

How Treating God's Promises as an 'If' Wrecks Your Spiritual Walk

Many years ago, when I was in high school, our school received its very first computers. Knowing that the world slowly was slowly transforming toward computer dependency, my father insisted I sign up for the programming class. The programming language we learned was basic, as a matter of fact, that is what it was called, "BASIC." One of the first things we learned was called an "if, then" statement. "If this, then this." In other words, you were programming the computer that if it recognized a certain word or thing that it would respond in a certain way. Through these statements, we could design certain simple word games and program the computer to perform simple functions.

Many believers view the miracles and promises of G-D from the perspective of "if, then" statements. They believe that their actions, their behavior or their obedience causes G-D to respond in a certain way. The problem with this thinking is that it exchanges the role of authority from G-D having authority to our having the authority. It reverses the reality, and reality places humanity on the throne and would make G-D the servant instead of us.

Let's look at an example. In Deuteronomy 19:8-9 (TLV):

"Suppose Adonai your God enlarges your territory, as He has sworn to your fathers, and He gives you all the land that He promised to give to your fathers— when you take care to do all this mitzvah that I am commanding you today, to love Adonai your God and to always walk in His ways. Then you are to add three more cities for yourself, besides these three."

Verse 8 begins with the word "suppose," which means

essentially "if." In many Bibles, the word "suppose" is translated "if." But when we read the context of verse 8, we find that Moses is speaking to Israel about something G-D has already promised them. At this point in time Israel is inheriting the Promised Land, but the area they were taking was not the complete dimensions of the land promised to Abraham in Genesis 15:18:

"On that day Adonai cut a covenant with Abram, saying, 'I give this land to your seed, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates River.'"

We all know that when it comes to G-D He cannot lie. In Numbers 23:19, we read: "God is not a man who lies, or a son of man who changes his mind! Does He speak and then not do it, or promise and not fulfill it?"

And 2 Corinthians 1:20 says, "For in Him all the promises of God are "Yes." Therefore also through Him is the "Amen" by us, to the glory of God."

With all of this in mind, we should understand that G-D was not saying "suppose" in the way of an "if as if," it was possible that G-D would not keep His promises. He had already made the promise and the promised land in its entirety. It was and is going to be given to Israel. So this "if or suppose" should be read by people of faith as a "when." In other words, G-D has promised Israel the promised land, so it is a done deal. The land already belongs to Israel; the question isn't and has never been "will it happen?" The question is only "when will Israel receive what G-D has already given them?"

That's why verse 9 is in the text. Verse nine begins with the word "when," which in many Bibles is translated "if." But it isn't an "if," it is a "when." Because it is also something that is going to happen. There is a time prophesied when Israel will receive the fullness of the promise of the promised land, and it will be when they "Love the L-Rd their

G-D and always walk in His ways.”

Now you may say that the above contradicts the statement above about our actions causing G-D to do something for us. But that’s not so. The truth is that G-D has already given the Land to Israel they simply need to receive what He already did. In the same way, the Scriptures proclaim in Isaiah 53:5

“But He was pierced because of our transgressions, crushed because of our iniquities. The chastisement for our shalom was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.”

We know that Yeshua already took these stripes for our healing. Our healing has already been provided. We don’t pray to be healed; we pray to receive the healing which we have already been provided. Our prayers are not causing G-D to do something for us; they are simply our way of responding to the understanding that He has already provided the promise of healing.

So anytime you read in the Scripture and the words say “if” G-D does something that He has already promised, know deep within your heart that it isn’t an “if.” When G-D has promised us something, those “ifs” are all “whens.” {eoa}

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