

Reach for God's Promise

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Preacher: William Philip

[0:00] But I'm going to turn now to our Bible reading for this evening. And please turn to Exodus. And if you don't have a Bible with you, we do have a guest Bible scattered around at the side or the back.

So please do grab a Bible if you need to. And we're on page 46 if you have the visitor Bible. Exodus chapter 2. And we're looking at just the very end of that chapter.

Last week we were hearing about Moses and his having to flee from the land of Egypt. And he ended up in the land of Midian.

And we saw last time that he was welcomed into the house of the priest of Midian. And he married his daughter.

We're going to see this now. Verse 21 of chapter 2. We're going to read from there just to the end. Of the chapter. So Exodus 2 verse 21. And Moses was content to dwell with the man.

[1:09] And he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah. She gave birth to a son. And he called his name Gershom. For he said, I have been a sojourner in a foreign land.

During those many days, the king of Egypt died. And the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help.

Their cry of rescue from slavery came up to God. And God heard their groaning. And God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

God saw the people of Israel. And God knew. Well, amen. May God bless his word to us tonight. Amen. We'll turn with you again to Exodus chapter 2. This is the last of our little group of studies here in Exodus.

[2:11] For the meantime, I'll be away for the next couple of weeks. And then we're going to be doing something different. But I think we will come back to Exodus. Because we're just beginning to get into the story. And it's a great story.

And a great book. So don't worry. We will be back. But tonight we're looking at just this little last paragraph. That rounds off this story of the beginning of the life of Moses.

And his intervention in Israel for God. Now, one of the biggest difficulties I think we often have as Christians.

Is that God is not like us. Now, we should thank God, of course, that he's not like us. But the truth is, I think, often we wish he were more like us.

That he was more predictable. More acceptable. More accountable in his ways to our scrutiny. But, of course, the truth is very different. We're just sung.

[3:14] God is other than we think. And the truth is, his ways are far above our reason. Way above.

Not that God is irrational. It's not that God is unreasonable, of course. But just because God is infinite. And he's eternal. And we're not.

We're finite. We're ephemeral. And so his ways are inevitably and irretrievably beyond our grasp. And that's a problem to us.

Because we just so often don't understand him properly. Don't understand what he's doing. And yet, here's the thing. We will never be at peace in this life until we accept that.

Until we come to terms with that. Unless we understand that God's ways are higher than ours. Unless we get that and grasp that and accept that, we will very easily lose heart.

[4:17] And that's why that hymn begins. Workmen of God, O lose not heart, but learn what God is like. That's the key, you see. And learning what God is like and getting a better sense of his higher ways and trusting them, even when we don't fully understand them all, as we never will, as mere mortals.

That is what the Bible means by faith. Seeing the invisible. Enduring. As people who do have the instinct that can tell that God is on the field, that he is at work, even when he's most invisible to us. And that is the answer. That's the only answer. To fear, to disappointment, to disillusionment. Even to anger, even to resentment against God. And we do sometimes feel that, don't we?

Of course, it's not easy to live like that, but that is why God has given us the scriptures. So that we can learn what he really is like. And we've been seeing that message, I think, in these wonderful opening chapters of Exodus.

Which teach us what God is like. Teach us what God is doing, even when it seems that he is virtually invisible. He's hardly mentioned, is he? You read through these first two chapters, you hardly hear God's name mentioned until this last little paragraph.

[5:45] It's just there a couple of times in chapter one. He's not there at all in chapter two until we get to this final paragraph. When we hear all about Moses' birth, his flight to Midian. No mention of God. But he's there.

Even though he's invisible, the message is very clear, isn't it? That God's people can rest in his purpose because it's unchanging. Even though it may not seem like that with enemies in the ascendant all around.

And God's people can rejoice in his providence because he will frustrate the actions of his enemies. He will turn it to blessing for his people's ultimate future, always.

And God's deliverer, Moses, is protected. We saw that. He's paid for. His upbringing paid for by the enemy king, Pharaoh himself. And God's people also were to recognize his pattern.

Because it's a pattern that we will see in our own lives as well. That he turns his servants' weaknesses, their rejection, into the ultimate blessing for his people.

[6:52] God knows what he's doing when Moses is being rejected inexplicably by his people. It's the pattern you see all through the Bible. It's the pattern for all his servants.

Because it's the pattern, of course, of the great servant, the Lord Jesus himself. He won the world through shame. And that is the road that he beckons for every true servant of his then and now. But in this last little paragraph, these last few verses of chapter 2, there's another clear message for us. And it's this, that it reminds us that however much God's working seems to be hidden in bringing about the deliverance that we long for, however deaf that he seems to be, even to our prayers, to see his intervention, we know that whatever God has covenanted for his people will always, without question, be fulfilled in his good time.

And so we're not to lose heart. We're not to start looking elsewhere for satisfaction, for the delivering we long for. No, no, no. We are to continue to reach for his promise.

Because his promise is unfailingly alive in his eyes, in his ears, in his own heart. Even if the heavens seem as brass sometimes to us in our prayers.

[8:20] Look at these words in verse 23. You see, during those many days, many days of groaning, of slavery, despite the people crying out to God in prayer, it seemed like they were not heard, it seemed like they were not being answered.

And I think one of the things we find most difficult of all as Christian people is getting to grips with God's timetable. Don't you find that? God is so slow to act.

Why doesn't he answer our prayers? Why doesn't he answer our prayers now, this way, the way we envisage him answering them? Now, those are real questions, aren't they? I'm sure you've asked yourself that question at times.

Many people do. And here's the thing. Alas, because of those questions, many people have given up on God.

They've abandoned God because he didn't work to their timetable and answer their prayers. One of the commonest things that I find over the years of people who once belonged to the Christian church, but no longer do.

[9:29] Some crisis arose in their life and they prayed to God and God didn't answer as they expected. And so they gave up on God. What they mean is that God didn't answer according to my timetable.

I've met so many people like that. I remember reading the autobiography of John Humphreys, you know, the BBC journalist. He's on Radio 4 explaining his agnosticism. And that's what he said. God didn't seem to answer prayer or act the way he thought. Therefore, he abandoned the idea that God could even exist. And for a very, very intelligent man, it really makes you wonder how irrational

people can be.

I remember meeting a man who told me that he'd left the church many years ago and I asked why. And he said, well, my mother died and God didn't answer my prayer to heal her. And I asked, well, was she taken suddenly ill?

Was she quite young? No, she was 94, he said. How long did he expect her to live? Forever? It's quite extraordinary, isn't it?

[10:38] But even as committed Christians, we all find God's timetable really difficult sometimes. And actually, the New Testament recognizes that and speaks to us about it.

Read Peter's second letter. There'll become, in the last days, he said, many people scoffing, saying, oh, where is this coming that Jesus promised? That it's easy, isn't it, to begin to doubt.

But when we see the world overwhelmed by evil, when we see the intractable ills all over the world, and we say, Lord, where are you? Why are you not coming? But remember what Peter says?

Remember this, that the Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise. As some kind of slowness, but he's patient towards you, not wishing that any should perish.

But that day will come, he says. You see what he's saying? Don't lose heart. Reach for his promise.

[11:39] It is unfailingly alive. Remember, he says, that for the Lord, a day is as a thousand years. He's got a different timetable. It's not the same as ours.

But we can trust his promises. They will never, ever fail. They will never, ever be forgotten. And they are as real and powerful today as the day when they were first uttered.

Because what did Jesus say? Heaven and earth will pass away. My words will never pass away.

And it's that wonderful message, really, that is oozing out of these three little verses here at the end of Exodus chapter 2.

When all hope seems gone, when everything around is dark, when heaven seems silent, what these verses are saying to us is, don't be afraid. Remember, fragile Christian.

Remember, fragile church. Our God is not fragile. He is faithful. Reach for his promise. It is unfailingly alive in the ears and the eyes and the heart of the Lord himself.

[12:44] Even when the heavens seem as brass to us, God will never, ever fail to hear the prayers of those who grasp hold of his covenant of grace. What does the psalmist say?

He fulfills the desires of those who fear him. He also hears their cry and he saves them. So let's look at these verses and just try and get clear what their promise is for us today.

The first thing they emphasize for us is, well, it is this apparent slowness, this apparent failure of God's timetable. These many days of groaning and longing.

Now remember, Moses is writing this to his people who are in the wilderness. They've been there for 40 years where they'd learned about God's timetable.

And he's writing it to them so that they will trust God and trust his promises despite the apparent failure to fulfill his promise to them of entering the land that was promised long ago.

[13:45] He's reminding them of what God did in the past and of how God works. Remember, chapter 1 here in Exodus opened with these dire circumstances of the Egyptians and the slavery and the oppression.

And the chapter ends with those even bleaker prospects of Pharaoh's genocide, killing all the baby boys to wipe out the next generation of Israel. But then, of course, chapter 2 begins with, well, there's a rush of hope, isn't there?

Maybe God is doing something. After all, we hear about the birth of Moses. And yet even that seems to come to nothing. And 40 years pass between verses 10 and 11 in chapter 2, according to Stephen in Acts chapter 23.

40 years of nothing. Just more slavery, more mistreatment. And then, verse 11, maybe God is going to start getting things moving.

And Moses emerges to stand with his people, reveals himself as a potential deliverer. Surely now things are going to change, but what happens again? It all goes to nothing. God's deliverer is rejected by his own people.

[14:54] And it looks like God's been defeated again in his plan. Moses is out of the picture, prince of Egypt, but now he's become a peasant out in the desert.

And for God's people, says verse 23, many days of groaning and slavery pass. And it seems with nothing but unanswered prayers.

And actually, Stephen tells us in Acts 7, it was another 40 years. Decades, two generations further on. And there seems to be nothing to show. There is no sign of mighty revival for God's kingdom people.

In fact, there's no evidence, is there, of God even being there at all. So how long can you keep on calling to God for help before you conclude that, well, either God is dead or doesn't exist, or if he does, he's not interested in you?

Before you begin to look elsewhere for deliverance. You begin to look for the future that you long for in other ways. You put your hope and your trust in people in this world, in the institutions of this world.

[16:13] Because it doesn't seem that God is going to affect any change. And so, you need to look elsewhere. And that is what happens, isn't it, so often when it seems to someone that God has failed.

People turn to the way of man instead. They turn to put their hope and their trust in politics, or economics, or social policy, or psychology, or any number of other things that seem to offer more immediate help.

Hoping to find the answers to their prayers there. Hoping to find it much more quickly. Much more quickly than the slow and deaf and apparently absent God who's failed to show up, who's failed to perform in any way that we can measure.

But you see, what Moses is telling us in these three verses is that to think like that is to make a huge mistake. A huge mistake. And that when we're faced with the choice of putting our hope in the politics of man, however auspicious they may seem, or putting them in the promises of God, however ancient they may seem, our true hope is always, always to be found in those ancient promises of God.

Because the auspicious politics of man will always, always in the end prove empty and vain. But the ancient promises of God will always, always prove ultimately to be glorious and certain.

[17:46] And that is the contrast that's actually being flagged up in these verses. It might not seem obvious to begin with, but look first at what we're told in verse 23, because it is about bright hope in the auspicious politics of man.

It's the little detail that we're given there. During these many days, what happened? The king of Egypt died. Now, if you're an Israelite being oppressed in Egypt under a tyrannical regime with a monstrous ruler who is committing genocide against every man-child that's brought into the world, you are desperate for any possibility of respite and a new political situation, aren't you?

You're bound to think that when a king dies, a new ruler coming is a sign of hope. And the Israelites were surely longing for exactly that, a new regime that might change our circumstances.

And the scholars, in fact, tell us that it was an established pattern in Egypt that when a new king, a new pharaoh came to the throne, they very often celebrated their coronation by granting an amnesty to people who are guilty of crimes and by setting prisoners free, setting slaves free.

And that's surely what they were hoping for. The king is dead. There is hope. But not so here, it seems. In fact, verse 23 seems to emphasize things got worse.

[19:08] The king died, but what happened? They groaned because of their slavery and they cried out for help. All the apparent hope of the auspicious politics of man turned out to be an empty hope.

God's people looked to political change, some fortuitous change in earthly power, some improvement in the government and the institutions that surround them in the world, and all hopes are disappointed.

And all such hopes in man and in man's world are always proven to be empty fully, aren't they?

Change of government in Egypt didn't answer God's people's needs.

In fact, what this verse is telling us, it just grew worse and worse. They groaned all the more. And I think that is an important lesson for us in the church today, isn't it?

Not to put our trust in the politics of man, however auspicious they might appear to be. That's what the world does. That's what the world's always done, of course, but it's sheer folly.

[20:19] Man has been searching for the way of earthly utopia since the very beginning, since the Tower of Babel, trying to build his own city, trying to build his own citadel to safety, to prosperity, all these things.

And always, where has it ended up? In ruins. Think about Marxist socialism that promised a century ago power to the people until the people found out that they were quite expendable, actually.

Or fascism with its dreams of purity and progress, just as catastrophic, horrific. Global capitalism, how's that doing today? It's not looking exactly a monument to stability, is it?

And yet, you know, there's a very real danger for the Christian church to be tempted by exactly the same kind of thinking, to lose focus on the true source of hope, on the ancient promises of God, and the certain fulfillment that God's gospel has promised in the fulfillment of time, and to turn instead to the auspicious ways of man, to try and bring about the kingdom that we long for, to try and do it now, our way, and that's been the root of so many problems of the church throughout history, from the New Testament right up until now.

Frustrations about God's timetable for the future of his kingdom, and temptation to want now what God has said is still not yet for the people of God. It's at the root of so many destructive heresies.

[21 : 56] And you see, when Christians and when the church lose focus on God's timetable, and especially when we lose the focus of the future, which is where God's gospel always points us, where it's all going, the new creation in Christ, when it begins to focus more on the present, that's when we begin to substitute real hope in God's promise for hope in the auspicious politics of man.

And we start to think that we can bring about God's kingdom in our timetable, in our way. And at the same time, we forget all about the powerful promise of God for the future, the gospel, which is the power of God for salvation, which is what the world really needs.

That's the story of theological liberalism that so blighted the church from the 19th century onwards. It's the loss of true gospel hope.

It's a loss of those ancient promises of God. And the replacement with what? Well, a mere social gospel for one thing. The relief of poverty, social justice, political intervention in the world, and all sorts of things like that.

Now, all of these things aiming to make this world a better place, those things become the real focus. Instead of preaching the coming kingdom and the way into that kingdom, as the only source of true hope for the world.

[23 : 26] Of course, it all starts well. It's very well-meaning indeed, very well-intentioned. And of course, don't mishear me, of course, the Lord Jesus assumes that His followers will have a care for the poor, will have a concern for mistreatment, will have a desire to protect the oppressed, will be keen for justice, and so on.

Jesus assumes in Mark chapter 14 where He speaks about these things, He assumes that His followers will be always seeking to do good things to the poor. But right there, He's very, very clear, isn't He, on two important things.

First of all, He says, the poor you will always have with you. In other words, this fallen world will not ever, ever be turned into a utopia, however much good we do in Christ's name.

We shouldn't ever imagine that we can do that. And secondly, He is saying very clearly right there that there are some things that are more important even than caring for the poor.

Honoring the saving death of Christ on the cross for sins. As the woman, He's speaking in the context of there is doing, anointing Him with expensive ointment that other people find very offensive.

[24 : 39] It's a beautiful thing she's doing, says Jesus. And that's why it will be told wherever the gospel is preached, because she sees the supremacy of the saving gospel of Christ.

And Jesus wants people to see and to understand the absolute priority of welcoming His death on the cross as the gospel, which alone can save this world. And where that priority is forgotten, the only source of true hope for this world and its people, and where that proclamation of the gospel of the cross is sidelined, everything is lost.

That's why it was such a pointed statement years back when the organization called Christian Aid got a new slogan, which was this, we believe in life before death.

It was deliberately sneering and saying, we don't want the gospel of the future, we're not interested in the conquest of death. All we're interested in is relieving poverty now.

And that organization has really got nothing distinctly Christian about it at all. A classic example of seeking hope in the auspicious politics of man.

[26 : 00] And in the same way, it disturbs me when once evangelical organizations today begin to drift in that direction and jump on that bandwagon of what is just the politics of man.

It's a big, big mistake to make. And if you begin to think that for the Christian church, the most important things to join big campaigns like make poverty history or end climate change or whatever

else it is that happens to be the thing at the moment, that somehow these things is what will usher in the kingdom of God.

Friends, it is deeply mistaken. There is no hope for this world in these things. Christ's church is not here principally to bring political change.

Real hope is in one place alone and in the same place it's always been in the ancient unchanging promises of God. The gospel of God fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ.

And that's what we're to remember and that's what we're to reach for. The true hope of the true gospel. And as the organized church of Jesus Christ, when we're thinking about what our strategy should be for this modern world, a world that is so uninterested apparently in the way of truth, God's promise is what this world needs.

[27 : 32] And we're to continue to reach for that unchanging gospel and proclaim it because that is the only true hope for our world. And it's our only true hope for ourselves when we are struggling with hardship and with discouragement.

That's what we need as well. We also need to reach for that same gospel promise and keep hold of it and not to think, oh well, if I could do this or do that or find this blessing or that, my life would be so much better.

If only I could get that better job or that marriage partner that I long for or the baby that I desire or this new experience that I want or any number of lists of things that we think might be our hope for life.

Listen to the psalmist. Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man in whom there's no salvation. But blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob whose hope is in the Lord his God.

And you see, that is what verses 24 and 25 are shouting to us here. The sheer certainty, the true hope that there is in these ancient promises of God.

[28 : 47] Unlike the politics of man. Unlike the changes in world regimes. which in the end will always prove vain and empty to help.

God's promises, although they're ancient, although they seem forgotten, although they seem feeble, perhaps, God's promises do not fail, not ever.

See what's so striking in these verses? It's such a contrast, isn't it, with virtually the whole of the two preceding chapters where God was virtually absent. He's unheard.

He's unseen. It seems like He's impotent. It seems like He's dead. But you see, these two verses just show us how totally wrong that is. Because suddenly the veil is lifted.

And we see right into heaven. We see the reality of what has been true all the time. But what the people of Israel couldn't see. That God's not absent, that He's present.

[29 : 43] And He's near to those who call on Him in truth, even when it seemed like He wasn't. Look at all the mentions of God's name clustered together.

Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And God heard their groaning. And God remembered His covenant with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. And God saw the people of Israel. And God knew.

God, God, God, God, God. He's alive with His people. He's there. He's attentive to His people. He hears. He sees. He knows. And He acts for His people.

He remembers His covenant. You know that when God says He remembers, it's never meaning that God recalls something He's forgotten.

For God to remember means for God to come down and act in power. To intervene. To deliver His people. The turning point in the story of the flood is what?

[30 : 40] Three words. God remembered Noah. And then after the flood, God said, when you see the rainbow, I will remember. I will remember. And I will not destroy.

God remembers His covenant promises. They're ancient. But there is no sell-by date. Think of God's promise for His people's land that He gave to Abraham in Genesis 12.

And His promise of liberation. That they would enter. They would enjoy that land. He spells that in Genesis 15. And His promise of leadership. To be with His people always.

He spells out in Genesis 17. Hundreds of years before. But none of it's been forgotten. None of it has fallen to the wayside. Even though, to His people, it seemed so.

And His timetable was utterly incomprehensible. God's promises may be old, but they're never defunct. And those ancient promises of God, friends, are the only things that we need to reach for.

[31:46] The only things we can reach for and hold on to. When it's dark and bleak all around. When the heavens seem to be as brass and our prayers seem to be not being heard.

Because they are alive, unfailingly, in the eyes and in the ears and in the heart of God our Savior. And maybe you just need to be reminded of that today.

I certainly do. Maybe you're here tonight and you feel as if you've been groaning many days. Maybe your hopes have been dashed. Maybe the new Pharaoh, the new regime, whatever it was, the thing in your life you were looking to that might bring change.

It's come and it's gone. And nothing's changed. And sometimes it is, isn't it? It's when we feel that our hopes really have failed. That's when we're forced back onto these ancient promises of God. The promises of our Savior, the Lord Jesus. They're 2,000 years old, aren't they? But they're not forgotten. Not one of them. Maybe you've forgotten them.

[32:57] We can easily do that, can't we? But God has not. God never forgot His promises to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob here. And what does the letter to the Hebrews tell us?

What have we been given? Better promises. Better promises even than these. And so we can be sure that He hears our prayers even when we think He doesn't.

He sees our need. He knows our heart even if your heart's broken. And He remembers His promises to you, every one of them.

And if you're downcast, if you're struggling, maybe groaning many days is how you feel, well, He wants you to reach out for these promises and stand firm on them.

because your hope is not in some circumstances in this life changing, the death of a Pharaoh, whatever that means to you. Your hope is in the eternal covenant promises of eternal life that is yours through Jesus Christ.

[34:07] Christ. So here's my question to us all tonight. Are we standing on those ancient but everlasting promises? Are we?

Let me remind you of just a few of them as we close. Maybe you have been plagued in recent days about your domestic situation and you're worried. Maybe you're worried about your job, about providing for your family if the economic situation does turn down and go badly.

Well, those are real concerns, aren't they? Reach for His promise. What does Jesus say? Don't worry what you eat or what you drink for the nations of the world seek after these things and your Father knows that you need them.

Instead, seek His kingdom and these things will be added to you. Fear not, little flock. It's your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

That's a promise. Luke chapter 12. Maybe some of us are genuinely frightened for our lives at this time.

[35:14] I suspect probably nobody in the room tonight, but perhaps some of our mission partners who may be watching and listening in. Well, don't put your trust in politics, in changes of government.

Listen to the Lord Jesus. Matthew chapter 10. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, fear Him who can destroy both body and soul in hell.

But even the hairs of your head are numbered. Fear not, therefore. Everyone who acknowledges Me before men, I also will acknowledge before My Father in heaven.

That's a promise from the Son of God. Maybe some of us are just fearful that God has abandoned us. Or perhaps, perhaps that God can't forgive you for something that you've done, some sin that you've relapsed into, some mistake that you've made.

Reach for His promise. Truly I say to you, says Jesus, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life.

[36:24] He does not come into judgment. He has passed from death to life. And all that the Father gives Me will come to Me. And whoever comes to Me, I will never cast out.

A promise from the Son of God. Maybe some of us tonight are grieving and our hearts are broken. And because of that we feel that our days are filled with darkness and the real pain of loss. Well, listen. We do not grieve as others who have no hope.

For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord that the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command and the dead in Christ will rise first. And then we will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

And so we will always be with the Lord. That's a promise in the apostle of Christ. Maybe you're increasingly conscious of facing the day of death yourself.

[37 : 37] And that dark valley is casting its shadow over you perhaps because of your own frailty or maybe it's what you're conscious of in a loved one. Well, brothers and sisters, don't put your hope in physicians and surgeons.

There's even less hope in them than there is in princes. And any help they can give you, it'll come to an end, won't it? But you can face death with a steady eye if you reach for the great promises of God.

Listen. I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet he shall live. And everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.

I will come again and I will take you to myself that where I am, you may be also. For this is the will of my Father that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him should have eternal life and I will raise him up on the last day.

That is a promise. And there's no greater promise in the world, is there? Maybe you're just feeling like you're very cast down.

[38 : 49] Your Christian life, your Christian ministry seems to be feeble, seems to be just a right flop. Maybe you think God can't really do anything with you.

You're no use at all to him. You're no use to anyone really. You're just unfruitful. Listen, you did not choose me. I chose you.

You should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

That's just a few ancient promises. I could keep going all night. And they're still as true, aren't they, as the day they were spoken. And when God's people reach for his promises in time of trial, in time of darkness, distress, any other time, when we reach for those promises, God will remember his covenant promise to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, and to the seed of Abraham, to every single one who belongs to him and the Lord Jesus Christ, who can never be plucked out of his hand, says Jesus.

He will remember and he will intervene. So friends, let's be helping one another. Whatever stage of life we find ourselves in, help one another to always be reaching for those same gospel promises.

[40 : 33] Not trusting in the auspicious politics of man, the fleeting changes in this world that we might think would bring help, but always are ephemeral and nearly always empty.

Not that, but standing firm on the promises of God, promises that are unfailingly alive in the eyes, in the ears, in the heart of our Lord and Savior.

Even when sometimes it feels to us that that's not so. God will never fail to hear the prayers of those who grasp hold of his gospel, who keep reaching for those eternal covenant promises of grace.

So stand there. Fear not. Our faith is so often fragile, isn't it? Is it ever anything but fragile? Well, our God is never anything but faithful.

Standing on promises, I cannot fall. Resting in Jesus Christ, my all in all, hearing his words of love, his spirit call, leading me heavenwards wherever before, forever, forever, I'll be standing secure in God's promise to me and to you.

[42 : 07] Amen. Well, let's pray. Lord, we thank you that you are the God of eternal, unchanging, everlasting, covenant promises and that though heaven and earth may pass away, your word of promise shall never pass away.

To help us, we pray, to stand secure, to reach for your promise and to walk on in faith and trust in you, our covenant-keeping God and help us to help one another on that road, we pray.

For Jesus' sake, amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.