**Salendine Nook Baptist Church – Church Together**

**Sunday 2nd March 2025 – God Keeps His Promises**

**Welcome**

Today’s Service is our annual: **Promise Sunday & Gift Day Family Service**

The Bible Reading for today’s service is: **Genesis 8 v. 20 - 9 v. 17**

The theme for our service today is: **God Keeps His Promises**

We hope that you will be able to engage with everything that has been produced for today’s service and that you would be able to **Remember That God Gives Us Signs Of His Promises To Us!**

**The Promises of God**

We are told that The Bible is full of God’s promises to us and that it reminds us that He is faithful to us through those promises. One of the best known promises in the Bible can be found in **Genesis 9 v. 13 - 17** which talks about Rainbows. This powerful promise from God teach us more about His incredible character and the things he says he will do for us. Let’s reflect on this rich promise to help us in whatever we are facing today. Take encouragement from the truth that God is with you, no matter what the circumstances may be.

**Definition Of Promises**

So, what does the word **PROMISE** really mean!

The dictionary defines the word **PROMISE** as:

A **promise** is a statement which you make to a person in which you say that you will definitely do something or give them something.

If you **promise that** you **will** do something, you **say** to someone that you will **definitely** do it.

If you **promise** someone something, you **tell** them that you will definitely give it to them or make sure that they have it.

The Bible is all about the promises of God. What does that mean? In this family service we will be thinking through a lot of promises that we find in the Bible.

Throughout our service today we are going to look at some of those ideas about **Promises**!

**Opening Prayer**

Loving heavenly Father, we thank you that you make wonderful promises to us and never break them. Help us to understand why they are so important and how we should respond to them. In Jesus' name.

**Amen**

**Song Suggestion**

All Over The World The Spirit Is Moving

**Promise Prayer - 1**

Thank you, Father God, that all Your good promises are fulfilled in Christ Jesus. Thank you that we are abundantly blessed, that You have provided for all of our needs. Father God, help us to grasp the reality that every spiritual blessing is ours, to enable us to live in the fullness of Jesus’ victory now and with hope for the future.

**Amen**

**Bible Reading**

**Genesis 8 v. 20 - 9 v. 17 NIV**

20 Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and, taking some of all the clean animals and clean birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings on it. 21 The Lord smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: “Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though[a] every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done.

22 “As long as the earth endures,

seedtime and harvest,

cold and heat,

summer and winter,

day and night

will never cease.”

**God’s Covenant With Noah**

9Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth. 2 The fear and dread of you will fall on all the beasts of the earth, and on all the birds in the sky, on every creature that moves along the ground, and on all the fish in the sea; they are given into your hands. 3 Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.

4 “But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it. 5 And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each human being, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of another human being.

6 “Whoever sheds human blood,

by humans shall their blood be shed;

for in the image of God

has God made mankind.

7 As for you, be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth and increase upon it.”

8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: 9 “I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you 10 and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. 11 I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

12 And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: 13 I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 14 Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, 15 I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. 16 Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.”

17 So God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.”

**Setting The Scene For Our Promises**

Ask some children to be your helpers in the talk later. Explain that if they do, they will each receive a gift at the end. Give each one a card with the promise written on it. Point out that this is an agreement between you and them. Ask for examples of other agreements people make.

Move on to explain the word **covenant** - a word the Bible uses for special agreements between God and people.

Illustrate this firstly with **a plane ticket**.

The airline company has agreed to take you to the place on the ticket. The ticket is the evidence of this promise.

A second illustration could be made with a **marriage certificate**.

The ticket and certificate are both signs of covenants.

Another word for '**covenant**' is '**testament**'. Ask the younger ones what that makes them think of. The two parts of the Bible are about God's covenants. Tragically, covenants sometimes get broken, e.g. airline companies are not totally reliable. But in the covenants God makes, we know that he will never break his promises.

**Song Suggestion**

O Lord My God! When I In Awesome Wonder

**Promise Prayer - 2**

Lord Jesus, we thank you for the promises that you give to us this day. We praise you for the gift of another day - for your love that is new every morning, for our eyes that are open and our hearts that are beating; each of those mean that you have a plan for us. We don’t know every step of your plan for us this day, but we know it will be for our good. We are confident it will be for your glory. We pray that you will lead us, Jesus, because we need you. May your promises and love flow through us and may we embrace every opportunity to share your promises and love with others that we meet.

**Amen**

**Offering**

If you feel that you are able to, then please keep on giving to the work of the church here at Salendine Nook, with a generous and cheerful heart, praising God for all that he has given to you and share in the finances of the church.

**Scouting & Girl Guiding Promises**

The Promise is a simple way to help young people and adults celebrate their shared Scout or

Girlguiding values. Every Scout or Girl Guide promises to stick by these values when they be-

come a member.

It’s important that every member has the chance to think about their Promise, and chat through

its meaning, before they make their Promise.

**Beaver Promise**

I promise to do my best and to be kind and helpful and to love God *(Christian)*

I promise to do my best to be kind and helpful and to love our world *(Atheist / No Religion)*

I promise to do my best and to be kind and helpful and to love our world *(Humanist)*

**Cubs Promise**

I promise that I will do my best

To do my duty to God and to the King *(To Uphold our Scout values, to do my duty to the King)*

To help other people

And to keep the Cub Scout Law

**Scout Promise / Explorer Promise *(and all other adult members of the scout association)***

On my honour

I promise that I will do my best

To do my duty to God and to the King *(To Uphold our Scout values, to do my duty to the King)*

To help other people

And to keep the Scout Law

**Guide Promise**

I promise that I will do my best

To be true to myself and develop my beliefs

To serve the King and my community

To help other people

And to keep the Brownie Guide Law

**All – Age Thought For The Day**

*Have items of clothing or ribbon in each of the colours of the rainbow (****red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet****). Also have a roll of bread, a goblet and an alarm clock.*

Recap Noah's ark - building. This was followed by the flood and all the living things outside the ark being destroyed.

This week's story begins about a year later. The flood had subsided, and they had all left the ark. Noah thanked God for saving them by sacrificing some of the clean animals and birds on it. It seems odd to us, but more on this later. Then God made a covenant promise to Noah and all living creatures - including us.

**THE PROMISE OF GOD**

**Genesis 8 v. 21, 22** says: ‘The Lord smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: “Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done. 22“As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease”’.

God promised that his creation would keep going day and night, through the seasons, year in and year out. We seem to take this for granted. But God made a covenant with us that it will continue and not be destroyed, even though he knew that people would carry on doing wrong. We saw earlier that covenants have signs connected to them: the train ticket and marriage certificate.

What was the sign that God gave Noah and us that he would never break his promise? It was the Rainbow!

**Ask your helpers to arrange the items of clothing into the correct order of colours in the rainbow.**

**THE PARTNERSHIP OF GOD**

There are two parties to a covenant: airline company and ticket holder; husband and wife; you and your helpers. God made his covenant promise himself and it did not depend on people in any way.

But there was a role for Noah and us in the covenant too. People were to get on with living in the world and respecting the life God had created. We are told this in **Genesis 9 v. 1 – 7** which says: ‘Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth. 2The fear and dread of you will fall on all the beasts of the earth, and on all the birds in the sky, on every creature that moves along the ground, and on all the fish in the sea; they are given into your hands. 3Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything. 4“But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it. 5And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each human being, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of another human being. 6“Whoever sheds human blood, by humans shall their blood beshed; for in the image of God has God made mankind. 7As for you, be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth and increase upon it’.

In Old Testament times, a sacrifice of animals was often part of making a covenant agreement - like Noah's sacrifice.

Jesus spoke of his death being the sacrifice which began a new covenant between God and people. We are told this in **Luke 22 v. 19, 20** which tells us: ‘And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.” 20In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you’.

The new covenant signs are the bread and wine depicting Jesus' broken body and poured – out blood. (Place bread and a goblet on a table.) This covenant was to deal with our sin. Again, the new covenant is something that God set up entirely without our help. But we have a role to play as well. If we are to be forgiven, we have to tell God that we are sorry for the things we have done wrong and ask Jesus to be our Saviour from sin.

It is as if the airline company sent you a free plane ticket unexpectedly. It is already paid for, but you still need to do your part by going and catching the aeroplane.

**THE PATIENCE OF GOD**

Set an alarm clock to go off in three minutes or towards the end of your talk. When it goes off, point out the unexpectedness of this and tie it in with the unexpectedness of Jesus' return.

God has promised that as long as the earth endures, the seasons will continue. He is very patient with us, but one day Jesus will come to be our judge. We are told this in **2 Peter 3 v. 9, 10a, 13**.

Our covenanting God always keeps his promises. Just as Noah and his family were wonderfully saved from the judgement of the flood and began a new life after leaving the ark, so those who trust Jesus will be saved from judgement and receive the glorious new life of heaven.

**Give your helpers their promised reward.**

**Gift Day Offering**

Today is not only our Promise Sunday but is also our Gift Day Sunday.

It is a time when we can sacrificially give financially to the work of the Lord here at Salendine Nook Baptist Church.

If you feel that your are able to, then please giving generously with a cheerful and grateful heart, praising God for all that he has given to you and share in the finances of the church.

**Prayers Of Intercession**

Lord, today we recall your faithfulness. Thank you that you walk with us every day, that you are with us always. We proclaim that your promises are true and your goodness and love never fail. In this moment we come to you and lay our lives before you.

May we honour, worship and adore you with every fibre of our being. Father, we proclaim that you are the Holy One, the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come. On this day we join with all those who worship and confess you as Lord, from generations past and present, and with all who sing of your greatness and splendour. Lord we adore you. Lord we love you. Lord we bow down and worship you.

**Amen**

As we continue in our Prayers of Intercession, others from the Scouts and Girl Guides are going to share with us in our prayers. They will be praying for:

The World

The Community

The Church

Ourselves

At the end of these prayers we will say together the words of The Lord’s Prayer.

**The Lord’s Prayer**

Our Father who art in Heaven

Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,

On earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread

And forgive us our trespasses,

As we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation

But deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power

And the glory, forever and ever.

**Amen**

**Song Suggestion**

Majesty, Worship His Majesty

**Promise Hands**

Give everyone a cut out of a hand and a pencil.

On the palm of each hand, they should write a Promise Prayer that they will make to God. On each finger of the hand they are to write a promise that is achievable and special to them.

Give everyone a chance to share with those sitting close to them and explain what they have written. Remind the congregation that the God of the Bible is our God as well, and he will be with us to guide us and help us through all the Promises they have described, because he is loyal to us.

Say this prayer, with short silences in the places indicated during which everyone can think of each Promise that they have written in turn:

Lord God, be close to us to guide us at this time, both today and tomorrow . . .

Lord God, be close to us to share our joy in the things we look forward to and the Promises that we have made . . .

Lord God, be close to us to make us strong in the things about which we are anxious . . .

And may we be aware of your presence in many ways through many days.

**Amen.**

**Moment Of Reflection**

God wants us to remember the good things He has done for us in the past. He wants us to remember His promises, His power and the awesomeness of His deliverance. He wants us to keep His word in front of us all the time. Why do we need to remember? Because we easily forget that our God is a mighty God.

**Song Suggestion**

O Jesus I Have Promised

**Blessing**

We go from here, Lord, with you to guide us; may friends and visitors enrich us,

May what you have revealed to us teach us,

May the Bible and our prayers direct us,

And so may every step of our journey please you.

**Amen**