

January 12
Lesson 7 (NIV)

SOLOMON SPEAKS TO THE PEOPLE

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 132:1-5, 11-18

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: 1 Kings 8:14-21; 2
Chronicles 6

1 KINGS 8:14-21

¹⁴ While the whole assembly of Israel was standing there, the king turned around and blessed them. ¹⁵ Then he said:

“Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who with his own hand has fulfilled what he promised with his own mouth to my father David. For he said, ¹⁶ ‘Since the day I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city in any tribe of Israel to have a temple built so that my Name might be there, but I have chosen David to rule my people Israel.’

¹⁷ “My father David had it in his heart to build a temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁸ But the LORD said to my father David, ‘You did well to have it in your heart to build a temple for my Name. ¹⁹ Nevertheless, you are not the one to build the temple, but your son, your own flesh and blood—he is the one who will build the

temple for my Name.’

²⁰ “The LORD has kept the promise he made: I have succeeded David my father and now I sit on the throne of Israel, just as the LORD promised, and I have built the temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ²¹ I have provided a place there for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD that he made with our ancestors when he brought them out of Egypt.”



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KEY VERSE

Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who with his own hand has fulfilled what he promised with his own mouth to my father David. —1 Kings 8:15

HONORING GOD

Unit 2: Dedicating the Temple of

God

LESSONS 6–9

LESSON AIMS

After participating in this lesson, each learner will be able to:

1. Recall promises within the Lord's covenant to David.
2. Explain the purpose of remembering God's mighty works.
3. Create a plan to exhibit more faithfulness in one area of life in light of God's prior faithfulness to him or her.

LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction

A. Because He Said He Would

B. Lesson Context

I. Blessings (1 KINGS 8:14, 15)

A. For the People (v. 14)

B. For the LORD (v. 15)

Unfulfilled Desires

II. Promises (1 KINGS 8:16–21)

A. For David (vv. 16–18)

B. By the Lord (v. 19)

C. In Solomon (vv. 20, 21)

Keeping a Promise

Conclusion

A. God Is Faithful

B. Prayer

C. Thought to Remember

HOW TO SAY IT

Ammonites	<i>Am-un-ites.</i>
Edomites	<i>Ee-dum-ites.</i>
Hiram	<i>High-rum.</i>
Moabites	<i>Mo-ub-ites.</i>
Philistines	<i>Fuh-liss-teenz</i> or <i>Fill-us-teenz.</i>
Syrians	<i>Sear-ee-unz.</i>
Tyre	<i>Tire.</i>

Introduction

A. Because He Said He Would

When asked to give the eulogy at his father's funeral, a young man named Alex Sheen decided to honor his dad by commemorating him as one who always kept his word. Sheen distributed "promise cards" with the words "because I said I would" written in the corner. He asked people to write promises on the cards and then to hand the cards to those to whom they made the promises. The persons making the promises would get the card back once they had fulfilled their word. Sheen then offered to send free cards to anyone who asked, no matter where they lived.

Word got out. Within 18 months, Sheen had kept *his* promise and sent out more than 250,000 cards. This response led to his establishment of the nonprofit organization "because I said I would."

Since 2013, the organization has provided over eight million promise cards.

This week's text focuses on words Solomon spoke at the dedication of the temple. Those words highlighted promises made and kept. Because God said he would, he did.

B. Lesson Context

The faithful God of Israel had established David's son Solomon on the throne of Israel (1 Kings 2:12). God then enabled Solomon to complete the project his father had given him to build a house of worship for the Lord (1 Chronicles 22:6-13). First Kings 8:1-13 (last week's lesson) recounted the opening scenes of the dedication ceremony for the grand temple Solomon had built in Jerusalem for the God of Israel (see lesson 6). Today's account continues to examine that ceremony. A parallel account can be found in 2 Chronicles 6:3-11.

I. Blessings

(1 KINGS 8:14, 15)

A. For the People (v. 14)

14. While the whole assembly of Israel was standing there, the king turned around and blessed them.

Details in this account again recall events from the Israelites' time in the

exodus (see lesson 6 regarding previous parallels). For example, when the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle at Mount Horeb, the people stood in reverence (Exodus 33:10). Similarly here, the glory has filled the temple (1 Kings 8:11, last week's lesson) with the people standing before it. In the instance at hand, *the whole assembly* stands respectfully to hear *the king*, knowing that God is present (8:10-12).

Their standing in this context is a position of prayer. Though today we may think of kneeling as the most devout position, standing is often the preferred posture in ancient Israel (compare Leviticus 9:5; 1 Kings 8:22-61).

The king has been facing the sanctuary on a special bronze platform while the priests were at the altar (2 Chronicles 5:12; 6:13). Unlike the people, it appears that Solomon is kneeling as he speaks (6:13). Kneeling is not necessarily a posture of worship; this posture can be assumed in situations to express one's lowly position before a more powerful or important person. In the context at hand, kneeling conveys respect for the Lord and humility in his presence (1 Kings 8:54; Ezra 9:5; Isaiah 45:23).

In the world of the Bible, the act of blessing expresses one's desire that God's approval and goodwill will rest on a person or group. The content of Solomon's

blessing is not recorded here. Later verses offer clues of what Solomon may pray as a blessing for the people (1 Kings 8:29–53, not in today’s lesson text). Likely, the blessing the king seeks is for God to hear the people and forgive them when they repent of sins.

What Do You Think?

What will be your personal part in helping your congregation bless the people in its neighborhood?

Digging Deeper

What does Matthew 5:43–48 suggest regarding the form and content for your plan?

Solomon’s blessing echoes Moses’ blessing of the people following the completion of the tabernacle (Exodus 39:32, 43). The king’s blessing of *the whole assembly of Israel* highlights his role as a spiritual leader among the people as well as his identity as the nation’s civic leader (compare Deuteronomy 17:14–20). Solomon’s words of blessing nudge Israel toward greater faithfulness (1 Kings 8:65, 66).

B. For the LORD (v. 15)

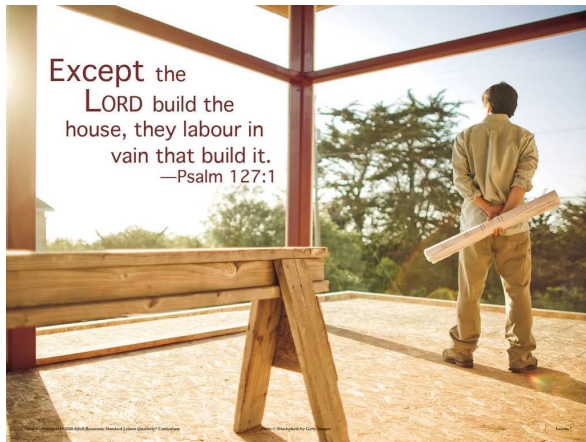
15a. Then he said: “Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel.

Having brought the ark of the covenant into the temple (1 Kings 8:6; see

lesson 6), Solomon reminds Israel of the greatness of God (compare David’s words in 1 Chronicles 16:36). The Hebrew word translated *praise* is the same as the word previously translated “blessed” (see 1 Kings 8:14). The NIV frequently translates the word as “praise” when referring to human action toward God (Genesis 24:27; Exodus 18:10; 1 Samuel 25:32, 39; 2 Samuel 18:28; 22:47; 1 Kings 1:48; etc.). Such passages emphasize that the Lord is worthy of reverence and worship.

Solomon begins the praise by addressing God with the extended title *the Lord, the God of Israel* (see 1 Kings 8:17, 20). The component parts of this address suggest much about God. In English translations, the small capital letters in *LORD* indicate that the name Yahweh is being used. This is the name that God revealed to Moses, translated “I Am Who I Am” (Exodus 3:14). At least two important attributes are suggested in this name: that God is eternal (compare 1 Timothy 1:17), and that he is unchanging (compare James 1:17).

In contrast with this special name, the Hebrew word translated *God* is much more generic. Many cultures in the Ancient Near East use a form of the same word to refer to the greatest of their gods.



Visual for Lesson 7. Point to this visual as you discuss the process of discerning one's role in God's work, whether in support or as a primary actor.

In Israel, of course, the term refers to the true God only and ascribes all honor and power and glory and might to him.

The words *Lord* and *God* are frequently used together in the Bible, notably in [Genesis 2](#). In combination, *Lord God* suggests that the most powerful god—the only God—is also a God who chooses to be close to his people, to reveal himself to them so that they can know him.

The phrase *of Israel* further emphasizes God's nearness—not just to his creation generally but to his chosen people specifically. The Lord God has chosen to create a covenant with Israel. Before revealing his name to Moses, the Lord indicated himself to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ([Exodus 3:6](#)). God connects his name to his people. Jesus

will use this very name later to show that God is the God of the living, not the dead ([Mark 12:24–27](#)). The Lord God is the powerful, transcendent deity who is near to the Israelites and has made covenant with them.

15b. “who with his own hand has fulfilled what he promised with his own mouth to my father David. For he said,”

That Yahweh had spoken the promises to *David* with *his own mouth* points both to God's intimate involvement in the promise and to its reliability (compare [Psalm 105:8](#); [Hebrews 6:13–20](#)). Working out those blessings *with his own hand* paints an image of sovereign power ([Deuteronomy 3:24](#); [2 Chronicles 30:12](#); [Ezekiel 20:33](#); etc.). What the Lord had promised, he has now performed.

UNFULFILLED DESIRES

On May 25, 1961, President John F. Kennedy spoke to a joint session of Congress. He urged Congress to join with him in accomplishing an amazing and seemingly unreachable goal: “I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the Earth.”

Congress agreed, and work began in earnest. Tragically, Kennedy was assassinated less than six years before astro-

nauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin landed on the moon on July 20, 1969.

Neither President Kennedy nor King David lived to see their dreams fulfilled. However, their dreams inspired others who followed them. What dreams do you have that can challenge others to greatness in the cause of Christ and his kingdom?

—C. R. B.

II. Promises (1 KINGS 8:16-21)

A. For David (vv. 16-18)

16a. “‘Since the day I brought my people Israel out of Egypt,

Solomon joins Moses, Joshua, and Samuel as leaders of a given generation of Israelites who review significant events of their nation’s past (Deuteronomy 1-4; Joshua 24; 1 Samuel 12:6-15). We see in the Bible that remembering correctly is often the first step to acting rightly (Numbers 15:39; Deuteronomy 5:15; 1 Corinthians 11:23-34). Even God is said to remember his promises before taking action (Genesis 8:1; 9:15, 16; Exodus 2:24). Rehearsing national memories of what God has done helps orient a new generation toward God in preparation for a new era of his dealing with the nation (Exodus 13:3-16).

God’s covenant with Israel and his

actions in rescuing that people from Egypt had formed the basis for God’s covenant with David (Exodus 19-24; 2 Samuel 7). The temple, obviously blessed by God with the presence of his glory (1 Kings 8:10, 11), now stands as a reminder of his continuing presence. It also serves as a portent of his future involvement in the nation (1 Kings 8:27-30; 2 Chronicles 6:10, 11). Should future generations dismiss God’s presence among them, judgment will follow (Jeremiah 7:4-15; Ezekiel 10:18, 19). They will, and it does.

What Do You Think?

What are some good memory aids to use to promote regular recall of how God has fulfilled and is fulfilling His promises to us?

Digging Deeper

Why would an expensive memory aid, such as stained-glass representations, be effective in one context but counterproductive in another?

16b. “‘I have not chosen a city in any tribe of Israel to have a temple built

Before Israel entered the promised land, Moses told the Israelites that the Lord would choose a place for their worship (Deuteronomy 12:4-7). For over four centuries, the portable tabernacle served as that sanctuary (Joshua 4:18, 19; 8:30-35; 1 Samuel 4:4; 1 Chronicles 17:5, 6).

During that time, Israel was meant to conquer the land (Joshua 1:3-6; Judges 1:19-21, 27-36). Israel's hold on the land, however, began to solidify once David came to the throne. David's victories over the Ammonites, Edomites, Philistines, Moabites, and Syrians (2 Samuel 5:17-25; 8) resulted in Israel's finally possessing the land the Lord had promised through Abraham and Moses (Genesis 15:18; Exodus 23:31; Deuteronomy 11:24). David's conquest of Jerusalem became the focal point of Israel's victories (2 Samuel 5:6-12).

16c. “‘so that my Name might be there,

The *Name* of the Lord is invoked repeatedly in the dedication of the temple (1 Kings 8:16-20, 29, 33, 35, 41-44, 48). God's glory and his name are frequently invoked in similar ways. Both are used to speak of God's awe-inspiring, transcendent nature.

When Moses desired to see the Lord's glory, God allowed him instead to hear a proclamation of God's name and to see his goodness (Exodus 33:18, 19). The Lord later proclaimed his name again to Moses, telling what his interactions with Israel have revealed about God's character (34:6, 7). The glory of the Lord subsequently made Moses' face shine (34:29-35).

While God's glory suggests that he is

unapproachable (compare 1 Timothy 6:16), his name speaks of Israel's ability to know and experience his goodness and mercy. Solomon goes on to speak of Israel praising the Lord's name (1 Kings 8:33-36). Similarly, the psalmists frequently write of calling on or trusting in God's name (Psalms 9:10; 80:18; 99:6; 105:1; 116:13, 17).

Attaching one's name to something like a building or someone such as a spouse or family lineage conveys association. The Lord does not belong to the temple, but he does allow the temple to be associated with his name. He does not dwell in the temple in the sense that it contains him. The Lord remains transcendent, free, and sovereign even though the temple is a place where worshippers can connect with God.

16d. “‘but I have chosen David to rule my people Israel.’

Solomon's words suggest that the events in which the community is participating are part of the next major stage in the Lord's ongoing relationship with Israel. Instead of choosing a city in which to place his name, the Lord had chosen *David*. God promised that David would have an everlasting dynasty and that a son would build a temple for the Lord (2 Samuel 7:11-16).

Now the city David conquered has become the place the Lord allows to be

the home of the temple that reflects his name (2 Chronicles 6:6). The temple becomes the authorized location for Israelites to worship (Deuteronomy 12:5).

17. “My father David had it in his heart to build a temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel.

The events Solomon recalls here and in subsequent verses are narrated in more detail in 2 Samuel 7 and 1 Chronicles 17 (see commentary on 1 Kings 8:18, 19, below). Having conquered Jerusalem, David found an ally in Hiram, king of Tyre. Hiram aided in David’s building projects by sending cedars from Lebanon as well as skilled workers to Jerusalem. These builders helped David construct a palace (2 Samuel 5:11). After its completion, David became concerned that he was living in a cedar palace while Israel worshipped the Lord in a tent (1 Samuel 7:1, 2). He then committed himself to build a temple for the Lord (1 Chronicles 22:7; Acts 7:46).

One inherently connects a person’s name to that person’s reputation. Therefore, David’s desire to build a temple for God’s Name expresses his desire to exalt *the Lord, the God of Israel* above the gods of the nations. This requires building the Lord an impressive house of worship that speaks of his glory and honor (Psalms 26:8; 132:5). Solomon will later connect the temple to the reputation of the Lord

among the nations (1 Kings 8:41–43).

18. “But the LORD said to my father David, ‘You did well to have it in your heart to build a temple for my Name.

Solomon’s assertion here does not appear to be quoted from any recorded material of anything the Lord said to Nathan or David (see 2 Samuel 7:5–16; 1 Chronicles 17:3–14). Instead, Solomon’s words make explicit that God had been pleased with David’s intent but not his timing.

What Do You Think?

Even though the church building is not equivalent to the temple of the old covenant, in what ways should it and/or its furnishings be treated as holy, if any?

Digging Deeper

What role, if any, should local sensitivities be allowed to have in answering that question?

B. By the Lord (v. 19)

19. “Nevertheless, you are not the one to build the temple, but your son, your own flesh and blood—he is the one who will build the temple for my Name.’

This verse highlights an important contrast: after God builds David’s house, David’s son will *build the temple* for God. Despite David’s good intention, God did

not desire that man to be the one who would build the temple (2 Samuel 7:5; compare 1 Kings 5:1-4). God's pleasure with David's impulse to build the Lord's temple can be seen in the fact that God allows his son Solomon to build it (2 Samuel 7:12, 13; 1 Kings 6).

Though David and Solomon may not have realized it at the time, the Lord's promise to David will bring about fulfillments of promises made to the patriarchs as well. The Lord told Abraham that all people groups would be blessed through that man's descendants (Genesis 12:3; 22:15-18). This promise is kept with God's honoring Jacob's blessing of Judah (49:8-12) when Jesus Christ is born of the line of David in the tribe of Judah (Luke 1:46-55, 68-75; 3:23, 33, 34).

What Do You Think?

How can we discern whether God is calling us to do something or is calling us to support someone else doing it?

Digging Deeper

How do passages such as Acts 15:37, 38; 17:7; Romans 16:21; 2 Timothy 4:16; and Philemon 1, 24 speak to your heart about the vital need to be a support person at times?

C. In Solomon (vv. 20, 21)

20. "The LORD has kept the promise

he made: I have succeeded David my father and now I sit on the throne of Israel, just as the LORD promised, and I have built the temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel.

Kings in the Ancient Near East often build or refurbish a temple to their patron god in order to establish the legitimacy of their reign. Politically, it makes sense to have a designated place of worship for an entire nation. This can create a more cohesive culture and nurture greater unity than if each village worships at its own altars and temples. Solomon affirms that he has not built the temple in order to establish himself—God has *already* done that (1 Chronicles 28:6, 7). God's placing of Solomon *on the throne* fulfills the Lord's promise to David (2 Samuel 7:12).

Peoples of the Ancient Near East consider their temples to be the houses or palaces of the deity. In fact, the Hebrew noun often translated *temple* can also refer to a palace (example: 1 Kings 21:1). Which use is intended must be determined by context. Because the Lord is both God and king, speaking of the temple can sound to Solomon's audience like speaking of God's palace. This reminds the audience of God's royal status as Israel's true king, residing in his palace in Jerusalem.

21. "I have provided a place there

for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD that he made with our ancestors when he brought them out of Egypt.”

The ark represents God’s presence, throne, and reign (1 Samuel 4:4; 1 Chronicles 28:2; Psalms 99:1, 5; 132:7, 8; see lesson 6). The ark also testifies to *the covenant* relationship between the Lord and Israel (Numbers 10:33–36). Without the presence of the Lord that the ark represents, the temple is merely a majestic building. Without covenant faithfulness, neither the ark nor the temple mean anything (compare Jeremiah 7:1–15).

The ark contains the stone tablets of the covenant that the Lord had made in the desert with Israel. Solomon’s reference to the ark thus underlines the tie between Israel’s exodus experience and the Lord’s covenant with David, emphasized earlier. God was utterly faithful to Israel’s *ancestors* who made the journey through the wilderness.

What Do You Think?

What guardrails can we put in place to ensure that God receives appropriate credit for accomplishments?

Digging Deeper

Does this mean that we should never have recognition programs to acknowledge the work of fellow Christians? Why, or why not?

In some respects, the temple is analogous to the nation of Israel. The Lord will dwell in the temple just as he dwells within Israel. Just as the ark of the covenant is in the heart of the temple, so also the covenant is to be within the Israelites’ hearts and actions. In a similar way, we speak today of believers as being the temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). We must therefore be faithful to our covenant with the Lord (6:20).

KEEPING A PROMISE

“John did something terrible, but it was told to me in confidence. Promise to keep it a secret?” Some people find that the more scandalous the story, the harder it is to keep a promise not to spread the tale. Thus some people make promises they fully expect to break.

On the other hand, there are promises that we *do* intend to keep. The contract we sign when purchasing a house is one such promise, one with penalties if we break it. The promise we make to love and cherish a spouse “till death do us part” is a promise most people intend to keep. Then there are the promises of God, such as the ones Solomon recalled for Israel. God is the ultimate keeper of promises. We who are his children are called on to be as faithful as he is in keeping our word, whether to God or others. Do we?

—C. R. B.

INVOLVEMENT LEARNING

Conclusion

A. God Is Faithful

Solomon's declarations highlight the power of God's promises. What God had promised to David, God fulfilled through Solomon. Just as the Lord God of Israel had kept his promises to the patriarchs, to Moses, and to Israel in general, so also he kept his promises to David. God's covenant to establish an everlasting dynasty for David finds its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus, the son of David ([Matthew 1:1](#)).

In response to God's promises, we are to be a covenant-keeping people. How we use our "temples" reflects our commitment to the Lord. Will others see God fulfilling his promises in us?

B. Prayer

Our Father, we thank you that you are the God of promises made and kept. We thank you for your presence with us through your Spirit. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

C. Thought to Remember

If God has promised it, he will do it!

Enhance your lesson with [NIV Bible Student](#) (from your curriculum supplier) and the reproducible activity page (at www.standardlesson.com or in the back of the [NIV Standard Lesson Commentary Deluxe Edition](#)).

Into the Lesson

Before class members arrive, write *The Power of a Promise* on the board. Begin by pointing to the phrase as you ask, "What is the most powerful promise anyone ever made to you?" Allow several to answer.

Alternative. Tell class members the story behind the movement described in the lesson's Introduction. Ask some or all of the members to find the website and/or Facebook page on their smartphones. Allow two or three volunteers to share from these pages a few stories illustrating the power of a promise.

Lead into Bible study by saying, "As you know, our God is a promise-keeping God! Today, as we continue our study of the ceremonies surrounding the creation of the temple in Jerusalem, we will see why that fact is important."

Into the Word

Prepare in advance three strips of

paper that have these phrases, one per strip: *God keeps his promises / God works in his own time / God sometimes says no*. Tell learners that the phrases you are about to read aloud state truths of today's text of **1 Kings 8:14–21** specifically and of life in general.

Read each statement twice. Then invite three shows of hands to indicate which statements your learners find most interesting. Form three groups according to the preferences indicated; give each of the three groups the appropriate strip of paper.

Ask class members to listen carefully as you read the lesson's Scripture text to see which part or parts illustrate their group's statement. You may decide to read the text aloud two or three times.

After the reading, give groups at least five minutes to agree on how the Scripture illustrates the groups' respective principles. Then call the groups together for whole-class discussion. Expect your groups to have seen at least these connections:

God keeps his promises verse **20**

*God works in his own
time* verses **16,**
21

God sometimes says no verse **19**

Groups may propose other connections of a more indirect nature. If so, ask for explanations.

Option. Distribute copies of the “Twelve of Many” exercise from the activity page, which you can download. Have learners work in study pairs to complete as indicated.

Into Life

Re-form the same three groups and ask them to brainstorm a list of situations in which people would be helped by believing the principle their group discussed. Allow just two or three minutes for groups to make lists as long as possible. (*Alternative.* Do this with the whole class, taking one principle at a time and writing responses on the board.)

Then lead a whole-class discussion, allowing participants to add more examples under the statements, which you have written as headers on the board. Probe deeper by asking when learners have experienced one or more of the truths personally. Allow several minutes for members to share their testimonies.

Option 1. Use the “One Favorite Promise” exercise from the activity page to expand the discussion. Students can pair off to discuss as indicated.

Option 2. Using the list of Scriptures containing promises on the activity page, recruit volunteers to look them up and read them aloud. Ask learners to adopt an attitude of worship as this sampling of God's promises is read.

Ask one person from each of the three groups to offer a prayer of thanks to God for keeping his promises and a prayer of petition for class members to keep promises to him.

Close by leading singing of the hymn “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” or another familiar composition that is similar in content.

To print the reproducible activity page, simply click the highlighted text below to create a pdf file on your hard drive. Then open the pdf file in Acrobat Reader and print.

[Activity Page \(January 12—Solomon Speaks to the People\)](#)

SOLOMON SPEAKS TO THE PEOPLE

Lesson 7, 1 Kings 8:14-21, NIV

TWELVE OF MANY

Today's study from 1 Kings reminds us that God keeps his promises, but not always in the way or at the time we would choose. Each of the 12 Scriptures below contains a promise from God. Unscramble the sentences below and match them to the corresponding verses.

Psalm 34:7	
Psalm 103:11	
John 3:16	
John 14:2	
Acts 2:38	
Romans 8:26	
Romans 8:28	
1 Corinthians 10:13	
2 Corinthians 12:9	
James 1:5	
1 John 1:9	
Revelation 21:4	

1. pray those for wisdom gives to who God it.
2. offers The prayers Spirit can't we express.
3. God from tempted gives an path Christians escape sin.
4. become gives Holy Spirit those the God who to Christians.
5. eternal an home for preparing Jesus is believers.
6. protects God His people.
7. who good things All work the of those love for God.
8. shown our Christ's is in strength weakness.
9. we will confess forgive God If sins, our them.
10. fear those God loves who Him.
11. promises life to God everlasting believers.
12. all will Someday and tears sorrow cease.

ONE FAVORITE PROMISE

Has there been a time in your life when one of the above promises was most helpful to you? What was the situation?

Which promise was it?

How did it help you?

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