



Possessing the Promised Land
Retreat/ Group Companion WORKBOOK



POSSESSING THE PROMISED LAND

Retreat/ Group Companion

WORKBOOK

RICHARD T. CASE





Dedication / Acknowledgements

I wish to dedicate this course to and thank all of the leaders of our **Ministry: Living Waters—ABIDE Ministries!** along with my wife, Linda, who have all learned that:

1. God has promises for all of us personally
2. These promises are all “yes” in Him, and thus available to all and are true
3. These promises are potential and not guaranteed, as we have to walk with God to receiving these and have Him fulfill these for us.

As we have received and experienced these truths, we have together walked into these promises as God resolves our personal issues of life; and does not leave us to figure things out alone and thus live a life of frustration and resignation. Rather, we have learned to go to Him and ask Him what promise is He speaking to us, and then not to focus on the circumstances but continue to move forward with Him—knowing that He will fulfill what He speaks to us. The promise turns into reality for us. Our leader’s experience this and then they give it away to their groups and friends who also learnt to hear, receive, believe and then experience God’s promises for them. As the church universal grows in this, we will see a dramatic shift in the life of the church—from struggle and resignation to victory and joy. Thank you all for teaching these truths:

These leaders are:

Jake & Mary Beckel

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Further, it is a joy for me to share this life with my wife, Linda, and family who especially continue to bring us back to seeking God’s promises, stay in the process to receive these in our everyday lives and not go to discouragement and resignation. We get to enjoy the wonder and fullness of life because of living out this process.

POSSESSING THE PROMISED LAND COMPANION WORKBOOK

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In what way was Abraham considered a great man of faith? What did he have to experience about understanding living out God’s promises? What does this speak to how we are to grow in receiving His promises?

Read Romans 4:17–21:

¹⁷ as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸ In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.” ¹⁹ He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness^[a] of Sarah’s womb. ²⁰ No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹ fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.

What do these sets of verses reveal about His promises—what He speaks to us? On what basis is this true? What does this mean regarding our confidence in the promises? Why?

Read Ezekiel 12:25–28:

²⁵ For I am the LORD; I will speak the word that I will speak, and it will be performed. It will no longer be delayed, but in your days, O rebellious house, I will speak the word and perform it, declares the LORD GOD.”

²⁶ And the word of the LORD came to me: ²⁷ “Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, ‘The vision that he sees is for many days from now, and he

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prophesies of times far off.'²⁸ Therefore say to them, Thus says the LORD GOD: None of my words will be delayed any longer, but the word that I speak will be performed, declares the LORD GOD."

Read Isaiah 55:8–11:

⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord.

⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

¹⁰ "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return there but water the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

¹¹ so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

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In these sets of verses, what does God speak regarding who or what can annul (stop) the fulfillment of His promises, His Word? What then is critical to possessing the promises? Why is this so important to us, and therefore what must we consider to experience His promises?

Read Isaiah 14:24–27:

An Oracle Concerning Assyria

²⁴ The LORD of hosts has sworn:

“As I have planned,

so shall it be,

and as I have purposed,

so shall it stand,

²⁵ that I will break the Assyrian in my land,

and on my mountains trample him underfoot;

and his yoke shall depart from them,

and his burden from their shoulder.”

²⁶ This is the purpose that is purposed

concerning the whole earth,

and this is the hand that is stretched out

over all the nations.

²⁷ For the LORD of hosts has purposed,

and who will annul it?

His hand is stretched out,

and who will turn it back?

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Read Hebrews 3:15–19:

¹⁵ As it is said,

“Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”

¹⁶ For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? ¹⁷ And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸ And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? ¹⁹ So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

What are the reasons that we typically give for not wanting to move forward into His promises? What is the difference between concerns and struggles and refusing to move forward because of the concerns and struggles? Why is this so important to our experiencing God’s promises to us?

Read Numbers 13:25–4:4:

Report of the Spies

²⁵ At the end of forty days they returned from spying out the land. ²⁶ And they came to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the people of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh. They brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. ²⁷ And they told him, “We came to the land to which you sent us. It flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. ²⁸ However, the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. And besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. ²⁹ The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the Jordan.”

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³⁰ But Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it." ³¹ Then the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are." ³² So they brought to the people of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out, saying, "The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. ³³ And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them."

What do these sets of verses say was the difference in Joshua and Caleb that they were able to go to the Promised Land? What is required of us? Why? What does this mean for us personally? How might we then move forward to be willing to be like Joshua and Caleb and experience God's promises to us?

Read Numbers 14:24:

²⁴ But my servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit and has followed me fully, I will bring into the land into which he went, and his descendants shall possess it.

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Read Hebrews 11:1-3:

By Faith

11 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ² For by it the people of old received their commendation. ³ By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

As we are called to live by faith and believe the promises God made to us, what are the reasons that faith is required versus living by sight or by what is called, “Christian fatalism—whatever happens, happens?” What are the requirements to live by faith? What is the reward if we do meet the requirements?

Read Hebrews 11:6:

⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

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Read Hebrews 10:35–39:

³⁵ Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. ³⁷ For,

“Yet a little while,
and the coming one will come and will not delay;

³⁸ but my righteous one shall live by faith,
and if he shrinks back,
my soul has no pleasure in him.”

³⁹ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

In these sets of verses, for us to receive the promises, how are we to specifically walk with God to possess them? How can we live this out in practical ways?

Read Deuteronomy 8:1–2; 6–10:

Remember the LORD Your God

8 “The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the Lord swore to give to your fathers. ² And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not.

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⁶ So you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him. ⁷ For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills, ⁸ a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, ⁹ a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. ¹⁰ And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land he has given you.

Read Deuteronomy 11:8–15, 18–25:

⁸ “You shall therefore keep the whole commandment that I command you today, that you may be strong, and go in and take possession of the land that you are going over to possess, ⁹ and that you may live long in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give to them and to their offspring, a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰ For the land that you are entering to take possession of it is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and irrigated it,^[a] like a garden of vegetables. ¹¹ But the land that you are going over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water by the rain from heaven, ¹² a land that the LORD your God cares for. The eyes of the LORD your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.

¹³ “And if you will indeed obey my commandments that I command you today, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹⁴ he^[b] will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oil. ¹⁵ And he will give grass in your fields for your livestock, and you shall eat and be full.

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¹⁸“You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ¹⁹You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. ²⁰You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, ²¹ that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth. ²² For if you will be careful to do all this commandment that I command you to do, loving the LORD your God, walking in all his ways, and holding fast to him, ²³ then the LORD will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than you. ²⁴ Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours. Your territory shall be from the wilderness to^[a] the Lebanon and from the River, the river Euphrates, to the western sea. ²⁵ No one shall be able to stand against you. The LORD your God will lay the fear of you and the dread of you on all the land that you shall tread, as he promised you.

If we do learn to walk with Him, what is His promised result for us? What does that mean for our personal lives? Why will that then encourage us to learn this even further?

Read Deuteronomy 5:31–33:

³¹ But you, stand here by me, and I will tell you the whole commandment and the statutes and the rules that you shall teach them, that they may do them in the land that I am giving them to possess.’ ³² You shall be careful therefore to do as the LORD your God has commanded you. You shall not turn aside to the right

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hand or to the left. ³³ You shall walk in all the way that the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you shall possess.

What choice does God give us regarding how to experience His promises? What does it mean, and how do we live this out? What are the real elements of the choice to be made?

Read Deuteronomy 30:11–20:

The Choice of Life and Death

¹¹ “For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. ¹² It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ ¹³ Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ ¹⁴ But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

¹⁵ “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. ¹⁶ If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God^[a] that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules,^[b] then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. ¹⁷ But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, ¹⁸ I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹ I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing

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**"All the promises are
yes in Christ, which
means we have to
receive it from Him.
We can't just decide
on our own."**

As we learn to walk with God into His promises for us, how do we apply taking down, eliminating idols in our lives? For us, what are some of those idols, and why are they considered idols for us? What is the benefit of us removing them from our lives?

Read 2 Chronicles 17:1–6:

Jehoshaphat Reigns in Judah
17 Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his place and strengthened himself against Israel. ² He placed forces in all the fortified cities of Judah and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim that Asa his father had captured. ³ The Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the earlier ways of his father David. He did not seek the Baals, ⁴ but sought the God of his father and walked in his commandments, and not according to the practices of Israel. ⁵ Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand. And all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great riches and honor. ⁶ His heart was courageous in the ways of the Lord. And furthermore, he took the high places and the Asherim out of Judah.

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From these sets of verses, what is the importance of abiding? How do we define abiding? What is the reason that God invites us to abide in order to receive His promises? If we do abide, what result will we experience? What does that mean in our everyday lives?

Read John 15:1–5:

I Am the True Vine

15 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

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Read John 8:28–32:

²⁸ So Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me. ²⁹ And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him.” ³⁰ As he was saying these things, many believed in him.

The Truth Will Set You Free

³¹ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

Even if you believe God can deliver promises, what is still necessary for us to experience them? What is the difference between rejecting this and receiving this? How do we then practically live this way?

Read Psalm 86:8–13:

⁸ There is none like you among the gods, O Lord,
nor are there any works like yours.

⁹ All the nations you have made shall come
and worship before you, O Lord,
and shall glorify your name.

¹⁰ For you are great and do wondrous things;
you alone are God.

¹¹ Teach me your way, O Lord,
that I may walk in your truth;
unite my heart to fear your name.

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¹² I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,
and I will glorify your name forever.

¹³ For great is your steadfast love toward me;
you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

What are the consequences of not walking with Him? For God to deliver His promises, what is He waiting for? What are we then to wait for? How does the Spirit guide us along His path to the promises? How does this practically work for us?

Read Isaiah 30:15–26:

¹⁵ For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel,
“In returning^[a] and rest you shall be saved;
in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.”

But you were unwilling, ¹⁶ and you said,

“No! We will flee upon horses”;

therefore you shall flee away;

and, “We will ride upon swift steeds”;

therefore your pursuers shall be swift.

¹⁷ A thousand shall flee at the threat of one;

at the threat of five you shall flee,

till you are left

like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain,

like a signal on a hill.

The Lord Will Be Gracious

¹⁸ Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you,

and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you.

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For the Lord is a God of justice;
blessed are all those who wait for him.

¹⁹ For a people shall dwell in Zion, in Jerusalem; you shall weep no more. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry. As soon as he hears it, he answers you. ²⁰ And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself anymore, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. ²¹ And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left. ²² Then you will defile your carved idols overlaid with silver and your gold-plated metal images. You will scatter them as unclean things. You will say to them, "Be gone!"

²³ And he will give rain for the seed with which you sow the ground, and bread, the produce of the ground, which will be rich and plenteous. In that day your livestock will graze in large pastures, ²⁴ and the oxen and the donkeys that work the ground will eat seasoned fodder, which has been winnowed with shovel and fork. ²⁵ And on every lofty mountain and every high hill there will be brooks running with water, in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. ²⁶ Moreover, the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day when the Lord binds up the brokenness of his people, and heals the wounds inflicted by his blow.

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For what must we wait? Why? What is the benefit of waiting? Why is this attractive for us and motivate us to wait versus move ahead on our own?

Read Isaiah 40:31:

³¹ but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;
they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint.

As we experience His promises, what is the true purpose of this? In what way do we express this purpose? Why is this so important to possessing the Promised Land?

Read Isaiah 42:5–9:

⁵ Thus says God, the LORD,
who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people on it
and spirit to those who walk in it:
⁶ "I am the LORD; I have called you^[a] in righteousness;
I will take you by the hand and keep you;
I will give you as a covenant for the people,
a light for the nations,
⁷ to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.

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⁸ I am the LORD; that is my name;
my glory I give to no other,
nor my praise to carved idols.
⁹ Behold, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth
I tell you of them.”

From these sets of verses, what are the elements of walking with God, and how do these apply practically to us? Why are they so important? Why are all three needed?

Read Ephesians 5:1–2:

Walk in Love

5 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. ² And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

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Read Ephesians 5:8–11:

⁸ for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰ and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

Read Ephesians 5:15–21:

¹⁵ Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

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How does this set of verses describe the work of Satan? What is his purpose? What are his strategies toward this purpose? How do we fall into his strategies (to what does he appeal, and why do we fall for it)? What is the result when we do?

Read John 10:10:

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Read Ephesians 6:10–13:

The Whole Armor of God

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

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Read Genesis 3:1–5:

The Fall

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You^[a] shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’”² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden,³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’”⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

Read James 1:12–18:

¹² Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. ¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

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¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.^[a] ¹⁸ Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

First, what is the promise given to Nehemiah, and how did he receive it. Was he then willing to walk into it?

Read Nehemiah 1:1-11:

Report from Jerusalem

1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah.

Now it happened in the month of Chislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Susa the citadel, ² that Hanani, one of my brothers, came with certain men from Judah. And I asked them concerning the Jews who escaped, who had survived the exile, and concerning Jerusalem. ³ And they said to me, "The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and shame. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire."

Nehemiah's Prayer

⁴ As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven. ⁵ And I said, "O Lord God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, ⁶ let your ear be attentive and your eyes open, to hear the prayer of your servant that I now pray before you day and night for the people of Israel your servants, confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against you. Even I and my father's house have sinned. ⁷ We have acted very

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corruptly against you and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, and the rules that you commanded your servant Moses. ⁸ Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples, ⁹ but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place that I have chosen, to make my name dwell there.' ¹⁰ They are your servants and your people, whom you have redeemed by your great power and by your strong hand. ¹¹ O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight to fear your name, and give success to your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man." Now I was cupbearer to the king.

From these sets of verses, what were the strategies of the enemy, and how did Nehemiah respond?

Read Nehemiah 2:10:

¹⁰ But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard this, it displeased them greatly that someone had come to seek the welfare of the people of Israel.

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Read Nehemiah 2:19:

¹⁹ But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they jeered at us and despised us and said, "What is this thing that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?"

Read Nehemiah 4:1-3:

Opposition to the Work

4 ^[a] Now when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he was angry and greatly enraged, and he jeered at the Jews. ² And he said in the presence of his brothers and of the army of Samaria, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore it for themselves? ^[b] Will they sacrifice? Will they finish up in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, and burned ones at that?" ³ Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, "Yes, what they are building—if a fox goes up on it he will break down their stone wall!"

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Read Nehemiah 6:1–14:

Conspiracy Against Nehemiah

6 Now when Sanballat and Tobiah and Geshem the Arab and the rest of our enemies heard that I had built the wall and that there was no breach left in it (although up to that time I had not set up the doors in the gates),² Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, “Come and let us meet together at Hakkephirim in the plain of Ono.” But they intended to do me harm.³ And I sent messengers to them, saying, “I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?”⁴ And they sent to me four times in this way, and I answered them in the same manner.⁵ In the same way Sanballat for the fifth time sent his servant to me with an open letter in his hand.⁶ In it was written, “It is reported among the nations, and Geshem^[a] also says it, that you and the Jews intend to rebel; that is why you are building the wall. And according to these reports you wish to become their king.⁷ And you have also set up prophets to proclaim concerning you in Jerusalem, ‘There is a king in Judah.’ And now the king will hear of these reports. So now come and let us take counsel together.”⁸ Then I sent to him, saying, “No such things as you say have been done, for you are inventing them out of your own mind.”⁹ For they all wanted to frighten us, thinking, “Their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done.” But now, O God,^[b] strengthen my hands.

¹⁰ Now when I went into the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined to his home, he said, “Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple. Let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you. They are coming to kill you by night.”¹¹ But I said, “Should such a man as I run away? And what man such as I could go into the temple and live?^[c] I will not go in.”¹² And I understood and saw that God had not sent him, but he had pronounced the prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.¹³ For this purpose he was hired, that I should be afraid and act in this way and sin, and so they could give me a bad name in order to taunt me.¹⁴ Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, O my God, according to these things that they did, and also the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who wanted to make me afraid.

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What are we experiencing in our walk that we now see are strategies of the enemy to distract us, to thwart the promises of God? How might we respond as Nehemiah did? What shall we then expect? Why?



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"He said, "Your role is to hear what I have to say and then possess it."

From this set of verses, in order to stop the activity of the enemy who is working to thwart the possessing of the promises of God, what are we called to do? What does that look like? What is the result?

Read James 4:7–10:

⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

Read 1 Peter 5:5–11:

⁵ Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, ⁷ casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. ⁸ Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. ¹⁰ And after you have suffered a little

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while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹ To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

We are called to bring down strongholds. How are these defined? What impact do they have toward us enjoying life? How do we bring them down? How does this practically work in our daily lives?

Read 2 Corinthians 10:1–6:

Paul Defends His Ministry

10 I, Paul, myself entreat you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—I who am humble when face to face with you, but bold toward you when I am away!— ² I beg of you that when I am present I may not have to show boldness with such confidence as I count on showing against some who suspect us of walking according to the flesh. ³ For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. ⁵ We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, ⁶ being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.

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First, how did Peter receive revelation, the promise of God? Why was this so significant, and how then do we receive revelation and promises?

Read Matthew 16:13–20:

Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” ¹⁴ And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” ¹⁵ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” ¹⁶ Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock^[a] I will build my church, and the gates of hell^[b] shall not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed^[c] in heaven.” ²⁰ Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

What is the reason we tend not to walk with God but actually are following the schemes of the enemy? What mistakes do we tend to make, just as Peter did? Why is this so significant to learning to walk with God? What then is the process to be able to walk with God (follow Him)? What does this mean personally to how we live this out?

Read Matthew 16:21–23:

Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

²¹ From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes,

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and be killed, and on the third day be raised. ²² And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord!^[a] This shall never happen to you."²³ But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance^[b] to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

Read Matthew 16:24–28:

Take Up Your Cross and Follow Jesus

²⁴ Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever would save his life^[a] will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. ²⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? ²⁷ For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done. ²⁸ Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

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In order for us to follow Him (after denying self, and standing on the truth of the cross), what is required? What exactly is this, and in what way can we be certain which is the requirement? Then, how do we receive faith? What is the role and responsibility of Jesus in this process? Why is that important for us to understand and not take on His responsibility?

Read Hebrews 11:1-3:

By Faith

11 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ² For by it the people of old received their commendation. ³ By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

Read Hebrews 12:1-2:

Jesus, Founder and Perfecter of Our Faith

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

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As we then move to faith, what is important in the process, and what truths do we reach in the process? (How do we know we have faith?) When we know that we know that we know, how then are we to pray? Why?

Read 2 Samuel 7:25–29:

²⁵ And now, O LORD God, confirm forever the word that you have spoken concerning your servant and concerning his house, and do as you have spoken. ²⁶ And your name will be magnified forever, saying, 'The LORD of hosts is God over Israel,' and the house of your servant David will be established before you. ²⁷ For you, O Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, have made this revelation to your servant, saying, 'I will build you a house.' Therefore your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to you. ²⁸ And now, O Lord GOD, you are God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant. ²⁹ Now therefore may it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue forever before you. For you, O Lord GOD, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever."

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From this set of verses, what is the process of how we understand His will, receive His will, and then experience His will (His promises to us)? What demonstrates that we are following the process and can be assured we will experience possessing the promises?

Read 1 John 5:14–15:

¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

Read John 15:7–8:

⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

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Read Mark 11:20–25:

The Lesson from the Withered Fig Tree

²⁰ As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. ²¹ And Peter remembered and said to him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered.” ²² And Jesus answered them, “Have faith in God. ²³ Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. ²⁴ Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received^[a] it, and it will be yours. ²⁵ And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.”^[b]

Read Matthew 18:18–20:

¹⁸ Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed^[a] in heaven. ¹⁹ Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”
