

The  
**ONE**  
YEAR®



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*the* **PRAYING**  
**PROMISES**  
*of* **GOD**

CHERI FULLER & JENNIFER KENNEDY DEAN



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**PRAYING THE PROMISES OF GOD**





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*The One Year Praying the Promises of God*

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# INTRODUCTION: PRAYING IN THE LIGHT OF GOD'S PROMISES

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**WELCOME TO** a devotional book written specifically to encourage your spiritual journey by praying God's promises. Those precious promises, of which there are hundreds throughout the Bible, are provided to stir us and inspire us to pray. Yet sometimes we fail to notice, believe, and pray these promises. British pastor F. B. Meyer said, "Though the Bible be crowded with golden promises from board to board, yet they will be inoperative until we turn them into prayer."

As you read this OneYear devotional book, you have the opportunity to turn God's golden promises into prayer each day and experience the blessings of a praying life. As we pray God's promises, the starting point is the nature of God. The essence of God's character is, in itself, a promise: "[God] keeps every promise forever" (Psalm 146:6). Throughout the Scriptures, each time God reveals something of his nature, he is promising us that he will be true to that nature in any circumstance.

God has always dealt with his people by communicating promises to them. By promising first and then performing what he has promised, he awakens in us the faith, desire, and expectation that point us toward him and find their outlets in the prayer of faith.

We might illustrate that process like this. Recently, I (Jennifer) saw an ad in a magazine for noise-canceling headphones. Until I saw that ad, I had no desire for noise-cancelling headphones. But once I knew they were available, I began to notice how loud the world was and to imagine how much better it might be if only I had noise-canceling headphones too. Knowing they were available awakened in me the desire to possess them. And knowing where to find them motivated me to seek them out. God makes promises to us for much the same reason. He is letting us know what he has available if only we will ask.

## MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT PRAYING THE PROMISES

Sometimes people have been disappointed when they prayed God's promises and didn't get the answer they hoped for. If you have experienced that, you're not alone. Let us suggest some things for you to consider and warn you about some misunderstandings to avoid.

First, remember that there is a difference between *believing in a certain outcome and having faith in God*. Sometimes we decide what God should do, then construe a promise so that it matches what we want. We might pray that promise with the subtext being *our definition* of the impact that promise should have on our situation. Over all the years that the Lord has had the two of us in his school of prayer, a lesson we continue to learn at deeper levels is how to let the Word of God speak without imposing our own interpretations and preconceived expectations on it.

Second, avoid thinking of the promises as tools to use to get your way with God. Some people pray as if God occasionally forgets his promises or tries to renege on them and is depending on us to remind him of them. The truth is, God made promises and bound himself to us in a blood-sealed covenant so that we would know exactly what we could expect from him. The purpose of

his promises is to give us confidence and peace. Instead, sometimes we pray as if we are responsible for finding the scriptural promise so we can guarantee the outcome we want, and then taking that promise to God to hold him to his Word.

This kind of prayer treats God's Word as if it's a catalog. We decide what God should do, look through the Bible to find a verse that will match our plans, and order it. As we do in catalog shopping, we then skim over everything that holds no appeal for us. We pick and choose.

Remember, Scripture is not God's *words*; it is God's *Word*. Scripture is a whole and can't be cut apart and pasted together to match our agendas. Rather, the golden promises are for *God to use* to inspire faith and confidence within our hearts and to shape our prayers as we look to his Spirit to guide us.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

We encourage you to use this book as a personal devotional or to read it with prayer partners or your family. It is also an ideal small-group resource. *The One Year Praying the Promises of God* is meant to be a companion book to *The One Year Bible*, so you'll find the readings move chronologically throughout the year. Each day is a devotional thought from either the Old Testament, the New Testament, Psalms, or Proverbs. As you read the pages ahead, we pray you'll be drawn closer to the Father through Christ, that you'll sense him speaking to your heart, and that you'll experience his love more and more.

If you are using this book with others—either in a small group, with your girlfriend, or with your spouse, you might want to underline thoughts that speak to you in specific ways. You can use the questions below as you think about, process, and discuss what you've learned.

What did you underline this week, and why was it significant to you?

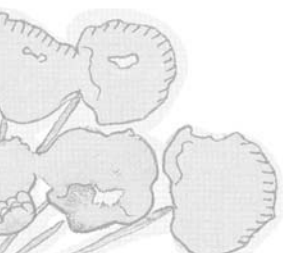
What promise this week gave you a new perspective on something you are dealing with?

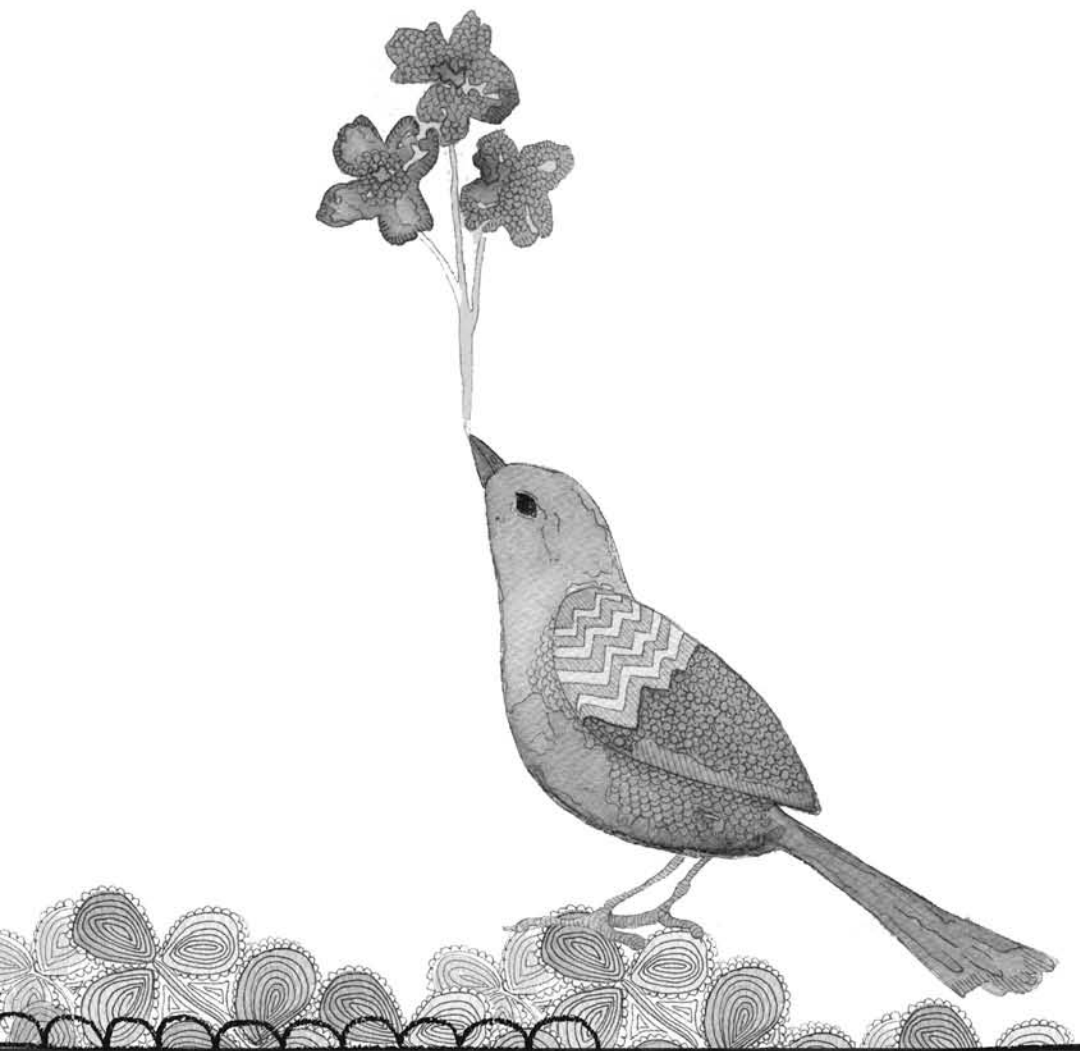
What action steps or active changes will you make because of something you read this week?

More discussion questions for each week can be found at [www.prayingthepromises.org](http://www.prayingthepromises.org).

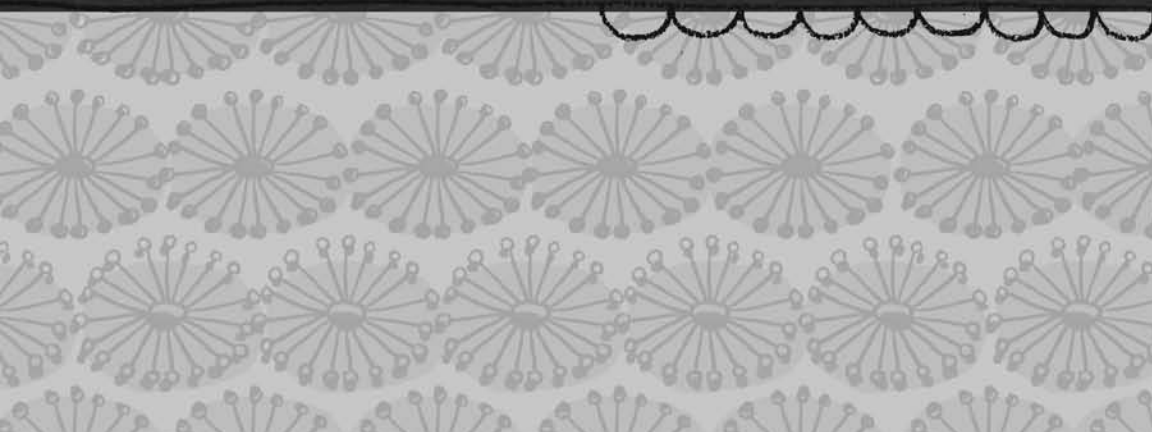
As you read these devotionals, may you be encouraged and strengthened. May your burdens be lifted as you cast your cares upon the Promise Maker. May you see over and over the Lord's faithfulness and be filled to overflowing with joy. Thank you for joining us on this journey through God's Word and his promises!

*Cheri & Jennifer*





**JANUARY**







## FRUITFULNESS

THEY DELIGHT IN THE LAW OF THE LORD,  
 MEDITATING ON IT DAY AND NIGHT.  
 THEY ARE LIKE TREES PLANTED ALONG THE RIVERBANK,  
 BEARING FRUIT EACH SEASON.  
 THEIR LEAVES NEVER WITHER,  
 AND THEY PROSPER IN ALL THEY DO.

*Psalm 1:2-3*

**THE WORD** of God is to your life as a river is to trees. And the trees to which the psalmist points us didn't just spring up naturally. They have been planted. Placed in that location deliberately so that they have direct access to nourishment and refreshment and the flow of life. They put down their roots where water is abundant.

The trees take in the water through their roots, letting it circulate to every cell and molecule. The water that once flowed in the river now flows in the trees. The fruit the trees bear season after season is the visible evidence of what we don't see—strong root systems.

We find another description of trees in Jeremiah 17:8:

SUCH TREES ARE NOT BOTHERED BY THE HEAT  
 OR WORRIED BY LONG MONTHS OF DROUGHT.  
 THEIR LEAVES STAY GREEN,  
 AND THEY NEVER STOP PRODUCING FRUIT.

A tree deeply rooted and continuously nourished will be fruitful even during times when the environment is brutal and deadly.

Today, sink your roots deep into the living and active Word of God. Let its truth circulate to every corner of your life. As it nourishes your soul, you will find yourself resilient even when the heat is on. The difficulties of life will just force your roots deeper and make you drought-proof.

*Lord, let me drink deeply from your Word. Let it inform my life and transform my circumstances so that I will bear hardy fruit.*

*Jennifer*

The trials of the saint are a divine husbandry, by which [God] grows and brings forth abundant fruit.

—CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON (1834–1892), English preacher and writer

JANUARY

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## FAITHFUL AND TRUE

THIS FULFILLED WHAT THE LORD HAD SPOKEN THROUGH THE PROPHET: "I CALLED MY SON OUT OF EGYPT."

*Matthew 2:15*

**GOD ALWAYS** keeps his word—*always*.

We all find ourselves in times when chaos seems to reign and our situations feel out of control. It must have seemed that way to Joseph—newly married under less-than-optimal conditions, away from familiar surroundings, and having to navigate the treacherous waters of intrigue and danger. He must have felt that all the experiences that recently had defined his life were sweeping him up in a tidal wave. Who could have planned ahead for a middle-of-the-night escape to Egypt?

But how events look and feel at the time is almost never the true picture. God knows every tremor long before a tidal wave forms. Things are never out of his control. He is shaping events in a way that will highlight his faithfulness.

Joseph followed God one step at a time and found himself in Egypt, a place he never thought he would call home. But he settled in and waited until the next summons came. Do you imagine that between the times when the guiding voice of the living God was clear and Joseph's faith was strong, Joseph wondered when and how, and even if? Do you suppose you might have looked at those circumstances and wondered, Did I make a mistake? Is God really guiding me?

Step back and see how God is telling the story. He is doing as he promised he would do. He spoke his intentions generations before and did not vary one iota from his plan. No matter how things might appear on the surface, God is always working out his purpose in his way, in his time. His promises will not fail. If your circumstances seem to be running on their own steam with no escape in sight, take another look through the prism of God's promises and know that everything is proceeding under God's careful management.

*Lord, I believe that you are working everything out for your own good purposes.  
I trust in your love for me and in your power to do all you have promised.*

*Dr. Jennifer*

You cooperate with the immediate inevitable because you know that in and through things God's will is being worked out.

—E. STANLEY JONES (1884–1973), American missionary and theologian

## WALKING WITH GOD

ENOCH LIVED 365 YEARS, WALKING IN CLOSE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD. THEN ONE DAY HE DISAPPEARED, BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM.

*Genesis 5:23-24*

**TUCKED INTO** one of those who-begat-whom chapters in Genesis, we stumble across a statement about a man named Enoch. The statement reveals more about God than it does about Enoch. It gives us another little glimpse into the character of God, showing us a promise about how he will act in our lives.

As you read the chapter, watch the rhythm. “So-and-so lived . . . and then he died.” Someone lived, and then he died. Over and over, generation after generation. Someone lived, and then he died. The drumbeat never varies—until Enoch. Enoch throws everything out of sync.

My late husband was very tall. His stride was much longer than mine. When we walked together, he would sometimes forget and be far ahead of me, talking to me as if I were right beside him. He had to be intentional about pacing his steps so that I could walk with him instead of behind him. He had to want to walk with me.

When I read that Enoch walked with God, the first thing that amazes me is that it means God also walked with Enoch. God was willing to calibrate his stride for Enoch’s sake—to take into account Enoch’s frailty.

So intimate was the relationship between Enoch and God that when the time came for Enoch to leave earth and enter eternity, his walk just continued. One last step on earth’s ground, the next step in heaven’s vast expanse. Death for Enoch was the natural extension of his life. He just kept walking with God. He received the promise early that came later to the followers of Christ: “He who believes in me shall never die.”

*Thank you, Father, for the gift of your presence. I am filled with wonder, amazed and awed, that you love me so much you actually desire my presence. Teach me more each day what it means to walk with you.*

*—Jennifer*

Forbid, O Lord God, that my thoughts be wholly occupied with the world’s passing show. . . . Grant rather that each day may do something to strengthen my hold upon the unseen world.

—JOHN BAILLIE (1886–1960), Scottish preacher