

Reneging on a ...

Continued from Page 3

went back on their commitment to the Lord. Those that were freed were again put into bondage.

Their doubled-mindedness, unfortunately, cost those who broke their promise to the Lord quite a lot, as He dealt with their disobedience and promise breaking. Enemies attacked them; pesti-



lences plagued them; famine ravished the people; their reputation was tarnished; many lost their lives (Jer. 34:17-22); and there were other punishments. They paid an extremely exorbitant wage for breaking their word to God.

Let this hard lesson Israel learned from the judging hands of God be a wake-up call to you for

any promises you have made to Him. The Lord takes our words very seriously. Be honest; be true; keep your word as God expects you to!

"If a man vow a vow unto the LORD, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth." Num. 30:2

God's Promises

Bowes, 1871

A clergyman, visiting a poor Christian woman, found her Bible marked here and there with the letters "T" and "P". Wondering what the letters stood for, he inquired of her their meaning.

"Oh!" she said, "those are God's promises in my precious Bible. There are many of them, you see, I have tried; so I marked them "T", and many I've proved, and I know that they are true; so I marked them "P".

God keeps His word and so should we!

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Your Words

Bill Brinkworth

God's words, as preserved in the Bible, are always honest and can be trusted (Prov. 30:15). Our words, however, are not always truthful and not always as reliable as His. Everyone sins with their mouth.

"Word" is used at least 704 times in the King James Bible. Although most of those times it is referring to God's Word, we can see by the many references that our words are important to God. Some of those verses show us what God thinks about what comes out of our mouth.

In Romans 1, at least 30 sins are mentioned. At least fifteen of those sins involve what was said. Some of the iniquities mentioned are those of: unthankfulness, debating, deceitfulness, gossiping, backbiting, pride, boasting, disobedience to parents, and covenant-breaking. Although there



are over 600 commandments in the Old Testament, the popularly known "Ten" include at least three commandments that can involve our tongue. It should be evident to all that our tongue can be used for good, or it can be used to sin.

Continued on Page 2

Reneging on a Promise to God

Bill Brinkworth

"When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee." Deut.23:21

In a position of desperation, sometimes some make a plea to the Lord for His help in a matter. They beg, and even promise God that if He remedies a situation they will do, or stop doing, something in return for His intervention. No matter the dire, compelling circumstances, they still vowed to the Lord they would do something and are responsible to keep their promise.

Continued on Page 3

Your Words

Continued from Page 1

Here is some of what the Bible says about the words that can come out of our mouth:

❖ **Many sins are with the tongue.** Our tongue can be behind some of our sin. *“Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.” James 3:5-6* *“But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.” James 3:8* *Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.” Psalm 52:2* *“Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words:” Psalm 64:3* *Also: Isa. 6:5, Prov. 30:5, Mat. 12:32, Job 15:5, Psa. 15:3, Psa. 73:9, Prov. 6:17, Prov. 15:2, Prov. 17:4, Prov. 18:21, Prov. 21:6, Prov. 26:28.*

❖ **Be careful what the tongue says.** It can, and should, be controlled! *“Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.” Psalm 34:13* *“Be not rash with thy mouth,*

and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.” Ecclesiastes 5:2 *“Teach me, and I will hold my tongue: and cause me to understand wherein I have erred.” Job 6:24* *Also: Job 27:4, Proverbs 10:31, I Peter 3:10*

❖ **We will be accountable for every word we say!** *“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”*

Mat. 12:36 *“The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things:”*

Psalm 12:3 *“For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.”*

Psalm 139:4 *“If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.” James 1:26*

There were times when Jesus, our example, knew to say nothing. Sometimes it would be best if we followed His example and said nothing in certain situations. *“And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.”*

Matthew 27:14

“The tongue is more to be feared than the sword.” — Japanese Proverb

❖ **The tongue can be used for good.**

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”

Colossians 3:17 *“And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.”*

Psalm 35:28 *“The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth.” Proverbs 10:20* *Also: I Timothy 4:12, Proverbs 15:4, Proverbs 14:15.*

❖ **There will be a time when we all speak what God wants us to speak.** Use it for His glory now.

“And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Philippians 2:11

Like the rest of our body, our tongue was part of God's creation. Its creation was not intended for us to use it to sin against our Creator. A saved person should strive to control what is uttered by his tongue. Some of the best advice for those desiring to please God and wanting to control their tongue comes from the old adage, *“If you can't say anything good, don't say anything.”*

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Continued from Page 1

A frantic mother at the bedside of her deathly ill child may beg God that if He heals her

child, she will go to church every Sunday, and bring her children. Distressed on losing his job, a man may promise God that he will quit drinking, if only God would get him work. Anxious from seeing unpaid bills piling up and visions of being homeless, a parent may promise God all kinds of changes, if only He will deliver them from the financial mess they have found themselves in.

Often God does deliver the despairing one from the serious situation. However, the rescued person often goes back on his commitment to the Lord. He reneges on keeping his promise to God.

Such was the situation in Jeremiah's day. God had the prophet Jeremiah relay a commandment to the Hebrews. The commandment was that they were to release all the Jewish maids and manservants from bondage. They were to be set free (Jer. 34:8-10), and the servants were released from their servitude.

However, as do so many in a similar situation, many changed their minds (Jer. 34:11). They

Continued on Page 4

“When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. 5 Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.”

Eccl. 5:4-5