



## Campaign Promises

## Jonah 2:9

TO: NEBRASKA STATE SENATORS

FROM: REV. PERRY M. GAUTHIER

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*Campaign promises have long been a part of the election process. Political leaders and elected officials seek elected office on a party platform, which includes campaign promises. Campaign promises are notable for being broken after the politician wins an election.*

*At the Republican National Convention on August 18, 1988, George Herbert Walker Bush, promised that, if elected to the U.S. Presidency, Congress would push him and push him to raise taxes. However, the 41<sup>st</sup> President also promised, in the now famous sound bite, that he would then instruct Congress, "Read – my – lips. No - new - taxes!"*

*22 years later, some organizations are tracking the campaign promises of the 44<sup>th</sup> President of the United States. PolitiFact says this:*

*"While on the campaign trail, Barack Obama made hundreds of promises. And throughout the President's first year in office, the Pulitzer Prize-winning Web site PolitiFact has tracked each one of those commitments. Just before Obama took office, PolitiFact combed through campaign documents, speeches and debate transcripts to see what promises he had made. They found more than 500 individual promises and put each of them into a database to be monitored closely. They found 91 promises have been fulfilled, 33 compromised on, 87 stalled and 14 broken. The remaining promises are designated as being "in the works." " <sup>1</sup> All leaders deal in hope...and promises.*

*Campaign promises like lower taxes or increased social programs are instrumental in winning the votes of certain hopeful citizens. Napoleon said, "Leaders are dealers in hope." We, the people, always hope for a better life. 'Hope springs eternal' and people are always eager to follow leaders who will give them hope for a better life.*

*Last week in our Senatorial Bible Study in Jonah 2:8, we saw Jonah moralizing that clinging to empty idols and "god-frauds" leaves one empty, damaged and unhealthy. Said another way, all the campaign promises of idols will be unfulfilled, stalled, compromised and broken. Idols never fulfill. Idols give no more hope than soap bubbles.*

*This week we will see Jonah applying the moral of verse 8 to his own life. Verse 8 has a principle. Verse 9 is Jonah's personal application. Jonah's vote has now swung to the Lord and he sees that the Lord runs*

*on a party platform of promise. Finally, the leading Lord has a willing follower. From the underwater world and deep within the gooey guts and burbling belly of his organic submarine, Jonah says:*

**Jonah 2:9** *"But I will sacrifice to You, with the voice of thanksgiving. That which I have vowed I will pay. Salvation is from the LORD." <sup>2</sup>*

*The Lord's perfect party platform is the promise of salvation. Jonah votes for the Lord's promise with his praise and his practice.*

### I. A PLATFORM OF PROMISE--ITS PROPER PRAISING

Few things rival the energy of political rallies in America. People praise the politicians they seek to promote. Why? Because they see in their leadership hope for their future, hope for a better life. Jonah is the same. He is thinking of thanks and is full of the praises of promotion.

**Jonah 2:9a** *"But I will sacrifice to You, with the voice of thanksgiving."*

He is praising the Lord's platform and offering up "a sacrifice of praise."

**Hebrews 13:15** *Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.*

Jonah is now thankful and is now voting for God. He channeled the energy in his heart properly into praise. With the word "but" (in verse 9a) Jonah is contrasting his foolish clinging to his idols of racism and hyper-patriotism with his new knowledge that he needs to cling to the Lord alone. His idols left him empty, devastated and drowning. However, the Lord saved him.

**Jonah 2:6** *"But You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God."*

Jonah's leader was a lifesaver. Jonah's leader was his Lord. Jonah's leader had given him a new lease on life and a second chance. Jonah's proper response to such a great salvation is verse 9's proper praise.

All in the Capitol Community are Welcome to be a Part of Regular Bible Study and Fellowship

SENATORS WEDNESDAY STUDY: 7:30, ROOM 1022

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### II. A PLATFORM OF PROMISE--ITS PROPER PRACTICES

When people really believe in a leader, they will pay a price to follow that leader. Jonah has paid a price of praise (which required him to put down his pride). Now Jonah promises to pay a price of proper preaching. He says:

**Jonah 2:9b** "...That which I have vowed I will pay."

Jonah repented and realized that he had a great leader—the Lord of salvation. Here he admits his need to be a better follower. He admits his need to live up to his commitments and live up to his calling. He had been called as a prophet of God. As such, he had vowed to preach God's word. He had done so faithfully, predicting the political/economic expansion of the realm of his king, Jeroboam II, the 41<sup>st</sup> king in Israel (2 Kings 14:24-25).

Yet in the small book of Jonah, we see a clear snapshot of a bad chapter in the long life of a good man. For a season, he had become unfaithful to his vows in the ministry. Now, finally, in repentant resolve he is determined to pay a price. That price would be the proper practice of his responsibilities as a follower of the Lord. That price would be his proper preaching to the Ninevite people. This call on Jonah's life was far from convenient.

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**POLITICIANS BREAK CAMPAIGN PROMISES. PARENTS BREAK PROMISES TO CHILDREN. SPOUSES BREAK SACRED WEDDING VOWS. BUSINESSES ARE FOUND IN BREACH OF CONTRACT. AND JONAH REALIZED HE HAD BROKEN HIS PROMISE AND VOW TO "PREACH THE WORD IN SEASON AND OUT." (2 TIMOTHY 4:2)**

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Jonah has praises for the platform of his loving leader and Lord. He has also promised to pay the price of preaching again, even to his enemies denying his own idols of race hatred and hyper-patriotism. He will practice what the Lord wants preached and he will preach what the Lord wants practiced. He will go to Nineveh. In our final study next week, we will see Jonah "burped from the belly onto the beach...off and running on his way to preach...You better bet the Ninevites heard the word of the Lord."

### III. A PLATFORM OF PROMISE--A PLATFORM OF PARDON

Politicians make campaign promises because they know that people are looking for the hope of a better life. People want to be saved from the messes and distresses in which they find themselves. The final clause in Jonah 2:8 restates Jonah's confident conclusion that his leader, the Lord, is a

living, loving Savior. Jehovah has just saved Jonah from drowning and wants to save the foreign and wicked Ninevites from their sins. The Lord's platform is a platform of pardon from sin and salvation for sinners.

**Jonah 2:9c** "*Salvation is from the LORD.*"

We live this week in the afterglow of Easter. Christ Jesus died on Good Friday to pay the eternal death penalty due to sinners like us. Christ died to provide a way of salvation, for salvation is of the Lord. The Old Testament Jonah agrees with the New Testament Peter, "salvation is of the Lord."

**Acts 4:12** "*And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.*"

The New Testament Peter got himself into quite a mess on Good Friday as he denied the Lord three times, steeped in selfishness and pride. The Old Testament Jonah nearly died in disobedience to his Lord in these two chapters, also steeped in selfishness and pride.

The Bible commands us to pray for our political leaders & "*honor the king*"—who would be our 44<sup>th</sup> President, Barack Obama. Consider his words below:

"In openly personal terms, President Barack Obama on Tuesday honored the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, saying he draws inspiration from an eternal story of pain, suffering and redemption. *'We are thankful for the sacrifice He gave for the sins of humanity, and we glory in the promise of redemption in the resurrection,'* Obama told Christian leaders from around the country at an Easter prayer breakfast at the White House. *'Such a promise is one of life's great blessings,'* the President continued. *'As I am continually learning, we are, each of us, imperfect. Each of us errs, by accident or design. Each of us falls short of how we ought to live. Selfishness and pride are vices that afflict us all.'*"<sup>3</sup>

We are all imperfect. We all err by accident and design, by selfishness and pride. That is true and it is truly bad news. However, there is good news. The Lord is the supreme hope-giving Leader of all time and He "runs" on a platform of perfect promises and a platform of pardon. May we all apply these truths to our lives as Jonah did, with proper praise and proper practices, all for God's glory. **AMEN.**

<sup>1</sup> Click here to listen to the story (4 minutes long) or read the article at NPR.org. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=122620185>

<sup>2</sup> All Scripture quotations are taken from the New American Standard Version 1995 Update unless otherwise noted.

<sup>3</sup> Headline story: "OBAMA TALKS RELIGION AT PRAYER BREAKFAST--President's comments provide a brief, uncommon view into his beliefs." MSNBC.com, 4/6/2010