

Devotion 43:

## **Our Father Backs Up His Advertising**

Matthew 1—28

The New Testament begins with the book of Matthew and it is a perfect segue from the Old Testament. The last ten books of the Old Testament are sprinkled with hints about the future, especially the coming Messiah, the Savior, the King who will lead the children of Israel forever in an everlasting kingdom. Then the intertestamental period of 400 years intervenes when there is silence. God does not give any recorded word to any prophet. Picture an audience eagerly awaiting a famous performer or speaker. Anticipation builds as the crowd waits. The stage curtains begin to shake and ruffle and the audience murmurs with expectation. And then the featured One arrives on stage. All eyes and ears are riveted on Him. That is the sense I get from Matthew.

Matthew begins with a genealogy, something I used to see as boring and meaningless in Scripture. But after reading the Old Testament, it is a perfect transition revealing the link between the Old and the New. It shows that our Father has been progressively moving history, or rather His story, toward this Day, when His dearly loved Son, enters human history. Immediately, Jesus is called “*the son of David*” and “*the son of Abraham.*” (1:1) It’s as if Matthew is declaring from the outset, “Ladies and Gentlemen: I present to you...the long awaited and promised Messiah!”

Then, at least 20 times in 28 chapters, Matthew says something akin to the following:

*“All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet.”* 1:22

*“And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet.”*  
2:15

*“So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets.”* 2:23b

*Webster’s Dictionary* defines the word *fulfill* like this: “to put into effect; to convert into reality.” And that is exactly what Matthew is telling us. Our Father, now through His Son, is putting into effect and bringing into reality everything He has been saying through His prophets for the past 800 years.

In our day and age, people play fast and loose with advertising. Sometimes there is deliberate deception, and sometimes there is poor follow through. One has to listen carefully and read the fine print. In a broken world, what is advertised is not always what is received. Delivery dates are missed; products are damaged; parts are missing; parts don’t fit; the goods don’t always work according to the directions. Not so with our Father. He backs up everything He says through His prophets with a 100% guarantee. Listen to what Jesus says in Matthew 5:18:

*“I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.”*

The Greek word in the above quote for *letter* is “iota.” That is the name for the smallest letter of the Greek alphabet. It is like our small *i* but with no dot over it. The Greek word used for *stroke* in the above quote means the tiny projection on a letter that distinguishes it from another letter. Jesus is emphasizing that everything the Father has said, down to the smallest detail, will be done.

Near the end of Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus says another curious remark concerning the Word of God:

*“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”*  
24:35

This verse might be clearer now in light of this discussion. Revelation 21:1 tells us, *“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.”* I take this to mean that heaven and earth as we know them now will be changed. But our Father’s Word will never change. It will remain in effect, as reality, for all eternity.

Our Father backs up His advertising. There is no need for a “money-back guarantee.” His Word is guaranteed!