

Hebrews 7.6-7

Blessing of God

The true idea of a blessing is one that has been lost in our age and culture. It is left as a linguistic nicety, a courtesy, an open ended wish for something good. But we fail to understand the depth and power of the blessing and so rob it of both its innate power AND our appreciation of its beauty and declarative force to convey the true power of God to do good to those who love Him. Before we can appreciate the wonder of Abram being blessed by Melchizedek, we need to understand just what a blessing is, and what it conveys. And maybe, we might even learn to recapture the awesome gift of blessing.

I. DIRECT BLESSING BY GOD –

- A. a conveyance of good and/or purpose, authority or promise. God grants His favor to individuals or a people and causes the work of their hands to prosper in His power. It is the sovereign gift of God, and cannot be commanded or bought...

Genesis 1.22-28

- B. God's blessing are for those who keep His commandments, for the righteous

Psalm 24:4 (NKJV)

⁴ He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully.

- C. Ultimately God's blessing rests upon those who trust in Him rather than in man

Jeremiah 17.5-7

- D. God can turn a cursing into a blessing.

Deuteronomy 23:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Nevertheless the Lord your God would not listen to Balaam, but the Lord your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the Lord your God loves you.

Cf: Nehemiah 13.2 we find the same thing noted generations later... God turns the curses of our enemies into BLESSINGS for us!

E. Because the ultimate blessing of God is to be chosen BY God to be His own, and to be blessed by Him!

Ephesians 1.3-12

II. EXPRESSION OF AUTHORITY

A. Blessings between people are given as an expression of authority. The one in authority commends his charge to God as a declaration of trust and desire for God to watch over them. It confesses that God is Himself the source of all authority and that God Himself must be the binding power and force between them. It is a prayer that God take on the responsibility of their protection and providence for all their need.

Genesis 27:28 (NKJV)

*²⁸ Therefore may God give you Of the dew of heaven,
Of the fatness of the earth, And plenty of grain and
wine.*

Genesis 48:15–16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ And he blessed Joseph, and said: “God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has fed me all my life long to this day, ¹⁶ The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, Bless the lads; Let my name be named upon them, And the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.”

B. These illustrate an important aspect of this concept. Blessings are a single directional issue - as the writer of Hebrews points out, the greater blesses the lesser, always. This is why the blessing of fathers was so powerful in the OT.

1. Isaac blessed Jacob
2. Jacob blessed his sons and grandsons
3. They could not bless their fathers in return
4. Fathers bless children and there was a real sense of conveyance; further, because God was involved, there WAS a real conveyance.

C. This finds its strongest expression in a blessing conveyed by those who themselves are blessed

of God and belong to Him, when that blessing is given to those under their authority.

Ephesians 3.8-21

D. The Aaronic blessing

Numbers 6.22-27

III. SOURCE OF ALL BLESSING

A. None But God is to be our source of blessing and oaths

Deuteronomy 6:13 (NKJV)

¹³ *You shall fear the Lord your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name.*

B. This is rooted in an unshakable confidence in both the power and the intention of God to care for those who are blessed...

1. To believe that He hears our blessing
2. To believe that He supports our choosing

3. To believe that He will do all that and more...

C. Jesus blessed His disciples and gave His favor to them

John 14:13–14 (NKJV)

¹³ And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

John 15:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

John 16:24–28 (NKJV)

²⁴ Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. ²⁵ “These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you plainly about the Father. ²⁶ In that day you will ask in My name, and I do

not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you; ²⁷ for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God. ²⁸ I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father.”

IV. GOD'S FAVOR

- A. God confirms the blessing when it is given by one in authority
- B. God returns it upon the giver when it is in alignment with His own will.

Genesis 12:3 (NKJV)

³ I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

- C. God holds the benefactor responsible for the blessing and for the condition of the blessed

John 20:21–23 (NKJV)

²¹ So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” ²² And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

D. God promises that when this is done in His name and according to His will then the blessed WILL be blessed of Him

Numbers 6:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ “So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them.”

➤ Notice the giving of God's name UNTO and UPON another...

E. There is a real transference of power, of favor, of grace, of God's promise to love the one blessed in His name. It is not an empty phrase, to be uttered in passing... it is a blessing given with full mind to honor the God whose name is invoked.

V. BLESSING GOD

A. An indication of our belonging to God

1. Only those who truly know and belong to God can honestly bless Him...

Psalm 145.1-7

B. An offering of praise to God for all He has given, for it all belongs to Him and comes from Him to us...

Psalm 24:1 (NKJV)

¹ The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein.

Psalm 115:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's; But the earth He has given to the children of men.

Deuteronomy 8:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you.

1. John Calvin writes on this concept:

"This whole world belongs to God. Only he who takes with thanksgiving truly receives from God; he who does not, robs God... All benedictions begin with the words: "Blessed (בְּרֵךְ, εὐλογητός) be Thou, Yahweh our God, King of the world." The continuation varies. Before bread it runs: "who hast caused bread to come forth out of the earth," and before wine: "who hast created the fruit of the vine." If a man eats alone, he says the blessing to himself. In common meals the main part is opened with a blessing usually pronounced by the head of the house with a piece of bread in his hand. The others confirm it with an Amen. After this the head of the house breaks the bread and distributes to those who sit at table with him. He himself eats first. There is no question of blessing the food and transforming it into something different. He rather praises the Creator who controls the fruits of the earth. At the conclusion of the meal there is a common thanksgiving or praise for the food. Usually the head of the house asks the chief guest to pronounce this. After saying "Let us pronounce the blessing," this guest takes the cup of blessing (τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας) and with his eyes

on it pronounces a blessing which consists of four benedictions. Thus the whole meal becomes εὐλογία for those who thankfully receive it as a gift from God."

2. Notice the parallels between the common meal in Israel and the Lord's table. There is something significant here that we often miss.

a. Thankfulness to God for the gifts is the center

b. He is provider, He is sustainer

c. We contribute nothing and our blessing is an acknowledgment rather than a statement of our own power. We do not command, we ASK and we give thanks.

d. This carries forward into all of life.

C. Praise Him for specific deeds toward us – I will not read the whole passages nor even the specific blessings uttered but want us to note that these prayers were intended to praise and bless God...

1. Zacharias when he could speak again

Luke 1:64 (NKJV)

⁶⁴ Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God.

2. Simeon when he beheld Christ

Luke 2:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said:

3. David leading Israel at the anointing of Solomon as King

1 Chronicles 29:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ Then David said to all the assembly, "Now bless the Lord your God." So all the assembly blessed the Lord God of their fathers, and bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before the Lord and the king.

4. At the corporate confession of sin in the time of Nehemiah (I commend the whole passage to you for consideration but this morning we will just read a tiny portion.

Nehemiah 9:5–6 (NKJV)

⁵ And the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said: “Stand up and bless the Lord your God Forever and ever! “Blessed be Your glorious name, Which is exalted above all blessing and praise! ⁶ You alone are the Lord; You have made heaven, The heaven of heavens, with all their host, The earth and everything on it, The seas and all that is in them, And You preserve them all. The host of heaven worships You.

5. At the contemplation of trials

Psalm 66.8-12

D. Praise and bless God for His abundant good and awesome nature

Psalm 104:1–2 (NKJV)

¹ Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, You are very great: You are clothed with honor and majesty, ² Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain.

1. Again, I commend this entire Psalm to you for your edification, but let us end with this thought, in all that we do and all that we see, let our eyes be opened to the awesome nature of what it means to be blessed of God and let us return praise unto Him for those manifold blessings. Let our lives display and our tongues confess the simple fact of our gratitude in EVERYTHING we do, so that God in Christ Jesus receives the fullest possible outpouring of His eternally deserved praise from us...