

Online Grace Bible School

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**Online Grace Bible School
Phase 2
The Blessing of Abraham**

1) Blessed To Be a Blessing

- ✓ Gal.3:6-14. After creation, the first act of God towards man was to bless him (Gen.1:28).
- ✓ Blessed = *barak* – to empower to prosper in all areas spiritual, physical, social/relational, material, emotional – wholeness in every part. ‘To bless in the Old Testament means to endue with power for success, prosperity, fruitfulness in childbearing, longevity, etc.’
- ✓ Also the blessing of everything God created contains the seeds of more fruit. ‘Be fruitful and multiply’. Blessing is the power to produce and reproduce. We are blessed to be a blessing.
- ✓ The Greek word for bless, *eulogia*. means ‘to speak well of’.
- ✓ Man was placed in a garden to tend it, i.e. cultivate, serve, work it to bring forth its fruit.
- ✓ The foundation of blessing is a right relationship with God. The curse was a result of a disconnection from God due to sin. It brought death in all areas. Tending was replaced by toiling; the curse of the law means you will toil to get what God gave you.
- ✓ God no longer rested in creation. He promised salvation, i.e. the new creation.

- ✓ In Gen.12:2-3 God’s redemptive program begins. Abraham is blessed to be a blessing.
- ✓ Abraham is declared righteous when he believes 15:4-6. This is through faith in the Seed.
- ✓ Righteousness deals with sin and the curse and places us in permanent favour with God.
- ✓ The seed of Abraham will be a blessing to the world. God repeated this twice more to Abraham and then to Isaac and then to Jacob. Gen.18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14.
- ✓ This includes Abraham’s *physical* seed, the Jews.
- ✓ But also his *spiritual* seed, the Church. Gal.3:8-9,14.

Abraham, the prototype of all believers.

- ✓ Gen.12:1-3. God would bless Abraham because of righteousness through faith in the Seed.
- ✓ You cannot be blessed and cursed at the same time.
- ✓ Gal.3:13&14. Crucifixion was the means of Christ taking the curse of the law.
- ✓ So we have been redeemed from the curse, i.e. from shame and guilt, healing from toxic relationships, toiling has been replaced with tending, we are reconciled to God, etc.
- ✓ We are blessed, i.e. empowered to prosper in all areas spiritual, physical, social/relational, material, emotional – wholeness in every part. These are the blessings of righteousness.
- ✓ When an innocent person sins they become guilty because their sin is imputed to them. But when a righteous person sins they remain righteous because their sin is imputed to Christ (2 Cor.5:19).
- ✓ Example #1. Gen.12:10-20; 13:1-2. Abraham sins; Pharaoh is rebuked and Abraham comes out of Egypt very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold! Because sin is not imputed to the righteous, (Rom.4:7&8; Heb.8:12).

Summary: Because we have been made righteous, we are blessed. We are empowered to prosper spiritually, physically, socially/relationally, materially and emotionally. We are qualified for wholeness in every part. God doesn’t want us to toil but to tend.

But remember this; we are blessed to be a blessing. If you turn in upon yourself then your blessings will become like rotten fruit.

Hebrew *baruch* means blessed. It also means to kneel because it is from the root word *berech* – knee, to bow. So our part is to bow the knee and receive the blessing.

2) Present Blessings

What are the blessings of Abraham? Are they spiritual or material? Are they present or future? Is there is a difference between present blessings and future inheritance.

Spiritual Blessings

- ✓ Righteousness. God did not impute sin to Abraham. We are blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. We are blessed to be a blessing.
- ✓ Intimacy with God. Gen.15:1. God is our reward. Intimacy is a characteristic of the new covenant. There is no veil, like in the old covenant. Meal symbolizes fellowship. Rev.3:20; Jn.15:15. Intimacy is a grace privilege; but it is still a choice.
- ✓ Intercession is not finding something that needs doing, and then praying to God to get it done. It is to take on God's burden and vision and praying it through. Prayer is a divine circuit, by which God takes us into His counsel. God talking to God through man, (Rom.8:26).
- ✓ Abraham was a friend of God. We are sons. Luke 11:2. – vs5-9 = friends; vs11-13 = sons.

Material blessings

- ✓ Gen.14. Abraham was returning with the spoils from victory. King of Sodom went out to meet him. The King's Valley was the Valley of Kidron, just outside of Jerusalem. It separated the Mount of Olives from the city. Jesus went here on the night he was betrayed.
- ✓ Melchizedek met him with bread and wine. These are symbols of the new covenant, but also products of the earth. We have earthly needs. We bring these to our Father. He blessed Abraham in the name of El Elyon – God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth.
- ✓ Melchizedek blessed him Abraham. And he gave tithes to him. The King of Sodom wanted to give him everything, acknowledging that he had gotten the victory. Abraham, by giving tithes to Melchizedek and refusing the gift gave God the glory. Now we see why God led him back through the King's Valley, so that he would meet Melchizedek first. He did not want to say 'The king of Sodom made me rich', i.e. I agreed with him that it was because of me. His vow before the battle is that he would honour the Lord, i.e. give Him the glory. Prov.3:8&9.
- ✓ Abraham and the patriarchs were blessed materially because they were righteous before God, (Gen.24:1&35; 26:12-14; 30:43; 33:11).
- ✓ There are two levels of material blessing. First level: The provision of all our needs. The blessings of righteousness - Matt.6:33; Phil.4:19. 2nd level: We are blessed to be a blessing. *"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work"* (2 Cor.9:8).

Physical Blessings:

- ✓ There is no record of Abraham being ill, since God promised him a 'good old age,' not a 'sickly old age'. Also, his healthy condition enabled him to bear children in his old age.
- ✓ Healing is the children's bread. Whose children? Abraham's. *"So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?"* (Luke 13:16).
- ✓ Several times the New Testament refers to us as sons of Abraham, or him as our father.
- ✓ Give us this day our daily bread.
- ✓ Again, we are blessed to be a blessing. *"Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body"* (1 Cor.6:13).

3) Sowing To The Spirit

Gen.17:1. *“Walk before Me and be blameless”*. This came after a long record of disobedience or partial obedience and reaping of the consequences.

- ✓ Terah. Gen.12:1 *“Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah who bore you; for I called him alone, and blessed him and increased him”* (Isa.51:2). But he took Terah.
- ✓ Egypt. Lies to protect himself. There he picks up an Egyptian female servant (13:16)
- ✓ Lot. There was conflict between his herdsmen and Lot's. They fought over best wells and land.
- ✓ Abraham is finally alone. Then the Hagar incident. Toiling replaced tending.

There are consequences for sowing to the flesh. *“For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life”* (Gal.6:9). This is not the judgment or chastening of God. It is a reaping according to the ground in which we have sown.

- ✓ So, through bad decisions or sowing to the flesh, we can experience corruption in our circumstances, our relationships, our finances, our health, etc. But this is not God's doing. The prodigal reaped what *he* had sown, not what his father had sown.
- ✓ But we cannot be corrupted. (1 Pet 1:23; 1 Cor. 6:17). If we were ever able to corrupt *our* spirit, we would also be able to corrupt the Lord because we have been joined to Him and are one spirit. (1 Pet 1:18-19). You have an inheritance that is incorruptible, (1 Pet.1:3&4).
- ✓ You cannot even sin or be corrupted, (1 John 3:9). When we sin it is in our bodies, not in our spirit. The life of God within us, the new nature called the seed of God remains uncorrupted regardless of our behavior. It is impossible to corrupt the nature of God (Rom.7:20, 22-23).
- ✓ The Seed of God living on the inside of a believer can never be corrupted, and can never come into judgment. But we can receive corruption or destruction in our circumstances because of sowing to the flesh. But never make the mistake of thinking when those things happen that God is punishing you or judging you. Your judgment for sin has already taken place. You have reaped from the field where you have sown!
- ✓ Even while we are reaping corruption from the flesh, God is blessing us! (Psalm 105:12-15).
- ✓ Goodness and mercy follow us all the days of our lives...

Gen.17:1. 13 years after Chapter 16. God doesn't just tell Abraham to trust Him, but also reveals His character – El Shaddai = the omnipotent, all-sufficient, all competent God. God Almighty. Note the *“I wills”* of God. 17:2,6,7,8,16,19,20&21. He will do it!

- ✓ Abraham and Sarai are given new names.
- ✓ From Abram = exalted father; to Abraham = father of many nations. The limits are taken off!
- ✓ From Sarai = from *“My princess which confines her dominion to one family”*, to Sarah = Princess, absolutely without restriction, or *the princess of a multitude* (1 Pet.3:6).
- ✓ Hagar mocked Sarah when she was barren. But once Sarah gave birth her mocking turned to persecution. Ishmael persecuted a much younger Isaac on the day he was weaned (Gen.21:8&9). Similarly religious people will always oppose those of grace.
- ✓ Hagar symbolizes the Mosaic Covenant - lawgiving
- ✓ Sarah symbolizes the Promise Covenant – life giving. She is the mother of us all.
- ✓ Turning to the Law is a form of panic and unbelief
- ✓ Trusting in the Promise produces miracle life
- ✓ 4:29-5:1. Legalists will always persecute those who live by grace
- ✓ Law and grace are incompatible and cannot co-exist

4) The Best Is Yet To Come

God asked Abraham to offer Isaac. We feel a sense of outrage at this. How can we explain it?

1) From Abraham's perspective. James 2:21-23. He professed faith, but that faith was found wanting on several occasions. There is really only one trial we will ever face – the trial of your faith. Faith has to be tested. Abraham's faith was tested, not for God's sake, but for Abraham's and for all who will be made righteous by faith.

2) From God's perspective. This is a picture of the Father offering up Jesus upon the Cross.

- ✓ He was to offer Isaac on one of the mountains of Moriah. It was here that God told David to make a burnt offering, which later became the site of the temple. 2 Sam.24:18-25; 2 Chron.3:1. Most probably Calvary. See 22:14. The LORD provided salvation for us.
- ✓ 22:4&5. Abraham told his two servants to remain behind while he and Isaac went on alone. They went so far, but no further. Like the two thieves with Christ on the Cross. They could not enter into the divine fellowship between Father and Son. God drew a curtain across so that no one else would enter into the depths of what was to take place.
- ✓ "We will come back to you..." A declaration of resurrection, (Heb.11:17-19).
- ✓ 22:6. A type of Jesus carrying His cross.
- ✓ 22:7&8. God will provide Himself a Lamb. Yet it was a *ram* that was provided. The complete fulfillment awaits a lamb. "*Behold the Lamb!*"
- ✓ 22:9&10. Isaac is probably 20-25, completely capable of overpowering an old man. Yet there is no protest from Isaac, (Isa.53:7).
- ✓ 22:13. God calls once to Abraham to go, and twice to not go through with it! A ram caught in a thicket is a picture of Jesus with the crown of thorns.
- ✓ This is the only time that God ever required a human sacrifice (in type). The first mention of 'love'. The source of all love is that of the Father's love for the Son. The first mention of love in the New Testament is in Matt.3:17.
- ✓ See 1 John 4:10. The outrage we felt at Abraham offering his own son can now begin to be seen for what it was meant to demonstrate - the outrageous love of God!

The Best Is Yet To Come

- ✓ 23:1-4. Abraham could rise up from mourning because he remembered he was a pilgrim.
- ✓ Abraham did not possess one square meter of land on which to pitch his tent, let alone bury his dead! He is a pilgrim.
- ✓ Gen.12:7. The land was not promised to Abraham, but to his descendants. He never inherited the land. He dwelt in the land of promise for three generations living in tents.
- ✓ This land was not his rest. He died in faith not having received the promise, teaching that the pilgrim's heart is not fixed on present blessings but future inheritance.
- ✓ Your blessings are not your inheritance, (1 Pet.1:3-4).
- ✓ Abraham waited for a heavenly city, (Heb.11:9&10).
- ✓ 1) A city which has foundations. "*Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb*" (Rev.21:4).
- ✓ 2) Whose builder is God. "*...you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ*" (1 Pet.2:5).
- ✓ 24. He makes provision for Isaac, as we make disciples. He left a legacy 25:5,6,11.
- ✓ Your blessings are not your inheritance. They are what God has entrusted to you as part of your stewardship. Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven.