

The Blessings and Curses (*part 1*)

Purpose: to encourage us not to turn aside from God's word, so that we can experience the blessings that He has promised us!

As a pastor, I have had so many people ask me for a "blessing" in one way or another. I have been asked:

- To bless houses
- To bless children
- To bless marriages
- To bless events
- To begin meetings with a blessing
- To end meetings with a blessing

But is it possible for us to live in such a way that we receive God's blessing continually? Can we really be a "blessed people"?

Once again, we can learn from the children of Israel in their final days in the wilderness. After Moses reviewed all of the laws and precepts that had been given him, he gives them this final charge, which can be divided into two parts:

1. The blessing of obedience
2. The curse of disobedience

First, the good stuff – the blessing of obedience!

Deu 28:1 - "Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth.

Deu 28:2 - And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God:

Deu 28:3 - "Blessed *shall you be* in the city, and blessed *shall you be* in the country.

Deu 28:4 - "Blessed *shall be* the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.

Deu 28:5 - "Blessed *shall be* your basket and your kneading bowl.

Deu 28:6 - "Blessed *shall you be* when you come in, and blessed *shall you be* when you go out.

Deu 28:7 - "The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.

Deu 28:8 - "The LORD will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

Deu 28:9 - "The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways.

Deu 28:10 - Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you.

Deu 28:11 - And the LORD will grant you plenty of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you.

Deu 28:12 - The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.

Deu 28:13 - And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe *them*.

Deu 28:14 - So you shall not turn aside from any of the words which I command you this day, *to the right or the left*, to go after other gods to serve them.

What is a blessing?

It is a benediction, or declaration of prosperity. In this case it is God's declaration (and therefore commitment) to bring favour, prosperity, and help from heaven. This blessing does not mean that challenges will not come, but it does mean that God's help, favour, provision and purposes will always be with you. It is summed up in Romans 8:28:

Rom 8:28 - And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.

Rom 8:29 - For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Rom 8:30 - Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Rom 8:31 - What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can* be against us?

Rom 8:32 - He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Rom 8:33 - Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies.

Rom 8:34 - Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

Rom 8:35 - Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Rom 8:36 - As it is written: "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE KILLED ALL DAY LONG; WE ARE ACCOUNTED AS SHEEP FOR THE SLAUGHTER."

Rom 8:37 - Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

Rom 8:38 - For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,

Rom 8:39 - nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

What is this blessing?

- City/country – no matter what way of life you live, you will be blessed
- Fruit of your body – your children will be blessed
- Your produce – the work that you do for your livelihood
- Your basket – that which you need right now
- Your kneading bowl – that which you need for the future
- When you come in and go out – from start to finish you will have success
- Your enemies – you will have them, but they will be thoroughly defeated
- At the LORD's command – He will bless all that you set your hand to do
- Establishment – He will make it know that you are His, if you walk in His ways
- All will know – people will understand that you belong to God and will be afraid of you
- Plenty of goods – an abundance in every way
- His treasure – the heavens:

Mal 3:10 - Bring all the tithes into the storehouse,
That there may be food in My house,
And try Me now in this,"
Says the LORD of hosts, "

If I will not open for you the windows of heaven
And pour out for you *such* blessing
That *there will not be room enough to receive it.*

Mal 3:11 - "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes,
So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground,
Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,"
Says the LORD of hosts;

Mal 3:12 - And all nations will call you blessed,
For you will be a delightful land,"
Says the LORD of hosts.

- Your position –
- the head, not the tail – you will lead and have dominion over others (like Daniel)
- above and not beneath – in dignity and respect

So, what has been said is very simple:

- If we obey His voice, by the power of His Spirit, we will be blessed in all that we do!
- Our enemies will not be able to stand against us.
- The people of this world will know that we belong to the LORD and will fear us.
- God will open the heavens to us
- We will be the head and not the tail

So don't turn aside from any of God's word, so that we can experience the blessings that He has promised us!