

Blessings We Could Have Had

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I would like to ask you all a question: How often do you think about all that God has gifted you with? Do you think about your blessings very much? God has blessed the Israelitish people with much more than any other people on earth. Despite Israel's lack of morals, in spite of Israel's spiritual adultery, and in spite of Israel's stiff necked sinful ways, God has blessed Israel abundantly.

Why? Why did God continue to bless England, Ireland, France, America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the rest of the Israelitish nations, even though they are spiritually bankrupt? Why does He do this? He does this because God keeps His promises. God does not lie. He always does what He says. God always fulfills His Word.

I want all of us to consider all the blessings God gave ancient Israel, modern day Israel, and us His church. And I will tell you why at the end of this sermon. So, think about these blessings. Turn to Genesis 17.

Genesis 17:5-6 "No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you exceeding fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you."

What a fabulous blessing God promised to Abraham in these verses! God says He will make many nations and kings from his children, specifically, Isaac and Ishmael. Remember, 12 princes came from Ishmael also. But in this sermon, I am specifically talking about the covenant people—Israel.

Turn to Genesis 12. God is talking to Abraham, here, a little earlier than in Genesis 17:5-6. God is making another promise to Abraham. First, God is talking about the ancient nation of Israel, and second, about how all nations and peoples are blessed or cursed through Abraham and his seed.

Genesis 12:2-3 “I will make of you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and curse him that curses you; and in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”

The first blessing I want to talk about is the one that God mentions verse 2 here, where He says He "will make of you a great nation." Israel became a great nation, and an empire under kings David and Solomon which lasted until the 8th century BC, after which it broke into two separate nations, Israel and Judah.

In I Chronicles 18 God records the military might of Israel at that time. King David could build an army of 1.5 million men at that time. That is a large army even by today's standards. And, he controlled all the land from the Nile River delta to the Euphrates. Many nations paid both David and Solomon tribute money.

Turn to Joshua 1 where God is telling Joshua, just before Israel was going to cross the Jordan and enter the Promised Land, that they would become a great nation that would control all the land from the Nile River to the Euphrates. This promise came to fruition under King David.

Joshua 1:4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory.

Now, God has recorded blessing after blessing, and promise after promise for us in the Bible to think about and meditate on. Charles Whitaker talked about this and mentioned it a few weeks ago in his sermon. Meditation is a valuable tool for all of us that we should use more often. God pours out blessing after blessing on His people, and keeps promise after promise despite our sins, and our stiff-necked attitude.

Think about King Solomon's empire (and it was an empire). It stretched from Egypt at the Nile River to the other side of Syria at the Euphrates River. Turn to I Kings 4.

I Kings 4:20-21 Judah and Israel as numerous as the sand in multitude, eating and drinking and rejoicing. So Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. They brought presents and served Solomon all the days of his life.

I Kings 4:24-26 For he had dominion over all the region on this side the River from Tiphseh even to Gaza, namely over all the kings on this side the River; and he had peace on every side all around about him. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, each man under his vine and his fig tree, from Dan as far as Beersheba, all the days of Solomon. Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.

Brethren, think of the blessings that God provided ancient Israel with under kings David and Solomon.

Turn to I Kings 10. These next three verses should give us a good idea of how blessed physically, materially, Israel had become under David and Solomon. God keeps His promises in spite of us.

I Kings 10:22 For the king had merchant ships at sea with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the merchant ships came bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys.

King Solomon's navy was very powerful. It was confederated with King Hiram's Phoenician navy, and with Pharaoh's Egyptian navy. The navy had to sail all over the world to be able to bring back gold and silver, ivory and apes, and monkeys, and who knows what else. They brought all kinds of things. This was a very large and powerful navy.

I Kings 10:23 So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

I Kings 10:27 The king made silver as common in Jerusalem and stones, and cedar trees as abundant as sycamores which are in the lowland.

God blessed ancient Israel abundantly. God keeps His promises despite you and me. God does what He says.

Consider this: We know that after Solomon's death, Israel split into two nations. And as time went on, both nations became more and more sinful and idolatrous until God sent them into captivity. But just because God was not pleased with ancient Israel and brought captivity upon them because of their sins, that did not mean that God would not keep His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Think about what God blessed Israel with. The Israel we know as America, Canada, Great Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, the countries of Western Europe, and Scandinavia—think about what God has blessed modern day Israelites with. Do you realize that most of the automobiles—the cars you and I drive—that are found in the whole world, are produced in America, Great Britain, France, Germany, and Japan? Germany is probably a mix of Israelites and Assyrians. Swedes also produce cars—Volvo and Saab. Have you ever seen a car from Russia most anywhere? What about Brazil or China—huge nations with a lot of people? But the little country of Sweden, an Israelitish country that only has 9.6 million population, produces all the Volvos and Saabs.

Consider this: Remember that there are only three things that produce wealth for any nation. One, you have to build it—like automobiles, trains, airplanes, ships, trucks, appliances, clothing, furniture, buildings, houses, dishes, bicycles, etc. Two, you have to grow it—like wheat, corn, barley, apples, oranges, cattle, sheep, etc. Or three, you have to mine it, like tin, copper, oil, gold, silver, coal, etc.

Look at those blessings that God gave modern day Israel! Canada, another sparsely populated country is a huge wheat producing nation; it is full of mineral wealth, oil, and natural gas.

Another Israelitish nation full of mineral wealth and produces a lot of sheep is New Zealand.

And what is there to say about America and all that we have been blessed with in terms of these things. I will not even go there as we have been so blessed abundantly.

Great Britain at one time was the premier ship building nation in the world. South Africa is full of diamonds and other mineral wealth.

Do you realize that when you and I get on an airplane or commercial airliner, for the most part that plane was designed and built by Israelites? Most commercial airliners in the whole world are either built by Boeing or Airbus in Western Europe. Where are the real industrial nations found today? Western Europe and North America, along with Japan. But Japan had Israelitish help to get to where they are today.

God has even gifted the Israelitish people with great minds—they engineer wonderful cars, planes, trains, appliances, tractors, tools. Do you realize that hand tools that are made right here in America—Snap-on—are sought after all over the world? Everybody wants them. All the things that make life easier, more productive, and more pleasant, Israel has been blessed with.

Turn to Genesis 35.

Genesis 35:11 Also God said to him, “I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come out from your body.”

God is telling Jacob, “What I promised your dad and grandpa, I promise to you.” And God renamed Jacob Israel, and God said, “I will give this promise to your seed also.” We all know that this company of nations became Great Britain and the Commonwealth. We also know that the United States of America became the great nation that God mentions in verse 11. Do you have any idea how vast this blessing from God is? It is almost unbelievable!

I am going to give you some statistics from back when we were at the height of these blessings:

In 1950 the United States and Britain produced more than half of all the oil production in the world at that time, producing 60% of the world's oil. That is not including our vast foreign holdings and investments.

In 1950 America mined one and a half times as much coal as the all other nations combined.

In 1950 Britain and America produced three quarters of all the world's steel. America and Britain possessed 95% of the world's nickel, 80% of the world's aluminum, and 75% of the world's zinc.

At one time South Africa dominated the production of coal mines.

We produced two-thirds of the whole world's rubber, and completely dominated the world's output of copper, lead, tin, and phosphate.

The British Commonwealth produced two-thirds of the world's gold—think of this—two-thirds of the world's gold, while the United States alone had three times as much gold reserves as the total for the rest of the world.

But, how much do you think we have today?

At the height of God's fabulous blessings, the British Isles constructed more ships than any other place on earth.

In 1950 the U.S. and Britain possessed half of the world's railroads.

At one time the U.S. and Britain produced 83% of all the automobiles in the world.

The blessings that God poured out on all of us Israelites are unbelievable! And the bad part in all this is we do not appreciate it! We take it all for granted, and I am not talking about the world itself, or America, I am also talking about us in the church!

Turn to Genesis 27.

Genesis 27:28 “Therefore may God give you of the dew of heaven, of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine.”

God is talking about the production of crops here: Wheat, barley, oats, corn, and all kinds of grain. The United States, Canada, and Australia have been so blessed in the production of grains, that we sell and give most of the rest of the world what they need. Think about how much we sell to Russia alone! Some years, without American and Canadian wheat, the Russians would have starved. They could not feed their own people. God blessed this country and all the Israelites not because of something they did, but because they were inheritors of a blessing—they are the seed of Abraham. And God keeps His promises.

Here is another promise of God found in Genesis 22. This is the blessing of military might, of safety and security in numbers.

Genesis 22:17 “. . . blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.”

At one time the British and the Americans controlled almost every land gate or pass, sea gate, canal, island, or waterway choke point in the whole world—two nations. The British had the greatest navy in the whole world. Today, America’s navy is still ranked number 1.

We all know that at one time, the sun never set on the British Empire. When Britain was at it is zenith, and when Britain was the greatest empire in the whole world with the strongest navy, do you realize that the British population was only 30 million people? This could not have happened with 30 million people without God. This was directly from God. Do you see God in all these blessings? None of this could have happened without God.

Turn to Genesis 28. These verses contain two promises or two blessings which pertain to the future—way into the future—thousands of years into the future.

Genesis 28:13-14 And, behold, the LORD stood above it and said: “I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give it to you and your descendants. Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

There are three blessings or promises contained within these two verses. The first is that God was going to give the land that Jacob was laying on to his seed. That land was the land of Palestine, the land of ancient Israel. The second was that Jacob's seed would be as the dust of the earth, and would spread all over the world. We know that is exactly what happened. The third is both physical and spiritual—all mankind has been blessed through Britain and America, and all the Israelites—monetarily and militarily. If the United States navy was not as strong as it is, the whole world would be a different place today. For the most part, the British and American navies have kept the sea lanes open, and the world safe.

The greatest blessing, found in verse 14, is that Christ the Savior for all mankind would come from Jacob's seed. And without that blessing, there would be no grace for any of us. All mankind would be lost because we have all sinned.

Now do you see God working in all this? Do you see God keeping His promises? Do you see God blessing Israelitish people?

I would like to give you some statistics from World War II that we can see God's blessing even in the time of war. Consider these notes about military personnel only. They are not for civilian's death or casualties. The following give military stats by country.

Russia in WW II lost 8,806,453 military personnel, and in the battle of Stalingrad, they lost 500,000 soldiers.

Japan lost 2,300,000 dead. Germany lost 5,318,000 dead. China lost 3,750,000 dead. The little country of Romania lost 370,000 dead. Hungary lost 300,000. Italy lost 319,200 dead, plus 20,000 more from their African colonies. India lost 87,000 dead.

Now let us look at the Israelitish countries, and how many combat deaths they suffered. It is amazing. Australia lost 39,700 dead. Canada lost 42,000 dead. France lost 210,000 dead. Britain lost 383,700, dead. And America lost 407,300 dead.

Now, compare British losses and American losses to the three small Axis powers. Hungary had 300,000 dead. Romania had 370,000 dead. And Italy had 319,200 dead. That is almost a million men in those three small countries. Britain only lost 383,700. They only lost 13,700 more men than Romania. And America, we lost only 37,300 more than the small country of Romania.

Can you see God in all this? God has blessed the Israelites in everything we do. God keeps all His promises no matter what.

But, how about us in God's church? Not the modern-day Israelites who do not even know who they are. They do not have a clue. I am talking about spiritual Israel—you and me in the church of God. We all made a promise to covenant with God at baptism, very much like ancient Israel made. What was that covenant or that promise they made? Turn to Romans 6. We agreed to live in newness of life. We agreed to be different from the people around us. We agreed to live a new way of life. We agreed that we would not serve sin but live by the laws and commandments of God. The covenant we made with God is that He must come first in all that we do—His laws, His commandments, and His way of life has to be first in our lives.

Romans 6:4-5 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

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This is telling us that we should live a new life lived for God and try to become Christlike. That is what you and I signed up for.

Romans 6:6 . . . knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves sin.

In God's eyes, our old man—our old wicked, corrupt, fleshly, sinful self—was reborn. After baptism we are reborn. Everything is gone and forgotten by God.

God created us, so He knows that our hearts are deceitful above all things, does He not? And He knows we are desperately wicked, and that we cannot live the way that He wants us to. We cannot do it, so He gave us a priceless fabulous gift of the Holy Spirit so could accomplish His purposes He has for us.

Turn to Acts 2.

Acts 2:38-39 Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

All of the promises are to you young people as well! The gift of the Holy Spirit is available to you because all of you are sanctified through your parents. Do you understand what a precious gift the Holy Spirit is?

So, how are the people of the greater churches of God treating this unbelievable gift? Do we take the time to pray and study every day? Are we good employees and good examples at work? Are we different, brethren? Do we try to overcome sin every day? Do we work at loving the brethren? It takes work to love your brethren. Do we talk to and teach our kids about God every day? Do we treat our mates properly? Or is it always our own way? Do we treat the preparation day and Sabbath correctly, or do we trample all over it? Do we lust after things that we should not have? Do we believe every

word that proceeds out of the mouth of God? Do we act entitled and take advantage of one another? Do we love money or possessions and position more than God? Do we tithe properly—first, second, and third?

I know that the church struggles with all of these things, plus many more. I know that each one of us does struggle, not with all of these—of course not—but we all struggle with some of them.

Turn to I Corinthians 6.

I Corinthians 6:9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?

Paul is warning the church at Corinth that unrighteous brethren would not inherit the Kingdom of God. Then Paul says:

I Corinthians 6:9-10 Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites [queers], nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

Now, if some of the brethren in the church at Corinth did not have a problem with sin, and these sins in particular, Paul would not have had to talk about them and warn them.

Then Paul continues on in verse 11 telling them that they committed these types of sins before they were baptized, before they made a covenant with God. But, now after their baptism and covenanting with God, they are now clean, now justified, and now sanctified. Why go back to the vomit? It will only take you out of the Kingdom of God.

I Corinthians 6:11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

You do not think that these sins Paul mentions and warns about to the people of Corinth happen in God's church today? They do! We have all the

problems within God's church today that the Corinthian church and all the other churches of that time had over 2000 years ago.

Think about this: Ancient Israel never kept the agreement or covenant that they had made with God. But God kept His covenant and His promises with them. God gave them a land flowing with milk and honey—a productive land. He gave them cities that they did not build. He defeated all their enemies and multiplied them. He gave them control of all the land from the Nile River to the Euphrates under David and Solomon. Really, the first world ruling empire was Israelite under King David and King Solomon.

Babylon was the first Gentile world ruling empire, but the Israelites were first.

God blessed ancient Israel abundantly. God kept His part of the covenant. But ancient Israel did not keep their part. They ended up in captivity under Assyria and then Babylon.

Do you realize that in the book of Deuteronomy God lists in the 28th chapter, verses 1 through 14, all the blessings He will give the Israelites if they will keep His covenant that they made with Him. But, if they do not, then verses 15 through 68 list the curses they would receive—cause and effect.

So, God has 14 verses of blessings, but there are 54 verses of curses. And this nation today is living under some of those curses.

So, what about modern day Israel? I know they are lost in the weeds. They are just lost. They are ignorant of who they are. They do not realize that they are the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But God knows, and God has kept His covenant with Abraham, and his descendants. Modern day Israel has been blessed by God as no other people on the face of the earth. God has kept His promises. Has modern day Israel kept the covenant with God? No, they have not. Modern day Israel does not even understand who they are. But God still kept His promises that He made with Abraham.

What about God's church—you and me—have we kept the covenant? We all know that that answer is no. The greater churches of God today are very

Laodicean in its actions, thinking, and attitudes. It is as if almost nothing matters anymore. We can do anything we like, as long as we go to church. You are okay. I am okay.

But think about what we could have had in addition to all that God has already blessed us with. Think about all the promises that God has already given us. Think about all the blessings I mentioned that God gave ancient Israel. Then, think about all the promises and blessings that He has provided for modern Israel. Think about all the blessings He has given to His church—our calling, the knowledge we have about God's Word. The healings that were performed by the apostles—the grace; the wonders; being firstfruits; giving of the Holy Spirit; and on it goes for the church.

But here is the sad part for God's people, you and me. God wants to give us even more than we can imagine. That is the sad part for us. He wants to give us all we desire, but we will not let Him. We refuse to keep His laws, and we refuse to keep our part of the covenant. We refuse to be righteous, we refuse to try and become holy. Because of our actions, and our attitudes, we miss out on some very unimaginable fantastic blessings that we could have had. They could have been ours. God wants to bless us with these blessings, but we refuse to let Him.

Turn to Deuteronomy 28.

Deuteronomy 28:2-9 “And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God. Blessed shalt you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country. [How blessed is modern Israel in our fields and our cities?] Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of thy cattle, and the offspring of your flocks. Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

The LORD will cause your enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways. [These blessings have only been partially fulfilled.] 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. The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you [but there is a condition here], if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and walk in His ways.”

Ancient Israel failed in this. Modern day Israel has also failed in this. Even the church has failed in this, for the most part. We could be so much more blessed if we would only do what God says, but we refuse. None of these blessings has God performed to the full—only partially, because we only partially keep our part of the bargain.

Turn to Leviticus 26.

Leviticus 26:4-9 “then I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. Your threshing shall last until the time of vintage, and the vintage shall last till the time of sowing; you shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid; I will rid the land of evil beasts, and the sword will not go through your land. You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you. Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; your enemies shall fall by the sword before you. For I will have look on you favorable and make you fruitful, multiply you, and confirm My covenant with you.”

Let me ask you a question: Do you think that God has respect for His church today, or His people? I do not think so. I think if God did respect His church, we would not be scattered all over the place. He is trying to get our attention. The church is scattered, and still splitting.

Turn to Deuteronomy 7.

Deuteronomy 7:13 “And He will love you and bless you and multiply you; He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the

fruit of your land, your grain and your wine and your oil, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flock, in the land of which He swore to your fathers to give you.”

Do you think the fruit of the womb is now being blessed in the Israelitish countries? It is not. Most Israelitish countries are declining.

Deuteronomy 7:14 "Then you shall be blessed above all peoples; there shall not be a male or female barren among you or among your livestock."

The greatest blessing of all has not been given to us because of our sins, and our lack of respect for His laws and Word. Think about this. What would life be like if we had received just this one blessing?

Deuteronomy 7:15 “And the LORD will take away from you all sickness, and will afflict you with none of the terrible diseases of Egypt which you have known, but will lay them on all those who hate you.”

This verse is why I said at the beginning of this sermon to consider all our blessings. We have been blessed abundantly, but none of us have received this blessing. This is the most fabulous blessing of all. This verse says that all sickness. . . can you imagine what a blessing no sickness would be? America is a sick nation. We are an unhealthy nation. This country is full of heart disease, diabetes, cancer, venereal diseases, and every other disease known to man.

So is the church of God, and rest of modern-day Israel.

How would you like to be as healthy as a horse? Could you imagine living with no sickness? What a fabulous blessing that would be! I would love it. I know you would too!

God is going to keep this promise too. When mankind learns to live by God's laws and commandments in the Millennium, He will bless them with these promises; not us at this present time.

Turn to Exodus 23. This is such a wonderful blessing that I would like to look at it with you.

Exodus 23:25 “So you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you.”

We could have had this blessing if we were not so stiff-necked and entitled. We want God's blessings, but we do not want to do what God says.

He says,

Exodus 15:26 And said, “If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do which is right in His sight [His qualification], give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes [qualifications about sickness, which Israel never received, nor the church], I will put none of these diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you.”

I think we all want to be blessed especially with good health. God wants to bless us with good things. But we as a church, and the people must do better at keeping our part of the agreement, and covenant we made at baptism. The church falls short.

What about you? Do you fall short too? We need to consider the blessings that God has already given us and how great they are, and more so the blessings we could have had. We need to live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Eternal. We must do better!