***The Blessing of Jesus Christ

RV108-01***

We continue with the universal adoration of God. This is segment number 11 in Revelation 5:11-14.

**The Bible**

As most all of you know, the Bible as a written document has for centuries been tested as to its truthfulness in a variety of ways. It has been tested by those who have been sympathetic to it – those who are believers. It has been tested by those who are unbelievers, and who are its enemies. The results from either side have consistently shown the Bible to be totally without error in whatever it discusses: whether it is believers who have tested something the Bible has said, or whether it is unbelievers; or, whether it is conservatives, or whether it is liberals. Consistently, the Bible has been proven to be the truth. Many times, indeed, those who are opponents of the Word of God thought they finally found some mistake in the Bible. They thought that they could finally establish that human reason must decide whether something the Bible says is true or not true. But every time that they felt they had something as a clear evidence that the Bible was wrong, a little more information proved just to be the opposite: that they were wrong; and, the Bible was right.

Scholars who study the ancient world actually have to depend upon the Bible relative to anthropology, chronology, and geography in order to interpret their findings. If it wasn't for the Bible, the vast amount of the findings of scholars relative to the ancient world could not be categorized. They couldn't tie it together. They have to go to the Bible to get the information relative to people who lived; the series of time factors that were involved; and, the geographic locations and arrangements.

**The Book of Mormon**

In contrast to the Bible, the Book of Mormon has been shown repeatedly to be geographic nonsense, let alone to have any historical or anthropological sense. The Book of Mormon lacks total truthfulness, and it has been proven false again and again. So, if a book is not telling something that is true, and centuries go by, you can count on the fact that it will be exposed to be false. This has never been the case with the Bible.

**Jesus Christ**

This absolutely perfect book makes some very important things clear to us. The Bible makes it clear, as the inerrant book of God, that people go on living after the death of the body. In time, the soul and spirit (the Bible tells us) of the deceased person is reunited with the resurrected body, whether that body is the body of a believer, or whether it's the body of an unbeliever. The person then spends eternity in either heaven with God, or in hell with Satan. The Bible (this book which never lies) gives us the factor that makes the difference between heaven and hell – the factor that determines one's eternal destiny, and that is how you as an individual are related to Jesus Christ.

In John 5:40, we read, "And you will not come to Me that you might have life." Jesus Christ says, "You will not come to me so that I can give you eternal life." Millions of people today reject Jesus Christ. This absolutely inerrant, perfect book says, "If you are not related to Jesus Christ, you cannot have eternal life with God in heaven."

In John 6:47, Jesus says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes on Me has everlasting life." To believe what Jesus Christ claims to have done in behalf of payment for our sins is the means to eternal life, because to believe in Him is to become related to Him. God the Holy Spirit places us in Christ so that we have a relationship that takes us into heaven.

In John 3:36, we read, "He that believes on the Son has everlasting life, and he that does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides upon him." So, the Bible (the book that has always been proven correct; always been proven absolutely true; and, always without any error whatsoever) is the book that also tells us that a person goes to heaven on the basis of a relationship to a person, and that is relationship to the person of Jesus Christ. Those who reject Jesus Christ as personal Savior, and who approach God apart from Him, will go to the lake of fire forever. The matter is not whether they are moral people; immoral people; or, religious people. Whatever they are, heaven is based upon an eternal relationship to Jesus Christ secured through believing in His death upon the cross in one's behalf. Salvation from hell, then, is based entirely on one's volitional relationship to the person of the God-man, Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, this book, which is without error in both Old and New Testaments, has made it clear that this person, Jesus Christ, because of what He has done to make it possible for sinners to enter heaven through His death upon the cross, has been declared by Almighty God to be worthy of total exaltation and prayer. He is the only celebrity in the universe, therefore. And when human beings exalt the best of sinful people, it is a sick joke. There is only one person to exalt. There is only one celebrity in all the universe, and that's Jesus Christ. That's why Almighty God says, "I will not share My glory with anyone."

**Jesus Christ is Worthy**

So, one of the things we ought to be very cautious of in a society that likes to make heroes and likes to make celebrities is to realize that they're all a sick joke. The best of them; the finest of them; and, the most noble of them are, by comparison to the one true celebrity in the universe, Jesus Christ, they are a sick joke by comparison. This book which never lies has made it clear that only this God-man, Jesus Christ is worthy of this kind of recognition as unique. For this reason in heaven, the innumerable multitudes of elect angels pronounced Jesus Christ worthy of preeminence above all other rational beings.

So, in Revelation 5:12, we have read a list of words of elements that Jesus Christ has been pronounced worthy of, and we have covered six of the seven. He is worthy of power; that is, omnipotence which can make anything happen that He desires. He is worthy of riches – the command of unlimited material wealth to use as He chooses. He is worthy of wisdom – a mind possessing divine viewpoint values to guide in making perfect decisions at all times. He is worthy of strength – uninterrupted physical health, capacity, and well-being. He is worthy of honor – deserving of the highest esteem of all rational creatures, never to be a disappointment to those who honor Him. He is worthy of glory – possessing the fullness of deity expressed in external brilliance.

**Blessing**

We now come to the seventh and last. The angels proclaim that He is worthy of blessing. The word "blessing" is the Greek word "eulogia." "Eulogia" has three distinct meanings, all of which are involved in the word "blessing." Here again, I hope to clarify in our thinking a very precious word. This a word we use all the time – blessing. We say, "Oh, that person is such a blessing. Oh, what I heard today, that message was a real blessing to me. I went out this afternoon, and I went out to lunch, and it was such a blessing to me." And we use this word "blessing" in a variety of ways. But the Bible, because we can anchor it back to the Greek language, has distinct meanings, and it is a very significant word.

1. **Praise**

The word "blessing" means "praise." Thus, someone or something is praised in the process of pronouncing blessing upon them. We have this illustrated by Zacharias in Luke 1:64. Zacharias, you'll remember, had lost his speech. He was the father of John the Baptist. He didn't believe the angel's message. He lost his ability to speak, and then received that speech back again when he indicated what the baby was to be named as per the angels' direction. Having been restored to fellowship, his speech was restored to him, and his response was to bless God for doing it, meaning that he praised God: "And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue was loosed, and he spoke and praised God. What he was doing there was that he was blessing God. And the word the word "praise" there is the word in the verb form of "eulogia," meaning to bless God.

This was also done in the case of Simeon when he held the baby Jesus in his hand. Here again, we have the verb form. This old man realized that he was holding, finally, what they had looked for centuries: the Messiah King of Israel – the Savior who had been promised. In Luke 2:28, we read about Simeon blessing God, meaning that he praised God: "And then he took Him (that is, the baby Jesus) up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 'Lord, now let your servant depart in peace according to Your word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation." So Simeon rejoiced over the fact that he held the baby Jesus in his hand. Then he went on and said in verse 31: "Which You have prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the gentiles, and the glory of the people of Israel. And Joseph and His mother marveled at all those things which were spoken of him, and Simeon blessed them." He then blessed the parents: "And said unto Mary, His mother, 'Behold, this child is set for the fall and the rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against."

So, Simeon praised God, and he praised or, in effect, complimented the parents. He was saying, "This is a really unique baby." You talk about getting excited over a baby being born: this baby was the most exciting thing that has happened to the human race since the creation of Adam. He was, in effect, praising those parents.

The same idea of blessing is found in the Old Testament – this concept of praising God. It, of course, uses the Hebrew word, but it is the same idea. In Psalm 63:4, for example, we read, "Thus I will bless you while I live. I will lift up my hands in your name;" the idea being: "This is the way I will praise you while I live."

Then Psalm 103:1-2: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me. Bless His holy name." What does that mean? That means praise God. Tell about what He has done. Get up at the Lord's Supper meeting and just turn loose in honoring him by praising Him in what He has done in His relationship to you: "Bless the Lord. O my soul. And forget not all His benefits." What does that mean? "Get up and praise God for his benefits. Tell what God has done for you." It is a right and proper thing to take every occasion for praising God. Do it when we gather at the Lord's Supper meeting, and we have an opportunity, or any time we do it. At the Thanksgiving Day service, when we have opportunity for testimonies, people ought to be popping up and standing, waiting in line – not sitting there like dolts as if they had nothing to say relative to blessing God in terms of praising him. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."

**Thankfulness and Worship**

Praise implies, of course, the quality of thankfulness and of doing homage (worship). This is why this quality of thankfulness is why we say that we are asking a blessing over a meal – as an expression of praise and thanksgiving to God for supplying the food. We gather, and we sit down at a meal, and we say, "Okay, let's bow together. We're going to ask the blessing." What do you mean when you say, "I'm going to ask the blessing?" Specifically, what you're saying is, "I am expressing my praise to God for the fact that I have had this meal. I'm not going to starve. I'm going to enjoy this food. If it wasn't for God, I wouldn't have it; I wouldn't enjoy it; and, I could potentially starve."

That isn't a very sensitive problem to most Americans. Few of us have ever known what it is to go without meals and to go without food. Few of us have ever known what it is to be threatened with hunger on any prolonged basis. So, when we sit down and bless the food, we don't really appreciate entirely that people who in other parts of the world constantly go to bed hungry, and who are constantly suffering from malnutrition. And don't forget that in our country, no matter what the liberal politicians and theologians are telling you, there are no starving people in the United States. There is no widespread malnutrition in the United States.

I read of a program that our government sponsors where it is giving people both food stamps and food itself in a special super welfare program because they don't earn more than $17,500 in a year. If you don't earn more than $17,500, in a year, you are eligible for a certain government food distribution program. So, we are feeding them with the food stamps, and we feed them with the with the other distribution in order to assuage our guilt – this ignorance that is in the political spectrum in this country, that we should be ashamed of the fact, and feel guilty as Americans because we are so prosperous. The reason we are so prosperous is because we have been founded upon biblical principles, and because we are the last strong and certain bastion of human freedom. We are, therefore, the last hope of this world for divine viewpoint information, and that's why God is prospering us; that's why He doesn't let us starve; and, that's while He blesses us with food. That is the same reason that He denies food to areas of the world that are in paganism, and that are in the religious systems of the world, because this is God's way of snipping off those societies so that they do not multiply and prosper and propagate their error.

This is why it is wrong for Americans, who can sit down and praise God for the blessing of food that they constantly have, to be willing to send that food that God has given, because we are a nation oriented to God's thinking, to a communist nation to feed them: because God has denied them that food; because they are not oriented to God's thinking; and, because they are counter to God's thinking. Who are we? What arrogance do we demonstrate to rise up and say, "God is restricting this country from food because of its economic system; because of its morality; because of its outlook; and, because of its attitude toward God," and we come along and say, "God, we have been blessed. We're going to override your decision to starve them out, to give them the suffering of the lack of food and of malnutrition, and we're going to help them." You see the arrogance of pretending that the Bible does not speak to these things, and that we do not have to be obedient to them. And we are seeking to override what God is doing with the food that He gives us for which we should indeed be thankful as we bless him for it.

1. **Prosperity**

The second meaning of the word "blessing" is "prosperity." Thus, blessing someone is to prosper the person. God, of course, blesses us with spiritual prosperity through the Word of God. In Ephesians 1:3 we read, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed (prospered) us with all spiritual blessings (with all spiritual prosperity) in the heavenlies with Christ Jesus." In our heavenly relationship (our positional relationship) to Jesus Christ, we are prospered by Almighty God with spiritual blessings.

The same concept is in Matthew 25:34. This is at the judgment of the gentile nations at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom: "Then shall the King say to them on his right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father (prospered of My Father), inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." There will be people who have become believers in the tribulation who are going to go into the millennial kingdom with the prosperity of God upon them because they are believers, and because they demonstrated that they were believers by the way they treated the Jewish people during the terrible days of the tribulation.

Galatians 3:9 also says, "So then, they who are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." We are prospered along with Abraham, who himself was promised great prosperity – material and spiritual. God blesses believers with spiritual prosperities.

You and I can prosper; that is, we can bless people with our mouths. In James 3:9-10, we see believers prospering other people with their mouths, or denying them prosperity – impoverishing people with their mouths: "Therewith we bless God, even the Father. And therewith we curse men who are made after the similitude of God." Some of you think that it's all right for you to use your mouth to thank God; to praise God; and, to talk about God, and then also to use curse words with that same mouth. Out of the same mouth proceeds blessing and cursing: My brethren, these things ought not so to be." So, the mouth of a Christian can bring spiritual prosperity by what you say, or it can bring spiritual impoverishment to the person by what you say. This is inherent in the word "blessing."

Christians whose words edify the believer, therefore, are said to be a blessing. We talk about certain believers being a blessing when they speak to us.

**Material Prosperity**

God also blesses believers, of course, obviously, with material prosperity, and that is involved in the word "blessing" as well. Hebrews 6:7: "For the earth, which drinks in the rain that comes often upon it, and brings forth herbs fit for them by whom it is tilled receive blessing from God." The earth is prospered. That's why we are blessed with food. The earth is prospered by God in terms of how He controls the natural forces that enable us to grow the food.

Hebrews 6:14 says, "Surely, blessing I will bless you; and multiplying, I will multiply you." This again is to Abraham – that God would prosper him materially. So, God blesses us when we are prospered materially. And it is right to say, "I've gotten an increase in salary. God has blessed me," because the word means "prospered:" "I have made an investment and found a great return. God has blessed me," meaning that He has prospered you in your investment. That is part of God's blessing upon us – these material things.

Furthermore, the Bible indicates that the financial gifts of all of you Christians are blessings to God and to believers. You bless God when you put money in that offering box. And the more you put, the more you bless. How is that? Well, it's because you prosper God's work. And the more you prosper God's work, the more your reward is in heaven. The Word of God says, "He who sows sparingly is going to be rewarded sparingly." He's going to have a short crop: "But he who sows bountifully; makes big fields; and, sows well, is going to reap bountifully." He's going to have enormous rewards.

In 2 Corinthians 9:5 we read, "Therefore, I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren that they would go before unto you and make up beforehand your bounty." There is the word. It's the same word "eulogia," the word for blessing: "Beforehand to make up your blessing, of which you have noticed before that the same might be ready as a matter of blessing and not as of covetousness." Paul sent an advanced party because these people had said, "We're going to help the poor saints of Jerusalem. We're going to make a contribution. Paul says, "That's good. I'm sending this party ahead to remind you that I am coming. I'm going to collect your gifts; I want the gifts to be there; I want them to be ready; and, I want it to be a blessing (a prosperity) that you have prepared. I don't want it to be a matter of covetousness – your having to give because you resent it; because you're acting out of greediness; and, you don't want to give this money. I want to give you a chance to prosper these people; that is, to bless them with your material possessions."

So, when we give money to God or to other people who deserve it, we are blessing them and we are prospering them. The financial offerings of believers is an act of blessing God. It prospers His work.

1. **Dedication**

Then there is another connotation to this word blessing that is applied to the Lord Jesus Christ, and that is that it means dedication. So, blessing a thing is dedicating it to some purpose. For example, in Matthew 14:19, we read about Jesus blessing some fish. Jesus is about to feed 5,000 people. And, we read, "And He (Jesus) commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke, and gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the multitude." He blessed and broke, and gave the loaves to His disciples. Here he blessed the bread and the fish. What was He doing? When he blessed this food, He was dedicating it (in this sense – in this instance) to a specific purpose; namely, the nourishment of the bodies of all the people sitting there who were going to eat it. So, when you bless your food, you are not only praising God, but you do indeed dedicate it to a certain purpose – the well-being of your body.

The Lord Jesus did the same thing with the meal on the road to Emmaus. In Luke 24:30, He sat down with those two men: "And it came to pass as He sat eating with them, He took bread and blessed it (dedicated it), and broke it, and gave it to them." As he blessed this part of the meal, He was dedicating it to the intent of this food for the prospering of their body. So, you and I bless a meal in the same sense. We say, "Father, we thank you for this food, and we bless You poor (meaning, we praise You for it), and we ask You to bless this food (to dedicate this food) to the nourishment of our bodies" – something like that. That is a legitimate and proper concept that we are asking the blessing, and that's what we mean. We are asking the blessing. We are praising God for it, recognizing Him as the source, and then we are asking him to use the food for the nourishment of our bodies. Why is that legitimate? Because your body is God's temple, and God's temple should be kept in good repair as much as it lies within your capacity to do that.

1 Corinthians 3:16: "Don't you know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" That's our relationship to God. We are His temple. God lives within our bodies. And His purpose in doing that is to use our bodies for the Lord's work and for the Lord's glory. Therefore, we shouldn't do things with our bodies that are debilitating to our bodies. We shouldn't take things into our bodies which are debilitating to the bodies. We shouldn't eat things that are debilitating to the temple of God. You keep the structure in good repair.

In 1 Timothy 4:3-5, we have this statement by the apostle Paul relative to some disoriented individuals forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God has created to be received with thanksgiving by them who believe and know the truth: "For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving. For it is sanctified (it is set apart) by the Word of God and prayer." You bless this food and set it apart. You dedicate it to the specific purpose of structuring and of maintaining the temple of God the Holy Spirit – your body.

So, these are the three basic concepts in the word "blessing." First, the word "eulogia" means "praise;" secondly, it means "prosperity;" and third, it means "dedication."

**Blessing in the Bible**

In the Bible, this word is illuminated by a variety of ways in which it is used.

1. **The Blessed One**

For example, God is declared to be the Blessed One, and for that reason, He deserves praise for who and what He is. In Mark 14:61, we have the adjective of this related word used: "But He held His peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest said unto Him, 'Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Here is the interrogation of Jesus before the high priests, and the Sanhedrin says, "Are you the Son of the Blessed?" What does he mean? "Are you the son of the Blessed God? Are you the Son of a God who deserves praise? Are you the Son of the God who deserves our prosperity? Are you the Son of the God who deserves our dedication to Him?" All of those ideas are involved in God being the Blessed One.

1. **Obedience**

Secondly, the blessing of God is very much dependent on one's obedience to the principles of doctrine (of Scripture). This is such an important factor. It's amazing how often we ignore it. This was made very clear to Israel of old. In Deuteronomy 7:12-16, for example, we read, "Wherefore it shall come to pass, if you hearken to these ordinances, and keep and do them, that the Lord you God shall keep unto you the Covenant and the mercy which he swore unto your fathers. 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 you wine, and your oil, the increase of you cattle, and the flocks of the sheep, and the land that He swore unto the Fathers to give to you. You shall be blessed above all people. There shall not be male or female baron among you, or among your cattle. The Lord will take away from you all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which you know upon you, but He will lay upon all those who hate you. And you shall consume all the people whom the Lord your God shall give to you," and so on. This passage indicates that blessing is dependent upon our obedience to the Word of God.

You may also consult Deuteronomy 28:1-15. That is a very detailed list about how God says, "I'll bless you if you keep My commandments (if you keep the structure of doctrine). It is amazing the enormous personal and national loss that we experience when we fail to make the connection between the obedience to doctrine and the blessing that comes from that obedience; and, the failure to have the blessing when we don't make the connection.

**Socialism**

Sometime ago, I attended an evening's course at Northlake College. It was a language course in the Czechoslovak language. The man who was brought in is the instructor, we discovered, had (18 months previous to the time of that class) defected from Czechoslovakia. He had been sent with his wife to some kind of a conference. I think he was a chemist. Because his wife was with him, and they had only the parents and other relatives back home, they crossed over into Austria, and eventually sought political asylum in the United States. He didn't know a word of English. In 18 months, they went to a Berlitz language school, and the two of them learned an amazing amount of English. They were the envy, indeed, of anybody who was interested in language study.

It was inevitable that in that class, sooner or later, we drifted off to talking to him about life under communism, and what he observed. Of course, immediately, he related the freedoms that he found here in the United States, and that he had to get used to certain things. In his country, you can't go leaving town (for, say, three days) without reporting to the local police that you're going to be gone. But he said, "Here, you can go anywhere you want." He said, "Furthermore, in my old country, because you can't travel of any distance, and you can't just go where you want to go, you grow up being used to living in a small geographic area: someplace you can walk to; or, someplace you can go with your bicycle. But here," he said, "I had to get used to these vast distances that we could travel. And the things that we were interested in, and things that we were involved in, were not restricted to some small area." He said, "Now that mobility – that's freedom." He would tell us all of the contrasts of the freedom that he saw here, and how much better it was. He said that the expression of life was so much better than what he had known all of his life under communism in Czechoslovakia.

I asked him, in the course of that discussion, whether the people under the communist system in Czechoslovakia ever made the connection between the fact that the reason they lack personal freedom was because of the economic system of socialism under which they lived, because that was the thing that was denying them their freedom. That is because for socialism to work, you have to have authorities who tell you what to do, and who restrict your freedom, and certainly who restrict that even in terms of your mobility. He said, "That's right. That's the reason they like freedom, but they don't make the connection." This was true even for a country like Czechoslovakia which, before the 1960s, had an enormous background of personal freedom and of democratic institutions. And some of the people who remembered that kind of life did not make the connection that when they went for socialism, they gave up their freedom. I wonder if the people of Poland today realize that when they went for socialism, they gave up their freedom, and they'll never get it again, unless they can rise up and destroy their masters.

The point of all this is that the Bible very clearly condemns socialism. The Bible very clearly condemns that kind of an economic system. It is against the Word of God. Yet, we in this country are bound and determined to do the same thing. We have for decades now been dominated by a political system – a party who functions on socialism, and a political system which gradually passes laws which are precisely the laws that are passed under a communist system. But they do it all at once. We do it step-by-step – into this same kind of socialistic system with all the loss of freedom. The Bible says that blessing is dependent upon our obedience to the principles of Bible doctrine. When we deny those, our blessings are lost.

1. **Bless the Children**

The third place that this word is used is in reference to the Lord Jesus Christ Blessing the children. In Mark 10:13-16, we have that incident described for us: "And they brought young children to Him that He should touch them, and His disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased, and said unto them, 'Permit the little children to come unto Me, and do not forbid them, for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter into it. And He took them up in His arms and He put His hands upon them, and He blessed them." Jesus Christ blessed the little children; that is, He was bringing down divine prosperity and care upon them. He was dedicating them to God's perfect plan for their lives. He was praising them for their openness to the truth of the Word of God, and their readiness to believe. He was doing all three of these things that are involved in the word "blessing" when He blessed them.

1. **Blessing the Disciples**

In the fourth place, we have the example of Jesus Christ blessing His disciples at His ascension into heaven. Luke 24:50-51: "And He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them and carried up into heaven." Here, the Lord Jesus Christ, who possesses total capacity for blessing, shows His attitude toward His believers during the church age. Do you know what God wants to do for you during the church age? He wants to bless you. This is the significance of this fact that at the point that Jesus Christ is returning to heaven, the last thing He does is to bless these people. While Jesus Christ is in heaven, His grace toward us is expressed in maximum blessing, which is only limited by our capacity to receive it. It is His purpose to bless us. That is the objective, and that purpose of blessing is only restricted by our own actions.

1. **All Gentile Nations are Blessed by God because of Abraham**

A fifth example is that all the gentile nations of the world are said to be blessed by God because of Abraham. Acts 3:25: "You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, 'And in your seed shall all the conditions of the earth be blessed.'"

Galatians 3:8 expresses this same idea: "And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the gentiles through faith preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, 'In you all nations shall be blessed." And, of course, we have been blessed. We have been prospered through Abraham as gentiles because of the eternal life which was made possible to all mankind through Abraham.

Galatians 3:14 says, "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the spirit through faith." Our blessings of eternal life are directly through Jesus Christ simply because Jesus Christ descended from Abraham. The Jewish people are under severe discipline for rejecting the Messiah Jesus Christ, so they do not enjoy the blessing of eternal life in heaven. Make no mistake about that. That is the status of the Jewish people. They do not enjoy the blessing of God.

Acts 3:26 says, "Unto you, Jews first, God, having raised up His Son, Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Jesus Christ came, first of all, to the Jewish people, to bless them. Of course, He came to bless them by prospering them spiritually, by turning them away from their sins, which are so self-destructive. All of you who have not caught on yet – that obeying the doctrines of Scripture is the basis of blessing. You can go ahead and beat your stupid head against a brick wall. You can undercut the doctrines of the Word of God. You can go ahead and do it your way, and you will suffer the consequences. And while you're enjoying your misery now, just remember that it's going to continue forever. If you're a Christian, your loss in heaven will be enormous. Blessing is dependent upon receiving the principles of Scripture. The Jewish people refused to receive the person of Jesus Christ. God's blessing is not upon them.

Romans 9:30 adds this: "What shall we say then? That the gentiles who did not follow after righteousness have attained to righteousness? Even the righteousness which is of faith? But Israel, who followed after the Law of righteousness, has not attained to the Law of righteousness." Why? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, for they stumbled at that stumbling stone; that is, the stumbling stone is Jesus Christ: "As it is written, behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone, and a rock of offense, and whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed." The Jews are going to be enormously humiliated in eternity when they discover that God came to them, first of all, with the spiritual prosperity of Jesus Christ; and Christ, instead of being a stone upon which they could step up to God, found themselves stumbling across it, and Jesus Christ became a stumbling block to them. So, they were not prospered. But all the gentiles – all the rest of us who have gone in and said, "I'll believe it, and I'll take it;" we have been prospered.

1. **Bless your Enemies**

The next use of blessing is Scripture is that because of the grace of God in salvation, Christians are called upon to bless their enemies, and to do so without reservation. In Luke 6:28, this grace is placed upon us: "Bless them that curse you. Pray for them who despitefully use you." Here we have the verb form of our word for blessing: Bless those who curse you." That is not very easy to do. We are to pray for those who treat you like a dog, and who treat you in a contemptible way.

Romans 12:14 also says, "Bless them who persecute you. Bless, and do not curse." We are to praise our enemies for the commendable things that we see in them. We are to prosper them, first of all, spiritually. We are to dedicate them with our blessing to God's best for them. We are to remember, as we deal with those who abuse us, the eternal loss to them, both as believers and unbelievers. Those who despise the family of God in Christ Jesus will experience tremendous loss. Christians bless their persecutors because Christians themselves are destined to be so tremendously blessed by God.

In 1 Peter 3:9, we read, "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but on the contrary, blessing; knowing that you are called to this, and that you should inherit a blessing." After all, why should you lower yourself to a contemptible action when you are a member of the royal family of God – a prince or princess who is going to enjoy tremendous blessing? Pity those people. Don't try to grind them into the dirt.

1 Corinthians 4:12 says, "And labor, working with your own hands, being reviled, we bless being persecuted. We endured it."

1. **Bless the Cup at the Lord's Supper**

Believers bless the cup representing the blood of Jesus Christ at the Lord's Supper. We bless this cup, in all the significant meaning of that word. In 1 Corinthians 10:16, therefore, we read, "The cup of blessing, which we bless, isn't it the communion of the blood of Christ? Isn't the bread which we break the communion of the body of Christ?" We praise God for this fruit (this juice of the grape) which represents the body of Christ. We seek spiritual prosperity for ourselves as we associate ourselves with the reality of what that communion service represents. We bless by dedicating that service, as the Lord told us to, to the memory of what He has done, and to the memory of His return.

1. **Our Blessing is from Jesus Christ**

Paul's blessing to the believers that he ministered to was not from his own abilities, but from Jesus Christ. He blessed people, as you and I can bless people. But remember that that blessing, if it means and if it's worth anything, has to come from the Lord Jesus. Romans 15:29: "And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ." So, Paul says, "I'm going to prosper you in a variety of ways. But when I do, it's going to be from what Christ has done for me."

1. **Avoid Pseudo Blessing**

Then there's an interesting use of this word "eulogia" in Romans 16:18. We're reminded that there can be pseudo blessing in the form of flattering speech. Don't be a sucker for that. This is the person who comes along and gives you a con job, and you say, "Oh, how blessed I have been," because they have given you flattering speech: "For they that are such (in verse 17, he has talked about people who are contrary to doctrine) serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own body. And by good words and fair speeches." That is the word "eulogia" – the same word "blessing" that we've been looking at here. Here it is translated in this context as "fair speeches" that "deceive the hearts of the innocent." The immature believer suffers from emotional domination of the soul. That makes him a sitting duck for the con artist who knows how to use speech and appeal to the emotions, and how to use people for personal gain and ambitions – pathetic people who think that they have received a blessing because somebody flatters them.

This is a flattery which is designed to satisfy the approbation lusts of our old sin nature. And all of us, within our sin nature, have an approbation lust. We have a cluster of many lusts, and that's one of them. We love to be praised. We love to have people bless us in terms of praising us, or even in prospering us for their own ulterior motives. These con artists are not using words to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ, but to deceive the minds of naive people for personal gain.

1. **Potential Blessing may be Lost**

A believer's potential for blessing from God is very great, but this potential blessing may be squandered, and may be lost. This is a very important point in the doctrine of blessing. Hebrews 12:16-17 put it this way: "Lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who, for one morsel of food, sold his birthright. For you know how afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place of repentance though he sought it with tears. The Bible uses Esau as an example of someone who has God's blessing in his hand, and then he blows it because of his resistance; his negligence; or, his indifference to what the Word of God has said to him. So, in the case of Esau, when he realized the enormity of the mistake he had made in selling his birthright (the right to be in the line of the Messiah who was to come in the Messianic Kingdom), that with tears, he begged God to give it back to him. He had sold it to his brother Jacob, and he never got it again. That is a lesson that we ought not to forget relative to the doctrine of blessings from God.

1 Corinthians 3:13-15 add this to that same concept: "Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall test every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he has built upon it (that is, upon the foundation of Jesus Christ), he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burnt (because it's human good), he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet as by fire." Potential blessing will be lost by this believer on earth. Potential rewards will be lost for all eternity.

1. **Christians are to Pronounce Blessing upon Others**

The Ministry of a Christian priest includes the pronouncement of divine blessings upon another person. That is one of the things that is ours as Christian priests of privilege. It is a privilege that we have to pronounce blessings on one another, in terms of all that the word "blessing" means in prosperity and in all the other factors that we've already looked at. Hebrews 7:1: "For this Melchizedek, King of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him." We today are priests in the family of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is a priest after the order of this Melchizedek, and this Melchizedek represents the universal priesthood of all Christians in the age of grace. So, this priest of God blessed Abraham.

Then in verse 6 we read, "But he, whose descent is not counted from them, received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises." Even though Abraham was already chosen and in the blessing of God, it was at the hand of this priest to channel divine blessings to Abraham. So, Christians who are priests of God are entitled to call down God's blessings upon other. That is a very worthy thing to do – to call down the blessings of God upon other believers.

So, to sum it up, the Lord Jesus Christ is pronounced in heaven to be worthy of blessing. The God-man is fully deserving of divine blessing, and all that that word connotes. He therefore deserves to be praised. That's what blessing means. He deserves to be prospered. That's what blessing means. And He deserves to receive our complete dedication, for that also is what blessing means. The church-age believer, as a joint with Jesus Christ, shares His blessings now and forever.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1982

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