

4 August 2013

Bless The Lord our God for All His works (Pt2 Bless the Lord).

This is our second study on the topic of 'Blessing God'. In our previous study we covered four points:- (1) bless the Lord for He has loaded us with benefits, and (2) bless the Lord for His kindness, and (3) bless the Lord for He is very great and is clothed with honour and majesty, and (4) bless the holy name of the Lord.

In this study we will cover another four points:- (1) bless the Lord for He is our strength, and (2) bless the Lord because He responds to our prayers, and (3) bless the Lord for all His works, and (4) bless the Lord for fulfilling His promises.

Let us add a little more detail to our points:-

1. Bless the Lord for He is our strength

Ps.144:1 [*A Psalm of David. Blessed [be] the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war; [and] my fingers to fight:* See also Ps.68: 35 & 130: 20.

In our previous study all four points were from the book of Psalms, and in this study our first three points will also be from Psalms.

Out of the 307 uses of the word *strength* in the Holy Scriptures there are 74 occurrences in 70 verses in the book of Psalms (not sure how many in the NIV or any of the 200 plus *corrupt* copies). In five occurrences David uses the phrase "O Lord my strength" and in three verses he blesses the Lord for being his strength.

If you remember the meaning of the word *bless* from our previous study, we can say that David got on his knees and thanked God for the strength God gave him. Clearly David acknowledged that it was the Lord God in heaven who strengthened him in his physical battles. When David was first called (see 1Sam.16: 12), the Scriptures record that he was a youth (see 1Sam.17: 42), hence, he was likely to be physically weak and therefore relied on the Lord for His strength to slay Goliath (see 1Sam.17: 4). And it was before David slew Goliath that the Scriptures record he slew both a lion and a bear (see 1Sam.17: 36). Hence, David's physical strength was really a 'weakness' but was profoundly strengthened by the Lord in battle (see 2Cor.2: 10 & Heb.11: 34).

I see a similarity with my weakness of writing, where I got 32% in the equivalent of my NCIS Year 11 exam (in 1977 it was known as School Certificate), and now the Lord is using my natural inability/weakness in grammar (which was noted in a Level 7 paper at BCNZ), for His work. Why? So *He* gets the glory, *He* gets the praise. I recognise the Lord's hand upon the work, because I have nothing to bring to the Lord but my willingness to hold the pen. In my *weakness*, He is *glorified*. And it is only when we are weak and the Lord is strong that we glory in the Lord (see 2Cor.10: 17). It would be no different to the Lord choosing a builder to write articles about those who are Drs of theology and Bishops of the church. The 'builder' or the 'verbless electrician' has nothing to glory in, and neither did David when he slew the lion, the bear or the giant, and therefore we *bless* the Lord. Humanly speaking that which is impossible, is possible with God, if they are of Him (see Lk.18: 27).

In what way does the Lord show you His strength? Does He help you smite a lion and a bear, or does He strengthen you when you have been working for 23 hours in your day-to-day activities? If He does help you, strengthen you in what you do, then I am sure you get a sense that you are doing *the Lord's* work, because *He* is helping you. So let us take time to remember to *bless* the Lord for His strength.

Take for example Ibrahim who is called of the Lord to evangelise the people of Turkey, where the population is 79, 749, 460 in 2012, with 99.8% being Muslim. Ibrahim and others that work with him need our prayers for God's strength, as each day they would rely on the Lord's hand to help them in their work. Anything they do would only be done by *God's* grace and strength. Let us pray that Ibrahim and others would know the strength of the Lord, and let us bless the Lord for His abundant strength that He gives his people, especially in countries like Turkey where Christians are being persecuted for their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Bless the Lord because He responds to our prayers

Ps.28:6 *Blessed [be] the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.*

In this point David blesses the Lord for responding to his prayers. When we go back to the meaning of the word *bless* from our previous study, we can say that David got on his knees and thanked God for responding to his prayers.

Whether you are given a specific gift to teach, preach, evangelise, or whether you support the work with your administrations, you will in each part of the work need to pray, as a matter of course. And providing you are not living in wickedness, then the Lord *bears* your prayers (see 1Pet.3: 12). And whether we discern the Lord's response or whether we do not, He does respond by strengthening us, comforting us and receiving our words of adoration. In which case we all have reason to *bless* Him for He responds to our prayers.

Have you ever had other family members or non-believers say to you, “can you pray for me because I know the Lord hears your prayers?” That's a classic request for those who are either backslidden, and don't want to stop their sin, or those who are lost and don't know how to pray. So then they ask you to pray for them about something, and the Lord in His infinite love and mercy, responds, and either you let them know, or they see it for themselves. Often the person asking knows in their heart that God responds, but they are under the assumption that He responds to *your* prayers and not theirs. But the truth is, if they were to get right with God, come before Him in prayer and repent for their sin, He would hear *their* prayers too, because that is what His word says (see Ps.34: 15 & 1Pet.3: 12).

Imagine for a moment that you have been called up for service in the army and you do all the necessary training, and get posted to Iran (in 2010 was 98% Muslim), but then your commander and chief doesn't answer your emails. You would feel cut off from the purpose of your mission, cut off from the strategic plan of the battle, cut off from any and all channels of encouragement and instruction. Well, it would be no different being a believer and heading off to the battle-field with no evidence that the Lord Jesus Christ, your commander and chief responds to your prayers.

Going back to the Psalms, we see that David not only *asked* God to hear his prayers, but also acknowledged that He *did* hear them (see Ps.66: 19). And therefore, with all sincerity, David *blessed* the Lord for responding to his prayers.

Let us encourage each other to *bless* God for responding to our prayers whether we know, or have any evidence that He does, but simply because His word says that *His ears are open unto* the righteous (see Ps.34: 15).

3. Bless the Lord for all his works

Ps.103:22 *Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the Lord, O my soul.*

In this point we continue with an example from David in the Psalms and find that he blessed the Lord, he gets on his knees and praises God, for His works. We see the link between blessing and praising in Ps.34: 1, where David says we are to *bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth*. And adopting this meaning from the Scriptures aligns with other Psalms where David praised the Lord for His works (see Ps.9: 1, 107: 8, 15, 21 & 31). In the New Testament we also see the disciples of Jesus praised God for the mighty works they saw (see Lk.19: 37).

Ps.145:10 says that all His works shall praise the Lord. Hence, even if we do not praise Him or bless Him for His creation, then the very works themselves will praise the Lord. And don't we see that in His creation? The mountains, and valleys, the rivers in their beauty speak of the Lord and give Him the glory, and in their magnificence they bless Him. Rom.1: 20 says that *the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen*. Hence, His creation speaks loudly of the Creator, even if the evolutionary scientists say otherwise, even if they teach as 'fact' that our beautiful world was created from a big bang.

If the body of Christ, the church, chooses to stay quiet, if we say nothing in response to the scientists, to the teachers and professors who bless the god of this world for creating the heavens and the earth from a blob of something, which in itself was created from nothing, then we, in our silence are NOT blessing God, we are *not* praising Him for His works, but we are doing the opposite. So even if you forget to get on your knees and praise the Lord, blessing Him for His creation and all His wondrous works (see Ps.26: 7), then be encouraged to *respond* to the next person who advocates evolution as fact. In doing so, you will seek to give God the glory for His creation, you will be praising the Lord for His wondrous works and so blessing Him.

4. Bless the Lord for fulfilling his promises

2Chr 6:4 *And he said, Blessed [be] the Lord God of Israel, who hath with his hands fulfilled [that] which he spake with his mouth to my father David.*

This is our first point in our study that has not come from the Psalms, but we note from 2Chron.6: 1 that it is David's son Solomon that is speaking, that is blessing the Lord God for fulfilling that which the Lord spoke through his father David. In a similar way much of the New Testament acknowledges the promises that God gave to Israel and how they are fulfilled in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. Some examples include: Acts 1: 16, 3: 18, 13: 29 & 33. We know from the same Scriptures that God is not slack concerning the fulfilment of His promises (see 2Pet.3: 9 & Lk.24: 44), and therefore, whether we can see their fulfilment or not, we are to simply *trust* that He *will*, or *has* fulfilled them, because that is what *He* has promised to do in His written revelation, the Holy Scriptures, preserved for us for us today in the English text of the 1611 Authorised Bible.

Do you believe God that *He* will fulfil *His* promise to preserve all the souls of the saints?

Do you believe the Lord that *He* has prepared a place for you in heaven when you die?

Do you believe God that *He* has kept *His* promise to preserve *His* words, not man's words, but the words given by inspiration of God?

Because it would be illogical for a person to say they believe *some* of God's promises because they are written in Scripture, and not believe *others*. Even though they have no evidence for His promises, yet they *choose* to believe one of His promises and not another. For example, if they chose to believe their sin is on Christ on the cross of Calvary, yet they do not believe God has preserved His words because they have no evidence of a perfect Bible without errors. Well, heads up to everyone, there is *no* evidence for our sin being on the Lord Jesus Christ, even if we were to be transported back in time by a space machine, and we stood at the cross of our Saviour bleeding, we would not be able to prove that our sin was on Him. You either *believe* the promise or you do *not*. If you believe it, then you like Solomon will desire to bless the Lord for fulfilling His promises, because your sins, according to the Scripture, are washed away (see Rev.1: 5). And you will desire to get on your knees and praise the Lord for fulfilling His promises. But how can you with all sincerity get on your knees and praise the Lord, bless Him for washing away your sin, which you cannot prove, but simply because He promises to do so in the Scriptures, and then say, but sorry God I do not believe you have preserved *all* your words, because I cannot find a book among the 200 differing versions or any other reason. Rather than coming to God with your preconditions that you would like fulfilled before you believe one of His promises, why not simply trust Him, and believe He has fulfilled them? Or do you not really believe God, in which case you are calling Him a liar?

Did He fulfil His promises, or did He not? And will He fulfil those that are to be fulfilled in the future, or will He not? IF you believe He did and will, then ask Him to show you, and trust Him, not me or any other mad "KJV only" believer. Believe God, and when you do, *bless* Him for fulfilling *His* promises.

So many people who call themselves Christians and say they believe God, they believe the gospel of Christ, they trust that their sin is on Christ, and His blood has washed them clean, and that they are going to heaven when they die, choose not to believe that the same God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has kept His promise to preserve His words. Many of the main-stream churches now reject God's promise of preservation, and now won't even discuss the topic.

I remember when I came to the knowledge of the truth of the Authorised Bible, that I learnt, most Bible colleges, and universities have stopped debating the topic because, according to them, it was settled back in the early 1900s. We *have* the *best* possible manuscripts and we are doing our *best* to provide the *best* possible translation of those, just as we would any other ancient manuscripts. But the difference is, the Bible is not just any other ancient book, it is the preserved words of God. And I am not going to bless man for doing his *best* to preserve God's words, but I will *bless* God for fulfilling *His* promises.

I choose to believe God has fulfilled His promises to preserve His words and therefore I bless Him for fulfilling all His promises. And we should encourage each other to praise Him, to bless the Lord for fulfilling His promises.

Having said what we have said, let us say it again. In this our second study on the topic of 'Blessing God', we have covered four points:-

1. bless the Lord for He is our strength, and
2. bless the Lord because He responds to our prayers, and
3. bless the Lord for all his works, and
4. bless the Lord for fulfilling His promises.