

8 September 2013

Bless the Lord our God (Pt4).

This is our fourth study on the topic of 'Blessing God'. In our previous study we covered three points; (1) bless the Lord because He directs our path, and (2) bless God for His mercy, and (3) bless God for His truth. In this study we will cover three points; (1) bless God for giving us rest, and (2) bless God for giving us a King, and (3) bless God for speaking to us.

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

1. Bless God for giving us rest.

1Kg.8:56 *Blessed [be] the Lord that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.*

The context of our verse determines that it is Solomon who blessed the Lord for giving rest to Israel as He had promised. The last part of this verse is amazing for those who believe what God said in His word, *there hath not failed one word of all his good promise*. Did you get that? Not *one* word of *all* his good promises will fail! But don't believe me, read it for yourself. However, if your reference point is an NIV it says something similar but changes 'blessed' so our point cannot be derived from 1Kg.8: 56. And in the Good News (GN) version you will notice a more significant change with the phrase *all his good promise* changed to "He has kept all the generous promises he made". So *you* choose whether Solomon blessed God for giving rest according to *all* His good promises or whether he didn't. How relevant is this passage for us today? How can we take this blessing that Solomon gave to the Lord and apply it to us today? By considering how the Lord Jesus promised to give *rest* to those who came unto Him that were heavy laden. And the Scriptures also speak of a future *rest* for believers in heaven. Therefore, even though our verse from the Old Testament is about Solomon and is written for the Jew, I assert that there is relevance to the believer today. So let us bless God for giving us rest as we journey, knowing that when we get to heaven an eternal *rest* awaits us. And let us say amen, to *all* God's promises being good.

The Lord Jesus said, *come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest* (Matt.11: 28).

Do you find yourself having rest in this spiritual battle we are in?

Do you find rest each day from your struggles with the devices that the devil uses to deceive, delay or discourage you? No, the devil is relentless in his attacks on believers.

So how can we practically bless God for giving us rest when there doesn't *appear* to be any let-up in the battle?

Would you praise the Lord, bless the Lord for giving you rest, when there is no rest? or is the Lord talking about something different in Matt.11: 28?

Let us go back to our verse and read it again in context of the surrounding verses. When we do we find that in verse 29 the Lord Jesus said, *take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls*. So when the Lord Jesus talks about giving a believer rest He is talking to those who labour and have heavy burdens (verse 28), and when they come unto Him He will give their soul rest, not their body. From Matt.11: 28 & 29 let us also note the clear instruction to *all* men to come unto the Lord Jesus Christ, *not* Mohammed or his god Allah (see also Jn.14: 6).

Have you ever felt physically worn out but you still function mentally as if you have drunk five cans of Red Bull energy drink? What keeps you going when you feel like that? When you spend time with the Lord Jesus Christ in prayer and in the Scriptures, you obtain rest for your soul, just as Israel did when they walked in the ways of the law (see Jer.6: 16). The Scriptures of truth do not say "go to Buddha or Allah and have rest". But they do say we are to take all our burdens, our worries, our sins and give them to Christ at the cross, and in return we receive His yoke, which is easy, and we follow Him in the power of His Holy Spirit. For those non-believers you meet on your journey they have a choice. They can choose the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ which offers our soul rest, or they can choose the yoke of Satan, and his deception, lies, discouragement, and delays. *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord* (Josh.24: 15) and receive rest for our soul.

Let us praise the Lord, let us get on our knees and bless the Lord for the rest He gives our soul when we come to Him. And when we have finished blessing Him for the rest He has given our soul, then bless Him for the eternal rest that awaits us when we get to heaven. Amen!

2. Bless God for giving us a King

1Kg.1:48 *And also thus said the king, Blessed [be] the Lord God of Israel, which hath given [one] to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing [it].*

See also 1Kg.5:7, 1Kg.10:9 & 2Chr 9:8

Israel wanted a king to be like the surrounding nations (see 1Sam.8: 5), and the Lord pointed out that the people had not rejected Samuel but God's rule over them (see 1Sam.8: 7). So the Lord appointed Saul to be king, then Saul disobeyed God so the Lord appointed David to sit on the throne, and promised his son Solomon that there would always be a king on the throne to follow after David.

One of the stumbling blocks that the Jew may put to a Christian for why they reject the Lord Jesus as the prophesied Messiah of the Old Testament, is their belief that Messiah would come to earth and set up a physical kingdom and rule Israel (see Jer.23: 5) and as we know that did not occur. But that would have occurred had the Jews not rejected Him as their Messiah. Because they did reject Him as Christ, the Lord took up the throne of David in heaven until He returns to physically rule on earth for 1000 years (see Rev.20: 4).

For those who have come to the Lord Jesus Christ, for those who have called on His name, not the name of Allah, or Buddha, but the name of the Lord Jesus, He is their King! During the time the Lord was on earth He was challenged by Pilate as to whether He was King of the Jews, and He replied, *thou sayest it* (Lk.23: 1-3, see also Jn. 18: 37). He didn't want the sign "this is the king of the Jews", and He told the Jews that His kingdom was not of this world (Jn.18: 36). But Christ is King, and He sits on the throne of David. And as it was when Christ walked the earth so it is today, not everyone acknowledges His Kingship.

Yes, it was king Solomon who blessed God for giving Israel a king to sit on the throne, and the Lord Jesus Christ did not bless His father for exalting Him to that position, but given Lk.1: 30-32 says that the Lord Jesus will be given the throne of His Father to sit on, we can bless God today for giving us a King to sit on the throne of David. Which is a fulfilment of the promise to David and his son Solomon (see 1Kg.9: 5).

Do you have a King? If you are 'in Christ' and have not believed in vain (see 1Cor.15: 1-4), then whether you daily register that you have a King or not, you *do* have a King, and He sits on the throne of David. You may not see your King, as those in Israel did, but then we are to simply believe the Scriptures of truth. So let us bless God for giving us a King to sit on the throne of David.

3. Bless God for speaking to us.

1Kg8:15 *And he said, Blessed [be] the Lord God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled [it], saying,*

In two of our previous points we have blessed God for His promises and for His truth and both relate to His words. Even though Solomon is not blessing God for His written words in 1Kg.8: 15, nor for fulfilling His written words, the revelation we have today is a word perfect preservation of the words God spoke, albeit translated into English. Therefore, there is a link from our verse in 1Kings to the preserved written words of God that we have today. In this point we can bless God for speaking out His words to the Patriarchs, to those who were given by inspiration, the words of God (see 2Tim.3: 16). The Scriptures attest to God speaking by the mouth of the prophets, and those words were written down (see Jer,36: 4). And today, I bless the Lord for speaking to us in His written revelation, under the guidance of His Holy Spirit who gives us understanding. And as the NZ Protestant pointed out, if you hear a voice that speaks to your mind, your soul or anywhere else, and it is different to the recorded words in Holy Scripture, then do not be deceived, because Satan also speaks to the hearts and minds of believers (see NZ Protestant Vol.5, Iss.2, page 7 & 8). Satan's words are lies, his words will be contrary to God's words, his words will cause us to sin and therefore disobey the Lord. And given that none of us can prove to anyone else what we hear in the quietness of our prayer-time, was from God, then those who say they hear such words can only compare what they heard, to God's written revelation to prove if they were from God or Satan. Consider some examples:- What if five people told you that God said "we were to drink blood to be cleansed from our sin"? Would you believe them?

What if fifty ministers of God told you that the Lord said "it is okay for two sodomites to marry"? Would their words of knowledge make sodomy right?

What if 100 ministers of God told you that the Holy Spirit said "use the Good News version (GN) of Holy Scripture"? Would you believe them if the GN had provable errors within its pages? Because ten or more years ago that is what a Presbyterian minister told me when I asked him which Bible version I should use. Did that mean I believed him because he had been a friend of the family for 45 years and I respected him as a minister of God? How many respected missionaries would have to say "idolatry is good" for you to believe them, even though God says in His written revelation, that it is a sin?

How many pastors would have to call evil good before you believed them, before you blessed God for speaking to them, as modern-day prophets? Joseph Smith believed that God spoke to him and so he wrote the book of Mormon, which contradicts the Holy Scriptures. Do you believe Joseph Smith's works, his written revelations? And if not, why not?

My counsel from the Scriptures is not to believe anything you hear regardless of who said they received it from God, if it contradicts the Holy Scriptures. And don't bless God for speaking to you in His Holy Scriptures if you believe words that contradict those revealed in Scripture. We are warned by the Lord Jesus Christ in Lk.21: 8, and by the Holy Spirit of God in 1Cor.6: 9, *Be ye not deceived*, as Eve was deceived in the garden of Eden (see Gen. 3: 1-6).

Let us encourage each other to only listen to the voice that affirms what God spoke, as recorded for us today in the Scriptures of truth. Let us bless the Lord for speaking to us in the truth of Holy Scripture, preserved for us today in the Authorised Bible.

Having said what we have said, let us say it again. In this our fourth study on the topic of blessing God, we have covered three points; (1) bless God for giving us rest, and (2) bless God for giving us a King, and (3) bless God for speaking to us through the Scriptures.