

BLESSED IS THE MAN

*Blessed is the man that walks not
in the counsel of the ungodly,
Nor stands in the way of sinners,
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful.
But his delight is in the law of the Lord,
and in His law doth he meditate day and night.
And he shall be like a tree planted by the river of water,
that brings forth his fruit in his season;
His leaf also shall not wither,
and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. Psalms 1:1-3*

The Bible is its own translator as well as teacher. As such, one scripture can explain other scriptures or reaffirm them. Thus, a cross-reference for Psalm 1:3 is Ezekiel 47:12. From thence is Revelation 22:2. What we want to see here is threefold: one, that more often than not, a precept in the Old Testament is repeated or reinforced in the New Testament (Matthew through Jude) and further capped in the Revelation. This progressive revelation of the heart and intent of God for our benefit is particularly clear here in these three scriptures. To begin, David simply speaks his heart about the Spirit-taught set of circumstances whereby a man is blessed. Later in Ezekiel, the Spirit speaks through him those characteristics of a nation, a people being blessed. Still later, John the Revelator records the Spirit's promptings as regards the entire population of the redeemed, the New Jerusalem. Second, we will determine the meanings of key words in Psalm 1:1-3, according to the Hebrew from Strong's Concordance, to see how wrongly our understanding of words is influenced by today's leaven. Third, we will look at why we are not "blessed" and how we are ever so subtly deceived and progressively led astray.

One: In Psalm 1:1-3, Ezekiel 47:12 and Revelation 22:2, we see several themes that repeat themselves:

- (a) a "blessed" state
- (b) a stream, a river, whose source is the Sanctuary of God
- (c) trees bearing fruit in their season
- (d) their leaves not withering
- (e) fruit for food
- (f) leaves for healing

As seen earlier, these scriptures begin with the effect of all of the above on a man, then on a nation, then finally on all the nations. The stream, the water of life, flows out of God's habitation and fosters a metamorphosis of that life in trees, which in turn, yield fruit in their season for food to benefit man, a nation, and the nations. The life in the trees is indomitable to drought and disease, etc.; leaves do not wither nor wilt, so that they can continue indefinitely to benefit a man, a nation, or nations.

Two: What do the words in these scriptures mean? Do we desire to remain in a “blessed” state, whatever that means?

- (a) blessed: a joyful mental state of contentment, of comfort and security for which a person is to be admired; a state of forgiveness (Ps. 32:1); being at peace, relaxed.
- (b) counsel: advice, consultation, purpose, project, plan, design, deliberation, wisdom; see Jethro’s counsel to Moses verses the elders’ counsel to Absalom.
- (c) ungodly: (Do we not think this means, or is portrayed by a whore in Harlem, a porno king in LA, a Jack the Ripper or a Hitler?) Narrowly it applies to these, but in a broader sense it means turbulence, restlessness, disjointed, poorly regulated, perpetual agitation; it points to the attitudes and intentions of people. Simply put, ungodly means wrong doing, being in the wrong, one who has broken the law. It includes all people who have done wrong, are doing wrong, and plan to continue. God even called His own people “wicked” because their hearts were far from Him and they had no intention of living by His laws and precepts. (See Psalms 50.)
- (d) delight: wish, desire, business pursuit; to have pleasure in, have an affection for, to choose; a strong positive attraction for, to be subjectively involved.
- (e) wither: to fall away, faint, fade; to be despised, disgraced, dishonored, to be lightly esteemed, to come to naught.

Three: The picture begins to be unveiled; being in a “blessed” state is to be at peace, of which the only true peace is being in a state of forgiveness before God. To be forgiven necessitates a release from previous acts of wrongdoing. We see also that David knew association with the ungodly precipitated the state of non-blessedness, because we will become like those with whom we associate, like it or not, intend it or not. Wickedness is infectious. We also deduce if “blessed” is contentment, peace and forgiveness, then discontentment, agitation, unrelaxed, disturbed (not a grieved sense here, but disjointed) restlessness, etc., must necessarily result in a non-“blessed” state. A wise man looks not at what is there, but instead at what is missing. An even wiser man looks at why it is missing, and what God says about it.

The most difficult thing for a born-again person to accept is his/her capacity for, or being called ungodly. Our perception of ungodliness, as stated before, is that of a Hitler or porno king or whore. While we as “saints” have largely conquered the sins of the “flesh,” we often fail to realize the root of our failings in the soul, particularly our mind, will and emotions.

“Among whom we all once lived in the lusts of the flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.” Ephesians 2:3

When the apostle (Paul) here speaks of the flesh and of the obedience to the desires of the flesh and of the mind (thoughts), we must beware lest we limit our interpretation to the outbreaks of a coarse and criminal carnality. The apostle who can rightly claim... he was found blameless (in the law) can certainly not be regarded as a man of vicious or debauching propensities. Let us remember that there is not only coarse, wild, unclean and filthy flesh, but also very tender, refined, highly-cultivated, lamb-like, yea, very religious flesh. Flesh which thinks the very highest and most aspiring thoughts, which aims at the highest ideas in matters religious and moral, but which like the eagle, can never reach the sun. Earth holds it captive. The common criminals and coarse sinners were...not the worst and bitterest enemies of the Lord Jesus,... they were chiefly the most devout, pious and strictly religious Pharisees and doctors of the law, the highly cultivated Herodians, the ‘enlightened’ Sadducees; noble, well-educated, theologically-trained ‘flesh.’

E. F. Stroter, in The Glory of the Body of Christ, on the book of Ephesians¹

When we catch ourselves in unrest, agitated, nervous, fitful, turbulent, and out of sorts, we have passed from the realm of the blessed into the realm of the ungodly. It doesn't mean we have lost our salvation or even become at our core “ungodly.” It simply means we have entered their realm in which are all those effects. If we remain in that realm the situation becomes worse and worse.

Various subtle events, none of which are wrong in and of themselves can distract us and lead us away from our “homeland.” There are things that “happen” during activities with our kids’ sports, moving our mother, putting our father in a nursing home, projects at home, TV, news, and car problems. We are either made angry from these “happenings,” or gently nudged out of our “blessed” state into progressively remote mental maelstroms until we experience restlessness, sighing, feelings of missing the Presence, and on in to fear, disbelief, discontentment, agitation, vexation, and all that removes our peace. We have left our God-ordained “home” and find ourselves in downtown south Los Angeles where we are subject to the effects of the realm of the ungodly. Then we wake up and ask ever so innocently, “God, where are you?” as if He left us! So if we find ourselves turbulent, restless, disjointed, in a mess, poorly regulated, perceptually agitated and the like, then we have entered the realm of the ungodly and are harvesting their harvest, just as David did at Ziklag. And, as David at Ziklag, our initial reaction is anger. Ninety

percent of the time the other person has “wronged” us. In reality it is we who first treated God in the same way.

When David and his men returned to Ziklag and found the city burned and their families and possessions taken away, the men were ready to stone him. He did not shift the blame, but as their leader, he took on the responsibility of finding out what God wanted him to do. Unlike David, we too often find opportunity to:

Shift the blame

1. Find an alternate solution
2. Run from the problem
3. Justify our position
4. Claim “persecution” and the like

Rarely do we grow up spiritually and admit we are the reason for the problem, and specifically our actions, our remiss, and our wrong way of thinking (or even more subtle, our not thinking at all!). All our reactions to the list above malign God’s character and exalt our own. The second we think we are right, we are wrong. It is not He who has moved, but us, and our evil thoughts (or omission of thoughts, which is the ungodly act of being careless with our minds).

If there is no “blessed,” then there is probably no meditation.

If there is no “blessed,” then there is probably walking in the counsel of the ungodly.

If there is no “blessed,” then there is probably some standing in the way of sinners.

If there is no “blessed,” then there is probably some sitting in the seat of scoffers.

If there is no “blessed,” then there is probably an unforgiving spirit.

If there is no “blessed,” then there is probably a spirit of deceit. We have believed a lie.

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One of the Tribe of Issachar

Blessed is the man whose sons and daughters turn out the way he hoped they would.

Blessed is the **LORD** when **His** sons and daughters turn out the way He hoped they would....

1. E.F. Stroter, The Glory of the Body of Christ: An Opening Up of the Epistle to the

Ephesians (Morgan & Scott, Ltd: London, England, 1909). 92,93