# Editorial The Blessing Dr Jason Hubbard

Editorial: ‘The Blessing’ – Dr Jason Hubbard

The Blessing

“The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. “So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them” ( Numbers 6:22-27 ).

These words have been heard by millions of people in the last months as they listened to the popular song “The Blessing.” The song, originally performed by Elevation Worship (the worship ministry of a church in the United States), viewed now over 22 million times on youtube has rapidly become an international hymn adopted by Christians around the world. From the Arab world , to Europe , to Brazil , to Australia , to Indonesia , to Singapore , to South Africa , to India , to China , this song has literally swept through the nations! It is exciting to see the global church singing her prayers and praying her songs! I think my favorite one is the kids from different nations singing the blessing!

The specific words of Aaron’s High Priestly Blessing came from the Lord Himself and were to be spoken over His people Israel, by which He would place His name upon them. The effect of His blessing would display His character, His nature, His very being in and through His people. He would bless them to ‘be’ a blessing to the nations because that is his nature! Our God is a ‘Blessing’ orientated God! He set his affection upon them, loved them as his own, even calling Israel his ‘own son,’ redeeming them out of the land of slavery. God was saying to the Hebrews, “I will bless you and keep you, smile on you, be gracious to you, and give you peace!’ His promise was to love, to protect, to bless and to be with them!

God is intensely concerned to bless his people. Blessing is God’s idea, it is not something we have to beg for, it is something that he desires to give.

In this prayer we see 6 promises of God’s blessing. The verbs are in the singular although he is speaking to the whole community of Israel. His blessing is his ‘name.’ As he said to Moses,

“So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them.”

God reveals his name Yahweh 3 times in the prayer, revealing his Trinitarian nature, the three-in-one God.

His name Yahweh is his covenant name, literally ‘I am who I am.’ He is the self-sufficient, self-sustaining, all knowing, unstoppable God who always keeps his promises! He promises, ‘I will be your God, you will be my people.’ In the relational sense, he means, ‘I am the one who is there with you and for you. All that I am I place at your disposal.’ In his wisdom God knows what’s best for us, in his love he wants what’s best for us, and in his power he delivers what is best for us!

Six promises of Blessing

1. The Lord BLESS you.

Blessing is the act of declaring God’s favor and goodness upon others. It is asking the Lord to wrap up His people in His protective and loving care. After God created Adam and Eve, he ‘blessed’ them to be fruitful and to multiply! He choose Abram and said to him,

“And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Gen. 12:1-3).

Blessed to be a blessing to the nations. The word ‘blessing’ and ‘to bless’ is used 330x throughout the Old Testament. Jesus opens up his teaching on the sermon on the mount with 8 blessings. When Jesus was about to depart from His disciples 10 days before Pentecost, the Scriptures records that He lifted His hands and blessed them (Luke 24:50).

This is significant because the High Priestly Blessing is also called “The Lifting of the Hands.” Jesus was blessing His disciples with the same blessing that His Father had commanded Aaron, through Moses, to speak over the house of Israel and thus place His name on them.

Paul speaks to the church at Ephesus, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,” (Eph. 1:3). Peter shares, “His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence” (2 Peter 1:3).

The greatest blessing of all is the blessing of salvation through Jesus Christ. Scripture shows that blessing is anything God gives that makes us fully satisfied in him. Anything that draws us closer to Jesus. Anything that helps us relinquish the temporal and hold on more tightly to the eternal.

2. KEEP you.

As Israel journeyed through the wilderness, God was faithful to keep them under the shadow of his wings, providing their needs, guiding them with his presence and delivering them from harm. The Lord promises to keep us, to protect us against all harm this world could offer. In the midst of dangerous places and things, he is our refuge, a bulwark and mountain fortress. He is never failing. Even in the midst of our trials and suffering, he will keep us! This gives us courage to follow Jesus wherever he would lead us! As Scripture says,

“No in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us!’ (Rom. 8:37).

Not just a conqueror, but more than a conqueror. The Greek phrase means to be super abundant in conquering through Christ, to triumph, or prevail completely! To be more than a conqueror means that before you ever get a problem, you already know that whatever problem comes your way, you can overcome it through Christ. You live with confidence that God loves you no matter what and He will never leave you nor forsake you. He protects us in Him!

3. The Lord will make his face to SMILE upon you .

A smile sends a message. It’s like new parents when they look into the crib and see their little one, a smile always ensues! There is something in that smile on the face of a parent that communicates connection, pleasure and delight. God says, “my face shines upon you with a smile, a look of love. I see you. I am interested in you, I take great delight in you. I notice you, you are not forgotten!” You are his treasured possession, the very delight of his heart.

He has his eyes on his prize! He sings over you with rejoicing. As the psalmist says,

“You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Psalm 16:11).

It’s his perfect love that cast out all fear! May Yahweh smile on you, and may he grant you well-being!

4. I will be GRACIOUS to you .

God deals with the reality of sin. Everyone of the 2 million Hebrews in the desert were sinners condemned to death and hell without God. Because of sin, God had to distance himself from his people. To deal with this problem he provided for them the sacrificial system to atone for their sins. In essence God says, ‘when the blood is shed, then you can come into my presence, then and only then can your sin be dealt with.’ This pointed to the ultimate fulfillment in the New Covenant and the blood of Jesus Christ, our Passover Lamb!

Grace is God’s love in action. Grace is when God freely gives us what we need even though we don’t deserve it and we can never repay him. Grace is when God solves our greatest problem even before we knew it was a problem. Grace is G od’s R iches A t C hrist’s E xpense. It is the face of God when he looks at our faults, failures and fears.. Jesus knows us the best, and loves us the MOST.

“The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious , slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin…” (Exo. 34:4-6).

5. I will turn my face TOWARDS you.

His first promise was to look upon us with a smile, and now he promises to turn his face towards us. He promises not turn his back on us even in the midst of our sin and weakness and come towards us with his Presence! This promise deals with his desire to come near us, to step in and walk with us day by day, moment by moment. Jesus promises to be our Emmanuel, God-With-Us forever! He promised that as we go to make disciples of all nations, that he would be with us even to the end of the age! At Pentecost, God came by his Spirit, not just to come ’to us’ but literally to dwell ‘in us.’ He promises to never leave us or forsake us!

6. I will give you PEACE.

This word peace is not so much the absence of war, or of conflict, but speaks of well-being. Of all the innumerable blessings of the Christian life, peace is one of the most precious. Our God is the God of peace, Jesus is called the ‘prince of peace,’ we preach a gospel of peace, and the Spirit of God releases peace to us.

Peace here speaks of well-being in all aspects of our life. It is all inclusive, complete, and comprehensive. Peace means life as good as it gets! He gives us abundant life, life to the full, more than enough, and in great supply. It is his life by his Spirit in us and through us that brings peace that transcends all understanding, above the ceiling and beyond imagination.

“And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.” (Col. 3:15).

He promises to Bless us, to Keep Us, to Smile upon us, to be Gracious to us, to Turn towards us, and to give us Peace. Wow!

“May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, that your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations” (Psalm 67:1-2).

As an IPC family let’s continue to receive his blessing in our lives and pray and sing God’s blessing over others! We are blessed to be a blessing! He wants to bless us so much that every person that gets in proximity to us will get blessed. Amen!

Much love,

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