

The Pathway of Blessing

Leviticus 26: 1-13

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Intro

As we complete our study through the book of Leviticus, we come to a chapter that speaks of the promises of God's blessings on the nation of Israel. These were the blessings that God promised Israel because they were a distinct people, God's holy nation. What he lays out for them is a pathway of blessing. They were to be a distinct people because of how they lived their lives, but they would also be a distinct people by how God would bless their nation.

Does God layout a pathway of blessing for us as well? The answer is yes, if we look through the New Testament we see the principles of God's blessings on our lives as well.

Many people are of course very concerned about how to receive blessings in their lives. We have just completed a very difficult year where the whole world's economy is in trouble. As we look forward to this next year, we do not know what is in store for us. But is there a pathway a blessing? Are their principles whereby we can predict the outcome?

The answer is yes, there are principles from scripture on which we should build our lives. There are principles of God's blessings which we should not ignore, because to do so would be very foolish indeed.

As we study through Leviticus chapter 26 we can discover the principles that God gives to Israel, but we can also discover the principles that God gives to us as believers in Jesus Christ as well.

I. There are Many Kinds of Blessing

- 1 When you study through the scriptures you discover that there are many different types of blessings that God lays out in the scriptures.
- 2 Here, in chapter 26, we see two different kinds of blessings, and we will discover yet a third.

A. Blessings on a nation

- 1 What we see in this chapter is primarily the blessings that God promises to the nation of Israel as a nation.
- 2 For example, in verse 4, God explains that he will give rains in their seasons so that the land will yield its produce and bear its fruit.

- 3 In verse 6 God promises peace in the land from their enemies.
- 4 In verse 7, God promises military superiority, “Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand.”
- 5 We have seen examples of these blessings both in Biblical times as well as in more recent times.
- 6 This of course is a fulfillment of what God promised Abraham all the way back in Genesis chapter 12.

Genesis 12:2, And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing;

- 7 In many ways, these blessings that God promises Israel are unique to Israel in the sense that he had a covenant relationship to them as a nation. In verse 9 God said that he would confirm his covenant with them. In verse 12 God said that he would walk among them and be their God, and they should be his people.
- 8 We are the United States and we’re not Israel, but are there not national blessings for any nation that honors God? The answer is yes.

Proverbs 14:34, Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a disgrace to any people.

Genesis 12:3, And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.

B. Conditional blessing

- 9 In chapters 26 and 27 there are 32 times where God says that if they will do this, then God would do that.
- 10 Are there blessings that are conditioned on what Israel does? Absolutely, they were to obey God and keep His statutes, keep His Sabbaths and reverence His sanctuary, and then the blessings on the nation would be theirs.
- 11 If they refused and despised God, then it would not go well for them at all.

Leviticus 26:19-21 If they will not honor God...

- 12 Are there conditional blessings for us as well? Absolutely. There are many scriptures that give us insight into the nature of God’s blessings on our lives, or lack thereof.

1 Corinthians 3:13-15, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man’s work. If any

man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

13 Even believers will appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:10, For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

14 We also know that he disciplines us as a father disciplines his son.

Hebrews 12:6-7, "for those whom the Lord loves he disciplines, and he scourges every son whom he receives." ... God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

Illus – we do the same with our children. If our children develop an attitude we don't just say, "My, isn't that cute?" The blessings of extending privileges, comes as a result of acting responsibly.

C. Unconditional blessing

15 Are there some blessings that are unconditional, both for the nation of Israel and for us? The answer is yes in both cases.

16 The covenant which God made with Abraham was unconditional. God would fulfill his promise because of who he is.

Deuteronomy 31:8, And the Lord, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed.

17 One of the best examples we see in scripture is found in Ezekiel 16 where God points out to Israel her unfaithfulness in dramatic fashion, but afterwards he says a very powerful word... *Nevertheless*.

Ezekiel 16:60, 63 "Nevertheless, I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you... so that you may remember and be ashamed and never open your mouth anymore because of your humiliation, when I have forgiven you for all that you have done," the Lord God declares.

18 Are there unconditional blessings for us who are believers in Christ Jesus? Again, the answer is absolutely yes.

19 Our position in Christ is unconditional. We are adopted as sons and we will remain the sons for eternity.

Romans 8:15-16, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,

20 In Christ, we have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies.

Ephesians 1:3-8 The blessings he lavished on us

II. There are Principles to Understand

1 This question of blessing is important for us to thoroughly understand because there are so many who teach wrong doctrines with wrong motives.

A. The pathway of blessing has direction

1 This is extremely important to understand. The pathway of blessing has to do with the direction of our heart. In other words, are you living your life toward God or away from God?

1 We’re talking about the blessing that God gives, so therefore he desires us to walk toward him at all times.

2 There are so many scriptures that help us understand this.

Mark 12:33, “and to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one’s neighbor as himself, is much more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

Colossians 3:2-3, Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth; for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Matthew 6:33, “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”

3 This is important to understand because it helps us to answer the question, *what is the degree of righteousness required to receive blessings of God?* In other words, does God become angry with us at every imperfection? The answer is that God knows the direction of our lives and that is the pathway blessing.

Proverbs 21:2, All a man's ways seem right to him, but the Lord weighs the heart.

Galatians 6:7-9 the principle of the harvest

B. The pathway of blessing is predictable

- 2 God was setting forth spiritual laws for the nation of Israel and there are spiritual laws in effect for believers in Christ as well.
- 3 God gives instruction on how to live our lives on the pathway of blessing; how to be Godly fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, businessmen, neighbors, etc.
- 4 If we are walking toward God and seeking his ways, this is the pathway of blessing. If we are walking in the stubbornness of our own heart, this is the pathway of difficulty.
- 5 Someone might say, *well I don't like these laws. I don't like these principles, I'll do things my way.* In short, that man is a fool.

Illus – there are laws of gravity, but if you decide that these laws are too restrictive and you will live your own way, you will see that the law of gravity will win.

There are laws of electromagnetism which I discovered are in effect on electric fences. There are laws of centrifugal force that every driver must obey.

In short, anyone who bets against God will surely lose.

C. Don't hinder God's blessing

- 6 Are there are ways to hinder the blessings that God desires to pour out on our lives? The answer again is yes. Therefore, we would be wise to understand what hinders blessings.
- 7 There are many things that can hinder the blessings of God. Here is a short list of four things which we should understand.
 1. Not treating our own wives as a co-heir.

1 Peter 3:7, and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

2. Sin which requires discipline. God cannot bless because he is busy with discipline.

3. Ignoring God's wisdom and judgment.
4. Disbelief. If you don't believe that God is faithful to his word and that his promises are true, you will have a hard time trusting them.

Illus – if you have God in the fullness of your heart, everything else is an addition. Heb 11:13.