

Letters on the Word

March 2008, Volume 2, Issue 1

THE COVENANT BLESSINGS OF THE LORD

“The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich and he addeth no sorrow with it . (Proverbs 10:22)

Greetings, dear brothers and sisters in the Lord! The Lord has been teaching me about His *spiritual blessings* – through one of His Kingdom soldiers, and I am eager to share with you some of the things I have been learning about the *Covenant blessings of the Lord*. The Covenant blessings of the Lord are essentially my inheritance and your inheritance in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior – as children of the most High God. But we have to know them in order to avail ourselves of them. In the past few months, I have been gaining a new, a higher view of our Lord, through the strongholds of fellowship, study, praise, worship and prayer. I have dwelt on 1 John 1:5:

“This then is the message

which we have heard of him, and declare onto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all,” – the words of John the apostle. Note that Jesus says that there is no darkness in God – He doesn’t say there is *usually* no darkness, or there is *almost always* no darkness – but *there is no darkness at all* – period.

The Holy Spirit also took me to John 1:5:

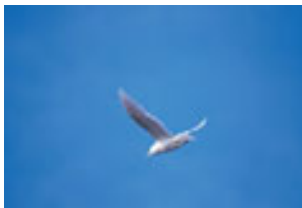
“And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not.”

Meditating on these two verses results in some thrilling revelations. And as the light comes in from the knowledge of the Word, it dispels darkness.

When the Holy Spirit impressed upon me that the next edition of the newsletter should be on His blessings, I had no idea what the specific message would be, but I trusted He would reveal it. And reveal it He

did –through one of His Kingdom warriors: Dr. E. W. Kenyon (1867-1948), evangelist pastor of the New Covenant Baptist Church and president of Bethel Bible Institute.

The blessings of the Lord are spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:3) and they are eternally our heritage as children of the living God. But how many of us in the Body of Christ know what they are? How many of us avail ourselves of these “spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ?” The purpose of this edition of the newsletter is to open our eyes and hearts to some of our spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ! You will find your freedom in the truth!



PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father, Father of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Father of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; thank you that you have blessed me with *all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ* (Eph 1:3). Open the eyes of my heart, my understanding, that I may come to know my spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus -- that my faith will soar because of my knowledge of the truth, and that this truth will set me free (John 8:32)-- because whomever the Son shall make free shall be free indeed! (John 8:36). I worship you for who you are. Thank you for answering my prayer in Jesus’ precious name -- Amen.

“ The blessings of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.” Proverbs 10:22

WHAT IS A BLOOD COVENANT?

What is a covenant? Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines covenant as a *formal, solemn and binding agreement*. Covenants are serious business and the practice of "cutting a covenant" is an age old one that has existed in several cultures from time immemorial. In his book, *The Blood Covenant*, Dr. E. W. Kenyon refers to Dr. H. Clay Trumbull's work on blood covenants, with data

A covenant is a formal, solemn and binding agreement.

showing that the practice of the blood covenant has existed in Africa, India, China, Borneo and the Islands of the Seas from time immemorial to this day. Various explorers and missionaries are said to have cut a blood covenant with several African tribes for protection during their explorations. Welsh journalist and explorer Sir Henry Morton Stanley is said to have cut the blood covenant more than fifty times with different tribes during his explorations in Africa. Dr. David Livingstone, Scottish doctor, explorer and missionary, who helped open the heart of Africa to missions, is said to have cut the covenant as well (Kenyon).

Why was the Blood Covenant cut?

Why was the Blood Covenant cut? Kenyon gives three reasons for men cutting the covenant with each other:

- (1) A weaker tribe living beside a stronger tribe and in danger of being destroyed would seek to "cut the covenant" with the stronger tribe for preservation.
- (2) Two businessmen entering into partnership might cut the covenant

to ensure that neither would take advantage of the other.

- (3) If two men loved each other as devotedly as David and Jonathan, they would cut the covenant for that love's sake.

The ritual of cutting a covenant could involve exchange of gifts (to indicate that all one's possessions became mutually owned by one's covenant partner); and bodily incisions so that the blood of covenant partners was allowed to mix in the same cup. Both partners were then made to drink this intermingled blood to demonstrate that they had indeed become blood brothers.

A blood covenant is perpetual, indissoluble.

Once cut, a blood covenant cannot be broken or annulled – it is perpetual, indissoluble. "The vilest enemies become trusted friends as soon as the covenant is cut. It is so sacred that children to the third and fourth generations revere and keep it." One who broke the covenant risked death at the hands of his own relatives. "The moment a covenant was solemnized, everything that a blood covenant man owned in the world became at the disposal of his blood brother if he needed it." (Kenyon)

Dr. Kenyon goes on to describe how the whole redemptive plan of the Lord God Almighty swings around two covenants. The Lord God Jehovah cut the Old Covenant with Abraham (i.e., the Abrahamic Covenant) sealed with circumcision (Gen 17). "This covenant bound Abraham and his descendants by indissoluble ties to Jehovah, and it bound Jehovah to Abraham and his descendants by the same solemn token." ... "The covenant was limited to Israel, the children of Abraham, and had behind it

the Promise and the Oath of God." (See Gen 22:16-18). This covenant came with obligations and blessings. (Deut 28). The blessings were conditional and in effect so long as Israel remained in obedience and fulfilled their obligations to Jehovah.

This arrangement is described by Ken-

The Covenant comes with blessings that are guaranteed as long as the Covenant partners abide by the Covenant.

yon as follows:

"God and Israel were bound together. As long as Israel kept the Covenant, there were no sick people." (See Genesis 34:7; Joshua 21:45; 1 Kings 8:56). "When He said, "I am Jehovah that healeth thee," that settled it. Jehovah was their only physician."

"He was also their only succor, their protector." ... "There was never a barren wife, no babies ever died, no young men and women ever died unless the broke the Covenant." ... "As long as they kept the Covenant, there were not allied armies enough in the world to conquer one little village." ... "For forty years, as they wandered in the desert, God gave them the cloud for protection from the fierce heat, and at night He gave them the pillar of fire for light and heat. He gave them food (manna); He gave them water. He literally met their every need. "They were Blood-Covenant men." ... "God preserved them as a nation because they were His Covenant people" (Kenyon). When they broke the Covenant, they faced judgment.

The Old Covenant (i.e., the Abrahamic Covenant) that forms the basis of the Old Testament foreshadows the New Covenant. In the New Testament, we see Jesus and the disciples gathered together that night before the Crucifixion.

WHAT ARE MY COVENANT BLESSINGS IN CHRIST?

26 *And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.* (Matthew 26: 26-28)

“The Old Covenant was the basis on which the New Covenant was founded. Now you can understand that when Jesus said, “This is My Blood of the New Covenant,” the disciples knew what it meant. They knew that when they cut the Covenant with Jesus in that upper room that night, they had entered into the strongest, most sacred Covenant known to the human heart.” (Kenyon)

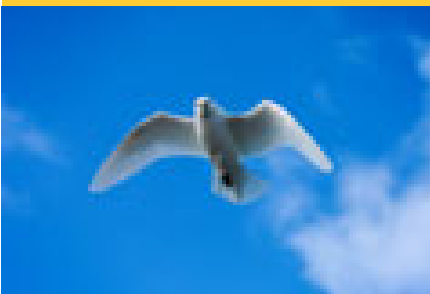
We must note that Jesus brings us a New Covenant, having displaced and fulfilled the Old Covenant. (Hebrew 10:9) And this new Covenant comes with a host of *spiritual blessings*. While the Old Covenant was sealed with circumcision, the New Covenant is sealed with New Birth. i.e., Although Jesus provided for this Covenant over 2,000 years ago, I have to accept Him as my Lord and Savior in order to enter into this Covenant with Him and have access to all the benefits of His present ministry, i.e., the provisions or spiritual blessings of the New Covenant.

What are your New Covenant Blessings (i.e., your spiritual blessings) as a child of God in Christ?

“The present ministry of Christ has been neglected by most Christians” (Kenyon). What is the present ministry of Christ? What are the spiritual benefits of the New Covenant? Let’s look at three spiritual blessings that come with the New Covenant.

1. Jesus is the surety of the New Covenant. (Hebrew 7:22) “God bound Himself with an oath to the Old Covenant. He was the surety of the Old Covenant. He said, “By Myself have I sworn.” (Genesis 22:16)

Just as God stood behind the Old Covenant and was its surety, so is Jesus the surety of every Word in the New. This means, He backs every sentence in the New Covenant. He is responsible for making good on every Covenant blessing in the New Testament.



2. In the New Covenant, once we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, He becomes our *High Priest* and we become a *royal and Holy Priesthood*. (1 Peter 2:1-10). *How many of us in the Body of Christ understand our rights and privileges (wrought by the grace of God in Christ) as part of this royal and Holy Priesthood? How many of us understand the implications of the present ministry of Jesus Christ as our High Priest, sitting on the right hand of the Father? “The first priesthood (i.e., in the Old Covenant) had a temple in which God dwelt in the Holy of Holies with the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 40). In the New Covenant our bodies are the temple of God, and the Spirit dwells within them” (1 Kings 6:19). The same Spirit of God that raised Jesus from the dead dwells in my body – what a monumental truth!*

3. In the New Covenant, Jesus Christ is our *great intercessor*. He is able to save all that come unto God by Him, seeing that He ever liveth to make intercession for

them (Hebrew 7:25). *How many of us in the Body of Christ today understand the reality of what it means that Jesus Christ is our Intercessor? Do I really understand that Jesus Christ, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, lives to make intercession with my Heavenly Father on my behalf? Wow. Isn’t that amazing? If I truly understand this provision and accept it, it completely changes the way I view myself. I have all of Heaven’s resources available to me through the intercession of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the One to whom ALL POWER belongs (Matt 28:18); the King of all kings; the Lord of all lords (Revelation 17:14).*

Our minds must be renewed so that we know our privileges and responsibilities as children of God.

Why do I need an intercessor? Kenyon explains why the child of God needs someone to intercede for him or her. Romans 12:2 tells us not to be conformed to this world; but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, that we may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God. “At the New Birth, our spirits receive the life of God (i.e., the zoe life of God). The next need is that our minds be renewed.” ... “Now that our spirits have received the life of God, *our minds must be renewed so that we will know our privileges and responsibilities as children of God.* The New Birth is instantaneous, but the renewing of our mind is a gradual process. *Its growth is determined by our study and meditation on the Word.* During this



HOW DO I ACCESS MY COVENANT BLESSINGS?

period we need the intercession of Christ.” (Kenyon) Jesus is able to save us from the uttermost because He ever lives to pray for us (Hebrews 7:25). Who can condemn the child of God when Jesus Christ at the right hand of the Father is making intercession for him? (Romans 8: 33-34)

What a formidable position to have in the Kingdom of God! However, in order to avail oneself of the truth, one must first of all know the truth (John 8:32).

What have these revelations shown me? They have made it very clear to me that I need to know my spiritual blessings in Christ in order to avail myself of them by faith.

Knowledge and faith are essential to accessing and walking in my Kingdom blessings!

The Bible says that we perish for lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6). Because my walk is a faith-based walk, what I do not know can hurt me – ignorance is not bliss in this case because I need to know the truth before the truth (by faith) can set me free (John 8:32). And who the Son shall set free, shall be free indeed. (John 8:36). There will be no questions about it.

Understanding my spiritual blessings this way has begun to shed more light on Proverbs 10:22 which says that *the blessings of the Lord maketh rich and He addeth no sorrow with it.*

As I have continued to study the Word, I have continued to grow in my understanding of who I am in Christ, and the fact that this knowledge is critical to my daily posture in life. For example, if I am ignorant of the fact that I am positionally part of a royal priesthood whose freedom has been already secured by the death of my Lord Jesus Christ on the cross (Colossians 2), and think of myself as a feeble sinner who has to struggle for God’s attention, then I have missed out on the present ministry of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ – and have not tapped into the full benefits of His dying on the cross for me. It also means I am limited in my effectiveness as a Christian because my knowledge of who I am is weak and inadequate: positionally in the spirit I walk around like a feeble nonentity in the Kingdom when I should be walking around like the royal priest and spiritual warrior I am *with the full covering of the New Covenant.*

My freedom is linked to my knowledge of the truth of who I am in Christ and the faith I have in that truth.

Because this knowledge is crucial to my access to Kingdom blessings by faith, I will be hampered unless I remedy deficiencies in my knowledge of who I am in Christ Jesus. I must know what I have faith in. I must know the provisions that come with my faith. And I must be able to explain to my loved ones exactly what it is that I have faith in.

Recently, I have sensed the Holy Spirit leading me to understand that I need to raise my thoughts concerning who I am as a daughter of the *living God.* The Spirit has said to me:

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:9)

If my knowledge of the truth is what will set me free, then my failure to know the truth directly hampers my freedom and ultimately my effectiveness as a follower of Christ. Thus, both increasing knowledge and faith are critical to my growth in effectiveness as a follower of Christ (Proverbs 19: 2a, 8a). *So I tell myself often now that I must apply myself with devotion to knowing the truth if I want to be an effective follower of Christ; if I want to be free!*



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Your blessings abound in Christ Jesus!