

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Words of Blessing

(Jerry Fite)

The high priest, Aaron was “separated that he should sanctify the most holy things, he and his sons forever, to burn incense before Jehovah, to minister unto Him, and to bless in His name, forever” (1 Chronicles 23:13). We probably have a mental picture of the priest offering incense up in a fragrant cloud unto God, and ministering unto God on behalf of man; but how often do we picture the priest “blessing” the people in “Jehovah’s name?”

An example of this blessing is found in Numbers 6:22-26: “Jehovah bless thee, and keep thee: Jehovah make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: Jehovah lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.” Notice that “Jehovah” is emphasized in this blessing. God wants His people to know their source of blessing is “Jehovah.” This meaningful repetition was purposeful: “so shall they put My name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them” (Numbers 6:27).

God was specific in this blessing. He said, “On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel...” (Numbers 6:22). Jehovah is the One who will keep and bless you. Having the approving face of the one true God shining upon you is encouraging. Walking in God’s

protective presence, receiving His unfathomable grace and peace you are totally blessed.

These words of blessing differ from intercessory prayer to God because they are spoken to people. “Jehovah bless thee...keep thee...shine upon thee...be gracious unto thee...lift up His countenance upon thee...and give thee peace.” When you offer words of blessing, you are making a personal connection with the person. You are offering words of blessing to another, connecting him or her with our gracious God.

Words of blessing create a positive atmosphere among believers. When Boaz met the reapers in his field he said, “Jehovah be with you.” The reapers answered, “Jehovah bless thee” (Ruth 2:4). The words of blessings differ in that the perspective of Boaz and the reapers are different. Boaz wants Jehovah to be with them, guarding and blessing them with strength to do their jobs, profiting Boaz as owner to the field. The workers want Jehovah to bless Boaz personally and his field so they have work to do. While the perspective and specific words are different, the source of the blessing singularly identified as “Jehovah.” Godly dignity among believers fills the air with the interchange of words of blessing.

Every one of Paul’s thirteen letters, carrying his name, begins with words of blessing. “Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” is Paul’s prominent expression (Rom. 1:7, 1 and 2 Cor.; Gal, Eph. Phil. and Philm.). He adds “mercy” to his introductory remarks in his personal letters to Timothy (1 Tim. 1:2, 2 Tim. 1:2). In most of his letters (Romans, an exception), he ends with blessing the reader with “grace of the Lord Jesus Christ” being “with” them (1 Thess. 1:28, 2 Thess. 3:18, etc.). Paul’s letters begin with blessing his readers with God’s grace, and after revealing God’s grace of teaching (cf. Titus 2:11-12), he desires that such grace will continue to go “with” them as they apply the teaching to their lives.

Do we offer words of God’s blessing to our brothers and sisters in Christ? Signing off with words of God’s blessing being upon our texting brethren will acknowledge the godly atmosphere in which we can thrive spiritually. What a way for daddy and mommy to tuck their little ones in to bed! Yes, we can continue in praying with them. But what a personal godly connection you can make with your child by speaking directly to him or her with the blessing of Jehovah tucking them in!