

BLESSINGS



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INTRODUCTION

Since 2003 the author has been spending time to make a study of blessings. Why? Because the author wondered why God has been so kind and generous to him and his family. Thus the author was quite amazed why he has been so blessed. The author felt the need to study carefully about this for two reasons:

First: the author thought, if he could study about it and acquired some knowledge, and understood why he has been so blessed; now, suppose this happened because he had done something, then he would strive to continue to do it so that the blessings would stay. On the other hand, if he could not know the reason, there would possibly be no more blessings.

Second: if the author knew, for example, that he was blessed because of something he had done, then he could teach this to his children

too so that they also would be blessed, even share it with others.

The author began to understand about this matter around the year 2011 or 2012, but at that time the materials were not yet made up or composed, because the author felt some things were still lacking. Only recently the author dares to write about this subject, because he has noticed new additions, some new discoveries, although it does not mean that the materials are complete. There were also things which previously seemed right but later found out to be wrong, and the understanding was still incomplete. So, this time, though not complete yet and perhaps not fully correct, the author dares to write about this very subject.

The General Definition of Blessings

According to Dereck Prince in his book, ***Blessing or Curse***, there are 410 words of "blessing" or words mean blessing in the Bible, whereas in other Holy Books only twenty five at

the most. The many words of "blessing" or mean "blessing" found in the Bible convince us that God has promised to bestow blessings upon His children. Before we dig deeper into this matter, we probably should know first what a blessing is to make its meaning clearer. When we know the true meaning of blessings, then today, as we may not feel blessed, we actually are already blessed. Or as we watch a person's life, we may think, "Oh, he is a very blessed man", while probably that is not true. Hence we should begin to understand first what a blessing is. Many people think, if someone can get a new car, he is blessed; or has a new house, he is blessed; or when he can travel abroad, he is blessed; or has a new store, he is blessed. But, is it so?

To Be Blessed Is Not to Own, But to Enjoy

From the author's observation, to be blessed actually does not mean to own or to possess, but to enjoy. The author renders two supporting verses:

*1 Timotius 6:17 “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in **the living God, who giveth us, richly all things to enjoy.**” (KJV)*

Or *“Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in **God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.**” (NIV)*

The above verse says that the rich should not get cocky or become arrogant owning the wealth they have, because truthfully it is more important for us to trust God since only He can provide us with everything for our enjoyment.

Ecclesiastes 3:12 “I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life.” (KJV)

Or *“I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live.” (NIV)*

In Ecclesiastes Solomon said that the pursuit of wealth, throne, women and knowledge are meaningless, because in the short span of a human life it is actually better for people to be able to enjoy more the pleasures in their lives.

To be more explicit, let us first make a comparison: What is the difference between money and blessings.

The Difference between Money and Blessings

Money is in fact just a medium of exchange; we can not eat money. For example, we get lost in a forest and there is nothing to eat while we are hungry. Now, even though we have money in our pockets, we will still be hungry, because we can not eat money. Money is only a device of exchange, and when with that money we buy something, perhaps fried chicken, then it becomes a blessing as we eat and enjoy the tasty food. However, when we buy fried chicken but we are allergic to meat, it will not become a blessing. So when we can buy something with the money and we can enjoy it, then money becomes a blessing. Yet many people still think that to obtain a blessing they need to have a lot of money, and without money they can not enjoy any blessing.

A Lot of Money - Abundant Blessings?

The author began to get some understanding about blessings, when he read a book by Mr. Muchtar Riadi, among other books. This book was published a long time ago. Therein Mr. Muchtar told that he had a very big house, the floors were of good marble, and there was a large-sized television in the living room. Nowadays a large TV is not unusual, since many can afford to buy it, however at that time a large TV was a luxury. But he said that due to his occupation, he rarely watched that TV then. Meanwhile, oftentimes when he got home, he saw his maid leisurely watching TV, sitting on the marble floor. So, the house and the TV were owned by Mr. Muchtar, but the one who enjoyed them was his maid! Hence, there is no guaranty that someone who owns or possesses some things can enjoy them. On the other hand, if someone does not own certain things, it does not mean that he/she can not enjoy those things.

Blessings Do Not Depend on Being Rich or Poor

In the author's life there was a very memorable event related to enjoyment of the blessings. When the author's wife was pregnant with their second child, incidentally the fetal position was still breech. To prevent breech delivery the doctor advised her to walk a lot to ease the childbirth in due time. Hence the author and his wife often walked from their house to the town square. The author remembered one morning, when they were leaving to take a walk, they happened to pass a vendor's cart selling bread, cookies and beverages. There the author saw a pedicab driver drinking a glass of hot milk. The author knew for sure that the drink was only sweetened condensed milk mixed with hot water, thus it looked white. Yet the way the man drank it showed that he enjoyed the milk very much in the cool morning air, "Sluurp haah, sluurp haah." The author immediately asked his wife to turn her attention toward that pedicab driver, saying, "Look, how that Abang Becak (pedicab driver) drinks the milk, he seems

to enjoy a very delicious drink." Then while walking we talked about it, because we had never enjoyed drinking our milk like he did, although we used the best milk powder at that time, even added with imported cocoa powder, which was also considered the best; whereas the milk enjoyed by the pedicab driver might be of a quality product inferior to what we choose.

From this experience the author learned the fact that consuming drinks or food of higher quality and more expensive price does not mean that we can enjoy them better.

House, Car, Traveling, and Business

Were we to have a new car, would it mean that we are more blessed? Not necessarily so. Many people add on his car collection only to keep the cars stored in the garage. Or, if we have a car, but often stalls during a ride, we can not say that it is a blessing to us. Is it a blessing to own a bigger house? Not necessarily so. If our house is so big that eventually the

family members rarely meet one another, and no longer closely related, it might not be a blessing. If we travel to a place while the weather is not good, and we get caught in the rain or suffer from the heat and even get sick, it also might not be a blessing. Likewise, if we start a new business, it does not mean that we obtain a blessing when the business makes us so occupied that we have no time for our family, or need to often eat in a hurry, or even get sick.

Enjoyment in Dining

It has been explained earlier that if we can eat something, we are enjoying a blessing. However, it does not mean that if we eat again the same kind of food we would enjoy the same blessings. For example, today we try a good steak, and while eating we say, "Wow, this steak is delicious! Let us eat again the similar steak, tomorrow." The next day when we eat it, the taste would probably be not as delicious as the day before. Or perhaps to be able to enjoy

the same delicious taste, we decide to eat it next month. At that time too it would still be uncertain whether we could enjoy the same delicious taste as the first time, for when we have a toothache or sprue just before then - we might not be able to enjoy the steak. Likewise, when we're facing a tough problem, it is very likely that we can not enjoy the entertainment and food provided. Therefore Ecclesiastes 3:13 clearly states, *"And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God."* (KJV)

Or *"That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil – this is the gift of God."* (NIV)

The above verse clearly mentions that a blessing is whenever we can enjoy, and it is a gift from God. Therefore, although we have money and can buy anything, it is not certain that we can enjoy life, because a blessing is a gift from God.

Blessings Are Not Restricted by Place Nor Circumstance

There is a story about a girl who went to a foodcourt to eat a bowl of noodles with meatballs she loves. She ordered one serving, then added some hot sauce, vinegar, and soy sauce. When she tasted it, wow, it was so delicious.

Next to the noodle booth was another stall selling vegetable fritter, often called *bakwan*. So she ate a bowl of noodles with meatballs, which was spicy, sour, and sweet, plus *bakwan*. Oh, how delicious...! While enjoying the food, a sudden call came from a school friend, so she chatted with the friend. Her friend asked, "*What are you doing at this moment?*" She answered, "*I am enjoying noodles with meatballs,*" then asked in return, "*And you, where are you now?*" "*I am at Plaza Indonesia at my boss' invitation,*" was the answer. The first girl immediately felt a pang of inferiority in her heart, "*Wow, Plaza Indonesia! I am here at a simple Foodcourt, while she is at Plaza Indonesia,*" she thought. Then she asked, "*Oh, what are*

you doing at PI?" Her friend replied, *"Well, the boss invited me to dine at a Japanese restaurant."* The first girl asked, *"And . . . what do you order?"* Her friend replied, *"Hmmm, this ... my friends said that **ramen kakiage** at this restaurant is very special and I am about to order it."* When the first girl heard it, her appetite immediately disappeared. She became very sad and could not finish the rest of her favorite food. *"Why?"* she thought, *"Oh Lord, why am I not blessed?"* She could only eat noodles with meatballs and fritters, at some simple Foodcourt which is not air-conditioned, while her friend was very blessed and could eat *ramen kakiage* at Plaza Indonesia which was fully air-conditioned.

What is ramen exactly? Ramen is noodle! And what is *kakiage*? Now *kakiage* is Japanese fritter! So *ramen kakiage* is actually the same food as noodles with meatballs plus vegetable fritters. Most Indonesians probably prefer noodles with meatballs to *ramen* for its richer flavor. The flavor of *ramen* broth is not so tasty and *kakiage* too is tasteless, different from the Indonesian fritter or bakwan which has

a stronger taste, a blend of sweet salty flavor. So both girls indeed enjoy the same kind of food, only with different names. And probably eating noodles with meatballs and fritters in the Foodcourt is more enjoyable than eating *ramen kakiage* at Plaza Indonesia. Why? Because in the Foodcourt eating hot and spicy noodles with meatballs makes us sweaty, whereas in the air-conditioned Plaza Indonesia it would be rather difficult.... Something with a cool name and a higher price does not necessarily provide more enjoyment. Viewed from the aspect of blessings, enjoying noodles with meatballs and fritters is considered more blessed than enjoying *ramen kakiage*!

**The Wealthiest is Not Necessarily
the Most Blessed**

Talking about wealth, Warren Buffett belongs to one of the richest in the world. But talking about blessings, Warren Buffett's blessings are

not necessarily better than the girl's who ate noodles with meatballs and fritters, for even though he is very rich, he may not be able to eat the same food or the similar kind enjoyed by the girl, due to his age or body condition at this time. However, financially he is able to purchase not only the noodle but even the mall in a blink of an eye. Hence, once again, there is no guaranty that people who own more money are more blessed. Since blessings are not concerned with money, but with anything we can enjoy.

Seven Greatest Blessings

In fact, God has provided incredible blessings for us and the author will discuss only 7 greatest blessings. What are they, and how can we get them, and where do they come from?

The First Greatest Blessing: Abraham's Blessing

It is enlightening when we discover that the primary meaning of the word "blessing" in *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* is not wealth or comfort (entertainment), but "made holy". In essence, since we are sanctified through salvation (being saved) in Jesus Christ, the true meaning of to be blessed is the consciousness that we have been removed from our unclean condition, brought to repentance, purified in holiness and someday in the future we will receive a crown of righteousness.

God said to Abraham in Genesis 12:3, *"And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."*

This blessing to Abraham is concerned with **salvation**, and it is God's greatest blessing promised to every human being, according to John 3:16, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten*

*Son, that **whosoever** believeth in him should not perish, but **have everlasting life.**”*

The greatest blessing God bestow to every human being is a new life and forgiveness of sins which is obtained by faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. Material blessings we enjoy day by day are temporary, but the spiritual blessings provided for us in Christ includes time and eternity, both material and non-material, as the Psalmist said, *“Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God.”* (Psalm 146:5)

And we as Christians understand why salvation is the greatest blessing, because Matthew 16:26 says: *”For what is a man profited, if he shall gain **the whole world**, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”*

Whoever owns salvation he/she has the most precious thing incomparable with anything else, because even the whole content of this world would not be enough to pay for salvation. This is the greatest blessing we ought to take time to ponder on, and to make sure that we already

have it. For more details, please read the author book "**Human Life Priority**", "**The Value of Salvation**" and "**The Great Commission**".

The Second Greatest Blessing:

The Fear of God

If we study the verses in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, God bestowed His incredible blessings to those who fear the Lord. Consider some of the following verse:

Ps 25:14 ***"The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant."***

Ps 33:18 ***"Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy."***

Ps 34:7 ***"The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."***

Ps 34:9 ***"O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him."***

Ps 85:9 ***"Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land."***

Ps 103:17 *"But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children."*

Those who fear the LORD God have a close relationship with Him and He even tells them His plans and He watches them continually. He sends His angels to protect and preserve them and blesses the country where they take shelter or dwell. His mercy and righteousness bestowed unto their children's children.

Here are some other verses related to the fear of the LORD:

Ps 111:5 *"He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant."* (KJV)

Or *"He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever."* (NIV)

Ps 22:4 *"By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life."*

Psalms 145:19 *"He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them."*

Luke 1:50 *"And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation."*

Psalms 25:12 *"What man is he that feareth the LORD? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose."*

Proverbs 9:10 *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding."*

Psalms 128:3-4 *"Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD."*

For the people who fear Him the LORD God provided food, blessings, riches, honor and life. God hears, saves and fulfil the desire of those who fear Him. God's blessings would be bestowed upon the descendants of those who fear Him, and He will give them wisdom and guidance. Even to men who fear the LORD God, He promised to grant them a good family, which can be read in the author book ***"The Blessed Christian Family."***

Indeed there are many other verses, but the verses quoted are just an example of how good the LORD God is that He promised such wonderful things, protection, a close or intimate relationship, provision, honor, even protection for the families of those who fear the LORD.

What Is the Fear of the Lord?

When we make an analogy between fearing God and fearing the police, what are the conditions so we can fear the police?

We can fear the police, if:

First: we know what the police is like, then we can fear (or respect) the police, because not all clad in uniform are police. TNI (Indonesian National Armed Forces) also are in uniform, so too are some community organizations, and security guards.

Second: we say that to fear the police is not only to fear the person, but also all the signs and the rules made by the police. If there is a police line, for example, we will not pass through or trespass that line, whether the police is or is not there. That is why we need to learn and understand all the regulations related to the police.

Third: obey. It is unlikely for us to obey the police, if we do not know what the police

are like. It is also unlikely for us to obey, if we do not understand the laws and regulations of the police.

Likewise, we can fear the LORD God, only if we know God, know the laws of God, then obey. So, what should we do? We must diligently and earnestly listen to the Word of God and read the Bible much, because God and all His laws are in God's word. Perhaps we have the opportunity only to listen to sermons in the church just once or twice a week. Therefore we need to improve our comprehension about God and His laws by reading the Bible regularly and diligently.

Dante said something interesting. He said, *"The completion of reading the Bible is not the main indicator, but in finishing it, there is our deep love for God to know Him more deeply."*

Indeed, reading the Bible does not guarantee that we would absolutely get to know God, but reading the Bible is the concrete manifestation of our love for God and our desire to know Him more deeply. Therefore, if we do not like to read the Bible or have never read through from

the Book of Genesis to the Book of Revelation even once, we need to check ourselves whether we truly love God? In fact we need to check further, whether we are truly children of God? Please read "**Characteristics of the Children of God**" for more details.

And one more thing, to fear God nourishes our bodies. Proverbs 3:7,8 says, "*Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.*" (KJV)

Or "*Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.*" (NIV)

The Third Greatest Blessing:

Blessing of the Priests

God told Moses that Aaron and his sons as priests should bless the people of Israel:

Nu 6:22 "*And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 23 Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, 24 The LORD bless thee and keep thee: 25*

*The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:
26 The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.*

27 And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them.”

Furthermore, the blessings were also delivered by other priests after them as is shown below:

1 Sa 2:20 "And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said, the LORD give thee seed of this woman for the loan which is lent to the LORD. And they went unto their own home.”

2 Ch 30:27 "Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven.”

In the New Testament, similar blessings are often pronounced by the apostles and elders to the church, such as in:

1 Co 1:3 "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.”

2 Co 13:14 "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.”

Eph 6:23 "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Php 4:19 *“But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. 20 Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”*

1 Tim 1:2 *“Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

Heb 13:20 *“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. 21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”*

1 Pe 5:10 *“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. 11 To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

And such blessings are usually delivered by the Servants of God (Pastors) at the opening and the closing of a worship service in the church, aren't they?

When the author discussed these blessings of the priests with his big family, one of his younger sister immediately responded, *“Oh, I get it now! While attending the worship service in church I can concentrate from the beginning to the end, but oftentimes I wondered why during the delivery of blessings at the beginning and*

the end of the service I seemed to lose my awareness. I could not concentrate then, and regained consciousness only when I heard the preacher utter, 'Amen'".

Why so? Since Satan does not want us to be blessed! Therefore, whenever the author attends the worship service in church, he sincerely regards with attention the prayer of blessings. The author is seldom late in coming to church so as to observe the invocation and receive the opening blessings, and never leaves before the benediction, to receive the closing blessings in the worship service.

The pronouncement of the blessings at the opening and closing of a worship service, and the blessings uttered by God's servants (pastors and ministers) are actual, therefore we should not miss those blessings -- those are great blessings the Lord has provided for us.

Besides the prayer of blessings uttered by God's servants, we indeed can utter a prayer of blessings too, because all of us, as believers, are priests of God as described in 1 Pe 2:9 *"But*

ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

Therefore, as priests of God we must convey prayers of blessings to everyone, especially to people around us and particularly to our family members.

The Fourth Greatest Blessing: Family Worship

Mt 18:19 *“Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall **agree** as touching any thing that they shall ask, **it shall be done** for them of my Father which is in heaven. 20 For where **two or three** are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”* (KJV)

Or *“If two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. 2020 For where **two or three** gather in my name, there am I with them.”* (NIV)

Indeed, two persons who agree with each other are not necessarily from one family. Yet naturally we approve that married couples or members of one family are the easiest to agree one with another, since they bear and struggle

with mutual burdens. Likewise, when two or three individuals gather together in the name of the Lord Jesus they may not belong to one family, but the easiest is if two or three members of one family worship together.

God promises incredible blessings in Family Worship or Family Devotion, because it is said that *“Anything they ask for, it will be done for them”* or *“Whatever they request will be granted.”* Can we imagine the magnitude of this promise of blessings as it is said that God will grant anything we ask for?

So in 1 Corinthians 7:5a the Apostle Paul said, *“Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer.”* (KJV)

Or *“Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time so that you may devote yourselves to prayer.”* (NIV)

It is clear that *“ye may give yourselves to . . . prayer”* or *“you may devote yourselves to prayer”* in this verse refers to praying together, because if it is meant for each one to pray privately, it can be done separately, far apart from each other. For

more details about this can be read in the book **"Family Worship"**.

**The Fifth Greatest Blessing:
Tithing**

Mal 3:10 *"Bring ye all the **tithes** into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of host, if I will not **open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.**"*

11 *"And I will **rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.**"*

12 *"And all nations shall **call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.***

The verses above clearly state that to bring our tithes does not mean God wants to take something from us, rather by bringing our tithes faithfully God wants to give; He wants to bless us. Now there are three great blessings promised linked with tithing:

1. God promises to pour out His blessings abundantly.

2. God will protect us from loss or failure.

3. Our lives with our families will become a life which many people dreamt of, as "*a delightful land*". We know that a country consists of people, land, buildings, culture, occupations, climate, and some other things. What does it mean? God will make us and our families just the kind of people/families yearned after by many. "*Now, they are just what I want, what I wish.*" God will grant all members of our families health, success in business, harmonious household, good behavior and habits, and other blessings men wish for. So by giving our tithes, God promises His enormous blessings.

The Sixth Greatest Blessings:

To Help Building the House of the LORD

1 Ki 9:1 *"And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do,*

2 *That the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon.*

3 *And the LORD said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever, and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.*

4 *And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart and uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee and wilt keep my statutes and my judgements,*

5 *Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.”*

When Solomon had finished building the house of the LORD, the LORD appeared to Solomon for a second time and promised to establish the royal throne of Solomon as the LORD had promised to David, his father.

Build and Repair the House of the LORD

Let us read and meditate on the Book of Haggai. God said that if we pay attention only to our own work, own business and our own lives

and do not pay attention to the house of the LORD, He will not bless our work and occupation:

Hag 1:5 *“Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.*

6 ***Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.***

8 *Go up to the mountain, and **bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.***

9 ***Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.***

10 *Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit.*

11 *And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labor of thine hands.”*

Henceforth, in the following verses the LORD tells us to build and repair the house of the LORD and He will bless our work and occupation abundantly.

Hag 2:15 *“And now, I pray you, **consider from this day and upward, from before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the LORD,***

*16 Since those days were, when one came to **an heap of twenty measures, they were but ten:** when one came to the pressfat for to draw out **fifty vessels** out of the press, **there were but twenty.***

17 I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labours of your hands; yet ye turned not to me, saith the LORD.

*18 Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth month, **even from the day that the foundation of the LORD’s temple was laid, consider it.***

*19 Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, hath not brought forth: **from this day will I bless you.**”*

If we build and repair the house of the LORD, the LORD promises to bless us, not later, nor next year, nor next month, but even today, this very moment!

The current church where we attend the worship service is probably in good shape, even luxurious enough so that there is no need to make repairs. But so many churches in the rural areas, and the inlands, are in poor condition. Let's obey the LORD's command to build and

repair them and see how God will pour out His blessings on our work and occupation.

**The Seventh Great Blessing:
Offering of the Firstfruits**

Ezekiel 44:30 *“And the first of all the firstfruits of all things, and every oblation of all, of every sort of your oblations shall be the priests’: ye shall also give unto the priest the first of your dough, that he may cause the blessing to rest in thine house.”*

Offering of the firstfruits is brought to God as a sign of expressing our faith in God and our gratitude for His provision for us. It is an indication of our dependence entirely upon God, trusting Him solely in living our lives throughout the year(s).

When we bring the offering of the firstfruits, we draw God’s attention to add and pour out His divine blessings. Proverbs 3: 9 and 10 clearly say,

*“Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with **the firstfruits of all thine increase**: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.”*

The firstfruits can be the first payment we receive in our jobs, our first profit we make in our businesses and the like. Let us dedicate the firstfruits and look forward to the blessings God will pour out into our lives.

To Become Channels of Blessings

Indeed, blessings are not always material and worldly pleasures, but also spiritual. One of the spiritual blessings is when God bestows on us the grace to be a channel of His blessings as He has done on the churches of Macedonia, though they lived in difficult circumstances and were of meager income, God gave them a heart to share joyfully:

2 Co 8:1 *Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia.*

2 *How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.*

3 *For to their power,I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves.*

4 *Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering of the saints.*

5 *And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave they own selves to the Lord and unto us by the will of God.*