

November 3, 2002  
AM Service  
Patchogue Church of the Nazarene

“You Will Be A Blessing”  
Zech 8:13

As you have been an object of cursing among the nations, O Judah and Israel, so will I save you, and you will be a blessing. Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong."

A man is in bed with his wife when there is knocking on the door. He rolls over and looks at his clock. It's half past three in the morning.

"I'm not getting out of bed at this time," he thinks, and rolls over.

Then, a louder knock follows.

"Aren't you going to answer that?" says his wife.

So he drags himself out of bed, and goes downstairs. He opens the door and there is man standing at the door. It didn't take the homeowner long to realize the man was drunk.

"Hi there," slurs the stranger, "Can you give me a push?"

"No, get lost, it's half past three. I was in bed," says the man and slams the door.

He goes back up to bed and tells his wife what happened and she says "Dave, that wasn't very nice of you. Remember that night we broke down in the pouring rain on the way to pick the kids up from the baby-sitter and you had to knock on that man's house to get us started again? What would have happened if he'd cursed you and told us to get lost? What a blessing he was to us that night. Don't you think you should be a blessing too?

"But the guy was drunk," says the husband.

"It doesn't matter," says the wife. "He needs our help and it would be the Christian thing to help him."

So the husband gets out of bed again, gets dressed, and goes downstairs. He opens the door, and not being able to see the stranger anywhere he shouts, "Hey, do you still want a push?" and he hears a voice cry out, "Yeah, please!"

So, still being unable to see the stranger, he shouts: "Where are you?"  
And the stranger replies: "I'm over here, on your swing."  
(I hope in spite of that story you desire to be a blessing not a curse)

Israel and Judah had turned from God; they broke His laws and worshiped idols. They paid for this so severely that they became an object of curses. Nations even used their name as a curse ["God make thee like a Jew!" or "May you become like a Jew!"]. The name of Judah & Israel was synonymous with a curse. Not only did other nations consider Judah as an object of cursing, but also when God's people turned from God to idols (i.e. when they worshipped or wanted other things more than God) they gave unbelievers a reason to blaspheme the holy name of God. [Jer 2:11 Has a nation ever changed its gods? (Yet they are not gods at all.) But my people have exchanged their Glory for worthless idols]. Nations thought, spoke and wished evil of Judah and Israel and, because of their circumstances and the condition of their land, other nations saw them as cursed. They were disgraced. Their land was destroyed, their temple and other buildings ruined and they were taken into captivity. Just as Jeremiah had recorded, (Jer 24:9 NLT) I will make them an object of horror and evil to every nation on earth. They will be disgraced and mocked, taunted and cursed, wherever I send them.

But God did not forget His people. Just as He promised in love and mercy, He restored His people. In His loving - kindness, instead of being the pattern of cursing, they would become a model of blessing; that, people would say, "May you be as blessed as the children of Israel, whom the Lord of hosts has favored above all the rest of mankind!"

I would like to turn our attention from ancient Israel to those who would now be called the people of God. God still wants His people to be a blessing instead of an object of cursing. So let's look at this verse from Zechariah as it applies to us today: "As you have been an object of cursing ... so will I save you, and you will be a blessing."

### **1. You have been an object of cursing**

If God says I will make you a blessing that must mean we were not so once.

a. I think first of before I was saved ("I will save you, *and* [then] you will be a blessing."). Some of us (before we saw our need for Jesus) were a heartache to our families. We can all look back with sorrow to our sinful past and its effect on those we love (perhaps our past sins still have consequences for our family and us today). We can not undo the evil we have done to others. Thank God that in Jesus my past sins are forgiven but I regret things I did before I was saved by Jesus and given a new life.

b. Yet, as I reflect, there is another sorrow that causes deep regret; namely, those things done since accepting Christ when I wasn't what Christ wanted me to be; When I did not do what Christ wanted me to do; When I was less than a blessing to others. There are times when we give into our fears rather than motivated by love and our fears caused us to miss precious opportunities to serve and share Christ.

God help us to turn our regret into practical repentance. Let your tears of regret, sorrow repentance fall as you recall the sad fact that you were a curse to others instead of a blessing even since you have known Christ. Such tears are likely to lead you to change your course of action for the future, so that...

## **2. You will be a blessing**

How can we be a blessing to others?

- a. First by consistent Christian conduct, a behavior that reflects what Christ would have you do. You are to be an example to others.
- b. In addition to that you will be a blessing if you are telling others about the Good News of Jesus (that God loves us but our sin separates us from God. That Jesus is God who came to earth to take onto Himself our sins, and died to take our penalty. Then was raised from the dead so that we could be forgiven and given new life and the hope of eternal life. This is the good news for all who will believe and accept it.).
- c. You will also be a blessing when you know of a brother or sister struggling and you go to them with words of encouragement or reproof...as long as you do it in love. Or you know of someone hurting and you bring words of comfort.
- d. You are a blessing when you meet a physical need that someone has (as well as emotional and spiritual needs).
- e. You will be a blessing if you will do the things that will help you to grow spiritually, or that will develop your gifts and talents so that you can be even a greater blessing.

You are a blessing when you are serving, Christ, His Body, the Church and His work in the World.

Be a blessing wherever you are whatever you are doing.

Let's look at one last statement in our text:

## **3. So will I save you**

I have already alluded to this, but it is the key to being a blessing instead of an object of cursing. You will not reach your full potential to be a blessing until:

- a. You are saved from your sins and notice that God says, "So will *I* save you." God in Jesus saves us when we accept Him by faith and...
- b. God through Jesus sanctifies us by faith also. Salvation is the forgiveness of sin and Sanctification is complete devotion to God. Are you 100% surrendered to the Lordship of Christ? In other words does He only "calls the shots" in your life? Only a complete and entire commitment and devotion to Christ will make you a useful Christian and a blessing. For it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." (1 Peter 1:16). Are you sanctified or set apart for God? Does His Spirit influence you and what you do? If so you will be a blessing to God and to others.

God wants to change us from a cursing to a blessing by saving us. Full salvation is to first turn from our sinful lifestyles to faith in Him. Only Jesus can forgive sin and give us a new heart, a new attitude a new life that will bless others. But we must also ask God to have full reign in our lives. When we are willing to give God our all He will give us His all – His Spirit to empower us to be a blessing.

“As you have been an object of cursing ... so will I save you, and you will be a blessing.” The verse ends: “Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong.” That is don’t be afraid but encouraged. Believe and do the work of God and be a blessing.

---

Have you accepted Jesus as your Savior?  
What was your life like before you met Jesus?  
How have you changed?

Have you committed yourself to Jesus as Lord (Sanctifier) of your life?

Are you a blessing to God and others?  
What will you do this week (today) to be a symbol and source of blessing instead of cursing?