

AF A9 BIBLE STUDY: “Rewards of Life” Luke 6

Scripture of Lesson: Luke’s Gospel 6:20-26

1. Blessings promised to Christians/ God’s people

- a. The seven verses are addressed to the disciples of Jesus --the select apostles and other believers.
- b. So-called ‘beatitudes’ are promises of blessings in an after-life --“In that day” [v. 23], which apparently refers to the Day of the Lord, that is the second advent of the Messiah.
- c. List of blessings -- suffering of misfortunes now but blessings later.
 - 1) Though you might be poor on account of me, you will be richly rewarded when the kingdom of God will be yours in that day. [v. 20]
 - 2) Though you might hunger while following me, you will be filled [v. 21].
 - 3) Though you might weep now on account of me, you will laugh [v. 21].
 - 4) Though you may suffer hatred, ostracization, and discrimination on my account, your reward will be great in heaven in that day [v. 23].
 - 5) Though you may be defamed and criticized like the prophets of OT days, your reward will be great in the last day [v. 26].
- d. List of woes
 - 1) Though you might be rich materially now, you will have no reward if your riches are all your present rewards [v. 24].
 - 2) Though you might be full and have a merry life here on the earth, you will have sorrow and weeping in the last day unless you accept Me as your Lord and Savior [v. 25].
 - 3) Though you may be lauded by many and enjoy popularity, you will only have woes unless you honor God and follow the narrow path of Jesus here on the earth [v. 26].
- e. Fulfillment of the Lord’s rewards will be in God’s time, during this lifetime and/or in end times.

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.” [Gen. 15:1] -- God has blessed Abraham during his life and after his death to his descendants. God is still blessing the world through Abraham’s seed, Jesus Christ.

Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you today; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today, to go after other gods which you have not known [Deut. 11: 26-28] -- As this choice between God’s blessings and His curses was laid before the people of Israel during their wilderness journey, the same choice is laid before us during our life here on the earth. Our choice will determine our eternal future.

What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived — the things God has prepared for those who love him [1 Cor. 2:9] – God is the creator and ruler of heaven and earth. He has prepared unimaginable rewards for His children who love Him in this life and in eternity.

And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. [Rev. 22:12] -- God will not fail to reward those who are faithful to Him during this life with His blessings and reward the evil people who reject God and Jesus Christ with eternal woes.

2. Goals of life we pursue

- a. The nature of God’s blessings and curses -- not immediate, may not be during lifetime
 - 1) Examples of delayed blessings

- a) Abraham's successor, Isaac, was born 25 years after the first promise of God to Abram and 14 years after the birth of Ishmael.
- b) Conquest of the Promised Land of today's Palestine and Israel happened some 400 years after the promise to Abram.

But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete. [Gen. 15:16]

2) God never fails to fulfill His promises

- a. God promised never to destroy the humanity with a flood again. He set rainbows as the sign of this promise:

And God said: "This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud." [Gen. 9: 12-14]

- b. God does not forget the covenant He made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which impacts the entire humanity through Christ Jesus to the end of the world and beyond.

He is the Lord our God; His judgments are in all the earth. He remembers His covenant forever, The word which He commanded, for a thousand generations [Psalm 105: 7-8]

b. Human goals and how we set our life's goals

Human goals are, in general, limited to this lifetime, and our achievements fade away after death.

All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, because the breath of the Lord blows upon it; Surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever. [Isaiah 40: 6-8]

c. How God's faithful people chose their goals of life

- 1) Joseph did not hold grudge against his brothers for selling him to Egypt because he saw God's purpose in the events of his life:

But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. [Gen. 45:5]

- 2) Daniel in captivity in Babylon: *But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. [Daniel 1:8]*

- 3) Apostle Paul: *Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing. [2 Tim 4:8]*

Discussion topics:

1. *What goals of life have we set for us and how sincerely are we pursuing to achieve them?*
2. *How willing are we to suffer persecution, disadvantages or losses because we are Christians in view of our eternal rewards?*