

THE BLESSING OF GODLY SEED

David Baker, prepared for the Presbytery fellowship word, 14 November 2021
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Introduction

Hello, everyone. You will remember that in our last session we considered Paul's admonition to the Corinthian congregation. He spoke to them as a congregation who should have been part of a lampstand church in the region of Achaia, and up into Macedonia. He exhorted them, as a congregation called to be part of a lampstand church, to be a manifestation of the bride of Christ in their particular locality.

We made the point that it is God the Father who places *a son of God* in the fellowship of the body of Christ, according to His own sovereign will and determination; and that the church, as the bride of Christ, is taken from the body of Christ.

It is also the Father who places each *family* in the community of the church, in a particular locality, to be part of the local manifestation of the bride of Christ.

We know that the church is a house to house fellowship that functions under the headship of Jesus Christ. That headship is expressed to each lampstand church through 'stars', or presbyteries, in His right hand. The church is a *house to house* fellowship and, as the bride of Christ, it is the context for the *blessing of Abraham* to be inherited by each believing family.

We also remember that the church, as the bride of Christ, is likened to a *city*. It is 'the Jerusalem from above' that is 'coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband'. Gal 4:26. Rev 21:2.

The first person who received the revelation of this 'bride city' was Abraham. The Scripture records that he lived in the land of promise with his family, dwelling in tents, as though it was a foreign land, because he was looking for the city which has foundations, and whose Builder and Maker is God. Heb 11:9-10.

In this session, we will begin to consider the inheritance of 'the blessing of Abraham' within *believing households* that belong to the community of the church, as the bride of Christ.

The blessing of Abraham in believing families

The blessing of Abraham is *the promise of the Spirit* that is inherited through faith. Gal 3:14.

The Lord promised Abraham that in his Seed – that is, in Christ – all of the *families* of the earth would be blessed. Gen 12:3. Gen 22:18. Gal 3:16.

This blessing is received in Christ, and through the church, because the church has been formed to be the helper comparable to Christ, as His bride.

The key point in this session is that if, on their wedding day, a married couple have received, and then *continue* to receive, a 'remnant of the Spirit', as those who belong to the church as the bride of Christ, their children will receive the blessing of Abraham – the promise of the Spirit – while they are still in the mother's womb.

Immediately after they are conceived and become a new identity in their mother's womb, a child is adopted by the heavenly Father, regenerated by the Son, and then receives the Holy Spirit, so that they are *born of God*. The *life* of God has germinated in their heart.

Having been born of God, they are also immediately caught up to God and His throne to become a member of *His household*, which is the body of Christ. This means that their citizenship is in heaven, *before* they are born into this world. This is an amazing point!

The Lord declared through the prophet Malachi, that He gives a remnant of the Spirit to a believing married couple because He seeks godly seed. Mal 2:15.

'A remnant of the Spirit' is that specific and unique portion of the Spirit that belongs exclusively to a married couple, and to godly-seed children who are born as *sons of God*. They are the *possessors of the divine nature*.

The adoption belonged to the believing descendants of Abraham

In this session, we will read some of the key verses which support and explain this wonderful point – particularly in the book of Isaiah, and in the Psalms.

In his letter to the Galatians, the apostle Paul referred to Isaac as 'the son of promise', because he was born according to the promise of the Lord to Abraham and Sarah. Gal 4:28.

However, more than this, he was called 'the son of promise' because, while he was still in his mother's womb, he received *the adoption* that had been promised to Abraham.

Adoption is 'the right' to the *full inheritance of a son of God*. This includes an immortal and incorruptible resurrection body for the new heavens and the new earth.

As we have considered, the promise of adoption then belonged to *all* of the *natural* descendants of Abraham through the lineage of Isaac, providing they continued to walk in the faith of their father, Abraham.

For the natural Israelites, circumcision was a sign in their flesh of the Everlasting Covenant that God had made with the flesh of Abraham.

In the book of Romans, substantiating that the adoption did belong to the descendants of Abraham, Paul wrote, concerning the Israelites, 'To whom pertain [or belong] the adoption, [also] the glory, the covenants, the giving of the Law, the service of God, and the promises.' Rom 9:4.

When a child was conceived to believing parents in the nation of Israel, the father immediately sanctified the child as an 'adopted son'.

They were known, and called, *by name*. This is what it means to be 'sanctified in the womb'. They were known and called by name, even though they were not yet born of God by receiving the Holy Spirit.

We know that that belongs exclusively to the New Covenant, and that it was not possible until the offering of Christ was complete, and He gave the Holy Spirit.

The adoption - I am the Lord's

The prophet Isaiah clearly proclaimed that adoption belonged to *every child* who was born into a believing household in the nation of Israel. Each child was called and sanctified by name, and could confidently proclaim, 'I belong to the Lord.'

In Isaiah Chapter 44 we read, 'Yet *hear now*, O Jacob My servant, and Israel whom I have chosen [This is an important point that we need to hear,

and to let distil on us]. Thus says the Lord who made you and formed you from the womb, who will help you: "Fear not, O Jacob My servant; and you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen".' Isa 44:1-2.

Jeshurun is another name for Israel. He was speaking to Israel here.

' "For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants [that is, the Spirit of the Son], and My blessing on your offspring [or, your children]".' Isa 44:3.

This was the first phase of receiving the inheritance of the blessing of Abraham, which is 'adoption'.

' "They will spring up among the grass like willows by the watercourses." One will say, "I am the Lord's".' Isa 44:4.

This particularly refers to the *children*, or the *offspring*. He declared, 'I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, and My blessing on your offspring [or your children]'. Isa 44:3.

Then *those children* 'will say, "I am the Lord's"; and another will call himself by the name of Jacob.' Isa 44:5.

They belong to the nation of Israel; but, because they have received the adoption, they firstly belong *to the Lord*, and can proclaim, 'I am the Lord's.'

'Another will write with his hand, "The Lord's", and name himself by the name of Israel.' Isa 44:5.

Moses – received the adoption in his mother's womb

We note that this is completely consistent with the personal testimony of Moses, David, and Jeremiah; and indeed, of all of the Old Testament believers.

The Old Testament believers were the beneficiaries of everything that belonged to the 'prevenient grace phase' of salvation, including *adoption* and *regeneration*.

Remembering that Moses, like Abraham, was a God-fearer, and was called 'the friend of God, we read, 'Moses said to the Lord, "See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people.' But you have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, 'I know you by name [sanctification; part of

adoption], and you have also found grace in My sight'." Exo 33:11-12.

According to the prevenient grace of God, Moses was sanctified according to his name, while he was still in the womb of his mother. We read in the book of Hebrews that, when Moses was born, his parents observed that he was 'a beautiful child'. Heb 11:23.

Of course, this did not refer only to his physical appearance. The point for Moses' parents was that they observed that *this child had received the adoption*, and so, he *belonged to the Lord*. He was a beautiful child because he had the right to the *full inheritance of a son of God*.

David - sanctified by name in his mother's womb

In the same way, David wrote, 'For You formed my inward parts'. Psa 139:13.

He was referring to having received *identity* from the Lord – his *spirit*. His spirit was his identity.

He also received his *soul*, which was the possession of his identity, and the *capacity to express* himself through all the various faculties that belong to our soul.

'You formed my inward parts [that is, the inner person]; You covered me in my mother's womb' – referring here to the formation in the womb of the outer man, the physical body. Psa 139:13.

'I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well.' Psa 139:14.

He continued to make a further point. 'My frame.' He was referring to his heavenly body now; not his earthly, or physical, body: 'My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skilfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.' Psa 139:15.

We know that 'the lowest parts of the earth' is different from the womb of a woman. Jesus Christ descended into the lowest parts of the earth on His offering journey; particularly between midday and 3.00 pm, as He hung on the cross.

While He was in the lowest parts of the earth, He was authoring for us every day of our lives, learning our obedience and fulfilling the works of our sonship, not only in this age, but also for the age to come.

David understood this point, even though he lived prior to the offering of Christ. He understood that the offering of Christ had *authored every day of his life*; and that while he was still *in his mother's womb*, he was sanctified by name and set on a pathway according to the days that had been fashioned for him by Christ.

He declared, 'Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they were all written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.' Psa 139:16.

Jeremiah – known before conception; sanctified in his mother's womb

Jeremiah is another good example. The Lord said to him, 'Before I formed you.' Jer 1:5.

That is, before everything that David spoke of: before the 'inward parts' of Jeremiah were formed, and before he began to be 'covered in his mother's womb'.

The Lord said, 'I already *knew you*, by name.' Our name was discussed by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in the fellowship of the Everlasting Covenant, before the foundation of the world. The Lord was saying to Jeremiah, 'Before you began to exist, I *knew you* by name.'

Then He said, 'Before you were born, I *sanctified you*.' Jer 1:5.

The Lord was identifying two waypoints here. He was saying, 'There was a point where you began *to be*. You received *identity*, and you began to be formed in the womb. And *before that* I knew you by *name*.'

But, between that point, and when you were born, I was *sanctifying you*.' So Jeremiah was sanctified by the Lord, according to his name, in the womb. 'I ordained you a prophet to the nations.' Jer 1:5.

Paul – transition of the blessing of Abraham from Old Covenant to New

Paul was also another interesting example for us. In his letter to the Galatians, he recounted his testimony. He reflected on the course of his life, saying, 'But when it pleased God, who separated me [or, sanctified me] from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood.' Gal 1:15-16.

Paul is an interesting example because he was born *prior* to the offering of Christ, and received adoption in his mother's womb. He was sanctified from his mother's womb – sanctified according to his name.

He presumably grew up in a believing Jewish household, with the right to the full inheritance of a son of God.

But, when Jesus Christ died, and brought the Old Covenant to an end, he *lost* the adoption. He lost the right to the inheritance of sonship, along with all of the other children and people in the nation of Israel.

Following the offering of Christ, as we know, the *only* way to enter the kingdom of heaven is to be 'born of water, and of the Spirit', as Jesus had already said to Nicodemus.

'Unless you are born again you will not see the kingdom of God.' Joh 3:3. And, 'Truly, truly, I [also] say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.' Joh 3:5.

Following the offering of Christ, Paul had lost the adoption. We know that he became an enemy of Christ until the Lord sovereignly confronted him on the road to Damascus and he was born of God, and became a member of the body of Christ.

How much more? – the blessing of Abraham in New Covenant families

When we recognise that a child who was conceived under the Old Covenant received the adoption in the womb, because of the faith of their parents, it would be unthinkable to suggest that a child receives nothing in the womb under the fellowship of the New Covenant.

If this were the case, the New Covenant would be a major step backwards when compared to the Old Covenant, rather than being a major upgrade. We know that the New Covenant *is* a major upgrade.

As Paul said many times through the book of Hebrews, the *new* is 'how much more!' Heb 9:14. Heb 7:22. This was his major theme, in many ways, as he compared the old with the new.

For example, he said, 'For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, *how much more* shall the blood of Christ, who

through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?' Heb 9:13-14.

If, under the Old Covenant, a child received adoption in the womb – the right to the full inheritance of a son of God – then the New Covenant is a major upgrade. It is 'how much more!'

The apostle Peter proclaimed this on the Day of Pentecost. Speaking about *the promise of the Spirit*, which all of the Old Testament believers were looking forward to, but had not yet received, which is the *full blessing of Abraham*, Peter said, 'For the promise is to you and [also] to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.' Act 2:39.

The early church understood that children in a believing family receive the blessing of Abraham

The early church in *Jerusalem* evidently understood this. They believed this. This is also consistent with Paul's teaching among the *Gentile* churches.

We know, for example, that he proclaimed to the Philippian jailer, when the jailer asked him what he must do to be saved, 'You need to believe on Jesus Christ, and you *and your household* will be saved.' Act 16:30-31.

In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul even went as far as saying that even *one* believing parent is able to sanctify the family so that the children are not 'unblessed heathen'; they are 'holy', or 'sanctified'. 'For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.' ICo 7:14.

Turning from the gospel of sonship violates the sanctification of family and of the fellowship of the church

Sadly, this wonderful truth concerning the *blessing of Abraham that belongs to children* in a believing household, was evidently lost when the Gentile church *turned aside from the gospel of sonship* that they had received from the apostle Paul, and embraced, in its stead, Greek philosophy.

We know, too, that they turned aside from the fellowship of the *agape* meal, and embraced all

kinds of *sacramental practices*, including the eucharist.

At the same time, any understanding of the *blessing of Abraham in a household* was lost, and was soon replaced by sacramental practices such as infant baptism.

All of these things were a major violation of the *sanctification of a Christian family* and the *order* that God had established for the blessing of Abraham to be received in every house.

It was also a major violation of *the fellowship of the church*, which is to be a *house to house fellowship* under the *headship of Christ*.

We note that the same lack of understanding concerning the blessing of Abraham in a Christian household is present in every denomination or religious group that does not embrace the gospel of sonship.

In the evangelical tradition, for example, it is generally held that a child is unsaved until they make a personal response to the Lord at some point, at an appropriate age. Such a belief leaves Christian parents with no assurance concerning the salvation of their young children. It also leaves children, as they grow up, quite confused concerning whether or not they have made an appropriate response to the Lord, and what an appropriate response to the Lord should 'look like'.

Children born as sons of God, members of His household, whilst in the womb

We are greatly rejoicing that the Lord has been restoring the gospel of sonship to us. We have come to understand how the blessing of Abraham is inherited by each believing family that is in the community of the church, as the bride of Christ.

As it was under the Old Covenant, the child who is conceived by believing parents under the New Covenant is immediately adopted by the Father and regenerated by the Son when He comes into their heart, crying out, 'Abba! Father!'.

However, *much more than this*, Christ gives them the *Holy Spirit* so that they cry out, 'Abba! Father!', as a *son of God*, while they are *still in the womb*. This is their first cry! It comes well before they are physically born and take that first gulp of air and begin to cry in the delivery room.

The first cry is the cry of 'Abba! Father!' when they are born *as a son of God*, still in the womb. Immediately following this cry, 'Abba! Father!', they are also caught up to God in His throne, to become a *member of His household*, which is the *body of Christ*.

As I said earlier, *their citizenship is in heaven*, long before their birth certificate is filled out as a child who has been born into this world.

The prophet Isaiah described this, saying, 'Before she was in labour.' Isa 66:7.

This refers to a married woman who belongs to the community of the church, which is the bride of Christ.

'Before she was in labour, she gave birth; before her pain came, she delivered a male child.' Isa 66:7.

This is a very unusual verse, because we know that labour pains always come before birth.

Isaiah was declaring that a son of God is born of God in the womb of their mother, *before* their mother experiences natural birthing pains, or labour, as the child is born into the world.

The prophet continued to say that this is a most extraordinary thing: 'Who has heard such a thing?' – a child being born as a son of God before they are born into this world. Isa 66:8.

'Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labour [this is 'the Jerusalem from above', on Mount Zion, the bride of Christ], she gave birth to her children.' Isa 66:8.

Isaiah spoke of the blessing of Abraham in Christian families

Referring to the natural labour of a believing mother, which occurs *after* the child has already been born of God, Isaiah also said, 'They shall not labour in vain, *nor bring forth children for trouble*; for they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring [or, their children] with them.' Isa 65:23.

In this passage, the Lord explained that a family that is *inheriting the blessing of Abraham* does not bring forth children for trouble.

This is because their children *do not belong to the world*, which is in bondage to the fear of death. Their children do not belong to the world that has

already been taken out by Christ, with its sin, into the sea of God's forgetfulness.

Even though their children are *in* the world, and are born *into* the world, *they belong to the kingdom of God*. They belong to the body of Christ, and to the Jerusalem from above. Their citizenship is in heaven.

As Isaiah declared, they are 'blessed', because their parents are blessed. 'They shall be *the descendants of the blessed of the Lord*.'

This is a family that is receiving the blessing of Abraham and, because of that, 'their offspring [their children] with them.'

The Psalms declare the glorious inheritance of the blessing of Abraham in families

Psalms 87 is another wonderful psalm that refers to those who have been born into Christian families *who belong to Zion*. Having been born, they are enrolled, or 'registered', in heaven. Psalms 87:5-6.

'A Psalm of the sons of Korah. A song. His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.' Psalms 87:1-2.

As we have been considering, adoption belonged to the households who were part of the nation of Israel, and to those households who were walking in the faith of Abraham. In this Psalm, these believing households are referred to as 'the dwellings of Jacob' or 'the dwellings of Israel'.

However, the psalmist rejoiced that the Lord loves 'the gates of Zion' – the 'bride city' – *more* than the dwellings of Jacob.

This is because the promise of *the Spirit* is given to children who belong to *families in Zion*, as the bride of Christ. This is 'how much more!'

The psalmist described this inheritance as 'glorious things', and exhorted us to meditate on this. 'Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God! Selah [meaning, 'think on this'].', Psalms 87:3.

It is good for us to meditate and simply to *rejoice* in this wonderful truth that has been restored to us as believing families.

Psalms 147 declared this same truth. 'Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem [referring to the Jerusalem from above]! Praise your God, O Zion! For He has strengthened the bars of your gates; He has blessed your children within you.' Psalms 147:12-13.

That is a definitive statement, expressing the reality that the blessing of Abraham is being inherited by 'your children'.

Returning to Psalm 87, the psalmist continued with one of the most definitive passages in the Scriptures concerning *the birth of sons of God* within *families that belong to Zion*.

'And of Zion it will be said, "This one [referring to the children] and that one were born in her; and the Most High Himself shall establish her".' Psalms 87:5.

Remember that He is *God the Father* – 'the Most High Himself' – who *establishes* the bride city by placing families *in the community of the church*, which is *a house to house fellowship* in a particular locality. He does this according to His own sovereign will and determination.

It is those who belong to the community of the church, because they have been *placed there* by the heavenly Father, who are 'registered in heaven'. Psalms 87:6.

Members of His church are registered in heaven

Paul proclaimed that those who have come to *Mount Zion*, and to the *heavenly Jerusalem*, are also part of the *church of the firstborn* which is registered in heaven.

'You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn.' Hebrews 12:22-23. It is 'the church of the firstborn' because the church is the bride of Christ who is the Firstborn Son of God.

'The church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven.' Hebrews 12:23. We know that when a son of God is baptised into Christ, they are raised and seated with Him in heavenly places. Ephesians 2:6. This is when they are registered in heaven.

But, for a child who is born into a family that is *already registered in heaven* as part of the church of the firstborn, they are born as a son of God and are *immediately* caught up to God in His throne, to be *registered in heaven* while they are *still in the womb*. This is an amazing point!

Maintaining our registration in heaven

However, it is important to recognise that our registration in heaven must be *an ongoing reality*.

We could liken it to an 'ongoing census'. By way of illustration, we remember that just before the birth of Jesus, the Roman emperor at the time, Caesar Augustus, sent out an edict that every person needed to be *registered* in the city of their birth. That is why Joseph and Mary were on their journey from Nazareth in Galilee, to Bethlehem in the region of Judea. Bethlehem was Joseph's city.

In the same way, we need to *continue to present ourselves*, and to *participate* in the *fellowship* of the *agape* meal to ensure that we maintain our 'registration' in heaven.

This is because it is possible, as we know, to *draw back* and to *fall from* the heavenly places.

In a similar way, we know that all children who are born in Zion will need to make their *own* commitment, when they come of age, to remain in the community of the church.

If a child has been raised in the nurture and admonition of the Lord by their Christian parents, and they have learned to participate in the community of the church, this should be a straightforward decision for them.

The psalmist referred to those who were *born into believing families*, and we know that many do choose to leave the community of the church.

However, the psalmist referred to those who were born into believing families and *choose to remain* in the fellowship and community of the church. 'Then the Lord will record, when He registers the peoples [or, in His 'ongoing census' of those who are participating in the fellowship of the *agape* meal in the heavenly places]: "*This one was born there*".' Psa 87:6.

And they have been part of this since they were in their mother's womb. That is a great point of rejoicing, isn't it! Again, the psalmist said, 'Selah.' Think on this!

The blessings to a believing household

We will conclude by reading Psalm 128. This Psalm describes the blessing of Abraham that belongs to a believing house in Zion.

'Blessed is everyone who *fears the Lord*, who *walks in His ways*.' Psa 128:1.

We know that the fear of the Lord *motivates* and *compels* us to *continually draw near* to Him, and to embrace *our unique participation* in the fellowship of

His offering and His sufferings, so that we are walking in *His way*.

We will be walking in the way that Christ has *established for us* on His offering journey from the garden of Gethsemane and the cross.

'When you eat the labour of your hands, you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you.' Psa 128:2.

This describes a man who is not out battling, and trying and striving to *beat the curse*. They are satisfied with their life; with the labour of their hands; with the provision of the Lord toward them; and with the provision of the Lord toward their household.

'Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the very heart of your house, your children like olive plants all around your table.' Psa 128:3.

The first part of this verse concerning the wife being a fruitful vine, is a wonderful point of focus. We have often considered the significance of a wife being 'a fruitful vine in the very heart of a house'.

In contrast to a woman who imposes her *own* desire upon her husband, and seeks to craft the identity of her children in her *own* image, this woman is *submitted* to her husband. She *guards the culture* of the home. She multiplies the fruit of *godliness* in her children so that when her children grow up, and as they are growing up, they recognise this, and they say concerning her that she is 'the blessed of the Lord'.

We also focus on the second part of this verse, and highlight the wonderful point concerning the children being '*olive plants* around the table'.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul used the picture, or the symbol, of an olive tree to describe *the kingdom of God*.

He was making the point that the Jews, as the natural branches, have been *broken off* from the olive tree because of their unbelief. And the Gentiles have been *grafted in*, like wild olive branches.

But the natural branches will also be *regathered* and *grafted in* – Jew and Gentile in the one kingdom of God. Rom 11:17-24.

The psalmist indicated that the children in a God-fearing household *belong to the kingdom of God*. They are sons of God. They are like little olive plants

around the dinner table of a family that is committed to the *agape* fellowship within the community of the church.

That is a wonderful picture, isn't it! The psalmist proclaimed that having children who belong to the kingdom of God is a great *blessing* for the man who fears the Lord.

'Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord.' Psa 128:4.

Significantly, this blessing is *in the family*, but it *comes from Zion*, because the family *belongs* to the heavenly Jerusalem on Mount Zion. That is, the family *belongs* to the community of the church, which is a house to house fellowship under the headship of Christ.

The children are not being raised in the church. They are being raised *in the family*; and then they are learning to *participate* in the community of the church, which is a *house to house fellowship*.

'The Lord bless you out of Zion, and may you see the good of Jerusalem all the days of your life.' Psa 128:5.