
Speak Life, Not Death

August 21, 2004

Thus says the LORD, "Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, Where the good way is, and walk in it; And you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.' [JEREMIAH 6:16] [NAS]

The path of God is ancient and is the way of godliness and righteousness, it was the way of the patriarchs, but the people in Jeremiah's day would not walk in these ancient paths just as most of us today will not walk in God's ancient paths. We have the choice to follow God's true way or a way of our own choosing. As Jeremiah said you will find "rest for your soul" if you follow God's ancient paths and walk them. As the verse above in Jeremiah tells us; we have a choice of two paths, one the path of God and the other the path of Satan, it's our choice. Over the centuries we have gotten further and further away from God's ancient paths.



~Departing from God and His Ancient Paths~

We have departed further and further from the ancient paths of God. As we departed from God and sin entered the world, the life span has continued to decline. Take for example, even after sin entered the world the life span was around 900 years. By the time of Noah after the flood it was 600 years and by the time of Moses 120 years and today around 80 years. There should be some type of light that goes off in our head by now. The simple answer is; "God and His Ancient Paths." We are to do as God instructed us in His holy Bible.

The Hebrew word for good is "TOV" as used in this passage from Jeremiah, it has several meanings; pleasant, well-off, happy, cheerful, merry and excellent. These are the characteristics that we will have when walking in God's ancient paths as well as finding "rest for your souls" as recorded in Jeremiah. This "rest for our souls" was even quoted in the New Testament by Jesus, In Matthew it says, *"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and*

YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. [MATTHEW 11:29] [NAS] This even applies today; the ancient paths of God have not been done away with. Follow them for “rest for your souls.”



Over the generations we have decided that we do not have to follow God’s ancient paths, we have gone our own ways and the result is found in Hosea 4:6, *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.* [NAS]

Folks you can’t get away from the “law of God.” Just as God has set in motion the perfect masterpiece of the universal, so are the laws of God to be followed by man.

~Loosing our Identity and Destiny~

We have lost two things among many others. “Who Am I?” and, “Where am I going?” Our “Identity and Destiny.” Today we find people that have no idea “who they are,” and “where they are going.” They wonder from birth to death, searching for the answer to the question, “Who am I and what am I doing here,” and “What is my purpose here on earth?” Their Identity and Destiny is unknown to them.

In America we have not walked down God’s ancient paths, and as a result many areas of our society, as well as personal and family life seem overwhelming at times. Therefore spiritual, emotional, financial, family, and health needs go unmet. We become self-focused and greedy after gain as we are told in Jeremiah 6:13; *“For from the least of them even to the greatest of them, Everyone is greedy for gain, And from the prophet even to the priest Everyone deals falsely.* [NAS]

We are not helping people when we attempt to bring healing to the brokenness in people in a superficial way. We are attempting to remove their guilt and pain without dealing with the root causes of the problem. We are speaking “peace, peace” when there is not peace with God. Jeremiah tells us this in Chapter 6, verse 14; *“They have healed the brokenness of My people superficially, Saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ But there is no peace.* [NAS] Today, we want instant pain relief, we are an impatient society. We are unwilling to deal with the root causes. We make daily choices based on the instant relief and not thinking about the root problem. Today we can’t wait to take a pill for some minor pain or maybe a headache, the pill

removes the pain but we fail to treat the deeper problem. What caused the minor



pain or headache? We are treating the symptom and not the cause.

People are looking for the short-term solution and not the longer-term cause, so it's one short-term bad decision to another short-term bad decision.

Jeremiah urges us to seek after the "ancient paths" where the "good way is." *Thus says the LORD, "Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, Where the good way is, and walk in it; And you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'* [JEREMIAH 6:16] [NAS] And what is this good way and how do we find rest for our souls, the answer is; Jesus Christ. It's all about Him. We need to get right with God through our Savior Jesus Christ.

'For My people have forgotten Me, They burn incense to worthless gods And they have stumbled from their ways, From the ancient paths, To walk in bypaths, Not on a highway, [JEREMIAH 18:15] [NAS] One definition from the dictionary for bypath is - the long way around. Jeremiah tells us again that we are making the wrong choices, we have forgotten God's ancient ways and instead of taking the interstate, we take the dusty, bumpy road, the long way around.



"By smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and take action. [DANIEL 11:32] [NAS] As we look at this verse in Daniel, we have to know our God in order to make those correct decisions. There is no other way to follow the ancient paths but by God's ways. We will need the full armor of God to fight the devil's schemes. The devil has started all these evil schemes that are traps for us if we are not in His Word. Jesus forewarned us of the devil. Reading in John it should be clear what Jesus said about the devil, here it is; *"You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him.*

Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. [JOHN 8:44] [NAS] Do not mess with the devil, don't listen to him and don't do what he tells you to do. How do we fight the devil and his schemes? Paul tells us in EPHESIANS 6:10-12, starting with verse 10 *Finally, be strong in*

the Lord and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. [NAS] If you do not follow God's ancient paths you leave yourself open to the devil and his schemes. When the devil devises schemes in our life, it just automatically works without any maintenance from the devil. It's on auto pilot, until you put on the armor of God and have the strongmen principle in your life to help you overcome the schemes of the devil.

~The Strongman Principle~



The strongmen principle can be applied to all of us. Take for example; when we are married there is a spiritual bond of husband and wife, the husband becomes the strongman of the wife. Then the parents are the strongmen of the children, grandchildren and maybe even the great grandchildren. When the strongman is bound, (parents) then the devil can take control of the children. This is the reason that strong spiritual parents are necessary to keep the devil from getting our children. It's easy for the devil to take control when there is no defense and the parents are not there to protect the child. I remember what sister Nicole said several weeks ago “The devil is after the family.” When the family is broken apart, then it is easy for Satan to step in with his schemes and lies.

~Who are we to minister to? ~



It has been said that each generation is to minister to his or her generation, but that is not true, we are to minister to the present generation as well as to at least the next two generations; our children and grandchildren and possibility the third generation if we are blessed enough to have great grandchildren. We are the strongmen of this generation that have been commissioned to protect our future generations. We would hope to leave this generation and the future generations better equipped spiritually in order for them to fight the devil and his schemes. By default, we accept the devil's plan of lies and schemes if we do not make a choice for Jesus Christ. Our choice is already made if

we don't turn from our wicked ways and accept God's ancient paths. Instead of using the ancient paths of God, we have created and continued our own ways of ceremonies, habits, customs and laws. Disregarding God's ancient paths that He set in motion thousands of years ago. God had placed these culture ceremonies, customs, habits and laws so that we would know our identity and destiny. So that we would know who we are and what we are doing here. I don't think God ever wanted this world to be as complicated as it is today. I believe it is just another one of Satan's schemes to void us of our blessings that God wants us to have.

~Blessings From God~

We need the blessings of God. Our culture has gotten away from the blessings of God. God started blessings many years ago with the first man and woman; Adam and Eve, it says, "God blessed them." Look at Genesis 1:28, *God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."* [GENESIS 1:28] [NAS]

There are many stories of blessings in the Bible, how about Abraham in



Genesis 12 starting with verse 1 *Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; 2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."*

Abram which was later called Abraham was blessed as well as all the families of the earth; we are blessed through the blessing of Abraham.

Jacob wanted to be blessed so much that he wouldn't turn loose of the angel he was wrestling with until he was blessed. You probably know the story in Genesis 32 starting with verse 24 *Then Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. 25 When he saw that he had not prevailed against him, he touched the socket of his thigh; so the socket of Jacob's thigh was dislocated while he wrestled with him. 26 Then he said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." But he said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me. 27 So he said to him, "What is your*

name?" And he said, "Jacob. 28 He said, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed. 29 Then Jacob asked him and said, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And he blessed him there.

The Father God blessed Jesus at the start of His Ministry when He was being baptized. We find this in Luke 3:21-22; verse 21 *Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."* This the words God spoke to His first-born Son. This example of course, would be how we are to bless our children and others.

Jesus blessed His disciples. He began His three year training program with the disciples by giving them blessings, known as the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes. We read about this in Matthew 5:1-11.



1 When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him.

2 He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying,

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

5 "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

10 "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.

12 "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Moses taught Aaron and his sons to speak blessings over God's people each time they assembled the people together. We see this in the book of Numbers chapter six.

22 *Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,*

23 *"Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'Thus you shall bless the sons of Israel. You shall say to them:*

24 *The LORD bless you, and keep you;*

25 *The LORD make His face shine on you, And be gracious to you;*

26 *The LORD lift up His countenance on you, And give you peace.'*

27 *"So they shall invoke My name on the sons of Israel, and I then will bless them."*



The Lord blessed Noah and his sons, Genesis 9:1; *And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.*

[GENESIS 9:1] [NAS] This is the same blessing that God gave to Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:28. And just as He blessed many people in the Bible, He also blessed the seventh-day. [Genesis 2:3]

The Lord blessed Abraham's seed in Genesis 22:18; *"In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."*

[GENESIS 22:18] [NAS]

Jesus also blessed His followers at His ascension to Heaven.

LUKE 24:50 *And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them.*

51 *While He was blessing them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven.*

Melchizedek blessed Abraham; the greater always blesses the lesser.

GENESIS 14:18 *And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.*

19 *He blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;*

20 *And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." He gave him a tenth of all.*



21 The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give the people to me and take the goods for yourself."

Ruth and Boaz were blessed by their people by saying, "We are witnesses." Lets read it from the Bible, turn to Ruth 4:11.

All the people who were in the court, and the elders, said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built the house of Israel; and may you achieve wealth in Ephrathah and become famous in Bethlehem. [RUTH 4:11] [NAS]

As you know Ruth and Boaz conceived a son by the name of Obed who became the father of Jesse who became the father of David which is the human blood line of Jesus. They were blessed and Jesus did become famous in Bethlehem as they had prophesized; as I believe without even knowing it.

~We are to Bless others~

We are to bless people, we are not to return evil for evil. 1 PETER 3:8 *To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; 9 not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.*



We're all went to school and we all know that 1 plus 1 equals 2. We also know that -1 plus -1 equals -2, so when someone insults or speak evil of you that is a -1 and then when you bless that person, that is a +1 and that equals a even -0-. You are not going into the negative arena; at least you have kept it even, no loss. Yes, one blessing over one evil evens out the score. We "Christians" are not to count score as the secular world does. We are to counter one blessing over one evil. I didn't make this up Jesus said it in Luke 6:28; *bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.* [LUKE 6:28] [NAS] and then Romans 12:14; *Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.* [ROMANS 12:14] [NAS] Believe in the Holy Bible only, because Jesus is the final score keeper. It doesn't matter about any other score.

Esau and Jacob, you probably all know the story in Genesis 25 where the twins of Esau and Jacob were born. Esau was the first-born and Jacob came second, holding onto Esau's heel. The children had even struggled together within the

womb before birth. The Lord had told Rebekah that the older shall serve the younger. Also later in life as it is written later on in chapter 25 of Genesis, Esau came in from the field and sold his birthright to Jacob for a pot of stew that Jacob had prepared. Later on as the story goes, Jacob the second born was blessed by his father Isaac through a deception by Jacob and his mother. Isaac had blessed the second-born instead of the first-born but the blessing is irrevocable when blessed by and for God. Isaac understood that blessings had authority. *Then Isaac trembled violently, and said, "Who was he then that hunted game and brought it to me, so that I ate of all of it before you came, and blessed him? Yes, and he shall be blessed."* [GENESIS 27:33] [NAS] Then we also read in Romans 11:29, *for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.* [ROMANS 11:29] [NAS]

~Children are Blessings~

To preserve the future spiritual generations, blessings needs to be imparted by us to our children and grandchildren. Children are blessed by and from God and they are a gift from God. *Behold, children are a gift of the LORD,* [PSALM 127:3a]



[NAS]

Your children like olive plants Around your table. [PSALM 128:3b] [NAS]

~We are to Bless our Children~

Satan does not want children to come under the blessing covenant of God. There is a certain amount of protection when children are blessed, especially by their parents. The blessing is a powerful spiritual instrument parents can use to keep their children in God's will and safe from the devil's schemes; the blessing will also help the child to know their identity and destiny. Why they are here and where are they going? Jesus said in Mark 10:15 *"Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all."*

16 And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them. When we become as little children we follow God, no questions asked. But also, as little children we could easily follow Satan unless we have the blessings of

God in our life. This is where parents can use their verbal blessings to protect their children.



By parents blessing their children they in turn will be blessed, just for the satisfaction of seeing their children enjoy the benefits of their blessings. We are to speak blessings over our children and grandchildren daily.

The blessing is always a spoken one, not just a hidden desire in the heart of parents. Just put God's name on the child you are blessing; then God does the work.

~Imparting Blessings~

To whom should we impart blessings?

- ✚ Impart blessings to those in your household for protection and guidance.
- ✚ Impart blessings to restore relationships.
- ✚ Imparting blessings does not mean that all your words will come true. (Jesus managed a success rate of only eleven out of twelve.)
- ✚ Speak blessings and then let God do the work in that person's life.

~Sinners~

When the sinner cries out for forgiveness, God sends His first born son, Jesus Christ to impart the blessing of salvation. Jesus willfully releases His birthright to the sinner. The sinner receives the resurrection of life of the first-born as a blessing.

In the Old Testament the greater blessing was in the first-born son, which was expected to become responsible for the tribe when the father died. The double-portion of the inheritance was needed to oversee the responsibilities of the father's tribe when he died.. *just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.*" [MATTHEW 20:28] [NAS]

Christ has redeemed, having become a curse for us - Galatians 3:13 says *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us - for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"* -(Quoted from Deuteronomy 21:23, if you committed a sin worthy of death then you were to be hang on a tree? The corpse was to be buried the same day that they died on the tree.) Continuing with verse 14 in Galatians, the first blessing of Abraham;

14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

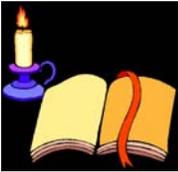
Jesus willfully releases His birth-right. For the redemption from the curse of the law is present only in the blood of Jesus Christ.

In the name of the Lord speak all the good things you can think of, especially over your children.

We have two Blessings;

1. Blessing of Abraham – gift of eternal life.
2. Blessing that you speak with your lips.

Remember:



- ⇒ The absence of light is darkness.
- ⇒ When turning down the light you always turn up the darkness.
- ⇒ Increase the light by blessings.

My message to you today is;

Speak life (Blessings), Not Death (Curses)



A lot of the information in this article was taken from two books that I recently read: *The Ancient Paths*, by Craig Hill and *Imparting the Blessing*, by William T. Ligon, Sr. Both have been a great asset of information on the subject of God's ancient paths and blessings.

Also:

I have gotten information for this article from a number of different sources; internet, Bibles, dictionaries, and study materials from several different authors, etc. I do not take credit for these writings since there are many. I did not keep up with this information in order to give proper credit. My comments and rewriting of the sources are in this article. I therefore cannot take full credit for this study. The full credit would have to go to Jesus Christ, the creator of all things.

Dewey E. Fox, Servant of our Lord Jesus Christ

Seven Special Times of Parental Blessing:¹

1 Conception

2 In Utero

3 Birth

4 Infancy

5 Puberty

6 Marriage

7 Older Age



¹ Craig Hill "The Ancient Paths" p.69

Plan for a blessing for your children: Bless your children daily until this event.

If you prepare for a formal child blessing you may use what is below as a guideline.

- ❖ Child will probably need to be 11 or older
- ❖ Plan a wonderful meal and beautiful environment
- ❖ Invite family and spiritual friends that can relate to the child's blessing
- ❖ Prepare the child at least one year in advance
- ❖ Be sure the child memorizes some Bible verses and prepare a word of thanks
- ❖ Family and friends may want to bring a small gift
- ❖ Time for the child to give a blessing as well as receive a blessing
- ❖ Should be a very happy time, maybe as a birthday party
- ❖ Parents speak verbal blessings over the child

Taken and somewhat revised from the book "Imparting the Blessing" by William T. Ligon, Sr.

