



Sermon Discussion Guide The Blessing of God - Iain Provan 11/26/23

Note from a question writer:

As we come to the end of our series in Leviticus, I hope that y'all have been blessed through this series. In this last discussion there are a couple of things that I would like for us to pay attention to.

First, all throughout Leviticus 26 this series of blessings are given to the second person plural rather than second person singular (y'all not you). Whenever we read these blessings we need to make sure that we are doing so within community and understanding that these blessings are given for the sake of community (note that the first thing that God decrees to be not good is human alone).

Second, throughout Scripture there is a prominent theme of God's generosity. From the very beginning there is more than enough. However, we as humans have a nasty tendency to assume a scarcity mindset. One thing that the blessings (and Sabbath, and Jubilee) challenge us to do is to live as though there is enough and find God's provision there. <https://youtu.be/62ClIEkRCso?si=z1DApWEIjStUZIOA>

Third, that these blessings are given in the context of inviting the community to carry the name of God well.¹ The Numbers 6 blessing that we read and sing in our church community ends like this "So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them." Blessing is a way in which the name of the LORD is put on the people (like the high priest).² Think then about the beatitudes. Those blessings then are the kinds of people that are truly reflecting God's own heart.

Putting these things together, we as a community are blessed in God's abundance so that we might represent God in a way that is true to His character. We need to hold onto the question of what it looks like to communally reflect the character of God, "who is committed to bless."³

¹ For more detail on this read Carmen Imes *Bearing God's Name: Why Sinai Still Matters*

² Exodus 28:36-38

³ Iain in today's sermon.



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Hook - Getting to know one another

If y'all have time/space, invite your group to have a meal together of leftovers from your thanksgiving meal.

- *How is everyone doing this week? Add other questions to get to know one another, especially ones related to the topic in the sermon.*
- How was your Thanksgiving? What are the pieces of the celebration that you love? What pieces are challenging?
- Why do you think that a holiday celebrating thankfulness is centered around a feast?

Book - Scripture

- *Read the scripture passages and discuss to understand **what the text is saying**:*
- Read Leviticus 26:3-13 (substitute any you with y'all). While the passage is being read, pay attention to what details stand out to you and share the pieces that catch your attention.
- What Echoes of Genesis 1 do you hear?
- Why does God end this section with a reminder of Egypt?
- How might Leviticus 26:9-10 be different than how Egypt was behaving in Exodus 1:8-14?
- What does this tell us about the heart of God?
- How do we read these blessings on light of Matthew 5:3-10?

Look - Connections to our world today

- *This section focuses on implications about **what this text means** about what's wrong in the world, about trusting God, about who God is, etc.*
- What does enough look like for you, your community, and our city?
- Where are we tempted to live as though there is not enough?
- Why do you think that we live as though there is not enough?



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- Where are we tempted not to live into God's blessings (both Lev. 26 and Matt. 5)?

Took - Personal Application

- *This application focuses on **how God is calling us to respond**. This could be personally, as a family, small group, or church. It could be something to believe, to meditate on, to say or do this week.*
- How might God be inviting us to live in His abundance without hoarding?
- What will it look like for you to reflect God's generous heart?
- How can we hold onto a spirit of thanksgiving in these coming weeks?

Time of Prayer