

ALL SAINTS' CATHEDRAL, KAMPALA

Theme: GOD ALMIGHTY, THE SOURCE OF BLESSINGS

Text: Deuteronomy 28:1-14, Matthew 6:30-33, Deut. 7:6-15

PRAYER: May the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be pleasing in your sight, O Lord my rock and redeemer (Ps. 19:14)

WELCOME:

APPRECIATION: This is ACP Sunday; We Praise & thank God for the work done so far on the 2nd phase commenced in May 2017. The Pastoral Team, and ACP Team under the chairmanship of my name sake Mr. Hannington Karuhanga.

Saints thank you so very much for the support as you give from what God blesses you with.

We praise and thank God for the obedient heart and the will to give – may the almighty God bless you abundantly.

As a Diocese we observed a 40 days of prayer and fasting for the nation, church and families.

We thank all of you – those who participated in this noble cause – praying for our country.

A need for more prayers are still needed.

God's people are struggling in the chains of the evil one and they need to be set free – provost and team will look into that.

GAFCON: - Thank you for sending a team from the cathedral led by the vicar and peoples warden – James Abola.

Theme: Proclaiming Christ Faithfully to the nations. Slogan: We will proclaim Christ faithfully to the nations.

- We renewed our commitment to proclaim the Gospel of the triune God in our respective churches and in all world.

- Nine strategic Networks were launched to this effect.

1. THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION – To promote communion
2. CHURCH PLANTING – Expand church planting as a global strategy for evangelisation.
3. GLOBAL MISSION PARTNERSHIP – To promote strategic cross – cultural mission partnership in a globalised world.
4. YOUTH AND CHILDREN MINISTRY – To be a catalyst for mission to young people and children of all nations so that they may become faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.
5. MOTHERS' UNION – To expand the potential of this global ministry to promote biblical patterns of marriage and family life.
6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENTS – To establish global partnerships which work with local church to bring sustainable and transformative development.
7. BISHOP'S TRAINING INSTITUTE: - To serve the formation of faithful and effective episcopal leadership throughout the communion.
8. LAWYERS TASK FORCE: - To address issues of religion freedom and matters of concern to Anglican lawyers and chancellors and to further the aims of the Jerusalem declaration.

9. INTERCESSION FELLOWSHIP: - To inspire and develop globally connected regional and national intercessory prayer networks.

THEME THIS SUNDAY – God Almighty the source of blessings.

Text: Deuteronomy 28:1-14

I. THE DEFINITION OF BLESSING (THE BLESSING DEFINED)

Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary.

- God's help and protection or a prayer asking for this.
- In his book: The Purpose and power of the Blessing – Robert Strand says that – The Blessing is and impartation of the supernatural power of God into another as spoken by a delegated authority of God.
- To bless another person is to give them honour, praise, importance and to lift them up, encourage them, and embolden them for a better life.
- To bless another person is to give them honour, praise, importance and to lift them up, encourage them and embolden them for a better life.
- When we bless others, we are empowering them for long, fruitful life.
- The blessing is a combination of words – The word blessing may look just like any other word.
- But I want to tell you that words have life, and they have power – especially when they are spoken by someone with Spiritual Authority. Priests; Parents. - Deuteronomy 5:16. Honor your father and mother so that you may live long in the Lord.

Words can literally shape the destiny and future of another.

- Words have the ability to bless or curse, to build up or tear down, enhance or destroy e.t.c
- Words have impact, especially when spoken by significant people in our lives.
- A blessing elevates someone to a place of importance i.e. when we say we bless God it is an act of adoration.
- When we bless others we also elevate them to a place of importance.
- the words like bless, blessings, blessed, blessedness appear more than 500 times in the Bible.
- it is a subject that is dealt with more often than the teachings about being born again.
- I trust and believe that many of us want to be super naturally blessed in our home, finances, health and relationships with peace and joy that is truly unspeakable and experience a consistent victory over the world, the flesh and the devil.
- One major secret to experiencing such powerful result in found in the supernatural of the BLESSING.
- This is an important concept (subject) which should not be ignored.

II. GOD THE SOURCE OF BLESSINGS

- God is not only the source of blessings but God himself is the blessing.
- We must be careful – many a times we focus on the blessings of God more than the blessing that God is.
- Do we really see that God himself is the blessing?
- Paul wrote and said in Phillipians 3:8 “... I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ...|
- Paul saw value of having Christ in His life over anything else. When you have Christ indeed you have everything.
- If we focus only on the blessings we will forget about God when we have them.

GOD'S NATURE IS TO BLESSING

Numbers 6:22-27 The Lord said to Moses. Tell Aaron and his sons. "This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them.."

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace..."

- It is important to know that it is God's will to bless us not because we deserve it but because it is the very nature of God to bless.

- Blessings do not come to us simply because of our hard work, and good planning.

- it looks that way because we fail to see the grace of God.

- Who gives you life, strength, wisdom to do all what you do? Isn't God? - "Don't mention"

- instead of "it is the grace of God."

- Apart from Him we have nothing. He is the source of our Blessings because this world is His Handwork.

- Everything we own actually belongs to God.

- The Psalmist says (Ps. 24:1) "The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.

- God owns the blessings that we are receiving.

- The produce of nature are not with in our control – the fruit of your womb, crops in the fields, livestock in the folds, and harvest we gather in the barns.

- All these are gifts of God.

- You can buy food but not appetite

- a house but not a home.

- medicine but not health.

- amusement but not happiness.

- Religion but not salvation.

- A passport to everywhere but not heaven.

- we have to acknowledge and recognise that blessings in life are gifts from God.

- it is all about Him. He will take us where money cannot, where people cannot, where our own wisdom and strength cannot.

- if you do not know Him, consider Jesus today and put your trust in Him as your saviour.

- it is only through Jesus Christ we know God. You will be blessed if you know Him.

- Deuteronomy 28:2 – All these blessings (that are not in your control but His) will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God.

- Other versions put it this way - "and overtake you"

- His blessings will come running after you, it is in abundance.

NOTE: God does not love us nor bless us because of what we do or not do – His nature is to bless.

- But we must also understand that some of God's blessings are conditional but even then God blesses. He has chosen to bless us – Luke 6:38 "Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

- Matt. 6:33 "Seek you first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you."

- I can see some to you are wondering and asking within yourselves – what them can we do that will cause God to bless us?

- OBEDIENCE IS ONE FACTOR THAT WILL TRIGGER MORE BLESSINGS FROM GOD.

III. OUR BLESSINGS COME FROM OBEDIENCE NOT WORKS. (we cannot bribe God)

- Since they are gifts of God, they are not merely the results of human efforts.

1. Deuteronomy 28:1, 13

Moses started with a big "IF" in verse 1 and ended with another big "IF" in verse 13.

v1. If you fully obey and carefully follow God's commands.

- This is the way to His blessings – by doing life His ways. That is the right way.

- It is quite clear that God's desire is to bless us with abundance and success.
- Beside material blessings God promises to "Set Israel above all the nations on earth." Deutenomy 28:1 "... enemies who rise up against you (then) will be defeated."

v7. "He will bless all the work of your hands"

v12 "make you the head but not the tail"

v13. And always be at the top, never at the bottom.

- God has His eyes upon us (Israel) to bless them (us) with abundance and success.
 - The message is very clear – He desires to bless us.
 - However we need to understand one thing – He wants to bless us on His own terms and in His own ways.
 - The abundance and success will come but not in your own terms and ways.
 - the blessings we receive from God are different from what we can get from this world.
 - What God given to us is enduring and lasting – what the world offers are fleeting and supernatural.
 - There is a temptation of wanting God to bless us according to our own terms – we must guard against this.
 - Many time when we pray for blessings we want God to bless us on our terms.
- "Bless me the way I want" mentality
- Sometimes we put conditions – if you do this to me Lord I will serve you the rest of my life.
 - Obedience is the key to blessings in life.

NOTE: When the people of Israel HEED what God says they experience these promised blessings by God's grace.

- Example ACP Team repeating and asked for forgiveness.
- Moses say "IF" because that choice in in your hands. It has always been and it will always be. We are as blessed as we want it to be.
- We will never go wrong if we follow the manufacturer's mammal. That is why it is so important that we know God's word, read it, study it, remember it and meditate on it – without this there is no basis for blessing.
- When Joshua reminded the people again what Moses taught them, he says, "Do not let this book of Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful" (Joshua 1:8)

IV. THE PERMANENCE OF THE BLESSING

- Once a blessing is spoken into existence it cannot be broken by others.
- It can only be stopped by God because of disobedience by others, even by the one who has spoken it into existence.
- This fact is found in Genesis 27 when Isaac was old and blind.
- Jacob his young son deceived him and gave him the special blessing which was reserved for Esau the oldest son.
- It is a sad story of deceit in a family.
- this sad family chapter is concluded with these words spoken by Isaac their father. "I blessed him.... and indeed he will be blessed" (Genesis 27:33)
- Isaac is saying. "I have blessed Jacob and he will be blessed. Once it has been given, I cannot take it back."
- When Jacob became old and his time to pass away approached he called his 12 sons like his father Isaac had done and he spoke into each of their lives a special blessing.
- And these 12 men and their descendants were blessed. Genesis 49.
- The prophetic prediction of their Father was fulfilled through their lives and the lives of their descendants. Western Uganda was blessed because of the revival. Many people from Western Uganda are riding on the blessings of their fore fathers.

- Parents you need to understand the permanence of your spoken words – whether negative or positive – your words live on forever in the minds and spirits of your children.

JESUS.

When Jesus Christ selected His 12 disciples and shaped their future ministries with His blessing – He told them that they would become the light of this world, the salt of the earth – World Changers.

- At the time of this pronouncement they had accomplished none of these things but later you can see the permanence of His blessings – we are among the beneficiaries.
- He founded this movement 2000 plus years ago and it is still growing strong.
- How did Jesus Christ do it?
- One major factor is the concept of the Blessing.
- At the time He pronounced His blessing upon them they were filled with imperfections – but as time went by, these men became what he said they would become because of the Blessings.
- He shaped their destinies with this power and permanence of the blessings.
- Never underestimate the power or the permanence of a blessing that you share with someone who is important to you.

V. WHO IS QUALIFIED TO GIVE A BLESSING

- As I said at the beginning that everything about the blessing begins with God.
- the very first act God did after creating Adam and Eve was to bless them.
- This shows how much importance God has attached to the blessing.
- Gen 1:28. God blessed them and He said...”
- God continued and blessed Noah and his sons
- Then Abram; God blessed him and changed his name to Abraham and his wife. Their descendant – Hagar and her son Ishmael.
- But it was Melchizedek to be the first human to bless. Gen. 14:18.
- Abraham’s servant blessed Rebekah. Genesis 24:1-66
- In this same story we see siblings blessing their sister - “So they (brothers and sisters) sent their sister Rebekah on her way along with her nurse and Abraham’s servant and his men. And they blessed Rebekah and said to her..” Gen. 24. 59 – 60
- Our families will change in a way that we would not believe if siblings are out to bless each other.
- All of us are entitled to bless others it is not a monopoly of the clergy.
- All of us are dispensers of blessings.
- The Bible says in Psalm 103:1-2 Bless the Lord O my soul and all that is within me bless His Holy Name.
- Psalm 134:1 “Bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord.”
- If we are qualified to bless the Lord God Almighty. We are certainly qualified to bless others.
- In the N.T. we are even commanded to bless those who persecute us, bless those that want to harm you in bless those who curse you.
- Everyone is qualified to bless the Lord as well as to bless others.
- Personal testimony – My mother “you are the Rev. you are supposed to bless me”
- Grand Parents – bless your grand children – aunties, uncles.
- Parent bless your children.

VI. ENJOY WITH OTHERS WHAT GOD HAS BLESSED YOU WITH

- Our obedience brings forth His blessings. We are blessed.
- Enjoy His blessings to day.
- Count them one by one.
- Train your eyes to see them and be happy.
- We don’t earn our blessings, instead we inherit them because we are in Jesus Christ.
- Servants earn their wages while sons receive an inheritance because they are sons.

- Children of God, we are already richly blessed.
- Paul says (Phil 4:19) “My God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”
- Enjoy what God has given you. Share with others and bless them as well.