

To be in the right position for God's blessings

Often people ask the question "what must I do to receive the blessings from God?"
"What must I do to have God's favor rest on me?"

Are there instructions in God's Word for the answer of this question?

Let us start in the beginning when God made man.

Genesis 1:26-30, *"Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."*

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground--everything that has the breath of life in it--I give every green plant for food." And it was so.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning--the sixth day.

Genesis 2:7-17, *"the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.*

Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground--trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. (The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there.) The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush. The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Asshur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the

garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

Genesis 2:19-25, *"Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field.*

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

The man said,

*"This is now bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called 'woman,'
for she was taken out of man."*

For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame."

So here we see the position of man and woman. They were perfect, made by God in His image. Adam was God's representative on earth. He gave names to all the animals that God has made. The Bible says all the animals and birds came to man to be named. Man was in charge of the entire creation and all his daily needs were made by almighty God. Adam and Eve lived in fellowship with God and communicated with God. What a marvelous position! **A wonderful partnership between God and man.**

Man could eat everything God had made but there was one thing man was strictly forbidden to do. God placed one restriction on man. God told man, ***"but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."***

Genesis 3:1- 4-7, *"Now the serpent was craftier than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"*

The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

"You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to

her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.”

Genesis 3:8-12, *“Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”*

He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.” And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?” The man said, “The woman you put here with me-- she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

Genesis 3:13-24, *“Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”*

So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”

To the woman he said, “I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”

To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.

It will produce thorns and thistles for you and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”

The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.”

In this reading we see a tremendous change take place in man’s position. He disobeyed God and became a loser. He lost his authority over God’s creation. He lost his authority over the animals. He lost his home in God’s beautiful garden. He lost his

status of eternal life in God's beautiful garden. He lost his position of fellowship and communication with God. Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the devil.

Satan disturbed man's position with lies and deception.

"You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

"When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked"

The devil is the same today and he also wants to destroy your relationship with God. He questions God's Word. Puts doubts in your mind and heart. He is the father of liars. The devil comes to destroy, steal and to kill.

We saw a beautiful partnership between man and God in the Garden. Adam was God's representative and God's spokesman and He carried out God's will and was in complete charge of all God's creation. But by breaking the partnership rule he lost everything.

Now coming back to the question of being in a position to enjoy the blessings of God. We looked at the first book of the Bible and now we want to look at the last book of the Old Testament, **Malachi 3:10**,

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it."

This partnership between man and God was established in Leviticus 27:30, "A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD." It is God who causes every thing to grow, He gives the sunshine and the rain at no charge to man and man may keep 90% for his own use. This seems to be an excellent deal for man. He may keep 90% of the results of his work.

Now what happens when man does not stick to this partnership and breaks the agreement? Man gives all kinds of excuses to not obey the Word of God, "I cannot afford it.", "There is not enough left over to pay my bills." Many people are simply too selfish. Now what does God's Word say about those who do not want to stick to this partnership with God? God uses very strong language and calls such individuals robbers, thieves and cursed! There is no pastor on earth who would dare to call the people by such names. It is considered impolite and even unethical. But who dares to argue with God? If we don't stick to God's principles and agreement. He is the one who calls us robbers.

Malachi 3:8-9, "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, `How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse--the whole nation of you--because you are robbing me."

In our church we have many footballers who have an agent who secures a contract for them. The agent suppose to charge 10% commission but some agents demand 20%, 30% or even more. I know for sure that a footballer would be very happy if an agent only charged him 10% but often they change the rules of the game.

God is not like that. In His contract with man He promises He will **“throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.”** Abundant blessings, so much that we don't have enough room to keep it all. And the best news of this deal that we only pay 10% to almighty God. Of course besides the tithing there are also free-will offerings.

In Deuteronomy 28:1-2, *Moses told the people “If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. ² All these **blessings** will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the LORD your God: You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country.”*

Blessed in the city and blessed in the country. God does not force this partnership upon any one. It is strictly voluntarily but the consequences are very clear. If we obey the abundant blessings come. If we cancel the partnership and do not obey Than God says we are robbing Him and we are cursed instead of blessed.

Final words of encouragement from the Lord

Proverbs 3:5-9, *“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones. Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.*

Praise the Mighty Name of Jesus!

Shall we sing together “When we walk with the Lord in the Light of His Word.”

TRUST AND OBEY

**When we walk with the Lord in the light of His word
What a glory He sheds on our way!
While we do His good will, He abides with us still and with all who will
trust and obey**

**Trust and obey for there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.**

**Not a shadow can rise, not a cloud in the skies
But His smile quickly drives it away
Not a doubt nor a fear, not a sigh nor a tear
Can abide while we trust and obey
Trust and obey.....**

**Not a burden we bear, not a sorrow we share
But our toil He doth richly repay
Not a grief nor a loss, not a frown nor a cross
But is blest if we trust and obey
Trust and obey.....**

**But we never can prove the delights of His love
Until all on the altar we lay
For the favor he shows and the joys He bestows
Are for them who will trust and obey
Trust and obey.....**

**Then in fellowship sweet, we will sit at His feet
Or we'll walk by His side in the way
What He says we will do
Where He sends we will go
Never fear, only trust and obey
Trust and obey.....**