

Blessing in Unity - Sunday August 18th 2013.

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is

For brothers to dwell together in unity!

² *It is like the precious oil upon the head,*

Coming down upon the beard,

Even Aaron's beard,

Coming down upon the edge of his robes.

³ *It is like the dew of Hermon*

Coming down upon the mountains of Zion;

For there the Lord commanded the blessing—life forever (Psalm 133).

Beloved in the Lord,

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brothers to dwell together in unity!

In the Congregational days of the past week, we experienced this blessing in a very real way. We experienced this precious anointing oil, the refreshing dew of Hermon.

Before I delve deeper into the blessings associated with unity, I would like to have a quick look at these two beautiful symbols brought to us in the text, namely the anointing oil and the dew of Hermon.

Oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. This reference to the precious oil that runs down from the head, through Aarons beard onto his robes, is the oil of anointing. It was used to consecrate priests and kings for service. The Holy Spirit was symbolically poured out upon the head of the one being consecrated. The one consecrated has been set aside for Holy Service to Almighty God. The anointing oil also served as a reminder that the power for service lay not in the man but in the Holy Spirit.

The second symbol in our text is the dew of Hermon. Mount Hermon is elevated above Jerusalem and it is a snow capped mountain. As the snow melts the pure fresh waters run down to Zion. The dew of Mount Hermon is extra clear and beautiful. It is a sign of refreshing. Water is also a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

Both of these symbols remind us and teach us that the Holy Spirit is the refresher, the empowerer. He flows where there is unity amongst believers and where God's Word is honoured and feared in Holy Reverence and obedience.

Lately we hear a lot of talk about unity. Unity is a very powerful thing. Jesus said: ***“Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven.²⁰ For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst”***(Matthew 18:19-20).

Please allow this truth to penetrate your heart. Where two people agree on any matter that they may ask, there is a promise of answered prayer. Please understand that this is not a blank cheque signed by God. We need to read the whole Bible and take all of Jesus teaching into account. The fact is that where two people agree on a prayer that is in accordance with the will of God, He will answer that prayer positively.

Over and over we experienced the truth of this last week. Praise God. All three pastors were in complete accord and God spoke powerfully and moved mightily.

Please understand that this sort of agreement is only possible when we walk in the Spirit. While we walk in the flesh, walk in a carnal worldly manner, obeying the lusts and demands of the flesh, there cannot be, and will not be unity.

There can only be true unity where Christ is in the very centre, where there is complete obedience and surrender to Him and His Word.

In His so called High Priestly prayer, Jesus prayed:

Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are. ¹² While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled.

¹³ But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves. ¹⁴ I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth (John 17:11-18).

We pause here for a moment. Jesus is praying that His disciples would be one, as He and The Father are one. This unity is not worldly but spiritual. This unity is truth. The only real Truth is God's Word. If someone doubts the Bible, doubts the word of God, disobeys the Word of God, then he is not in the Truth and there cannot be unity. It is as simple as that.

Jesus prayed: "*Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth*". This means all of God's Word and not just bits and pieces of it.

There is no unity in the Churches, and especially in LELBĀL, because there is not this absolute trust in God's Word. So many of the clergy say "I do not believe that all the Bible is God's Word." They water down and twist the meaning to suit their sinful ways. How can there be unity?

During our Congregational days we experienced true unity and the blessing of it, because all three of us, Aldis, Krists and myself, confess that the whole Bible is Truth and it is God's

Word from cover to cover, from Genesis to Revelation. I believe that is why the Spirit could flow like the precious oil, and the dew could fall upon the hearts of those who were open to God's call.

We return to Jesus prayer: ***"As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.***

²⁰ "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.

²² The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; ²³ I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me (John 17:18-24).

It is clear from Jesus prayer, that true blessing, true unity comes when we are abiding in Him fully, as He abides in the Father fully. This brings us to a Scripture that I return to very often: ***"Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect (Romans 12:1-2).***

True unity can only occur where everyone concerned fully surrenders themselves to God as a living sacrifice, that is holy and acceptable to Him. The areas that we do not surrender to God, are areas in which we allow Satan to work, and where Satan works, there is and can be no unity. Satan is scared of Christians who surrender themselves to God, who do not live carnal lives, but whose eyes are upon Jesus. He trembles when Christians join hands and stand on God's Word. He is scared when Christians walk in the Spirit, because their power grows. He hates it when we present to God an empty vessel for Him to fill with His Holy Spirit.

Where there is true Biblical Unity, there the testimony is pure as the morning dew, and sweet as the fragrant oil. There service is powerful. Hallelujah.

One of the greatest blessings of unity is joy. Real pure joy. How much true joy do we see in the Churches? Very little. That is because there is no unity. There is no surrender to God. People walk about with inflated egos seeking to get their way. There is a lack of humility and submission.

Not only joy, but all of the beautiful fruit of The Holy Spirit. : ***“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law (Galatians 5:22-23).***

Oh, how we need this fruit in our life, in our Churches, in our world.

This fruit can only manifest where people walk and live in the Spirit.

When we submit fully to God and walk in His Word, then this fruit grows.

In His grace and mercy, God allowed us to experience some of this fruit last week. I believe that this is just the beginning and that greater things and greater blessings lie ahead.

May we walk in the Spirit. May we surrender all to Him. May we hold fast to His Holy Word. May we separate ourselves from all that would hinder and may we live in true unity of the Spirit with all who truly love Jesus and believe in Him.

May God grant us to always have this precious oil flowing and may we experience the refreshing dew of His love and mercy anew each day.

Amen

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All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.