

Blessed Broken Given: Blessed

What does it mean to be blessed?

Many of the things we associate with a blessed life—health, provision, beauty, and more—are, of course, gifts from God. But they are like hints and shadows of the real and true blessedness.

Genesis 1:1-4a, 10-12, 16-18, 21-22, 25-28

‘And God saw that it was good...’ ‘And God blessed them...’

God established blessing from the origins and foundations of the world. If we want to understand who we are and what makes us blessed, we have to go back to the creating, ordering, and blessing of the world.

When the Bible tells us the story of the beginning, it begins with a Person, God.

In the ancient world everyone knew that *some* god or collection of gods were responsible for the material world. They were not like people in our day, who imagine the world as a series of automated processes or random incidents with no divine involvement. For people in ancient times, the questions were not “Did god make this?” and “How?” but rather “Which god made this?” and “Why?”

God reveals Himself in the Scriptures in a way that is especially stunning against the landscape of other origin stories from the ancient Middle East. To the question “Which god made the heavens and the earth?” many of Israel’s ancient neighbors would answer with names of regional gods who were power hungry and jealous, making deals to gain more jurisdiction and stopping at nothing—even murder—to rule over all. To the question “Why did they make humans?” the answer would be that humans were made to be slaves of the gods—to do work the gods didn’t want to do.

Notice three things that set the God of Genesis apart from the gods of the day.

First, there is *only one God*.

Secondly, the sole sovereign God creates the world *on purpose* and *with purpose*.

Thirdly, God *blesses* what He makes.

From the beginning the God who creates also blesses what He has made. And why wouldn’t He? After all, He meant to make it. He called it good. The word *good* has many meanings, but in some usage it has resonances with what we might call “beautiful.” In a very real way, all that is good and beautiful in the world is the result of God’s blessing.

Good and beautiful. Is that how you see yourself?

The Genesis story grounds us in God. God Himself made us on purpose and for a purpose and blessed us by calling us good and beautiful. That is our origin story.

Being blessed is not a state—it’s a story.

It’s an origin story. It’s the story of how you began and why. It’s the story of God the creator calling you into being on purpose and for a purpose. It’s the story of God taking delight in you and naming you as good and beautiful. It’s the story of God the redeemer pursuing you, calling you, and returning you to who He made you to be. The God who called light out of darkness calls you out of darkness and into light. In doing so, He brings you back to the beginning, to *your* beginning. This is where it starts: ***You are blessed.***

In Genesis 12, God calls Abram and blesses him. But in Genesis 16, God interrupts with a female, Egyptian slave on the run, and blessed *her*.

Hagar is on the run because Sarai, barren wife of the newly blessed Abraham, was jealous and resentful toward her. Genesis says that Sarai was harsh with Hagar. Things had gotten so bad that she thought fleeing into the wilderness with no provisions and no plan would be better than staying in that house. Hagar, pregnant with Ishmael, was prepared to die in the desert.

Hagar thought it was over. She was sure no one would help and no one would come to her rescue. But God did.

God found Hagar by a well in the wilderness. She had stopped at a spring for what could have been one last drink. And then an angel of the Lord met her there and called her *by her name*.

Genesis 16:7-8a - The angel asked Hagar two questions: Where have you come from? and Where are you going?

When God asks a question, He's not launching an interrogation; He's staging an intervention.

These two questions were about *origin* and *destiny*.

God was about to rewrite her story. God told Hagar to go back to Abraham's house, not because God condoned Sarai's mistreatment of her, but because there was no other way for Hagar to be saved. She would die in that wilderness.

Genesis 16:10

'The angel of the Lord also said to her, "I will surely multiply your offspring so that they cannot be numbered for multitude."'

This was *Abraham's* blessing. This was the promise that was restated when God made a covenant with Abraham in the chapter right before the Hagar story—that his offspring would be like the stars, too many to count. **Right from the start, God made it clear: He wants everyone to be able to get in on the blessing. He desires all to be swept up in his saving and redeeming love.**

When Hagar understood this, she was in awe. She had seen *God!* Hagar responded by naming God. "So she named the Lord who spoke to her: 'You are El-roi.'" Translated, this term means "God sees me." Hagar then said, "In this place, have I actually seen the one who sees me?" (Genesis 16:13).

Maybe you think you missed the Genesis 1 blessing. Maybe you find yourself on the run from a place of pain and suffering, convinced that God does not see you. I'm here to tell you today, that God sees you. I am the messenger he sent to find you in the wilderness, to ask you where you think you've come from and where you think you're going. And then to tell you that God is re-writing your story. Your origin is better than you thought. And so is your destiny.

The bread that Jesus took and blessed did not become something else; it became what bread was made to be. Material things are not the opposite of sacred things. You see, the whole created world was made to be a container of God's glory.

To be blessed is to be returned to our origin and destiny; it is not simply to be restored, but to be re-story-ed.