

W320-THREE_SPHERES_OF_BLESSING.mp3

[00:00:02] Well, we pick up our subject now, not so much to stress the adoption of, but to consider those three spheres which are indicated by the fact that there are three sets of believers who have a firstborns position. In case any of you should be thinking of Ephesians 315, which reads in the authorized version of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. You might remember that most critical translations are draw your attention that it is more exact to read of whom every family. In heaven and earth is named. You will find that in Middleton's book on the use of the Greek article, and I think the companion Bible and elsewhere. Every family in heaven and earth is named as a family on Earth. A family in the heavenly Jerusalem and a family far above all. But the God and father is one of them all, wherever they may be. Well, now, just a few words with regard to each one of these callings. And this, of course, I trust, is common knowledge to most of us, but we must include it. I go back to the call of Abraham in Genesis chapter 12, just to indicate that there is most definitely a promise which is substantiated in the rest of Scripture. That there shall be a great nation descending from Abraham. Who will have a peculiar place of blessing in the earth. Ultimately, let's read a few verses of Genesis 12.

[00:01:44] Now, the Lord had said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee and I will make of thee a great nation. And I will bless thee and make thy name great. And thou shall be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee and curse him that curseth thee. And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So here we have the distinctive calling of the descendants of Abraham. Ultimately, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were the fathers, and Israel are the nation that is in view. And they were to occupy a certain piece of territory. It says in verse seven, The Lord appeared unto Abraham and said Unto thy seed, Will I give this land? When Harriet said to Abraham, If you get out from your father's, if you get out from your country and Kindred, I will show you the land. But you see, he didn't. He took lot with him. Even Abraham is yet alert. He took lot with him and there was a great conflict between Lot and Abraham, ultimately. So much so that in Chapter 13, although Abraham had the right of choice, he said, Look here, I'll give you the option. You take what you wish and I'll take the other. We can't go on like this. And lot. He looked at the land of Sodom and Gomorrah before it was destroyed, and it was a lovely place to live in.

[00:03:09] He chose it. And then. Then in chapter 13, it says in verse 14. And the Lord said unto Abraham, after that lot was separated from him, Now I'll do what I said I would do. I'll show you the land. Lift up thy now thine eyes look from the place where thou art northward and southward and eastward and westward for all the land which thou seest to thee. Will I give it and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth. So that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise. Walk through the land in the length of it, and in the breadth of it. For I will give it unto thee and without trillioneading all the peculiar, funny names. You can look in Genesis 15. Verse 18, down to verse 21 and see the boundaries. Geographical boundaries of that land that was given to Israel. Well, now you know as well as I do that in the prophets, Prophet Isaiah and Jeremiah, Daniel and the minor prophets, they're all looking forward to the day when that land shall be inherited and God takes an oath. That he happened to pass away. And if you could number the sand and the sea and whatnot.

[00:04:30] Then he will not fulfill his promise to these people. Israel. It's utterly impossible to believe that God will allow anything ultimately to prevent the inheritance of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who are counted for a seed, the Children of Promise. Because it's not all Israel which are of Israel, but the chosen seed that were known all the time. Romans nine puts you right there. But anyway, there shall be a day when Israel shall be the center. They shall be occupying their firstborns position. They will be a kingdom of priests. And if you'll get just one verse from the last book in the Bible, you'll see that although they never were able to conform to the conditions that were given at Mount Sinai, God said to them through Moses. Now here's the covenant, and if you will keep this covenant, you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me of all people that are upon the earth, You shall be a kingdom of priests. And they said all that the Lord hath spoken. We will do. But they never did. But now it's going to be theirs on the different terms, not the old covenant which they break, but the new Covenant which was sealed by the blood of Christ. Revelation Chapter one. Verse five, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness and first begotten of the dead and the Prince of the Kings of the earth.

[00:05:53] Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His father. I know that are some of God's

people who live today attend different churches who maintain that they are a royal priesthood and a holy nation, while they are taking words that belong to the people of Israel and there never will be. God will never allow any Gentile to intrude into the inheritance which he has set apart for this people. They and they only will be a royal priesthood and a holy nation. They are the only ones who are to inherit the earth. In that capacity. Well, then you will discover, as I suggested in the preceding study, that now you can find passages of Scripture where the rest of the nations of the earth will have to go up to Jerusalem at certain specified times to learn the law of God and be taught by these people. And ultimately from that center which God will bless in the beginnings of His movement yet to come, the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the water which begins to flow out from the throne of the Lord at Jerusalem shall go down and blot out the Dead Sea out of it. What a picture of what God is going to do. You see, it doesn't say the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the water covers the sea that you can see when you're standing down at Eastbourne, looking at the channel.

[00:07:17] That's not the idea. The water doesn't cover the sea there. It's a sea that covers the land, but it's the water of life that flows out from Jerusalem that goes down to Engedi and blots out the Dead Sea. What a picture of what God will do one day when Jerusalem is the center of blessing in the earth. Instead of being a cup of trembling in the hands of the nations as it will be and is at this very moment. So I don't think I need to labor that there is an earthly calling and the people of Israel are the dominant factor in it. Well, now will you turn to Revelation to Hebrews rather this time Chapter 11 and Chapter 12. Hebrews Chapter 11. Now we're back again with Abraham. Verse eight, By Faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed. And he went out not knowing whither he went. Now, that's what we read in Genesis, but we do not read in Genesis or any Old Testament book that Abraham had another vision given to him and another promise made to him. That's that's kept quiet. We're not told about that till we get to the New Testament.

[00:08:31] But now we are told by faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country. What he did, although no explanation is given. He knew that that whole land was given to him, and yet the only piece he possessed was what he paid for. As a burial aware at all he never possessed a square foot of it. To begin as his own freehold property. He just bought a little portion of it. Well, was it unbelief? No. It says this is the reason why he acted like this. Dwelling in Tabernacles, that's misleading because that

sounds like gold and purple and. No, no. This is the word for a tent. Just a tent dweller. He became a tent dweller. He didn't build a city or he didn't even build a house. He just lived in a tent with Abraham, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise, for he looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God, is He? Now then he goes on to explain that a bit further. It says verse 13, These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off and were persuaded of them and embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims in the earth. He the very attitude shows that they are now lifting above the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

[00:10:05] And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out. They might have had opportunity to have returned. Or if you want to turn back from God, you'll soon find means and leadings of the Lord and everything to help you back again. Poor old Jonah. When he ran away from the Lord, he found a ship going to Tarshish. Oh, it was all ready to take him, wasn't it? But it says, Don't forget he paid the fare thereof. Said When God takes you. He took Paul to Rome without paying the fare thereof. But not Jonah. But here it was. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country, they might have had opportunity of returned. But now they desire a better country that is an heavenly wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city. So a heavenly country, a heavenly city, something over and above an extra to what was originally pronounced in Genesis 12. Now, chapter 12 picks it up again. He says you have not come to Mount Zion at Mount Sinai. In verse 18, the mount that burned with fire and blackness and darkness and tempest. But you have come. Verse 22 to Mount Zion. You can see the play on the word Sinai and Zion, the just a little alteration of the vowels.

[00:11:24] And unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels. Now, there are no nations, no nations in the city of God. But you have these overcomers, these who follow in the footsteps of the faith of Abraham and Angels. So you have on earth the people of Israel, the One nation and all the rest of the nations you have in the heavenly Jerusalem. These who have the right to enter that city and they are above angels. They were told they were going to be above angels. In Paul's epistle to the Corinthians. And there's yet to be further. But angels are not mentioned with regard to the highest calling of all. It's only there we read the principalities and powers. We see that in a moment. So now he says, Ye are come unto

Mount Zion, unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the General Assembly and Church of whom. Those who have the adoption. The first born. That's their title. The first born is the adoption. And there they are. There's the Church of the Firstborn, which are written in heaven. Well, now we have then two spheres, the earth with its geographical boundaries, the river Euphrates, this side and the Mediterranean, that side, which you can read in Genesis 13, 1415. Here you have a heavenly Jerusalem, a heavenly city.

[00:12:57] And it's mentioned again. If you'll notice in the book of the Revelation, will you turn to chapter three of the book of the Revelation? And it says in verse 12 him that Overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God? And he shall go no more out. And I will write upon in the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God. And I will write upon him my new name. And then in chapter 20, you see it realized. Do you remember that the Book of the Revelation is written about one little handful of people only. All the rest of it. The plagues that fall, the Antichrist, the Beast and all the other things you read are all to give you the background and the little people that are the thread of the book of the revelation is him that overcome it. From the first. The set of it in the book, in the epistles to the churches, to the last. And here they are, the overcomers at last in Chapter 20. Verse four, and I saw thrones and they sat upon them and judgment was given unto them. And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the Word of God and which had not worship the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands.

[00:14:22] And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. There they are. They've reached that position. And in the next chapter, book one chapter or in next chapter, we have in verse nine. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which held the seven vials full of the seven last plagues and talked with me saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain and showed me that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. And there you have it's description with its foundations of precious stones, its gates of pearl. And on every gate you couldn't get into a gateway of the New Jerusalem without passing the name of one of the tribes of Israel. So they still got the touch of Israel about the heavenly Jerusalem, as there's a very strong touch of Israel, about the earthly. Well, now I've got once more to

remember. Time is passing and we'll go to the third sphere. Now we back again to Ephesians. Where are the blessings to be enjoyed that are being described in Ephesians? They're not going to be enjoyed on the earth and there's no reference to the heavenly Jerusalem. But what we do read is this. Ephesians one, verse three, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.

[00:15:54] Will you say where our heavenly places? Well, I don't know unless God has told us. But inasmuch as the word occurs in the epistle to the Ephesians and occurs nowhere else in the whole Bible. And I say that consciously because I know full well you can think I've made a mistake, but I haven't in the heavenly places. Entice Paradise occurs nowhere else in the Bible except in Ephesians. So if I don't know what it's about in Ephesians, I don't know where it is at all. But fortunately, in the end of chapter one, it says it again that Christ was raised from the dead. Verse 20, and said at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Well, I know this, that Heavenly Places is at the right hand of God where Christ sits. And it's not a far above angels and it's not far above other nations, but it's far above principalities and powers and might and dominion. The aristocracy of him this time, is he not, angels. And in chapter four, when it speaks about the ascension of Christ, it says in verse eight, Wherefore he says, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it? But that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth.

[00:17:12] He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens that he might fill all things. Where is Christ sitting? Friends? He's ascended up far above all heavens, not merely the limited heaven with which we are acquainted, but however many of the heavens are higher. You remember, Solomon said when he built his temple, he said, Why heaven or the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee. And Christ has gone beyond them all. Well, that's beyond any idea of where the heavenly Jerusalem is. So he is the third sphere. And we had the exhortation based upon that with which I must finish Colossians chapter three, because these are not merely speculations where our inheritance is there, our hopes and our heart and all our thoughts should be so. Colossians Chapter three, the first four verses if ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye died and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, Then shall ye

also appear with him in glory. Well, that's evident that our hope is where Christ sits at the right hand of God. And we are to. We are told to live looking for that blessed hope. Well, now, when we meet together next time, I want to take this a stage further.

[00:18:48] I want to use the opportunity we shall have of two more of these short studies and think about the three spheres under three other headings. And the other headings will be these. The restored wife. The bride and the body. They are terms used in Scripture to define three different companies of God's redeemed people. The restored wife as one. The bride is another and the body is yet a third. So we've got three adoptions. We've got the Earth, the heavenly Jerusalem, and far above all heavens. And we've got those three titles to consider, which, if they are true, will only be added evidence. And I trust that those of you who are listening to these studies may be able to see your title clear. That in this present period when Israel are scattered and blinded. That God is holding out to you, that you may miss the earth. You may miss the Heavenly Jerusalem. But if you miss those and you get this highest of all callings, what a blessing it would be that you have been brought into living contact with a present savior. Now that's all we can say for the moment. And once more, I commend you to God and the Word of His grace which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.