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Genesis

Chapter 26 - God's Blessing to His Beloved Children

The Unexpected Blessing of Peace (vs.26-33)

Genesis 26:26-33: Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with his adviser Ahuzzath and Phicol the commander of his army. Isaac said to them, “Why have you come to me, since you hate me and have sent me away from you?” They said, “We see plainly that the LORD has been with you; so we said, ‘Let there now be an oath between us, even between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you, that you will do us no harm, just as we have not touched you and have done to you nothing but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the LORD.’” Then he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. In the morning they arose early and exchanged oaths; then Isaac sent them away and they departed from him in peace. Now it came about on the same day, that Isaac’s servants came in and told him about the well which they had dug, and said to him,

“We have found water.” So he called it Shibah; therefore the name of the city is Beersheba to this day.

Well, I'll tell you, Sonny couldn't have given a better song, *"Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blessed, finding as He promised, perfect peace and rest."* God keeps His promises. This is really about God's promises. It starts off about 100 years before this in which God promised Abraham, "I'm going to bless you." It's hard to perceive what that means until you begin to experience it for yourself. And in many respects, as we come to this chapter, it is the experiencing that God wants Isaac to feel. He wants him to experience the promises of God just as his father Abraham did. As we've talked about this, you can't do this vicariously. You have to do it yourself. And so, Isaac is coming to terms with "What does it mean to benefit from the promises of God? Are the promises real to me? I've heard my father talk about it. We've talked about it together. But are the promises real?" And so, this wonderful passage in Chapter 26 begins to reveal that

yes, they are real, and there's something for you to take hold of.

As we look throughout Chapter 26, it is clear that God wants to give the blessings of Abraham to his son, Isaac. And as we looked at the very beginning of the chapter, we saw that there were three invaluable blessings that the Lord gives. The first is **direction**. God tells you where to go; what to do. That's a blessing of God. I mean, otherwise, you're just like fundamentally the world, groping aimlessly, as the Book of Isaiah will make reference to, of the sinners. We don't have to grope aimlessly. We know where we're going. We know what God wants. And so, God has given us great direction.

One of the great passages that we make reference to is Psalm 119:105, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." We can actually see where we're going, and we're not tripping over stuff. It is the graciousness of God to do that.

Psalm 32:8 reads this way,

"I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go..."

That's comforting to me. It's one of the reasons why you want to get into the Word of God because He's actually telling you how to live. Not just how to make a living, but how to live. And God is gracious to do that.

I believe also, as Hebrews in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 makes reference to the fact, that today, if you hear His voice, don't harden your hearts and God begins to speak to your heart. I mean, how many times has He directed you just by virtue of saying, "Don't do that"? You can hear the conscience, and you can hear the Spirit of God begin to move in a particular direction, tell you what to do, what not to do, and give you confidence in that.

He not only gives us direction, but He corrects us. And Hebrews will make reference to this in particular in Chapter 12, "Who the Lord loves, He **disciplines**, and He scourges every child. If you're without discipline, you're illegitimate; you're not His child. But it is the graciousness of God to not let us get away with stuff. And so, in this particular setting, even though obviously Isaac had done something wrong, God was going to correct him through a foreigner. And sometimes, God does that through

sinners, "Well, you Christians aren't supposed to be doing that, are you?" Nevertheless, it is the graciousness of God that He doesn't give us what we deserve; He gives us that which corrects our wrong behavior. There is a difference between discipline and punishment. Punishment- you get what you deserve. Discipline- He teaches you and instructs you along the way. And so, God corrects us in His graciousness, and He certainly has done this with Isaac. And it's the display of God's presence with Isaac as well as with his father.

The third thing that is clear is that God gives him **protection**. And the Philistines could have easily come in with their armies and taken him out, but instead they just take their anger and put it in passive aggressive behavior. They just start filling up his wells. And so, we see there's a hostility there, but not such that he would be destroyed by the Philistines. And God protects him throughout that. What we're going to look at today specifically is an unexpected blessing, and that is an enemy coming and saying, "I want to make peace with you." What enemy does that? It's not in his head to do that. When I think

about the way the world is, man doesn't know what peace is. He makes a lot of peace treaties, but he doesn't know how to keep them. Isaiah says the wicked are like the tossing the sea. They can't keep quiet. They can't find peace.

Proverbs puts it this way, it's very interesting,

(Proverbs 16:27) "A worthless man digs up evil..."

So, though the righteous man might dig for water and for life and for benefit, the wicked man fills it in and looks for ways to destroy and hurt. It is amazing that the world will spend a lot of energy doing wrong and hurting people. Nevertheless, we're in a world that does that so that when the world comes back at us, and says, "We want to make peace with you," this has got to be something divine that has taken place.

Now, when we come to the passages, we will come to verse 26 where Abimelech will come to Isaac and go, "Can we make a peace treaty here?" We realize that this comes with a preface, and the preface is that there were certain things that Isaac had done before this. In other words, the question is, how did this come into being? How did this

happen? What would make an enemy do these things? And so, what we begin to realize is that there were certain things that happened prior to this.

And the initial thing, if you look in verse 22, is that ultimately Isaac realized and acknowledged that God was at work among him in his midst. Acknowledging God. You go back to Romans 1, and it says God's upset. He's angry. And you go, "What's He angry for?" Because even though they knew God, they wouldn't acknowledge Him as God, nor would they give thanks. God just simply wanting us to acknowledge that He's at work, that He's doing good. And Isaac finally comes to the point, instead of trying to work things out himself, and he goes, "You know what? God had to do this. If there's peace at all, it had to be God." And so, it is with that he then turns and he goes to a region called Beersheba. Now, this is basically going to be at the hub of our story, this place called Beersheba. Correctly defined, "well of oath". We'll put it another way- The place of refreshment, the place of life where God has promised. So, it is the promise of God to give us life, isn't it? The question is, do we believe that? Well,

Isaac goes back to this particular region called Beersheba. "Beer" making reference to the well, "sheba" making reference to oath. It is the same word where we get the word "Sabbath". So you have Sabbath, which is the seventh day, which is a completion or a fulfillment. The best way to describe it is that when somebody would take an oath, they would call it "seven oneself". So, they would seven oneself and they would declare, "I'm going to make this good." That's the best way to think of the Sabbath. It's where God sets aside this day and displays and declares His love, and says, "I'm going to make this good." And so, God does make it good with His Son, doesn't He? So, it's a promise of God that is given to us at the very beginning. The people realize, no matter what nation you were from, that to seven oneself meant this. And so, they come together, and it's going to be this well that's going to be at the hub of this story.

It says in verse 25,

(Genesis 26:25) "So he built an altar there and called upon the name of the LORD..."

So, let's just kind of go through the stages. He acknowledges God, "God did this." That's giving glory to God, right? And then, he turns and he makes an altar. Now, the reference to this is that this promise that God gives us comes with great sacrifice. And it's a recognition of that. We're gonna talk about that, but the emphasis is that any promise has with it sacrifice. You make a promise, whether you're getting married or whatever, you're saying, "For better or for worse." So, you're bringing into the realm of sacrifice. And so, he realizes this and he actually builds this altar. He calls upon the name of the Lord, which seems to convey that he wants the relationship with God. And then he pitches his tent there, and says, "This is where I'm going to reside. This is where I'm going to abide in this relationship with God." It is almost the first place that we see Isaac doing this. Up to this point, we saw Abraham doing this, but now we're seeing Isaac, and he goes, "I'm owning this." and we see him owning it. It then says that he takes his servants, and he says, "Start digging for the well." Now, what we know is that there was a well here previously. These wells had been being filled up as the Philistines were envious of

Isaac, and so they began to fill up his wells, and probably Beersheba was one of those wells that they had filled up. So, the servants would have to re-dig.

What's interesting is that there are many blessings that God is giving to Isaac. The first blessings that we looked at were not only dealing with the direction, and clearly, the correction and protection of God, but He gives him physical things. Scripture tells us that he was extremely blessed and had a lot of stuff. I mean, it says he had possessions of flocks (verse 14), herds, and a great household. And because of this, some problems ensued. The point of Scripture is this, and I think that when we think of blessings, we almost immediately go to the tangible, to the physical, to the fact that maybe we're talking about a lot of money, "Maybe I'm going to win the lottery," although I'm not encouraging you to play the lottery. The point is that we think in that realm, and what this passage does, it goes, "Yes, God may bless you in the physical, but it's not going to be your greatest blessing. In fact, it's going to possibly bring a lot of trouble." Because

the world will tend to envy you. Isn't that what it says? Go back to verse 14 of Chapter 26.

(Genesis 26:14) "For he had possessions of flocks and herds and a great household, so that the Philistines envied him."

Okay, so you might have a lot of stuff, and at times, it might seem wonderful having the possessions of these things, but it's going to stir up unsettling feelings around you; a whole thing of competition and all kinds of things. In other words, the blessings of the world aren't the greatest of blessings. And if you will recall, it was the very thing that divided him from Lot. They all had too many things and then that caused separation. So, it'll cause separation oftentimes with family. It'll cause separation oftentimes with your neighbors, the problems with strife.

1 Timothy 6 will make reference specifically to this. And it says, once the love of money comes in, all kinds of problems start ensuing. So, it is a blessing that God gives, but nevertheless, it's an unnerving blessing to the world and the world begins to see it as a negative. The ultimate point of the passage is going to be that he needs to

discover the greater blessing. And in order to discover the greater blessing, he's going to have to feel it himself. He's going to have to experience it himself. And by virtue of doing a little digging, he's going to find it.

Now, Proverbs 2 will talk about this. It'll talk about the fact that if in fact you want the blessings of God, if you want the knowledge of God, if you want the wisdom of God, you're going to have to do some digging. And Proverbs 2 will read this way, if you will seek for wisdom as you would for silver, if you will search as for a hidden treasure, that would be, you'd have to do some digging, then you will discover, then you would discern, what the knowledge of God is. In other words, God's not going to give it to you unless you start digging. Why is that true? Because you won't appreciate it. You won't appreciate anything that just handed to you. We know that happens continually in our government as they begin to hand things out to people for doing nothing, and they don't appreciate the things that are given to them. And you won't appreciate the things that are given to you unless

you put a little back into it. And so, it is the digging of the well.

What's interesting is that the whole well digging thing was a pretty arduous and difficult project. It was not unusual for them to have to dig 20, 30, and sometimes upwards of 200 to 300 feet deep to find water. They'd have different ways of trying to find out where to dig. One of the ways is they would lay on the ground and they would look for places in which it looked like something was raising up and they'd think, "There's some water in that ground," and they could see that. Sometimes, they would recognize certain trees and certain shrubbery, certain foliage and they would go, "That would be a place to dig because only those things could live if there were some water underneath." But at times, they would have to dig very deep and it was a long and arduous event. By the time they finally got it dug, they would begin to stack stones as they would keep digging deeper and deeper. And then, they would ultimately have to stack the stones up higher to keep animals from getting inside because once the animals got inside, then it would mess up. And

then they would put a cap over or a big stone over in which you read about Jacob actually lifting the cap off because he was so in love with this girl that he was going to meet. The passage is telling us that this is not an easy task to dig a well. Nevertheless, start digging, because in digging, you will find the blessings. And God wants us to find the blessings that your fathers had. In fact, literally what we're talking about is a blessing in a well that had already been dug by Abraham in Beersheba but now has to be re-dug. And once again, the reason why it has to be re-dug is the fact that God wants Isaac to receive the blessing. So, though the blessing has already been and is immutable in and of itself, it resides there; he's going to have to do the digging for it.

It is at this point that we pick up on this particular narrative, and in verse 26, we have Abimelech coming to him in this surprise event in which he shows himself. And after all the stopping up of all the wells and he's having to re-dig the wells and finally, they find a place where there's water, and he goes, "Well, God made this happen." And he gave God the glory and he recognized

God and he realized that the greatest blessing is the relationship with God above all these things because whether or not you and I can make something happen or re-dig something doesn't make it sure, doesn't make it steadfast, doesn't make it enduring. We need something more solid than this. And he realized this. So, he goes to this place in which he has and there are memories. The significance is going to be revealed to us.

If you look at verse 26, it starts off this way,

(Genesis 26:26) "Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar..."

That is to say, the king of the Philistines; that these Philistines have been causing a lot of trouble filling up the wells. They've caused a lot of trouble in the sense that they don't even want them in the neighborhood. They told them, "Get out of here. We don't want you anywhere around us." But now, he comes back out of the blue, and there is some trek, he's probably close to 40, 50 miles away. So, he has to walk a good distance to find him because he's in the wilderness of Beersheba. And why would he do this? On top of that, he seems to have an

entourage with him. He has his advisor, Ahuzzath, which seems to be a title in the sense that he possesses things for him. He's a keeper of his possessions. And then Phicol, which is best described as a mouth. But the point is he's the one that gives the orders.

"... and Phicol the commander of his army."

And I guess, in some way, he was afraid that something might ensue, a battle or something. So, he's got everything covered.

(Genesis 26:27) "Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me..."

"I mean, you already told me to get out. You said that you don't like me. So, what's the surprise visit about?"

"... "Why have you come to me, since you hate me and have sent me away from you?"

(Genesis 26:28) They said..."

"Well, we've been thinking about it."

"... "We see plainly that the LORD has been with you..."

Now, they'd already seen that God had blessed him in the sense of all the things that he had. Nevertheless, it seems

to go beyond just seeing the possessions and it seems to go into the realm of God probably visited him. We know that God had done this with the Pharaoh. We know that he had done this with the Abimelech prior to this. So, now He seems to do it again, and they go, "We've been thinking."

"... "We see plainly that the LORD has been with you; so we said, 'Let there now be an oath between us...'"

Now, he does not use the word "Sheba" in this text. Once again, it's where we get the word "Sabbath" or "seven". He does not use the word. He uses a word which seems to convey something a little bit more intense. "'*Ālâ*'" is the word that he uses, which seems to make reference to this strong curse. In other words, "I want you to promise me something and if you don't do it, I want a curse upon you." It's kind of like a threatening. If you think about it, that's the way most peace treaties are written. You know, "We want you to sign this, and if it doesn't work out, we're coming after you." So, it's the threat that makes the peace and that's one of the reasons why they don't work.

So, he says, "Let's threaten each other." We'll put it that way. "So, let's threaten each other. Let's come together, you and me, and we'll make a covenant." Actually, the word "cutting" is mentioned several times here where he says, "let us make". There's a cutting there, and in "covenant" itself is a cutting. In other words, we're seeing a lot of blood in this one.

"... and let us make a covenant with you,
(Genesis 26:29) that you will do us no harm, just as we
have not touched you..."

Of course, he's not telling the truth, but who does when they're making peace treaties? "We've not done anything to you, but we've only been nice to you. We obviously haven't filled in your wells. We don't want to talk about that anyway."

"... and have sent you away in peace..."

"We told you, 'Get out of here.' But we sent you away in peace."

And then he says this at the end of verse 29,

"... You are now the blessed of the LORD."

Now, the point of the passage and that phrase is that he is actually declaring something. In other words, "With this peace treaty, I am declaring from now on, you are thus henceforth blessed of the Lord." Now, I know that he doesn't control that, but he wanted to let him know that "We recognize this from henceforth. I mean, we might have messed up in the past, but from here on, we're going to declare you blessed of the Lord." So, Isaac doesn't argue with him. I mean, he pursues peace. Scripture tells us to pursue peace. So far as it depends on us, be at peace with all men. So, Isaac pursues that.

(Genesis 26:30) "Then he made them a feast, and they ate and drank."

(Genesis 26:31) "In the morning they arose early and exchanged oaths..."

Now, he uses the word "*šāba*". That's interesting. They began to swear each other. In other words, the oath that was being placed to each other in the morning was, "How about we just make a promise? How about not threatening each other? Let's just make a promise." And it

was not unusual that they would do this seven times, "We promised to do this. We promise to do this." Seven times.

"... then Isaac sent them away..."

You know, the Lord demonstrates to us that there's a better way to send people away than the way we normally do.

"... and they departed from him in peace."

"*Šālôm.*"

(Genesis 26:32) "Now it came about on the same day, that Isaac's servants came in and told him about the well which they had dug, and said to him, "We have found water.""

What are the odds of that happening? The same day they find water that the enemy declares, "From now on, you're blessed of the Lord, and there's going to be peace." And they have this oath, and God goes, "Blessings." Isaac knows that this has to be God. This is not a coincidence, it's not serendipitous, it's not something that just happened, not a happenstance. This is something that God made happen.

So, the statement is, if you look in the passage, it says,
"... "We have found water."

(Genesis 26:33) So he called it Shibah..."

"*B'ēr šeba'.*" Remember, "*šeba'*" is what? Oath, promise; seven oneself. Why does he call it "Shibah"? Because he remembers, "God promised and He fulfilled. God came through on His promise that He would take care of me. God told my father that He was going to bless him. He told my father that He was going to bless his children. He told him that. But I didn't realize it until just now. This is the God of promise."

So, the passage reads,

"... therefore the name of the city..."

And let me just say this- There's not a city there at this particular text, but we will realize that there's a city called Beersheba when Joshua comes into the Promised Land. In other words, the name never left, even though others possessed it for God had declared this to be the "well of oath," the place where God keeps His promise. And so, he called it and named this place Beersheba even to this day.

Some actually believe that Ezra added this text in to declare the continuance of this wonderful thing. Now, Beersheba is really the hub of the passage. And the point is, that all the way through, God has been showing us His faithfulness in His promises. It's hard for man to see it right away.

In fact, if you go with me to Genesis 21, it's the first time that we really see this region called Beersheba. Now, the text will make reference to the fact that it's the wilderness of Beersheba. However, it's not yet named. The passage is letting you know that this is the area that will someday be called Beersheba. Nevertheless, if you look with me in Genesis 21, if you remember, it was at a time in which Sarah finally had her child, Isaac, and Ishmael had been making fun of him. She turns to Abraham, and she says, "Get this woman out of here." And Abraham is grieved. I mean, Ishmael is his son as well. And had grown up in his household. He's in his late teens and you grow attached. I mean, it's his son. God says, "Listen to Sarah. Send him away. I'll take care of him. Just send him away." He does. He obeys God. One of the

hardest things that he had to do. He released this one into God's hands. The thought is, "Now that I can't help this person, they can't be helped." And God goes, "Wait a minute, I gave you a promise. And My promise was, I'm going to bless you. Now, how extensive do you believe in that blessing? What are the extremities of that blessing? Don't you believe that means that I'm going to take care of that which concerns you? Of those that you love? Didn't I say I would?"

The passage reads this way,

(Genesis 21:14) "So Abraham rose early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar, putting them on her shoulder, and gave her the boy, and sent her away. And she departed and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba.

(Genesis 21:15) When the water in the skin was used up, she left the boy under one of the bushes.

(Genesis 21:16) Then she went and sat down opposite him, about a bowshot away, for she said, "Do not let me see the boy die." And she sat opposite him, and lifted up her voice and wept.

(Genesis 21:17) God heard the lad crying..."

Not the mother, the lad.

"... and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "What is the matter with you, Hagar? Do not fear, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is.

(Genesis 21:18) Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand, for I will make a great nation of him."

(Genesis 21:19) Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water..."

Where? In Beersheba. This is the place where those we love and care for are saved beyond our reach and our power. God makes Himself known. His promises become real for the first time. The reason for the whole well thing is the whole well thing is very tangible. You can't live without water. You can't survive. And you certainly can't be refreshed. But this is God's evidence in a very tangible way that "I'm going to be with you," and more specifically, it's something that an individual can partake of, and they can say, "God has been faithful to me." They've experienced it for themselves. At this point, Hagar is

experiencing these promises; the promises actually become real. Up to the point that you just hear, "I'm going to take care of you," they're not real. You drink the water, they're real. They're real.

Well, there's no mistake that this chapter ends with Abraham and Abimelech, another Abimelech, the name actually being a title, "Father King". So the Father King comes to them in his day, about perhaps 78-80 years prior to the time of Isaac, and this one begins to take his wells. And Abraham says, "I don't want you guys doing that." He goes, "Okay, let's make a peace treaty." So, Abraham goes, "I think you need to understand that I'm serious about this." Now, here's an interesting question- If you make a promise to somebody and they make a promise back to you, how do you know they're serious? Well, you know, "Hope to die; stick a needle in my eye." I guess you could say that. But the point is that you need some evidence that they're serious. What does Abraham do? The first thing he does is he gives him a bunch of animals. He goes, "At cost to me, I'm going to give these to you. And these are going to be the seven of the oath. You're

always going to remember this, that I was willing to sacrifice for the promise that I give." There's a psalm that reads something like this- It says, "The righteous give a promise and they swear literally to their own hurt."

People need to know that you're willing to suffer for the promises that you make. And that makes it legitimate in their eyes, "If I can see that at some cost to them, they're willing to step out on limb, I'm going to believe that this is real." So, Abraham initiates this thought, "It's at great cost to me to make this promise. I want you to know that I'm serious."

So, the passage reads on,

(Genesis 21:30) "He said, "You shall take these seven ewe lambs from my hand so that it may be a witness to me, that I dug this well.""

"And that you're going to hold true to this." And here it is, the well of Beersheba.

(Genesis 21:31) "Therefore he called that place Beersheba..."

So, now, here's the naming of it, even though we know Hagar was in the wilderness where this was, and she happened to find a well. It was Abraham who dug this well by virtue of this commitment that was made. God was looking out for his son **even** before he could know that He was looking out for his son. But at this place, he was going to make an oath at the well and that oath was going to be at some cost.

It's right after this in Chapter 22, that God says, "I want you to take your only son and I want you to put him on the altar." It will register to Abraham, "He's making a promise to me, and He wants me to commit to it." And he takes his son and he gets ready to put his son on the altar and he's putting the knife over him, and God says, "No, I'm going to provide. I'm going to make good on the promise. It's going to be Me." But see, this is already registered in his head at the well of oath because the refreshment comes with that.

It is not a surprise, if you look with me in Genesis 22, after they come down from the mountain which God promised that He was going to provide that sacrifice, that He was

going to put Himself on the line so that you would take seriously His promises.

It was after that, that it says this,

(Genesis 22:19) "So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham lived at Beersheba."

He's going to abide in Beersheba. It's not a mistake that when we come to Isaac, when he finally makes this commitment, he says, "I'm going to live here. This is where I'm going to pitch my tent. This is where I'm going to stay. I'm going to stay by the place in which I'm the most refreshed, in which life flows, living waters flow to me, where God made a promise."

Let me just say this- This is where life begins. If you will abide where God makes His promises and you don't leave that place. Jesus will say in John 15, "Stay, stay here, abide with Me." You will find God working in ways that go beyond your imagination, and quite frankly, He's going to work in ways that are highly unexpected. You begin to put God first. You see, the problem is that we have difficulties. We have neighbors perhaps that are bad or

whatever, and we try to manipulate it by... Well, we know that one of the things that Isaac tried to do like his father is that he tried to placate him. But that wasn't going to work. That's not going to keep the troubles away. What is going to keep the troubles away is you getting right with God.

This is a great verse found in Proverbs 16:7.

It says this,

“When a man’s ways are pleasing to the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.”

Even his enemies to be at shalom, peace.

There's a passage I want to end with. It's found in the New Testament, Philippians, if you look there with me. In Chapter 4. We have all kinds of enemies out there that threaten us. Whatever the enemy is in your life, there are things that threaten us. There are things that bring us distress, things that oppress us; things that I would say rob you of blessings, of joy, happiness, of experiencing life and refreshment. Paul was concerned for the Philippians

because there were things that had come in that were doing that very same thing to them.

His statement is in verse 4,

(Philippians 4:4) "Rejoice in the Lord always..."

His point is that you need to acknowledge that God's in control. If you think about it, it was the beginning of Isaac's transition into the real. Up to this point, he had been vicariously following his fathers. In fact, he had dug up some of the same wells. They just filled them back in again. But this time he acknowledged God. He built an altar, and he said, "I'm staying here." It wasn't until he did that, that God began to work. And lo and behold, the enemy comes, and says, "I surrender." Isaac's going, "I don't even know where you come from. What made you do this?" No, he knows. The God of oath. The God who promised. And he dug on that promise.

Paul writes to the Philippians, and he goes, "Now, if you want the promises of God, you're going to have to do some digging." "I don't want to dig." You won't own it unless you dig. You won't own it. So, what does He tell

you to do? Well, first start acknowledging God and start rejoicing.

The second thing that He tells you to do is,

(Philippians 4:5) "Let your gentle spirit be known to all men..."

In other words, be patient. Don't be aggravated. That's hard. It's like old Dr. Bob used to say, "It's hard to do right; it's hell to do wrong." We're not saying it's going to be easy. It's not easy to dig 30, 40, 50, 100 feet in a desert. That takes a long time. Sometimes, it takes years, they say.

"Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near."

Oh, here's another one,

(Philippians 4:6) "Be anxious for nothing..."

Stop being anxious.

"... but in everything by prayer and supplication..."

"Supplication" is an interesting word. It's kind of you crying out for mercy. Just come to the Lord and say,

"Help." And then, believe He's going to do something.

"... with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

Thank Him ahead of time.

Watch verse 7.

(Philippians 4:7) "And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

You'll have an unexpected guest. And the unexpected guest will arrive and it'll be peace. You can't make peace happen. Man can't make peace happen. It's not within him to conjure up or in any way create peace. He can't do it. But God can give it. Jesus will say, "Peace I give you, not like the world gives you. I'm going to give you something that's going to stick. And I'm going to give you something that's real."

And it says this,

"And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

(Philippians 4:8) Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things."

Start digging. "That takes work." Good. Get in Scripture. Start digging.

(Philippians 4:9) "The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things..."

That's going to take some work. But what's the end result?

"... and the God of peace will be with you."

He's going to take care of all those enemies that threaten you, that bring distress upon you, that oppress you, that rob you of your joy. You're going to wake up one day and you're going to go, "Shalom, I feel great." Because God made good on His promise. You see, He sent His Son to let you know He was serious. And He said to you, "I'm willing to die for this one." He was willing to die for His promise.

And so, He wants you to come by the well, like the woman at the well. He says, "I'll meet you there. And I'm going to give you refreshment." Just like He told the woman at the well, "You're going to be refreshed today. It's going to be living waters. And you don't have to worry anymore." You willing to dig?

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today, and we give You thanks for Your kindness to us, Your love for us. You're bringing us to a place in which we not only find life, but refreshment and fellowship. The Lord is your goodness. You want us, according to Scripture, to work together with You. And so, we come together, and we start digging. It's the same water, it's the same place that our forefathers have dug, but we have to experience it anew. With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, what we're asking you to do is find the water that's always been there. It's never changed. It's always been living, ever promised, ever true. We're asking you to experience it. God is calling upon you to work together with Him; that you might come to the same conclusion that Isaac came

to, "This is the God who keeps His promise. This is the God that's true." Taste and see that the Lord is good. Do what He says. Follow the steps. Watch what happens. God will visit you. He'll abide with you. He'll remain with you.