

**"In The Beginning..."**

**"I Will Be With You & Bless  
You"**

***God's promise to bless  
faithfulness.***

**Gen. 26**

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## **“I Will Be With You and Bless You”**

**Introduction:** The different lessons in this series have focused on our responsibilities as God’s people in various aspects of our lives: family, work, morality, and spiritual development. The point has been made emphatically that we must develop godly character so that we may be faithful in these areas. In this lesson, however, we want to think about the character and faithfulness of God. We want emphatically to make the point that God has made certain promises to His children, that He will keep those promises, and that His character will not allow Him to do otherwise. We will do this by looking at several events in the book of Genesis that demonstrate the faithfulness of God toward his people.

### **I. THE IMPORTANCE OF “BLESSING” IN GENESIS**

- A. The word ‘bless’ occurs in various forms well over 60 times in Genesis. It first appears in the creation account (1:22) and is found throughout the book until its last occurrence when Jacob blessed his sons (49:28). These passages show that God is good and desires to bestow blessings upon His people.
  - 1) God created man and woman in His image and bestowed on them the blessings of having children and ruling over the earth (1:29-30). This blessing is alluded to just prior to where the descendents of Adam are recorded (5:2).
  - 2) When God’s work of creation was complete, He blessed the seventh day and made it a holy day (2:3). The Israelites were commanded to observe this day as a day of rest and worship throughout their generations (Ex. 20:9; 31:13-17).
  - 3) After the Flood, God blessed Noah and his sons as He had blessed Adam in the beginning (9:1).
  - 4) God promises to bless Abraham (12:1-3).
    - a) Prior to this the sins of human beings had brought God’s curse upon His creation (cf. 3:14, 17; 4:11; 8:21; 9:25). God had dealt with that sin by bringing His judgment on the world in the Flood.

- b) On this occasion, however, God takes an entirely different approach. In His grace, He determines to bless the world through Abraham. God has not abandoned His creation, though they have sinned repeatedly.
  - c) The word 'bless' occurs five times in these verses, counterbalancing the five occurrences of the word 'curse' in the previous chapters. Through Abraham God will reverse the curse mankind has brought upon himself through sin.
  - d) The Lord blessed Abraham in every way (24:1).
  - e) From this point on, the text repeatedly indicates God's blessing was on the descendants of Abraham: Isaac (26:3, 12; 25:11), Jacob (27:23, 27-29, 28:1-4, 14 [cf. 48:3]; 30:27; 32:29; 35:9f), Joseph (49:22-26)
- 5) God also blesses those who come into contact with Abraham's descendants: Laban (30:7), Potiphar (39:5)
- B. Genesis describes the Lord as a good God who wants to bless His people. His blessings take many forms: long life, children, family, land, wealth, victory in battle, reputation, and rule. The New Testament emphasizes the blessings God bestows on His people through Christ (Eph. 1:3)
- 1) These blessings come to those who develop a Christ-like character (Matt 5:2-10), who endure temptation (Jms 1:12), and who are doers of God's word (Jms 1:25). In fact, we are called so that we might receive God's blessing (1 Pet. 3:8-12)
  - 2) The greatest blessing God gives is the forgiveness of sin and a right relationship with Him through Christ (Rom 4:1-8 [Ps 32]; Gal 3:6-14)

## **II. ONE OF GOD'S GREAT BLESSINGS IS HIS PROMISE TO BE WITH HIS CHILDREN ALWAYS**

- A. God promised to be with Isaac as he lived among the Philistines (Gen 26:3, 24).
- B. God frequently makes this promise to His people at critical times in their lives.

- 1) Jacob (Gen 28:15; 31:3)
  - 2) Joseph (Gen 39:2, 3, 21, 23).
  - 3) Moses (3:12; 4:12, 15; 33:12f)
  - 4) Joshua (Deut 31:23; Josh 1:5-9)
  - 5) David (1 Sam 18:14; Ps 23; cf. Ps 51:11)
  - 6) Jeremiah (Jer 1:8)
  - 7) Jesus promises to be with the apostles as they go out preaching the Gospel (Matt 28:19-20).
  - 8) Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:9-10; cf. 2 Tim 4:16-17)
- C. No matter what the challenge might be, God promises to be with His children. We may take courage and serve Him faithfully, knowing that He will not abandon us under any circumstances.

**III. GOD'S CHARACTER WILL NOT ALLOW HIM TO BE UNFAITHFUL TO HIS PEOPLE. THE SCRIPTURES SAY THAT GOD CANNOT DENY HIMSELF (2 Tim. 2:11-13). HE MUST ACT IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH HIS CHARACTER.**

- A. God is pure; He cannot act in an impure manner. God is a God of justice; He cannot act unjustly. God is holy; He cannot act in an unholy way. God is love; He cannot act unlovingly. God is faithful; He cannot be unfaithful to His children and abandon them in their time of trial.
- B. God is described as 'abounding in lovingkindness...who keeps lovingkindness for thousands' (Ex 34:6-7 NASB). Though the NKJV uses two different words in this passage ['goodness' and 'mercy'], one word is found in the Hebrew text [*hesed*]. The word is used throughout the Old Testament to describe God's loyal love for His people (Gen 32:9-12; Ps 51:1; Lam 3:32). The New Testament says, 'God is faithful' (1 Cor 10:13; 1 Thess 5:24; 2 Thess 3:3).

C. God's faithfulness to His children and His promises is illustrated often in the book of Genesis and throughout the Bible.

- 1) Though Noah lived in a sinful world, God knew that he was a righteous, blameless man who walked with God (Gen 6:9) and saved him and his family.
- 2) God promised Abraham and Sarah a son in their old age. The promise was fulfilled 25 years later. Over that time Abraham certainly made some errors, but God remained loyal to Abraham and blessed him with the child He had promised (Gen 21:1-3).
- 3) The New Testament calls Lot a righteous man (2 Pet 2:6-8). Consequently, when the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, God saved Lot (Gen 19).
- 4) Few stories illustrate the loyalty of God better than the story of Joseph. Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers, enslaved in Egypt, cut off from his family, lied about, forgotten and abandoned by his fellow man. Yet, Joseph was continually faithful to God, and God was continually faithful to Joseph (Gen. 50:20).

**Conclusion:** We serve a good God who wants to bless us and has blessed us. Among His blessings is the promise, 'Do not be afraid. I will be with you.' We know He will always be true to that promise because God is faithful to His word and to His people. He will never abandon us. May we devote ourselves to serving Him faithfully, enduring to the end so that we may reign with Him in eternity.