

Are we WALKING Worthy

of God?

1 Thessalonians 2:12

of the Lord?

Colossians 1:10

of our Vocation?

Ephesians 4:1



Adapted from an address by C. E. Lunden

Three times in the Bible we are told to **“walk worthy”**.

The **Thessalonians** turned to God from Idols. They had come out of terrible uncleanness, which was an abomination to God, and these dear new believers are told to *“walk worthy of God”*. **1 Thessalonians 2:12**. This involves practical sanctification to *“God who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all ...”* **Romans 8:32!**

Is He not worthy of our faithful walk beloved?

Then in **Colossians** we are exhorted to *“walk worthy of the Lord”* (**Colossians 1:10**).

As individuals we should own Jesus Christ as our LORD and collectively He is the HEAD of the assembly. Do we own Him this way?

It is a solemn fact that we can hold the doctrine of the HEAD without actually holding the Head. Do we go to the Lord Jesus with everything both as individuals and collectively or do we try to figure things out ourselves or rely on an arm of flesh?

Then we have in **Ephesians 4:1** the exhortation to *“walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called”*.

The apostle has outlined that we are blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies. We are heavenly people. The Holy Spirit has joined us (baptized us) into one body connected to our Head in heaven even Christ Jesus, a Man in the glory. The middle wall of partition is broken down and both Jew and Gentile when they are saved are brought into the mystic body of Christ. What a blessed privilege and one which was hidden in God before the apostle tells us of this wonderful truth. The angels look down and should see the *“manifold wisdom of God”* shown out in the assembly. What do they see beloved? How we have failed but we are exhorted to *“walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called”* and the time is short.

Isaac, a type of the heavenly man, gives us some very important instruction. Oh that we might take heed to it and glorify God and Christ Jesus.

READ Genesis 26:1-35

- 1 *And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar.*
- 2 *And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of:*
- 3 *Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father;*
- 4 *And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;*
- 5 *Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.*
- 6 *And Isaac dwelt in Gerar:*
- 7 *And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said, She is my sister: for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon.*
- 8 *And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife.*
- 9 *And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety she is thy wife: and how saidst thou, She is my sister? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her.*
- 10 *And Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us.*
- 11 *And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.*
- 12 *Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the LORD blessed him.*
- 13 *And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great:*
- 14 *For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him.*

- 15 *For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.*
- 16 *And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.*
- 17 *And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.*
- 18 *And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.*
- 19 *And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.*
- 20 *And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him.*
- 21 *And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah.*
- 22 *And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.*
- 23 *And he went up from thence to Beersheba.*
- 24 *And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.*
- 25 *And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.*
- 26 *Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army.*
- 27 *And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?*
- 28 *And they said, We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee;*

29 *That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of the LORD.*

30 *And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink.*

31 *And they rose up betimes in the morning, and sware one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.*

32 *And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water.*

33 *And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day.*

34 *And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite:*

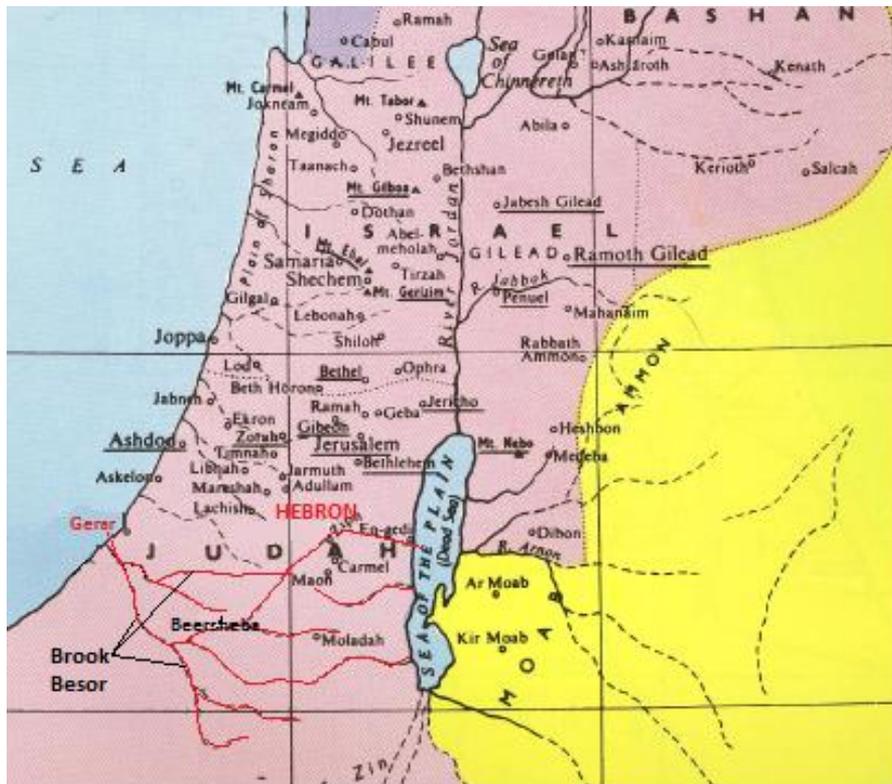
35 *Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah.*

There are twelve chapters devoted to the life of **Abraham** in the book of Genesis and there are about twenty-five to the life of **Jacob**; but there is only one chapter given to us in regard to **Isaac**, except for a few other verses.

Isaac is a picture to us of the heavenly man. If you have been saved, no matter how young you are, you are in this category—you belong to heaven and these things apply to all Christians, both old and young. Everyone who has Christ as their Saviour belongs to heaven; and we are on our way *now*. It is interesting and instructive that there is only one chapter devoted to the history of Isaac, the heavenly man but there are many things we can learn here in regard to one who is a heavenly man!

The first thing we read about Isaac here is that there is a famine in the land. Little do we know the work that God is doing to prepare us for heaven! Everything that comes into our lives has a **purpose** and God has a purpose concerning every one of us, and He has a **plan** for each of our lives to fulfill that purpose. Considering this we should be on our knees in order to find out His plan rather than following our own course and ways; because, if we do that, we will go wrong, and we may have to retrace our steps and with sorrow.

There is a river, or brook, in the south of Palestine called **Besor**. It is the same river (or pathway) that Abraham went up on the way to Hebron. Besor means "*glad tidings.*" This river has several branches. One branch goes to the south country and another branch goes to the land of Salt, but here the branch is the one that goes into **Gerar**.



Gerar (Philistia) is a picture of the religious enemies in the land. That is the first place that Isaac goes. He had started for **Hebron**—Hebron was his object; it is a picture to us of the heavenly places. But, we find that he goes first to Gerar.

Notice: "*And the Lord appeared unto him.*" Two times in this chapter the Lord appears unto him. The first time (**verse 2**), He tells Isaac what He is going to do *for* him; not what Isaac has to do, but what He is going to do

for him. Isn't it wonderful that God has done everything for us? Has He given us lands and other things down here? No, we are a heavenly people.

Ephesians outlines to us (**Ephesians 1:3-6**): *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all (or, every) spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."*

In these verses God is musing on what His own counsels have brought. Think of it! He is going to have children with Him in heaven. Notice the words, *"blessed"* (or, happy) and *"good pleasure."* It is God's good pleasure. What a wonderful thing for us to know, that God is doing all this for His own eternal happiness; and He is going to share that happiness with us! Isaac gives us just a little picture of these things and it makes us think of our portion as a heavenly people.

In connection with this history of Isaac we see our pathway down here as heavenly citizens and some of the things that Isaac did that he shouldn't have done. It is true that he did in a measure obey. God had told him to sojourn in *"this land"* and he did (**verse 3**). But we read in **verse 6**: *"And Isaac dwelt in Gerar."*

Isaac should have known that his father had made a covenant with the Philistines, the enemies in the land, at Beersheba. His father had drawn a line outlined in **chapter 21**. And, there is a line today between a heavenly man and this world. Abraham was the father of faith, and he drew a line at Beersheba—he made a covenant with them. Isaac was not to go down and dwell at Gerar; he was to dwell where his father dwelt. The covenant had been made before, and he should have known. There are many things that we should know because our fathers and mothers have taught us. But we don't always think of them or appreciate them, and so we make mistakes.

Also in **verse 2**: *"Go not down into Egypt."* Here, Isaac stopped; he didn't go down into Egypt. His father did; but God had not told his father not to, but, He told Isaac not to, and Isaac obeyed. He didn't go down into Egypt; but he did go to Gerar.

God hadn't told him not to go to Gerar but Gerar was a city of the Philistines, the people who were enemies in the land. Immediately he has

problems. And if we do not walk by faith, we are going to have problems. We may have problems just the same, but we will not have the problems out of communion that Isaac had. At Gerar he had no altar!

Do we have a set time and place where you get into the presence of God, where you read, pray and do those things that are in keeping with a heavenly man? Isaac *dwelt* at Gerar. We are not to *dwell* in this world, especially the religious world; it is not our dwelling place.

Isaac began to have problems. Then he had to lie to get out of the difficulties. "*Be sure your sin will find you out.*" (**Numbers 32:23**)

We can be sure of it - our sin will find us out!

All the time he was in Gerar, he had one thing after another in his way. God prospered him, it is true; but he prospered him in the place where he should not have been. He should never have been in Gerar. And, finally, he had to retrace his steps to get back in the right path. It is possible that, in great measure, his time was wasted there, because he did not walk by faith. Isn't that solemn? Now he has to be rebuked by king Abimelech. It is wonderful that God came in. Has He not done so for us beloved?

If there is any faith at all, He will come in and correct us and we should listen to the corrections He gives.

So, this problem between Isaac and Abimelech is straightened out immediately, and now this part of the journey is past.

But, why did he lie? His father lied; Abraham carried a lie with him for over 60 years: he said that his wife was his sister. So, his son does the same thing. As fathers what kind of an example are we giving to your children? Do realize that our children are watching us? What are we doing?

So, he lied and it hadn't reached his conscience before, and so someone outside, who was not a heavenly man, had to rebuke him. Isn't that solemn? It would have been nice if his father had straightened him out; but his father had left him a bad example—even though his father was the father of faith to us.

"Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great (Verses 12, 13). It is wonderful that God blesses us; and the reason is that Christ has been set for blessings. (**Psalm 21: 6, marginal reading.**) God has set Christ to be blessings, and it cannot be otherwise. But the point is - do we want our

blessings in the right place, or in the wrong place? We cannot enjoy heavenly things rightly when we have a bad conscience. When we are with the enemy in his land, we cannot enjoy heavenly things. That requires separation. Unless you and I, beloved, are walking in separation, we cannot enjoy the blessing of the Lord. Many have been blessed very much when they were out of the path—blessed in natural things. But that doesn't mean that they were in the right state of soul, just because God blessed them in natural things. No! One can be deceived by this very thing: He might say, *"I am going on well; see how the Lord has blessed me; just look at how much He has given me in natural things."*

That is not the measurement for a heavenly man; it is spiritual things. *"Blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies."* That is our blessing. So, do not be deceived by the things in our circumstances.

Then comes next **(verse 14)**: *"For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him."*

More trouble! As heavenly people: we should never put ourself in a position where the world envies us because of our personal possessions. Don't do it! That is not our place down here. First, Isaac was in the wrong position; next, he was occupied with the things that belonged to the enemies land.

"For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth" (verse 15).

Abraham dwelt there at one time; but he moved out to Beersheba. Abraham had wells when in Gerar. His servants had dug them, but the Philistines had stopped them with earth. When you are in the world, even in the religious world, all you are going to get in the place of refreshment is *"earth."* The Philistines are busy to stop up the place of refreshment with earth—not heavenly things. If we allow ourself, in just a few moments we will be filled with the things of this earth for we are surrounded by earthly things - on the sign boards, every place! We get it in the schools; every place we go they are going to fill our mind with what belongs to this earth. But we are a heavenly people; we don't belong here.

"And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we" (verse 16). It is one thing for you to say, *"I am not going to walk with the world."* That is your choice; and, you may go back again some time. But, when the world drives you out, you can't! That was God's doing. We see God working here at every step. But He

is allowing Isaac to go through an experience. In the case of Egypt, God said *"Go not down into Egypt."* That was a definite commandment; and he didn't go. But God did not say, *"Go not to Gerar."* There are certain things in our lives that we have to pass through in experience, and God allows them. Now Abimelech says *"Go from us."* It wasn't a very happy thing, for Isaac had been established there; he thought he was prospering. But, Abimelech said, *"Go!"* God was behind that.

Oh, how God loves us! He will not let us go on in ways that we shouldn't even if He has to use *the enemy* to drive us out of the position that we are in. How good if we had learned these principles when we were young, instead of having to wait until we are old to learn them! How many of us have had to learn these things when we were older, because we did not learn them when we were young!

"And Isaac departed thence" (verse 17). Now, where is he? He is in the valley, outside of Gerar. He is not in the city any longer, but he has only gone part way.

Oh how hard it is to get us out of this religious world through which we are passing. But God is patient; He is going to continue until Isaac is completely out. And, He is going to continue with us until we are in the enjoyment of our spiritual blessings that are in Christ Jesus. He is going to keep at it!

"He pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar." He has a tent, for he is a pilgrim. His father had a tent also. A tent speaks of a simple life—a life without glamor. Are we following a glamorous life? That is not a pilgrim life. A simple life is having simple things surrounding us, not the things that characterize this world. We do not have our home here. The prophet said, *"This is not your rest: because it is polluted" (Micah 2:10).*

"And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father" (verse 18).

That was a good step. He doesn't change anything: *"he called their names after the names by which his father had called them."* He is beginning to wake up; he is on his way now. But, it is God behind him all the time, moving him along in his soul through the obstacles that He has allowed in his life. Oh, the obstacles are good for us. If it hadn't been for these obstacles, Isaac would still have dwelt in Gerar, where he never should have been. How patient God is!

"And he called their names after the names by which his father had called them."

We are in a day of new doctrines in every place. We believe what God has said. Isaac did not depart from what his father had established in the names—he carried on the same names. When a soul is recovered, he will go back to the truth; he won't invent something new. The reason we have from twelve to fifteen hundred, or more, denominations of the Christian faith today, is because someone has invented something new—all the way along. That is man; not God! *"Isaac digged again the wells of water."* **Verse 19:** *"And Isaac's servants digged in the valley."*

That is a good place to dig. The valley speaks of a low place. There is always blessing in a low place. That is our place—just to take a low place before God, and then there will always be blessing. And so it was, they *"found there a well of living water"* (marginal reading).

But what about it? It was still the wrong place; and so, *"the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, the water is ours: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him"* (**verse 20**).

Esek means striving. But Isaac knew something of grace, so he moves on. Do we know anything about grace? Are you going to strive back, or just move on? The Lord was pushing him right out of that country and teaching him.

"And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah (or, hatred)" (**Verse 21**).

Now they hate him! He is still in the wrong place. Oh, how hard it is for some of us to get out of this world in separation. But God is going to keep after us, because He loves us. He loved us long before this world was made, and His love is everlasting.

Now Isaac finds another place, and they do not strive for that—there is room. That is another test; it is down at the end of the road. As much as to say, *"Isaac, do you want to stay here? I have made room for you if you want to stay."* It must have hurt Isaac when he saw that, because he got out right away. How God works! He has His own marvelous ways of working with our souls. Do you want to be here, beloved? Do you want to have your portion in this world? It is going to burn soon, and everything we do is going to burn with it. When you have been blessed in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus—accepted in the beloved One—do we want this world?

"And he went up from thence to Beersheba" - where he should have been long ago. How long has it taken you, and how long has it taken me, to get out of this world in our spirit? And, even now, our poor hearts often go back after the things of this world; isn't it so?

What happened when he gets to Beersheba (**Verse 24**): *"And the Lord appeared unto him the same night"* (that very night!).

He didn't have an altar down in Gerar, so he had no communion with God. Do we want to go on in communion? Do we really—to have the fellowship of the Father and His Son Jesus Christ in *practice* down here? Is that what we want? And that is what Isaac got. Has the Lord been working with you in this way? I am sure He has with me. And, how good to know that it is all His work, and not mine. It is *all* His work! I can't look back and say I did this or that. If I had, I would still be living in Gerar. But the mercy, the kindness and the love of God has done it all.

At the end of this chapter we have **Esau** manifesting his will. His father didn't want him to marry the heathen, but he went right out and did just that taking two wives from the Hittites. He knew his father didn't want him to, so he went out and did it anyway. That is the natural man—always doing his own will. When Abraham went down into Egypt, it was weakness. He had obeyed the command of God; the God of glory had appeared to him. God had called him out into the place where He wanted him to be. But it was **weakness** that led him down into Egypt. At the end of this chapter we find that Esau did what he wanted to do. Am I doing what I want to do? That is **will**.

Psalms 103: 10-14: *"He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." (Notice that word "us.") "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."*

There is a difference between will and weakness. We have in the New Testament our great High Priest on high, who is interceding for us continually to keep us in the path just like we have seen in this chapter, the Lord prodding Isaac to get out of Gerar.

Besor has another branch which goes down to the south— *"the path of ease and pleasure."* But Isaac never went that way. Once the Lord got him back into the path, and he had the Lord before him as his object, he never goes down into that south country of ease and pleasure. And, as far as we

know, he never goes to the *valley of salt* either. (The valley of salt speaks of correction.) He didn't have to go that way. The Lord's work is good. "*As for God, his way is perfect*" (**Psalm 18:30**). And, once He had done this work in Isaac's soul, Isaac stayed in the path.

Has the Lord done that work in your soul, where He is keeping you right in the good path, enjoying the fact that your blessings are heavenly and that you are seated in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus?

Or are you still going after the things down here as an object? How He speaks to our hearts in this. "*As a father pitieth his children.*"

"And the Lord appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake" (**verse 24**).

He repeats all the blessing that He had given him before. He has brought him back, and given him that same message all over again. He must have gotten cold—like some of us and have had to have that message repeated. How good it is to have the message repeated, that we are children of God, seated in the heavenlies; He loves us—He loved us before the foundation of the world, and still loves us! And, His ways toward us are very good (even the ways of His prodding). "*For I am with thee.*"

Oh, how good to go on every day with the assurance that the Lord is with us. There will be trials; He will never let up until we are home, we have too many lessons to learn. "*I am with thee.*" He says, at least twice in Scripture, "*I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*" Never! Faith believes this, and this is our happiness. So Isaac had to learn that his happiness was not in circumstances—his happiness was in communion.

Then Isaac builds an altar (**verse 25**). Oh, what a long time he was without an altar. And he built the altar in the right place; he couldn't have an altar in Gerar.

At the end of the chapter, **verses 34 and 35**: "*And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beerli the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite: which were a grief of mind (or, "bitterness of spirit") unto Isaac and to Rebekah.*"

That last verse shows us that there was now communion; and that is why there is bitterness of spirit.

Is there any bitterness of spirit? Or, do we just say, "*Well, that's the way it is; I can't help it?*"

In one way there is no communion; in the other there is communion. If there is bitterness of spirit, there is communion. So, when Isaac was back, we have this record of Esau; one of his sons had gone astray, and there is bitterness of spirit.

Then the enemy comes, and he wants to make peace. This was the enemy that had driven him out. Are you going to have peace? You will if God makes peace in your life; otherwise not. Do you want to have a happy life down here? God will have to make it for you. And, if you respond to His gently leading you on in the path of faith, the end will be that you are living in peace.

Later in the **35th chapter**, we find that Abraham and Isaac dwelt in **HEBRON**. It does not say that in our chapter but now we learn that Hebron is where Isaac spent his life after he had been corrected. How good this is: for a believer to spend his life in the enjoyment of heavenly things, instead of all the time having that which is correcting as we have noticed in the history of Isaac— living in the enemies land, and having to be corrected continually, so that he might live in the good of what God has provided for him. And, how much good God has provided for us! Why is it, beloved, when we have so much—we have the very Manna of heaven for us now; we have a risen and glorified Christ to feed upon— are we going to feed on the husks of this world?

Are we going to be occupied with what is for this religions world? You know, the religious part of this world is the worst part. It is the religious world that crucified our Saviour. It is the religious world that has persecuted the Christians down thru the ages. We read in **Revelation 18:24**, that Babylon, that great religious system, will have to answer for the killing of all of God's prophets, and of saints that were slain upon the earth. That is the religious world.

So, in **verse 32** *"And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water."*

They find water in the very place where he is supposed to be - **Beersheba**; *'the well of the oath'*.

Water speaks of refreshment. We have to have refreshment and if we are a heavenly people, we have to have heavenly refreshment. They found water *in the place* where they should have the water.

How good it is to know that we are gathered unto the precious Name of the Lord Jesus Christ! He has given us heavenly truth. Do we appreciate it?

Little Flock #180 - J. R. Taylor, 1836

1. We are but strangers here;
Heaven is our home !
Earth in a desert drear;
Heaven is our home !
Dangers and sorrows stand
Round us on every hand;
Heaven is our fatherland,
Heaven is our home !

2. What thought the tempest rage,
Heaven is our home !
Short is our pilgrimage;
Heaven is our home !
This life's wild wintery blast
Soon will be overpast;
We shall reach home at last;
Heaven is our home !

3. There at our Saviour's side,
In heaven our home !
We shall be glorified;
Heaven is our home !
There with the good and blest
Those we love most and best
We shall forever rest,
In heaven our home !

4. Therefore we'll murmur not,
Heaven is our home !
Whate'er our earthly lot;
Heaven is our home !
We shall yet surely stand,
There at our Lord's right hand;
Heaven is our fatherland,
Heaven is our home !

