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Substance of Sermon preached by our Pastor  
on Thursday, February 25, 1982.

Lesson. Genesis 32.

And it came to pass, as she came unto him, that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and she lighted off her ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wouldest thou? Who answered, Give me a blessing; for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs. Joshua 15. 18. 19.

This is one of the rare glistering jewels in the midst of Biblical history in relation to the subduing of those who occupied the promised land, and who under Joshua, their Commander-in-Chief as well as Prime Minister were routed and the tribes of Israel took possession of the land. In the midst of this historical record we have a wonderful jewel of a choice child of God uttering the very language of every quickened soul in all generations following Achsah and before, concerning the Lord's divine blessing. For what could be more explicit or comprehensive, divine and precious than the request from her soul, "Give me a blessing"? I will make two observations initially to show the connecting links. First I will briefly return to Lord's Day evening. It is clear to me when the Lord promised to open the windows of Heaven and pour out a blessing that there should not be room enough to receive it, as in Malachi, that He referred to the incarnation and victory of Christ. His ascension on high and ten days after the ascension the opening of the windows of Heaven in a marvellous Pentecostal effusion of the Holy Ghost was a pouring out of blessing that there was not room enough to receive. I wonder how - it was by the help of God - how the apostles proceeded to baptise three thousand souls. You will see there was not room enough to receive the blessing: it spread through the whole earth. So there is a connecting link between Lord's Day and the Text now. We have an individual, a daughter, a dear gracious character who is saying, "Give me a blessing." Does it find an echo in your breast? It is true to say concerning Achsah that He did pour out a blessing so that there was not room enough to receive it here below. He gave her the upper and the nether springs.

Do you think you will have room enough to receive the upper springs, the land of pure delight, foretastes of glory in your soul? If the Lord gives you the upper springs you will know what it is to echo the words of the Church;

"The saints, unable to contain  
Their inward joys, shall shout and sing."

This is the portion of every child of God, and I would present the truth to you in this glorious manner. It is the wish, will, pleasure, delight of the Lord to bless His people. He has no delight in withholding the blessing from them. If you ponder deeply in your spiritual mind the vast fulness it has pleased the Father should dwell in Jesus and if the Lord pours something of that into your soul there will not be room to receive it. This is a spiritual hypothesis. It is the Lord's will, pleasure, delight, wish to richly bless His dear people. If only the Lord would pour it into your soul! It is not the Lord's pleasure to withhold things from them that walk uprightly. This is a blissful theme in the gospel.

I will make reference to what is unique and unfathomed and seek to know the definition of it in the Lesson. We have an amazing record by Moses as he was inspired - Moses wrote concerning Jacob - and what a revelation of divine truth did the Lord give to Moses! He knew all concerning the unique, wonderful, singular, glorious method divine and so unfathomed which is termed wrestling. You cannot wrestle on your own. If you have those things you desire to see brought to fruition, accomplished, if you have a trial and seek deliverance from it your mind by the Spirit will involuntarily turn to wrestling. If you wish to see evidences of a dear child being born again; to see deliverance out of intractable, complicated trial you will be turned to the divine method of wrestling. This verse is a favourite of mine.

"Wrestling prayer can wonders do;  
Bring relief in deepest straits!  
Prayer can force a passage through  
Iron bars and brazen gates."

But the truth is you cannot wrestle alone: the Lord must come and wrestle with you. This is a grand, glorious mystery. The Lord in human form came and wrestled with Jacob. If you will wrestle you must have the blessed One to wrestle with. This is the most profitable experience one can know on earth and the most satisfying, to feel the Lord wrestling with you.

The whole purpose of wrestling is to get the other down. Why should the Lord come and do this with His people? The purpose is to bless you with a larger measure of faith than you have now. What would your condition be if the Lord increased your faith and came and wrestled with you as if He would down you, and because of a large measure of faith you by His strength wrestled with Him? What preaching there is then! what cures for the body! what conquests of grace! of souls taken from the hands of Satan and brands plucked from the burning! If you are going to see deliverance in trial you will need wrestling. This is of the profoundest depth and parallel to the Text. Jacob said to the Lord, - he knew He was a divine Person - "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Achsah said, "Give me a blessing."

A question I will ask the friends, especially mature friends of great depth of experience is, what would you judge the blessing was that Jacob sought? He must have it: what was it? It must be specific. "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. It is a blessing I must have, Lord." Turn to another gem, that of Jabez. It may appear comparatively easy for faith to define the nature of the blessing he sought. He said, "Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed." I suppose every gracious heart will soon arrive at a conclusion concerning an indeed blessing. The way to answer it is to know it yourself. An indeed blessing is a premier blessing, the greatest blessing God can bestow; the forgiveness of sins, pardon and peace in the soul and to be in the full liberty of the Gospel. Is that what you mean when you say, "Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed."? Would you like to know what Jacob's blessing was? Almost at once we read, "And he blessed him there." It related to the Lord Jesus. He gave him a glorious discovery of the Person of Christ. I feel in particular it was of this nature, to behold by faith and to receive the fruit of the victory of Christ as demonstrated when He said triumphantly on the cross, "It is finished" and as it is demonstrated abundantly when He gave His life sacrificially, vicariously, opened the fountain of purgation, was dead and buried and rose on the third day. All His enemies were defeated. He ascended to Heaven and sat on the right hand of God. I am sure this was the blessing Jacob sought, to see Christ the mighty Conqueror accomplish redemption and have the fruit of it in his

soul. He said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me...And he blessed him there." It appears to me when the Lord blessed him there he had all the blessings the Lord could convey to him; nothing was withheld. He had therefore an experience that was parallel to that of the apostle Paul: he had a foretaste of Heaven. Paul was caught up to Paradise, to the third heavens. The blessing was a concentration of all the glorious provisions and blessings of the New Covenant.

I will put to you at this further stage a question. Are you able to define the blessing of God? If you have life and are under a gracious influence this will be paramount, your longing, thirsting, panting, yearning for a divine blessing. There is no substitute for it. God's people are blessed because they are in His heart, because He loves them, because they are on the Rock, because they are in the clefts of the Rock and in the secret places of the stairs; because His left hand is under their head and His right hand doth embrace them. They are blessed because they are eternally secure and safe, but they seek enjoyment of the blessing. It can be said of you if the Lord has favoured you with divine life and a revelation of Christ you are blessed, for ever blessed. Nothing can make it negative, detract from it or change the nature of it for 'He rests in His love'. In my experience I have seen, and this is one of the greatest joys of a pastor's heart, I have seen some of the flock favoured with full deliverance, pardon, peace and Heaven begun below, and I have participated in it with them. It may have lasted for a fortnight or for weeks on end. Some have never lost it. I am speaking of older friends. The Lord has come and blessed them and they have never lost it. There are some of you here the Lord has in a special way blessed you, and though you are sometimes beclouded you have never really lost the blessing and you never will. There is a difference in your whole life. You are not afraid of death: you anticipate joyfully the happy day. You are in a different frame of soul from what you were a few years back. God has blessed you. I could say to you you are blessed for ever. The Lord will never take away His Covenant of Peace. He will never dissolve the relationship between Himself and you, between the Trinity and you. We do not adequately realise the richness, magnitude and glory of the Lord's blessing. You seek the experience renewed and the

enjoyment of the Lord's blessing. Once you have tasted you are finished for the world and the flesh largely. You drop your idols and soon as you reach your Saviour's arms you give Him all your heart. If you have tasted divine blessing there is no substitute for it. All else is hollow, false, glittering. It is the blessing of God. I will say this, you know God's blessing is to be sought.

There are three things. Jacob was left alone and you will be. It will be blissful loneliness so you are under the canopy of the influence of the Spirit and so filled with heavenly desire and a fixation in things that are heavenly and the glories of Christ that you are lost in wonder, love and meditation and much prayer, and the Lord will bless you. If He gives you this He will bless you. It is the same in preaching. If we have a special time of meditation and prayer and contemplation of the glories of Christ it flows out in the ministry. The blessing is to be sought and obtained. There is a sad sort of indifference, a rushing to the House of God and no preparation. I know life is difficult and there are the pressures of life. If there is no gracious preparation who can hope to receive? You dear sisters, there are times when the Lord drops a word into your spirit and breaks your heart and softens your spirit and you will bring the richness of <sup>it</sup> into the Sanctuary. There is preparation. It is sad and it reflects the depravity of fallen nature and the power of a cruel adversary: it is possible to plan improvements or business projects while you are supposed to be listening to the gospel. I know it. One can sit in the pew and think how to do this and things you will do and improvements you will make and not know about the service. There is no blessing, is there? You go home as barren as a wilderness, an arid desert. It is of course, the sinful weakness of the flesh and the opportunity of Satan. Oh the projects he brings to the mind! I am guilty before God and I confess it. I have been looking round a project in the House of God and thought I knew how to proceed. One cannot expect the blessing of God there. If you put into operation things you planned when you should have been listening to the gospel God will blow on it and you will ask no questions. Your ears were closed to the gospel. There is no blessing there, my friends. The Lord disciplines us and teaches us to profit. It is wonderful when you plead

with the Lord to prepare you for the blessing, and you will go with anticipation, a little expectation of the Lord's blessing. Why? Because there is a sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees. There is a feeling of the influence of the Holy Ghost, and you anticipate the Lord's favour and you are not disappointed. You are in trial and need and you have got a thirst for Christ, for God. What a different scene when the world is darkened and you see Jesus only. There are no plans, no projects, no pleasant pictures then. It is Jesus only. Wonderful this is. We have no power in it. You might say you will concentrate: if the Spirit does not come you are not able to.

So preparation is needed for the blessing. Daniel was mourning three full weeks, "and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long." He saw a vision. You will prove it. If the Lord really gives you wrestling prayer, pleading with Him and preparation you will know what His blessing is. So who can define adequately the blessing of God? The subject is eternal; the blessing of God. Caleb said to Achsah, "What wouldst thou? Who answered, Give me a blessing." Very precious. It shows she was rightly exercised before God: she sought the blessing of God beyond all else. She was able to open her heart. It shows what discernment she had, and this is applicable to us. "for thou hast given me a south land." The Lord has given us a south land. We are in the South, and it is far more highly favoured than most parts of the country in relation to the gospel. You may say, "Thou hast given me a cause of Truth to meet in, given me a gracious ministry." Not to refer to self but this is a south land. "I am able to meet continually in a cause of Truth, this dear House of God. It is a south land, green, verdant, and the Lord is there." If you have a gracious husband or wife, children, parents, the Lord has given you a south land. If He has given me a dear flock He has given me a south land. If He has given pastors according to His heart, or ordained ministers He has given a south land. It is not a wilderness, not a desert. We have got our Bibles: we are not persecuted. Think of the favour of a south land!

6 So, "for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water." It means in translation, "Give me the unction, power and life of the Holy Ghost, living springs and all the favours of the everlasting

gospel and the New Covenant." They are like to springs of divine origin. The heart of God, beneath His Throne living waters, and the springs flow down to the south land. This is what she sought. Water is life, healing, peace, salvation. It brings all the blessings of a precious Redeemer, the wondrous accomplished work of redemption. Upper and nether springs. Upper means a foretaste of Heaven, and the springs flow to your soul here. They bring pardon, peace, heavenly foretastes, and presently you will be there, and He will lead you unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes.

"There is a land of pure delight,  
Where saints immortal reign;  
Infinite day excludes the night,  
And pleasures banish pain."

They are the upper springs and they flow. You get a taste of them. And the nether springs flow down to you here, and they include grace and providence; all you need for your poor body of strength, wisdom and help; everything for your soul, family, dear ones, and the gospel. "And he gave her the upper springs and the nether springs." Blessed be God,