

**SALT Church**  
Genesis 26:13-35  
**“God’s Hand”**  
June 3, 2026  
**“In the Beginning”**

**Recap**

- **Genesis 26:1-13**

**Setting the Tone:**

**Psalm 139:1-12**

- <sup>1</sup> You have searched me, Lord,  
and you know me.**
- <sup>2</sup> You know when I sit and when I rise;  
you perceive my thoughts from afar.**
- <sup>3</sup> You discern my going out and my lying down;  
you are familiar with all my ways.**
- <sup>4</sup> Before a word is on my tongue  
you, Lord, know it completely.**
- <sup>5</sup> You hem me in behind and before,  
and you lay your hand upon me.**
- <sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,  
too lofty for me to attain.**
- <sup>7</sup> Where can I go from your Spirit?  
Where can I flee from your presence?**
- <sup>8</sup> If I go up to the heavens, you are there;  
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.**
- <sup>9</sup> If I rise on the wings of the dawn,  
if I settle on the far side of the sea,**
- <sup>10</sup> even there your hand will guide me,  
your right hand will hold me fast.**
- <sup>11</sup> If I say, “Surely the darkness will hide me  
and the light become night around me,”**
- <sup>12</sup> even the darkness will not be dark to you;**

the night will shine like the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.

**As we move into Genesis 26 we need to keep these verses in mind.**

- God is both far and near.
- He is all knowing
- He is all powerful
- He sees all things and knows every heart
- The past and the future are as clear as the present.
  - **He is God**

**This account is a reminder of the power of:  
Romans 8:28**

**<sup>28</sup> And we know that in **all things God works** for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.**

### **Genesis 26**

***26 A severe famine now struck the land, as had happened before in Abraham's time. So Isaac moved to Gerar, where Abimelech, king of the Philistines, lived.***

- **Based upon what we already know, is God causing this famine?**

***<sup>2</sup> The Lord appeared to Isaac and said, "Do not go down to Egypt, but do as I tell you.***

- Apparently, Isaac had planned to go to Egypt like his father did when a famine occurred during his lifetime.

***<sup>3</sup> Live here as a foreigner in this land, and I will be with you and bless you. I hereby confirm that I will give all these lands to you and your descendants, just as I solemnly promised Abraham, your father.***

***4 I will cause your descendants to become as numerous as the stars of the sky, and I will give them all these lands. And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed. 5 I will do this because Abraham listened to me and obeyed all my requirements, commands, decrees, and instructions.” 6 So Isaac stayed in Gerar.***

***7 When the men who lived there asked Isaac about his wife, Rebekah, he said, “She is my sister.”***

***He was afraid to say, “She is my wife.” He thought, “They will kill me to get her, because she is so beautiful.”***

- Like father like son!

***8 But sometime later, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looked out his window and saw Isaac caressing Rebekah.***

***9 Immediately, Abimelech called for Isaac and exclaimed, “She is obviously your wife! Why did you say, ‘She is my sister?’” “Because I was afraid someone would kill me to get her from me,” Isaac replied.***

- This plan would have never worked
  - At best they take his “sister” and someone marries her and he is left with the grief of knowing that he caused it all.
    - But God...
      - God causes Abimelech to see Isaac loving his wife.

(Side note)

- He could have said that she was his cousin!

***10 “How could you do this to us?” Abimelech exclaimed. “One of my people might easily have taken your wife and slept with her, and you would have made us guilty of great sin.”***

- It is a sad day when the pagan world is more concerned with sin than Gods people.

***11 Then Abimelech issued a public proclamation: “Anyone who touches this man or his wife will be put to death!”***

- Look at God go!

- In the middle of this mess God pours out His grace and mercy on this moment and reassures Isaac that no one will touch him or his wife.

***12 When Isaac planted his crops that year, he harvested a hundred times more grain than he planted, for the Lord blessed him.***

- Only God could produce such a harvest!
  - Such a harvest in the middle of a famine.
- Keep in mind that Isaac moved his family due to a famine.
  - Keep in mind King Abimelech and his people are watching.
    - What must they have been thinking?
      - What is happening to Isaac's faith?

WHY WOULD GOD DO THIS?

- Doesn't feel like God is rewarding bad behavior?
  - What is at stake here?
    - God's great name...

***Genesis 26:13-35***

***13 He became a very rich man, and his wealth continued to grow. 14 He acquired so many flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, and servants that the Philistines became jealous of him.***

- Why would it be important to God that Isaac and his family become so wealthy and powerful?
- Wasn't Isaac already rich with many herds that he inherited from Abraham?
  - What is God doing here?
    - We know what Isaac is doing, he is becoming very wealthy and powerful which is an amazing thing especially during a regional famine.
    - What is God up to?

***15 So the Philistines filled up all of Isaac's wells with dirt. These were the wells that had been dug by the servants of his father, Abraham.***

- Did God have a hand in this?
  - Do you think Isaac would have left this area if this had not happened?

***16 Finally, Abimelech ordered Isaac to leave the country. “Go somewhere else,” he said, “for you have become too powerful for us.”***

- Did God have a hand in this?

**Proverbs 21:1**

***1The king’s heart is like a stream of water directed by the Lord; he guides it wherever he pleases.***

***17 So Isaac moved away to the Gerar Valley, where he set up their tents and settled down.***

**Proverbs 16:9**

***9 We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps.***

**(Side note)**

- It occurred to me that Isaac does not have a place that he would call home.
- “Home” for Isaac was where God moved him.
- “Home” was not a place that could ever be found.
  - “Home” was a promise that would not be realized until his death.
- Isaac was born in a tent and lived in a tent his whole life.
  - Think about that...
    - He is very rich and powerful and yet he never owned a home.
- Do you remember John 1:14?

**John 1:14**

***14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.***

- Did you know that in the Greek it reads *“The Word became flesh and He tented among us.”*
- The parallels are amazing
  - Both are the only sons of promise
  - Both are promised that the whole earth will be blessed because of them
  - Both are representations of God’s people
  - Both are called to leave their homes
  - Both speak to kings
  - Both are powerful and yet neither own homes.
    - Later on (several hundred years from Isaacs day) God will call His people out of Egypt and they will live in tents for at least one generation of people.
      - In fact, once God leads His people in to the promised land, He will call them to remember those days in which they had no home and lived in tents.
      - The Feast of Tabernacles is a week-long celebration in which Gods people leave their homes and camp in tents together as a reminder of how God provided a home for them.
        - A tabernacle is a tent.

***So, when we read that Jesus “tented among us” it becomes so much more to us when we understand the history of that statement.***

- He let His home
- He was all powerful and had access to all riches
- And yet He “tented among us”
  - Why?
    - Because this place was not His home.

**Back to Genesis 26**

***18 He reopened the wells his father had dug, which the Philistines had filled in after Abraham's death. Isaac also restored the names Abraham had given them.***

- Why would the Holy Spirit want us to know this detail?
  - It good to remember the goodness of God.
  - Those names were reminders of Gods goodness and the enemy did not want Isaac to remember Gods goodness.

***19 Isaac's servants also dug in the Gerar Valley and discovered a well of fresh water.<sup>20</sup> But then the shepherds from Gerar came and claimed the spring. "This is our water," they said, and they argued over it with Isaac's herdsmen. So Isaac named the well Esek (which means "argument").***

- Why is that an important detail?
  - What is God doing?

***21 Isaac's men then dug another well, but again there was a dispute over it. So Isaac named it Sitnah (which means "hostility").***

**Proverbs 16:9**

***9 We can make our plans,  
but the Lord determines our steps.***

***22 Abandoning that one, Isaac moved on and dug another well. This time there was no dispute over it, so Isaac named the place Rehoboth (which means "open space"), for he said, "At last the Lord has created enough space for us to prosper in this land."***

- Listen to the wisdom of Isaac.
  - He acknowledges Gods hand in the discouragement of the previous two wells.
- Isaac agrees with Proverbs 16:9
  - Isaac had a plan but God guided his steps to another place.
    - There is a lot of peace when we agree with God.

***<sup>23</sup> From there Isaac moved to Beersheba, <sup>24</sup> where the Lord appeared to him on the night of his arrival. “I am the God of your father, Abraham,” he said. “Do not be afraid, for I am with you and will bless you.***

- This leads me to believe that there was some fear within Isaac's heart.

***I will multiply your descendants, and they will become a great nation. I will do this because of my promise to Abraham, my servant.”***

- This is one of the most important statements in the Bible.
  - What is at stake here?
    - God's great name and reputation.
      - He keeps His word because His name and reputation are at stake.
        - Why is that so important?

**Our salvation is at stake!**

**John 3:16**

***<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.***

- If God does not keep His word, then we would have reason to doubt John 3:16
  - But we don't because God always keeps His word.
    - Therefore, “whoever believes in Him SHALL not perish but have eternal life” means that you cannot lose your salvation otherwise it would not be eternal.
    - The whole point is this:
      - You didn't earn your salvation you simply put your faith, hope, and trust in Jesus and the Word of God.
      - Therefore, because God keeps His word He will keep you from losing your salvation.

**John 10:27-30**

**<sup>27</sup> My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. <sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one."**

- God keeps His promises!

### **Deuteronomy 31:6**

**<sup>6</sup> Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."**

- This is repeated in the New Testament (Hebrews 13:5) so it is for all believers both New Testament and Old Testament.
- But it is especially for the Jewish people because God was sending them to their new home and His command was "don't be afraid" why?
- Because in their natural skin there was plenty to be afraid of but God...
  - He would go before them, they would be called to go and God would ensure the victory.
    - Now, there can be no victory without the fight.
      - Thus we learn that the struggle is part of the growth.

### **Back to Genesis 26**

**<sup>25</sup> Then Isaac built an altar there and worshiped the Lord. He set up his camp at that place, and his servants dug another well.**

**God's timing is always perfect!**

- It had been a difficult journey for Isaac and Rebekah
- Finally they land where God wanted them to be and God speaks again.
  - He reaffirms His love for Isaac and for the promises that He made to Abraham.
  - Isaac's response was to worship
    - To build an altar

- While all of this is going on, Isaac’s servant show up and proclaim that another well had been dug and water had been found.

- Don’t miss that!

- This was a famine and water had been found.
- Water meant life

- Life is always found in obedience and worship of the one true God.

**Time stamp:**

<sup>26</sup> **One day King Abimelech came from Gerar with his adviser, Ahuzzath, and also Phicol, his army commander.**

- Sound familiar?

<sup>27</sup> **“Why have you come here?” Isaac asked. “You obviously hate me, since you kicked me off your land.”**

<sup>28</sup> **They replied, “We can plainly see that the Lord is with you.**

- What had they saw?
  - Prosperity during the most difficult days.

**So we want to enter into a sworn treaty with you. Let’s make a covenant. <sup>29</sup>Swear that you will not harm us, just as we have never troubled you.**

- This is not a true statement
  - They stole wells
  - They filled in wells
  - King Abimelech ordered Isaac to go!

**We have always treated you well, and we sent you away from us in peace. And now look how the Lord has blessed you!”**

- The pagan king and his advisors could clearly see the hand of God on this family.
- They are wise to make a treaty with him.
  - It is interesting to me the way that is phrased.
    - It sounds like they were taking credit for their prosperity.

- Isaac, filled with grace does not posture but shows grace to these lost people.
- This is what God had purposed for both Isaac and King Abimelech.

***30 So Isaac prepared a covenant feast to celebrate the treaty, and they ate and drank together.***

- A covenant is more than a promise and it is only as strong as your word and reputation.
  - It is not conditional for the strength of a covenant rest in the word and action of the one entering into the covenant.
    - Simply, a covenant says I am going to do what I said I would do regardless of what you do.
      - It is stronger than a contract and should never be entered into lightly.
- There will be peace between Isaac and King Abimelech but sadly this will not be the case after they are gone.

***31 Early the next morning, they each took a solemn oath not to interfere with each other.***

- This is the heart of the covenant that was between King Abimelech and Isaac.

***Then Isaac sent them home again, and they left him in peace.***

***32 That very day Isaac's servants came and told him about a new well they had dug. "We've found water!" they exclaimed. 33 So Isaac named the well Shibah (which means "oath"). And to this day the town that grew up there is called Beersheba (which means "well of the oath").***

**Amazing!**

- **Gods provision during a famine for this family is nothing short of amazing!**
  - But what if Isaac had continued to Egypt?
    - He would have likely encountered more difficulty and suffering.
      - There is Gods way and there's the hard way.

### **This next blurb doesn't make sense to me**

***<sup>34</sup>At the age of forty, Esau married two Hittite wives: Judith, the daughter of Beer, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon. <sup>35</sup>But Esau's wives made life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah.***

- Two wives?
  - What was he thinking?
    - If you recall Abraham made sure that Isaacs wife came from his people and homeland.
    - The same will be done for Jacob which was most likely motivated by Esau's decision.
- What a strange transition into chapter 27.
- It is a reminder that children can bring joy and happiness to their parents or they can bring pain and sadness.
  - Esau was a wild and spontaneous man who had no regard for God or his parents.
    - Thus his life is recorded as one the greatest disappointments for Gods people.