

## LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON | GENESIS 26 | PASTOR MARK BOFILL | 12/03/2023

\* I. Wandering (1-5) | II. Wife (6-11) | III. Wealth (12-16) | IV. Wells (17-22) | V. Worship (23-25) | VI. Witness (25-33) | VI. Woes (34-35)

**INTRO:** As we get into the second half of the Book of Genesis, I want to remind you that **Genesis is A Book of Genealogies:** Of the Heavens and the Earth (2-4), of Adam (5-6:8); of Noah (6:9-9:29), of Shem, Ham, & Japheth (10-11:9), and in (11:10-25:11) it lists Terah, who was the father of **ABRAHAM**, who became the **Father of Faith**. Briefly mentioned next is Ishmael's genealogy (25:12-18), then the **last three:** **ISAAC** (25:19-35:29), Esau (36-37:1) and finally of **JACOB** (37:2-50:26).

- Today **we are going to ZERO IN on ISAAC**, because **he became God's new focus**, (Gen 25:11) *"After the death of Abraham, God blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac dwelt at Beer Lahai Roi."* – **God's promises to Abraham** would NOW be upheld through Isaac!
- In this chapter we will learn that **Isaac's 'Faith, Circumstances, and Actions are comparable his fathers in many ways** – So, I've entitled this sermon **LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON (Genesis 26:1-35)\***

**I. The WANDERING Of Isaac (1-5)** – **Like his father, Isaac WANDERED away from the place of blessing to go to Egypt.** – (Gen 12:10) tells us that in the early stages of Abraham's faith a SEVERE FAMINE was the land of Canaan, which caused him to flee to Egypt. Now, under similar circumstances (1a), **ISAAC faces a FAMINE, and is TESTED** to see **if he would OBEY God's voice** also.

**A. His Course (1b)** – **Isaac was heading for Egypt**, but he traveled first to **GERAR**, a city which bordered Egypt (Philistine Territory). There we are told that he *"Went to **ABIMILECH**,"* a dynastic title for the **King of the Philistines**. (*A different ruler than in Abraham's time (20-21), more likely his son*)

- **Notice that, as he went... "Then" the Lord appeared to him!**

**B. His Course Correction (2-3a)** – Because **Isaac was the seed bearer**, God directly warned him **NOT to "Go Down" to Egypt but allowed him to remain in Gerar**. God's counsel was for Isaac to, *"Dwell in this land, and I will be with you."* i.e., **STAY PUT!** – **If he would remain in Gerar, God promised to bless him!** – (Psalm 37:3) *Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. (This is the test! Don't wander!)* God then took the moment to provide Isaac with...

**C. His Covenant Reminder (3b-5)** – The **OATH** that He swore to Abraham in (22:16-18), which contained the promise of Land, the promise of the Seed, and the promise of Blessings is repeated here, because **Isaac was the heir to the promises God made to Abraham**. Though it was an unconditional covenant, **Isaac was still to OBEY God's voice as his father did!** – **Keep the charge!**

**P/A** – Trials and Hardships will often happen in life! **But where do you go!** When Life gets rough, **ARE YOU A WANDERER?** When there is a **'famine in our souls,'** do we walk with God by faith or Wander towards Egypt! Only those who are faithful to listen to God and obey His voice will have the promise of God's blessings!

**II. The WIFE Of Isaac (6-11)** – **Like his father Abraham, now Isaac LIES about his wife!** – As Isaac agreed to dwelt in the land, eventual testing's came also! Because **Rebekah** was *"beautiful to behold,"* the men of Gerar asked about her availability.

**A. His Cowardice (6-7)** – Isaac now makes the same **dishonest claim** that Abraham used in both Egypt (12:10-12) and Gerar (20:1-18). **He reported that Rebekah was his sister!** We are also told that **he did it to save his own neck!** He lied because **he was AFRAID!** (*absence of faith and focus on God!*)

- **Earlier in life Isaac had the faith** to believe in God for children (25:21), but **NOW** he fails to **believe in God for protection!** – Instead of laying down HIS LIFE for his wife (Eph 5:25), he laid down a LIE! *“Husband, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for her.”*
- B. **His Carelessness (8-9)** – After some time, Abimelech saw Isaac showing endearment to Rebekah. The **Hebrew verb** implies they were laughing while caressing affectionately. **Abimelech then called him out on his lie!** (*God’s people are to be a Witness to unbelievers, not Stumbling blocks!*)
- C. **His Criticism (10-11)** – **WOW... a pagan king acts more honorably than a son of God!** – (Prov 29:12) says, *“If a ruler pays attention to lies, All his servants become wicked.”* – **Abimelech**, wanted to protect his people from guilt, so **he imposed a death penalty** on any who touch Isaac and Rebekah! – As with Abraham, this was God’s divine protection at work (tt. Psalm 105:7-15)

P/A – Like Father Like Son... **If God is our Father, then we should never Lie because God never lies!** – God made a NT example of **Ananias and Saphira**, two of God’s children who allowed falsehood in their report of giving. *“Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.”*

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**III. The WEALTH Of Isaac (12-16)** – **Like his father, God blessed Isaac with wealth and favor!** – After the king’s rebuke, Isaac settled in the land and **Began Farming**. **As he did so, God MULTIPLIED the work of his hands**. We are told that **Isaac became ‘Very Prosperous’ (13-14a)**, but the **Philistines ‘Envied Him’ (14b)** – **This is a good and bad report! GOOD**, because it testified to God’s favor when abiding in Him... **BAD**, because his enemies coveted his prosperity and became hostile towards Isaac!

- A. **His Conflict (15)** – Because they did not want Isaac to prosper, **his enemy stopped up his wells!** Water was essential for survival in the desert and Isaac had it! **They literally filled his life source with dirt!** – **This is exactly what Satan tries to do to God’s children!** – Our Spiritual Life Source is **Jesus Christ**... He is the Well of Living Water from which we are to **rely upon!** – In (John 7:38) Jesus said... *“He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water”*
- B. **His Casting Out (16)** – Isaac’s wealth and prosperity was so abundant, that **Abimelech was threatened by his MIGHT!** – **If God is mighty, then God’s children should be mighty!** In (Jug 6:12) the Angel told Gideon, *“The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor!”* – As children of God, **we are to BE MIGHTY**...but some of us just don’t know it! – In fact, the enemy can’t handle a mighty son or daughter of God! – Their only resolve, *“Go away from us!”*

P/A – When you do well... **know that there will be others who envy you!** Be wise in your dealings! Isaac could have retaliated for their actions, but he kept his peace and moved on!

**IV. The WELLS Of Isaac (17-22)** – **Like his father Abraham, Isaac had to Keep Digging!** – **There is more to a well than just water...** A well is a symbol of a thriving community! And the Philistines did not want the communities God’s people to thrive! Nevertheless, Isaac kept on...

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- A. **His Continuance (17-18)** – Isaac relocates from the City of Gerar to the Valley of Gerar, a region under the control of Gerar, **but not next to it.** – There, Isaac **“Dug Again!”** He **KNEW** approximately **where his Father’s wells were**, so he continued to search for them... **Like Father, Like Son!**
- **When Isaac found them**, notice that **he DID NOT rename them**... He called them what his father did! Why, because valuable lessons are attached to their names. In fact...

- God wanted ISAAC to look for these wells so he could experience the same lessons that Abraham did! – In the next paragraph, those names and their meaning are rediscovered...

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- B. **His Contention (19–22)** – Isaac’s men kept digging in the valley, but here we are told the well was of RUNNING WATER (19) – The {*Heb. word Hai, khah-ee; lit. Living or Alive, Springing or Fresh*} *I found this to be fascinating!* – This is a **living well** that was not only Physically Refreshing, but also **Life-Sustaining!** (*Running water is needed.. not stagnant water!*)

1. In John chapter 4, Jesus had an **encounter with a Samaritan woman at a well**. They talked about **physical thirst** and **the need to Draw Water from Jacob’s Well**. But Jesus changed the conversation from the Physical to the SPIRITUAL realm. He said, *“Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,<sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.”* (John 4:13-14) – She replied... **Sir...give me this water!** (*b/c she was Spiritually Drained!*)

2. In (v.20) we see that contention escalated over this well as **the Herdsman of Gerar claimed that the “WATER WAS THERES!”** – Such contention was troubling to Isaac, so **he left the well to them** and called it ESEK. – As they **dug another well (21)**, they quarreled over it also, so Isaac named it **SITNAH**. – As **Isaac moved to a third site (22)**, they dug again and there was NOT a dispute, so he named the well **REHOBOTH**. – **The names of these wells reflect the events associated with them:**

- **ESEK – Quarrel (20)** – Our enemy always seeks to steal our water!
- **SITNAH – Enmity (21)** – Our enemy HATES US and wants to quench us and Harass us!
- **REHOBOTH – Spaciousness (22)** – As we walk through life, we... **in a sense we are digging wells**. **Trying to find that place of settling! Room Enough** where we can plant and grow in peace and prosperity. – As we do so, **we should always be seeking the Lord’s direction**, even as Isaac found (22b)... **“Now the Lord has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.”** (*God will faithfully supply your every need, ‘IF’ you thirst for upon Him*).

P/A – **Have you found your well?** Maybe you *“have not,”* because you *“ask not!”* Maybe you *“have not”* because of a **CERTAIN SIN** in your life! Whatever the case, you can **Call Upon the Lord today**, so that **times of refreshing** may come from the presence of the Lord! (Acts 3:19) *But be truthful though!*

**V. The WORSHIP Of Isaac (23-25)** – **Like his father Abraham, Isaac LEARNED to call on the name of the Lord.** From Gerar, Isaac traveled 20 miles southeast to BEERSHEBA, a place where his father dwelt for some time. Years earlier, Abraham dug a well there and made an OATH with Abimelech, giving him **seven ewe lambs** as a witness (21:25-32). – At this location Abraham planted a Tamarisk Tree also (21:33) and **he called on the name JEHOVAH... the EVERLASTING GOD: EL OLAM.**

- **NOW God Appears to Isaac** once more, telling him *“NOT TO FEAR,”* He said, **“...For I AM WITH YOU.”** He then **REAFFIRMS** the Blessing to **“His descendants!”** (*Reassurance was needed!*)
- So then, Isaac **RESPONDS with WORSHIP, building an ALTAR** there and he also *“called upon the name of JEHOVAH.”*

P/A – On many occasions Abraham built altars and worshipped God as prescribed. **Isaac must have learned from his father that God has a prescribed a right WAY to worship God!** – **Jesus clarified this also to the Samaritan woman at the well...**

*“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. <sup>24</sup> God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” (John 4:23-24) – Is your worship of God Spiritual and truthful?*

## **VI. The WITNESS Of Isaac (26-33) – Like his father Abraham, Isaac made an Oath of Peace.**

When Isaac walked in disobedience he brought trouble on others, when he walked in obedience, he brought blessing on others, and **he found his place! He let God deal with his enemies...**

**A. His Covenant (26–31) – Abimelech comes to Isaac to establish a covenant (v. 28). He wanted to assure they will live together peacefully (21:22–32). – Phicol is possibly the same individual as in (21:22), but the name could also be a family name or a title. – But who is who is AHUZZATH? His name means “Possession.” – Is it possible that Ahuzzath also dwelt in the valley where Isaac pitched his tent? Did Abimelech bring the commander of his army in case of war?**

- This is all speculation, but I know this: God can make even your enemies to want peace with you! (*All too often our flesh jumps into defense, feeling the need to retaliate when wronged - Leave it to God!*)

**B. His Confirmation (32–33) – Just as they departed in peace**, Isaac got favorable news from his men which served as **a direct confirmation from God! They found the well at SHEBA, the very well that his Father claimed and made peace with the Abimelech of his day!** Wow! Coincidence? **NO...** It was a divine lesson from God and Isaac acknowledged Him by calling it by its proper name...**Beersheba**, which resembles the Hebrew word for **“oath.”** Beersheba (cf. 21:31)

**P/A – Is there an Abimelech in your life? Just pray for them! – Jesus instructed... “I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you (Luke 6:27) – If you keep “digging in life,” your life will impact those around you!**

## **VII. The WOES Of Isaac (34-35) – Like his father Abraham, ISAAC was grieved for his firstborn son. As Abraham had a wayward son; Ishmael, who broke his heart; now Isaac has a WAYWARD SON, Esau.**

- **His Concern (34–35) – Esau acted ungodly and chose two wives poorly, almost to spite his parents.** His actions deliberately ignored the standard set by Abraham for Isaac.
- This is confirmed as they **made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah.**
- As wonderful it is to have children, **sometimes they can be the source of our woes!**

**CLOSING THOUGHTS: This was Isaac’s life!** Both he and his father made a lot of mistakes, but God still saw them as His children! There is **no perfect earthly father** and there is **no perfect earthly son!** But The ultimate ‘LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON’ example is FOUND in Jesus Christ, who delighted to follow His Father’s footsteps. (John 5:19) *“Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.*