

Genesis: God and Man

Dwell in This Land

Genesis 26:1-17

Previously

- Abraham takes a new wife, Keturah, “incense”
- Abraham’s other sons sent far away to not interfere with the inheritance of the promised son
- Abraham dies
- Isaac prays for Rebekah to give birth
- Esau and Jacob born, different
- Bowl of stew for a birthright

Today: Famine returns, what will Isaac do?

Have you ever tried to making something work in your own strength?

- Get a job or start a business?
- Find or make a lasting relationship?
- Save your pennies?
- Get your boss to like you?

Has it ever not worked out? Can you not seem to get ahead?

- Just can’t get hired
- The business keeps falling apart or someone beats you to market
- Your dates end up being nightmares or you keep pushing people away
- Every time you save some money some big bill shows up in the mail
- No matter what you do they still don’t see how good of an employee you are

Pro 16:33 NKJV - The lot is cast into the lap, But its every decision [is] from the LORD.

(NLT) We may throw the dice, but the LORD determines how they fall.

Sometimes getting ahead in life, getting the right job, the right companion, the right amount of favor, the right perspective...is all about simply going and doing what the Lord has said]

**And truly it’s not about getting ahead,
it’s about knowing the Lord and being where he wants you in life**

Jhn 21:1-7 NKJV - After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and in this way He showed [Himself]: Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the [sons] of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We are going with you also." They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Then Jesus said to them, "Children, have you any food?" They answered Him, "No." And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find [some]." So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on [his] outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea.

Utmost 2/24 "Once "the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit," we deliberately begin to identify ourselves with Jesus Christ's interests and purposes in others' lives (Romans 5:5). And Jesus has an interest in every individual person. We have no right in Christian service to be guided by our own interests and desires. In fact, this is one of the greatest tests of our relationship with Jesus Christ. The delight of sacrifice is that I lay down my life for my Friend, Jesus (see John 15:13). I don't throw my life away, but I willingly and deliberately lay it down for Him and His interests in other people. And I do this for no cause or purpose of my own. ... Many of us are interested only in our own goals, and Jesus cannot help Himself to our lives. But if we are totally surrendered to Him, we have no goals of our own to serve. Paul said that he knew how to be a "doormat" without resenting it, because the motivation of his life was devotion to Jesus. We tend to be devoted, not to Jesus Christ, but to the things which allow us more spiritual freedom than total surrender to Him would allow. Freedom was not Paul's motive at all."

"Stay under the spout where His grace comes out" - Chuck Smith?

pray

1-6

Another famine

Seriously hard times

These are a common occurrence in Bible times

We still have them today, but because of our prosperity in America, we have food stores. But you will see years of good or bad harvests, price of chicken go up, etc. But thankfully we have had an overabundance of food for about a century.

Great Depression, Dust bowl

Egypt seems to be the place to go

Either they weren't being affected by it at the time, or if they were, they were prosperous and able to sell it.

Much like in Joseph's day, except without God's instruction, that seven year famine would not have been prepared for

Are we ready for famine?

Pro 6:6-8 NKJV - Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, Which, having no captain, Overseer or ruler, Provides her supplies in the summer, [And] gathers her food in the harvest.

Savings, preparation, getting skills, thinking ahead

There is a famine of God's word in the land

Do people know they can come to us for Godly, Biblical answers? Prayer? Advice?

Isaac was in the promised land, but when famine came, it caused him to naturally want to go somewhere else.

Troubles tend to drive us from where we're supposed to be. Trouble isn't always a sign that we're doing the wrong thing...although we need to consider it and take it to the Lord and not be obstinate thinking that trouble is just people or the world out to get us

The key is seeking the Lord for the reason for the trouble and what to do in it

Isaac goes to Abimelech

Not same Abimelech as his father, Abimelech is a title like King
But as Abraham did, so Isaac does

The fig didn't fall far from the tree

The LORD appeared to Isaac

Isaac wasn't necessarily seeking the Lord, but the Lord revealed himself to him

Was this a vision? Was it more subtle? I'm apt to take it at face value, just like Abraham spoke with the Lord and recognized Him when he was walking by his tent on the way to S&G

The first thing the LORD says? "Dwell in this land."

This was the promised land. Famine or not, this is where the Lord's blessing was.

We can be tempted to flee in famine, or to look to some earthly King for our provision

Healthcare? Free education? Basic income?

But we're to expect the Lord to appear to us in every circumstance, especially the hard ones

The LORD reminds Isaac of the promise. He makes it real to him, not just through the words of his dad and mom, but a direct promise to him

The stars again...you can really see more stars in the country...it would be a reminder on every clear night of God's promise

He might forget it in the day, but not at night.

And if he remembers the promise to his father, about the sand on the seashore...he can't forget it in the day either.

Just like the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night for the Israelites fleeing the Egyptian army

Because Abraham obeyed

Abraham had a hand in his son's spiritual inheritance. God promised and God provided, but Abraham also obeyed.

We have a great duty to our children to obey God ourselves

that the promises for them would not be hindered or hurt and that they would see God for who he is in his victory, and not for who we are in our failures

You can't just drop your children off at Sunday school and think they'll be OK. God will use it, but he can use a parent devoted to God himself much more effectively

Gerar = "a lodging place"

a Philistine town south of Gaza, modern 'Umm'

7-11

The men of the place asked about his wife

Typical men right. They see a pretty woman, they start to talk and ask about her

I remember when Ashlee first started coming to church (of course I did)
Guys from other churches started coming to our college nights lol

Isaac chickened out and said "she's my sister"

I'd never tell anyone that Ashlee was my sister. I hope not anyway. I'd say, she's my wife, now get lost.

I wonder where he learned that line from? :cough: Abraham!

Was she his sister? No. A relative of sorts, but not a half-sister half-truth like his dad said about Sarah.

The same fears as his father

I see similar fears in my kids at times that I have had, being afraid of the dark for one, being afraid of trying something new in another, and part of my duty as a dad is helping them through it as God has helped me through it. And to let God help me through my fears that they might learn to not be captive to them. And to give them the practical tools and skills in life.

YET, NO ONE TAKES HER AS A WIFE (that's the grace of God...)

A beautiful, young, single woman shows up in town, and no one asks her out. Her beauty must have been mighty intimidating!

**Abimelech, hanging out, looks out his window...what does he see?
Isaac and Rebekah not acting like brother and sister**

KJV says sporting

They're flirting, they're playing, they're having public display of affection.

Isaac is near the king's house

He's obviously safely a part of the town. He's not fearing for his life at this point.

Is Abimelech grossed out? He calls for Isaac

I love what he says...I can almost hear him say it

"Quite obviously she is your wife"

Give me a break Isaac, she ain't your sister

This king Abimelech, like his predecessor, is more righteous than the men of God!

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

DO YOU REALIZE WHAT ONE OF US COULD HAVE DONE AND WOULD HAVE BROUGHT SIN UPON US!

Isaac, you didn't just lie to save yourself, you could have brought a grave sin on us!

Sidenote Sin v. transgression

Lying always has deeper and wider consequences

One of the people could have! This king didn't want her for his collection...he learned from his predecessor.

**This king was concerned about his people
And knew one person's sin can affect the entire nation**

So no, I don't agree with your sinful lifestyle, I do not approve it
I extend God's grace to you and care about you and don't hate you at all
But I will not legislate it or vote for it or praise it or allow it in this church

Abimelech makes a command

The death penalty to anyone other than Isaac who touches Rebekah

This heathen king also knew that the death penalty was the only way to stave off sin
That this sin was worse than the death penalty
That it corrupts. That it brings it on the people. That it separates them from God.

Abimelech honored God, protected the marriage of Isaac and rebekah, and shielded his people from sin...something that the promised son should have done.

It was Isaac's job to protect Rebekah
To be an example and witness to the people of God's promise
But he was worried about his own skin

When temptation comes in our lives, it's usually to protect our own skin,
and it always affects our witness to the world.

12-17

Isaac planted and in the same year reaped 100 fold

Gal 6:7-9 NKJV - Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

This is obviously God's favor on Isaac. I'm no farmer, but I'm sure it takes a few years for a field and plants to build up strength and maturity to make a big return.

But even if not, there is a famine going on and he returns 100 fold

That's a huge bounty

And Isaac is a nomad, I'm not sure he's an expert farmer

God's favor on someone's life is usually quite evident

In youth group you could see God's hand on all of the kid's lives, despite their good or bad behavior

But there were some, who were given to him, that you could just see a special air of grace on

It was available to all, but only some had truly found it

V13 how many times can the writer say prosper in one sentence?

The man began to **prosper**, and continued **prospering** until he became very **prosperous**;

1. Began to prosper
2. Continued prospering
3. Very prosperous

You could pass off beginning to prosper as beginner's luck

But it wasn't luck...there's no such thing (like we read earlier in proverbs)

He continued prospering

It was a way of life, he kept prospering. What he put his hands to, it did well.

Pro 22:29 NKJV - Do you see a man [who] excels in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before unknown [men].

Psa 1:1-3 NKJV - Blessed [is] the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight [is] in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

1Ki 2:3 NKJV - King David says to Solomon "And keep the charge of the LORD your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn;

God wants you to prosper. But this isn't always physical health, wealth and prosperity.

The kind of prospering God wants for you is spiritual health, wealth and prosperity.

The physical can be stolen, break or die.
The eternal cannot be.

**Spiritual prosperity can bring physical prosperity
And physical prosperity can be a sign of spiritual prosperity
But they're not always linked**

God allowed Job's prosperity to be taken away than his spiritual growth would happen

Jesus had no place to lay his head, was born in a stable, was crucified
But he rose again.

Mat 6:19-21 NKJV - "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; "but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Flocks, herds, servants
He was a rich guy.

The Philistines envied him.

When you are successful, people will envy you. It's not if, but when.

We all tend to envy the rich.

Psalm 73

Why do you think everyone is trying to come to America? Why do you think they don't want a border? So they can have the same prosperity we have.

I'm all for anyone coming to America to take part in her prosperity, but legally.

I work with now and have worked with in the past people who have come here legally from other countries. I admire their courage and determination very much. Some have some very hard stories. But they did it legally. I can't imagine leaving my country, my family and going across the world to find a job and make a life. I'm glad they did it and welcome them because they are desiring a good life, some escaping a hard and dangerous situation or just a bad economy. We will all prosper if we go about it in the right way.

America has been very prosperous because God has blessed us. That blessing won't last forever. We've seen it fail because we've turned from him. Pushed him out of our society.

Their envy causes them to hate Isaac. To fear him. To be afraid that he will take them over. So they kick him out while they can.

They fill up his wells. In this land especially, water was the source of life. If you didn't have water, you couldn't drink, your animals couldn't drink and you couldn't maintain the land.

It would be like someone cutting your power, filling up your well, emptying your propane tank, or cutting your internet. If we had no internet, I couldn't do my job.

He doesn't fight, he lets them have their way, and he goes and dwells in the valley of gerar. Same area, but he leaves the populated areas and goes out a little bit, off the grid

When we obey God and God's blessing is apparent on our lives

A good marriage

A stable home

A steady job

A ministry of life

People will come against it. They will wish they had it...and you know, they could, if they just started with obeying God

But they will try to defame you, try to get rid of you, or try to attack you

You look at politics in America. You look at how hateful they've become, the words they use to describe the other side. And I think, at it's root...it's because the values are so different.

Conservatives tend to value the things of God more, and Liberals tends to value the things of the world more. Things have shifted quite a bit, but I think at it's root you can see that.

Pro life vs. pro choice.

Biblical marriage vs. marriage as a form of government and societal validation

I think it's because one side wants the peace, wants the blessing, wants the prosperity in life that God offers...even that the poor in Him have...but they don't have it in their way of life, their thinking, their efforts.

But they could have it, we can all have it...

God's grace, and favor is available to all, if we would but call on him, listen to what He says is right and wrong, and obey it.