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We have noticed that Jacob has his heart in the right place. He is a man who values the things that belong to his father and his grandfather, the things that have come from God, the blessing of God, the double portion that is the inheritance of the firstborn son. These are things that matter and are important to Jacob.

He is the son that Rebecca loves. And you also get a little bit of insight into perhaps some of the less than great parenting going on here because it's not a good thing for parents to show obvious favoritism, and apparently that was the case with Isaac and with Rebecca, that there was sort of a division in the family where you've got Isaac and Esau versus Rebecca and Jacob. And good parents will not wind up with favoritism, overt favoritism of this nature, but obviously that is a part of the situation here.

Jacob sees the good things. He sees the valid things, the spiritual things. He is described with the same adjective that's used of Noah being perfect in his generations, being an upright man and so forth.

He is after the pattern of Rebecca in valuing the things of God and operating in faith to an extent. But Jacob decides that he is going to reach out and grasp this thing. That grasping is another one of those very fascinating threads that runs through the plan of God.

You go all the way back to the garden. Contrast, if you will, Genesis chapter 3 and chapter 4 with Philippians chapter 2. Jesus did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped, a thing to be seized and held on to. But what is it that motivates Eve to reach out and pluck the fruit? If you eat, God knows that you will be as gods, knowing good and evil.

It is equality with God that causes Eve to reach out and grasp the fruit. It is this equality with God and grasping to partake of the things belonging to God in an illegitimate way that is the occasion for the fall. Here you have Jacob seeing the good things and the legitimate things.

His sensibilities are offended, if you will, that these things that are so valuable and so important are going to devolve to Esau who cares nothing for them. He is a man of the fields. He doesn't care anything about the flocks and the herds and the day-to-day management.

You get the idea that Jacob is feeling a little unappreciated. He is the son that is back there helping out with the running of this vast Isaac Incorporated. He stays back in the tent and is assisting with these things.

Yet his father favors Esau. You can imagine that this sort of grated and chafed on Jacob.

He says, I am the one that cares about these things.

I am the one that stays here and looks after it and values it and so forth. It is all going to go to Esau. It is just not right.

I am not getting the thing that I value, that I justly deserve. You can see an echo of the same thinking that went through Eve's mind. When she saw that the fruit was pleasing to the eye and was desirable to make one wise, she could justify this in her mind.

Think how close I can be to God if I am just like him. She reaches out and grasps. Jesus, in his humanity, did not make this mistake.

To try to seize or to retain possession of something in an illegitimate way. To trust that God will grant what God deems necessary. What God deems proper in God's time and in God's way.

And to wait on the Lord. This is one of the constant refrains in scripture. Wait on the Lord.

Be of good cheer. He shall strengthen thy heart. Take no thought for what you will eat or what you will drink or what you will wear.

Your Father knows how to provide. Seek first the kingdom of heaven. Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

And all these things will be added to you. But that is a step of faith. That is a lifestyle of faith.

To trust God. And to have the discernment to know what is a proper course of action. And when to be aggressive.

And when to be proactive. And when to seize opportunities that come our way. Without overstepping into this grasping behavior.

Where I see the legitimate thing and I will reach out and grab it. And this was the problem in Israel from beginning to end. You see it here in its inception with Jacob.

The father of the twelve tribes of Israel. You see it at the end of the same age. Remember over in Matthew chapter 11 verse 12.

Jesus is speaking about his generation. Talking about the reception of the message of John the Baptist and later of himself. He says in Matthew 11 verse 11.

He is talking about the ministry of John the Baptist. Something we are just getting into in Luke. And he says, Assuredly I say to you, Among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist.

But he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now. The kingdom of heaven suffers violence.

And the violent take it by force. There were people who saw the kingdom. The kingdom of God.

These are spiritual things. These are the heritage elements and factors in Israel. And people in Israel saw these.

You think about the scribes and the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The things that they desired were in the religious area. They were students of the scripture.

And they saw these things. But what were they doing? They wanted to reach out and take it by force. And not to distant future in Genesis.

We are going to see Jacob wrestling with the angel. And it is going to be actually the man. But we see Jacob wrestling.

He says, I will not let you go until you bless me. His objective is valid. What better thing than to have the blessing of God.

Here he is angling for the blessing of his father. And all of the things that pertain to it. Israel from beginning to end.

Has as a promise and as a potential possession. The things that come from God. But the means of acquiring it is their own effort.

To seize it by force. And they become violent men. They do violence to the principles of the word of God.

They do violence to relationship with God. And to the grace of God. And to faith in God.

By seeing these wonderful legitimate things. But trying to obtain them in an illegitimate way. So from beginning to end.

And this is the foreshadowing that we have here at the end of chapter 25. So we will tuck that away and see this come to fruition. After we tackle chapter 26.

But all of a sudden we have this account of Jacob and Esau. And the strife that began in the womb between these two brothers. Interrupted with an account that has nothing to do with Jacob or Esau.

And in chapter 26. There was a famine in the land. Famine is one of the things God uses to test his people.

We have seen a famine before. He says this is not the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. Remember the famine brought up a crisis.

It forced a decision point for Abraham. In the very young nation of Israel. Just a few days out from Egypt.

Just having crossed the Red Sea. Within days they start running out of food. Running out of water.

Throughout the sojourn in the wilderness. There are times when there doesn't seem to be provision. Has God brought us out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? And the people grumble and complain.

And you have the Meribah and so forth. This is a part of the plan of God. And we need to recognize that times of seeming lack of provision are from God.

They're a part of God's plan. And it is an occasion for faith. It's a test of faith.

It isn't that God got busy and forgot. It is a quiz. It's a test.

Where are you looking for your provision? What are you really trusting in? How are you going to act when there's a little bit of pressure? When there seems to be a lack of what's needful? So here there is a famine in the land. And we can anticipate already. This is the land that God promised to Abraham, to Isaac, and to their descendants after them.

And yet there's a famine. God has said, come to this land. I will bless you.

I'll multiply you. You'll be prosperous and so forth. And God has done that.

But then all of a sudden there's a famine. And suddenly all of these riches and all of the wealth of servants and animals and flocks and so forth. Now becomes a liability.

Because when there's a famine in the land, you run the risk of losing everything. Your animals will starve. Your servants will flee to someplace more prosperous.

You can quickly lose everything. And so your possessions that started out being such a blessing suddenly become the means of testing faith. Instead of being an asset, they can suddenly turn into a liability.

You see this with the rich all the time. Especially the nouveau riche where you suddenly come into a whole bunch of money through investments or inheritance or whatever. But now you have the constant worry what to do with it.

Am I going to lose it? Am I going to be back where I started? So there's a famine in the land beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And it's important that this is distinguished. And it's distinguished here for a reason.

There's been all kinds of liberal scholarship come in and say, well, this is just confusion

on the part of the ancient Israelites. They got the story of Abraham mixed up with the story of Isaac. And it's two different versions of what was initially just one episode.

We're going to see why when we go through the details here. But he distinguishes it at the very beginning. And it's going to be distinguished again in the end.

This is not the same thing. It's not the same episode with the names changed that happened to Abraham. But it is very similar.

It's so similar that we're warned ahead of time, look, different famine, different situation, different people. Don't get the two confused. But, of course, liberal scholars immediately do.

Beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines in Gerar. This is the same place where Abraham got tangled up just a few chapters ago.

This Abimelech has a sidekick named Phicol. Remember him, the general of the armies, this kind of right hand man? Well, Abimelech and Phicol are going to be mentioned again. And we think, well, my goodness, here's Isaac.

He's 60 years old or so at this point in the story. And we know Abraham got tangled up with Abimelech. And saying that Sarah was the sister and so forth many, many years before.

How can this possibly be the same man? Well, it's not. It's noted in the Hebrew text by a slightly different pointing of the word Abimelech. There's a dogish in the name there, which isn't a part of the original text.

But it tells us that the early scribes who began vowel pointing the text distinguished this Abimelech from the one that preceded. And Abimelech is a title like Pharaoh. It literally means, you know, Ab is the word for father.

Avi, you put the I on it, it means my father. Melech is the word for king. My father was king.

I'm the king because my father's the king. It's a hereditary rulership that succeeds down from father to son. And this is probably the son of the Abimelech that Abraham dealt with.

Could be a son, could be a grandson. But it's a different man. Fechol is also going to be a title that is assigned to the job.

So Isaac went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines, in Gerar. It's also important for us to recognize that when it says Philistines here, this is a different kind of Philistine. These are the proto-Philistines.

These may have been Aegean types that came over, but they're not the same Philistines that Saul and David and Samson and so forth have dealings with some thousand years later. Those Philistines, as you will recall, have their locus. They have the five cities of the Philistines.

You have Gath and Ashdod and those capital cities. This is a different thing. They were ruled over by princes in these Philistine towns.

Here you have sort of a city-state arrangement with Abimelech. It's a different kind of a Philistine. A good analogy might be when you think about the Romans a thousand years apart.

If we talk about the Romans today and the people that live in Rome, the Italians that occupy that region, that's a different set of people than the Romans of a thousand years ago in the dying days of the Roman Empire. There's been an incursion of different people. The barbarian hordes came down from northern Europe and invaded and conquered the dying remnants of the Roman Empire, and the Italians of today are not the Romans of a thousand, fifteen, two thousand years ago.

You had a great intermingling, and they're just not the same people. But we can talk about Romans now, and you can talk about Romans then, and it's a valid thing to say, but they're not actually the same entity, not quite the same people. Same situation here.

So these are the ancient Philistines, not the Philistines of David's day. So Isaac went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines, in Gerar. Now Gerar is in the region that has been promised to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.

You remember, if you look at the map, this is within the boundaries of what is promised. It's in the boundaries of the promised land. So in verse 2, the Lord appeared to Isaac and said, Do not go down to Egypt.

Live in the land of which I shall tell you. This word for live is the word that means to encamp, to pitch your tent and have as a dwelling place this promised land. He says don't go down to Egypt.

Egypt is outside. This is what Abram did when the first famine hit in the land of promise, wasn't it? He left the land and went down to Egypt. Well, God forestalls this for Isaac.

He says don't go to Egypt. And Isaac, to his credit, obeys. And he stays in the land.

But what he does is he dwells in this land. God says in verse 3, dwell in this land. I will be with you and bless you.

For to you and your descendants I give all these lands. And I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars

of heaven.

I will give to your descendants all these lands. And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. This is a full reiteration of the covenant promises that God made to Abraham.

It is reiterated personally to Isaac. Why did God make these covenant promises and ensure their fulfillment to Abraham? Look at verse 5. Was it an unconditional covenant? I would argue no. Because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge.

This was the condition of the covenant. And Abraham met it. And God says to Isaac, you do likewise.

You keep my commandments. You stay in this land. I fulfilled this covenant to Abraham because he obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

It's an interesting thing. You may or may not have any interest in this, but you've heard how liberal scholarship for the last hundred or so years has divided up the Pentateuch and said that it was the Yahwist and the Elohist and the Deuteronomist and the priestly redactor that wrote different parts of this. And it's all a late compilation that was put together during the captivity, and Moses didn't really write any of it.

It's just ascribed to him in the way some of the apocryphal gospels are ascribed, you know, the gospel of Peter and the gospel of Thomas, but that Moses really had nothing to do with it, and it's all late. The interesting thing is this particular passage here is ascribed to the Deuteronomist, the person who has an interest in the laws and the regulations that were a part of the civil life of Israel and so forth. But they're inconsistent even in their own scheme because by all of these people, because they say, well, the Deuteronomist, he loves to make lists, and here's a list of different kinds of commands from God.

But they don't really pay close attention to their own theory because in Deuteronomy, the law of God is never found in the plural. It's always the singular. It's one law.

Deuteronomy throughout it says, Obey the law of the Lord. Observe the law of the Lord, and it's always in the singular. Here it's in the plural.

So if this was, in fact, the Deuteronomist that was all concerned with Deuteronomy, it would have been, Abraham obeyed my voice, kept my charge, my commandment, my statute, and my law. But it's not. It's in the plural.

And so it's just another little evidence that their theory is kind of ragged around the edges, not to mention completely without foundation. But God says, I will make your descendants multiply. I will give to your descendants all these lands.

In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed because Abraham obeyed my voice. And Isaac is the heir of these things because of his father's obedience. In the same way, later on, God will make promises to and about Solomon because of David's faithfulness.

And there is the blessing by association and the enjoyment of blessing because of relationship with one who was faithful. And you can see this in our own lives. We benefit, we share in great blessing and great reward and great fruit-bearing potential because of the faithfulness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And it's our relationship with him that guarantees our possession of so many wonderful blessings. So Isaac takes this on board and he responds. And so Isaac dwelt in Gerar.

But the word for dwelt here is different than encamp because this isn't really the heart of the land. This isn't the Hebron area up where Abraham dwelt. Gerar is kind of out on the outskirts.

And it's actually under the dominance, under the kingship of Abimelech. But this is a different word. This is the word Gur, G-U-R.

And it's an interesting, another play on words here because you have Gerar which is G-R-R and you have Gur which is basically G-R or G-U-R. And Gerar is the place of sort of temporary dwelling, of sojourning until you get back to the land. And in the same way that Abraham had this experience, so does Isaac of while he's sojourning in this temporary fashion in Gerar, he's going to be tested in the area of his dealings with those around him.

And it's a reminder to us. We're in this situation now. Our citizenship is in heaven.

We've been promised all the spiritual blessings in heavenly places. Paul talks about the palatuma, the citizenship, the heavenly rights and privileges that belong to us because we are citizens of the heavenly kingdom. But we sojourn, we dwell for a time temporarily in this world.

We're in the world and not of it. And we're strangers and pilgrims in this land. And it is a test.

And in the same way that there's a famine in the land and Isaac is now going to come into contact with Abimelech and his people, this is our situation. So we want to watch Isaac closely here and learn from his experiences because this is our experience. This is where we are.

We are performing the action of the verb gur. We are dwelling temporarily in a situation that brings us into contact with the Philistines, if you will. So verse 7, Then the men of the place asked about his wife, and he said, She is my sister.

For he was afraid to say, She is my wife, because he thought, Lest the men of the place kill me for Rebekah, because she is beautiful to behold. And it kind of summarizes this in one verse because we've already seen this situation come up two times before in Abraham's life. You remember that back in Genesis chapter 12 where you had the famine and the wife-sister ploy? And again as recently as chapter 20 where he goes to this very same region and again pulls the wife-sister deception.

So this really ties Isaac back to his father and to the fact that as the called of God, as the one with a covenant relationship with God, he faces a similar test and to his discredit, he falls into the same type of failure as his father Abraham. And in fact, this interlude, we have to ask ourselves the question, why we have this interruption? And in fact, there's a similar interruption that's going to take place when we get down to chapter 34. And right in the middle of what seems to be the forward progress of the story of Jacob, we have this incongruous, unexpected episode in the life of Isaac.

Why didn't this come before the story of the birth of Jacob and Esau and so forth so that the Jacob story could flow in an uninterrupted manner? I'll cover this more fully when we get to chapter 34, but you know the fondness that God has in the construction of this book and many others for chiasm. Another word for that is a palestrophic construction where you have kind of like a big crisscross or an X where things on the outside correspond and you have concentric parentheses or you have elements that correspond from the outward working their way inward and they all center on a specific thing. Well, we're going to find that the chapter 34 and chapter 26 correspond to each other in a number of ways.

And although they both seem like they interrupt the normal narrative flow of the story, there is a reason for it. And when you look at that larger context, we find that rather than being interruptions, they're actually very integral links to what precedes and what follows. So this story and this situation, and you can already think about all the things we studied in the two accounts of this wife-sister business with Abraham, Isaac, about whom we know very little, frankly.

He's the least documented of the patriarchs. But this fills in a big gap for us because it reminds us of some of the failures of Abraham. And in fact, it also shows us one of the reasons why Esau was the favorite son of Isaac because they are similar in the sense that their personalities seem to be similar.

Isaac is going to get under a little bit of pressure here, like Esau was when he was hungry and tired, and he's going to take the quick, short-term solution. He's not going to have that long-distance view. And although he's obedient and the recipient of the covenant promise of God, he doesn't seem to be able to convert that into daily faith.

And this is a consistent theme that we've been seeing in our recent studies. You might just turn over to Chapter 34 right quick so that this will make a little bit of sense. In the

life of Jacob, you go through his 20 years in Syria with Laban and getting Leah and later Rachel as his wife and so forth, and returning back to the land.

He meets Esau in Chapter 33. They've been estranged after he steals the blessing. We know the general outline of this story.

Esau runs to meet him. They give presents in exchange, and he's happy to find out that Esau's actually not going to try to kill him. Esau says, Come, join me in the land.

They say, Okay, fine. But then Jacob, in Chapter 33, journeys to Sukkoth, builds himself a house, made booths for his livestock. That's why it got its name, Sukkoth, or Sukkoth means booths.

Then Jacob came safely to Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, pitched his tent in the city, brought the parcel of land from the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for 100 pieces of money, erected an altar there and called it El Elohe Yisrael. Then in Chapter 34, we have this episode with Dina, the daughter of Jacob, and you have this violation of her. She gets tangled up, kind of like we were talking about in the first lesson, with one of the sons of Hamor, and basically is raped or defiled.

She's taken advantage of in the physical sense. So he offers to make it good. He says, Well, I'll go ahead and marry her, but her brothers are incensed that their sister has been defiled and so forth, and they perpetrate a deception.

They say, Well, okay, you can marry our sister, but you have to be circumcised first. The whole household of Shechem and Hamor there, they get circumcised, and while they're trying to heal up, and while they can't move, the brothers come in and slaughter them and kill them all. Verse 27, the sons of Jacob came upon the slain and plundered the city because their sister had been defiled.

They took their sheep and their oxen and their donkeys and all the wealth and so forth. Jacob says in verse 30, You have troubled me by making me obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites, Perizzites, since I am few in number. They will gather together and kill me.

I will be destroyed, my household and I. But they said, Should he treat our sister like a harlot? Then you get back in chapter 35, it resumes the story of Jacob, and he goes on to Bethel, and you have the onward progress of the story. But this chapter 34 kind of sticks out and interrupts the flow. But in the grand chiasm here, these two chapters correspond.

The chapter we're studying here, 26 and 34. And there are a lot of parallels because you have common words here. There is a lot of common vocabulary.

There are common themes of deception. There is a deception involved here in chapter

26 with Isaac saying, This is my sister instead of my wife. And you have the brothers of Dinah saying, Okay, you can marry our sister, but be circumcised, and so forth.

Obviously, there is the fear of intercourse. The same word is used for intercourse. It's shachav with the uncircumcised.

You have Isaac fearing that they'll kill him and take his wife and make her their own, these uncircumcised Philistines. And you have the same issue with Dinah having been taken advantage of. Circumcision is an issue there.

There is the charging of someone with deception and the outworking of all of that. You have malfeasance with those who are called brothers. There are just lots of parallels.

We'll review this in more detail when we come to that point in chapter 34. But the main reason I bring that up at this point is we're finding something out about Isaac. Just as we got launched on the Jacob and Esau story, it stops.

And now we have this glimpse of Isaac. And this is actually going to tell us something about both Jacob and Esau. Because in the second half of what Jacob needs to get what he's after, he needs the bakhara, the rights of the firstborn, which he sort of tricks his brother into selling to him, which is, by the way, a legitimate transaction.

The rights of the firstborn could be bought and sold among brothers in the ancient Near East. But he also needs the barakah, the blessing. And there's going to be deception involved in obtaining the blessing.

And here is a man who perpetrates a deceit, and he is going to find that he himself reaps the fruit of that when he is deceived later on. So all of these threads and all of these things are tying together. But as we resume the story here, Isaac dwelt in Gerar.

This is a failure on his part when he resorts to deceit rather than trusting God. This is going to be a failure on Jacob's part, isn't it? To resort to deceit, to take, to grasp, to seize something by force rather than trusting God for it. To implement your own strategy.

Abraham and Sarah got into this when they tried to obtain a son by the Hagar ploy. And time and again we are warned. It takes a little bit of meditation.

We have to stop and spend some time in reflection in our own lives. Are there areas in our life where we know that something is legitimate? We know that provision is legitimate. We know that blessing, we know that opportunity for ministry is legitimate.

We know that there are things that are a part of the Christian life that are justifiable and are legitimate in our lives. Things that ought to be. Things that should be our possession and should be our hallmark as believers.

What is the means by which we seek to obtain these things? Are we justifying how we live and what we do? The priorities that we set or the actions that we engage in because of the rightness of the goal? Abraham and Sarah did that. They said, God has promised us a son. Here is a way to get a son.

And engendered a permanent thorn in the side of all their descendants with the Hagar Ishmael outcome. Here you have reaching out and grasping a legitimate thing. Something that is valued.

Something that is recognized for its worth. But by not waiting for God's timing. By not trusting in God's provision.

In the same way that God can turn cursing to blessing. We can turn blessing to cursing by going about it with an illegitimate means. Taking the kingdom of God by force if you will.

And this takes place while Isaac is in Gerar. And it is a reminder to us. We are essentially living in Gerar.

This is not our promised land. This is not our permanent eternal dwelling. This is a temporary dwelling place.

And do we start getting our eyes on the circumstances in the temporary area. And compromising rather than remembering our heavenly citizenship. Isaac while he is dwelling in Gerar.

The men of the place asked about his wife. So the famine has propelled him into this region. And now that he is there with Rebecca.

And you know that she is as they would say today. She is drop dead gorgeous. She is a very beautiful woman inside and out.

And they see her and they ask about her. It is natural. They want to know who is this impressive woman.

And he said she is my sister because of fear. God has two verses earlier promised him. That he is going to make his descendants multiply as the stars of heaven.

But the other thing that is interesting is. Look in verse 3. God says dwell in this land and I will be with you and bless you. For to you and your descendants I give all these lands.

There has only been one other time in Genesis so far. That God has made this promise to the individual that he was talking to. Time and again he promised Abraham that the land would be for his descendants.

But if you remember back in chapter 17 and verse 8. God said I will give this land to you

and to your descendants. And so Abraham knows that he is going to possess at least a portion of this land in his own lifetime. It is not just a promise where all your grandkids are going to have it.

God says I will give it to you and to your descendants after you. And that means that he has to be there to possess it. Well for the second time now God has said you personally are going to possess this.

And he says it to Isaac right here in verse 3. He says I will give this land. What does this mean? Well for the time being Isaac is immortal. Because he does not yet possess the land and God says I am giving it to you.

This is a promise and this is a statement from God that Isaac can take to the bank. He can make it the object of his faith. It can be the basis for his decisions.

He should have no fear of being killed for his wife. Because God has promised him the possession of the land. This is the young man who was traipsed up the side of Mount Moriah and laid on the altar.

And God spared his life because the promise had not yet been fulfilled. Isaac has plenty of doctrine in his soul if you will to make the basis of application in this situation. But he forgets.

He is short sighted. He is compelled by his immediate circumstance to think in the short term. This is just what we have seen Esau do at the end of the previous chapter.

An expedient solution to an immediate problem. We really have to watch out for the expedient solution to the immediate problem. The first solution that comes to hand.

The quick remedy. Rather than faith. Rather than waiting on the Lord.

This is the illustration that we have here. He thinks they will kill me for Rebecca because she is beautiful to behold. Verse 8. It came to pass when he had been there a long time.

It turned out they didn't seize Rebecca. They didn't try to make her their wife apparently. But he doesn't ever correct this misperception.

They have been there a long time. But Abimelech the king of the Philistines looked through a window and saw. And there was Isaac showing endearment to Rebecca his wife.

This is kind of comical because it is sort of a euphemistic statement that is made here. The word showing affection is the Hebrew word *metzakech*. And the consonants in that *metzakech*.

This is a play on Isaac's name. *Tzakak* or *Yitzkak* is the word for laughter. We know that

this is how Isaac got his name.

The idea of playing or frolicking is tied up in this word. You put a name in front of a verb like that and it becomes a noun or a gerund we might say. They are sporting together if you will.

This is obviously a type of expression of affection and a type of playing that only happens between husband and wife. We are left to speculate on exactly how intimate this was. But it was very obvious to Abimelech when he looks out the window that this is no brother and sister.

So Abimelech called Isaac and said quite obviously she is your wife. So how could you say she is my sister? Isaac said to him because I said lest I die on account of her. I was afraid for my life is his excuse.

And Abimelech said what is this you have done to us? Interesting we just saw an identical statement made by Mary to Jesus over in Luke chapter 2. When he doesn't show up in the caravan and they have to look around for three days and they finally find him. And Mary says what is this you have done to us? Very same statement. And in fact we have seen this several times where someone calls someone else to account.

Do you remember this in chapter 3 and verse 13 where God calls Adam and Eve to account. Chapter 4 and verse 10 when God calls Cain to account for the murder of Abel. Chapter 12 and verse 18 where Pharaoh calls Abraham to account for deceiving about Sarah.

And again in chapter 20 verse 9 where Abimelech, this Abimelech's father probably calls Abraham to account. What is this you have done to us? It kind of reminds us be sure your sins will find you out. And if anything he is at greater risk here for having lied to the king than he ever was for the beauty of his wife.

What is this you have done to us? And he goes on to say one of the people might soon have lain with your wife and you would have brought guilt on us. And it turns out that Abimelech as we have seen before winds up having a higher standard of righteousness than Isaac. Abimelech recognizes that this would have been a great wrong for one of his people to have taken Isaac's wife and lain with her.

It would have brought guilt on all of us. So Abimelech charged all of his people saying he who touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death. He goes on to tell us in verse 12 Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold and the Lord blessed him.

Even though there is a failure here and Isaac is short sighted. Isaac reaps the blessing that God has promised because of the obedience of his father. Abraham obeyed my voice.

Abraham kept my charge, kept my commandments, kept my statutes, kept my laws. And God says I will give this land to you and your descendants. I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven.

He reiterates all of the promises and here is the fulfillment. Isaac himself begins to receive these wonderful blessings even though he failed. And you get the idea that this was a pretty hefty rebuke to which at least at this point Isaac seems to have responded.

That he sowed in that land. By the way this is the only case where any of the patriarchs is ever said to have planted crops and reaped a harvest. We always think of them as being agrarians and so forth.

But this is never said of either Abraham or Jacob. They seem to have been herdsmen and their sheep and goats and so forth are spoken of. But it's interesting this is the only place where a patriarch is said to have sowed and reaped.

And he reaped in that same year a hundredfold. And this is sort of the maximum that you could hope to expect. Jesus mentions this in the parable of the sower and the seed.

Thirtyfold, sixtyfold or a hundredfold. It's sort of the maximum that you could possibly expect from sowing a crop. This is what Isaac reaps.

So the good news and the positive note on which we are going to end this morning is as we sojourn in the land, as we face our tests of famine and our tests with how are we going to deal with those around us? How are we going to face the possibilities that cause us fear and cause us concern? We are called to faith. We are called to remember the covenant promises that God has made to us. We have a wonderful relationship with God that is founded on new and better promises.

We have a wonderful eternal covenant. We stand before God in Christ. Paul tells the Corinthians, why do you settle for just a portion? You say, I am of Paul or I am of Apollos.

All things are yours in Christ. Don't minimize what you have. Don't forget what God has promised.

This was Isaac's failure. This was Esau's failure. We don't want it to be our failure.

God can prosper. God can bless in his own time, in his own way, in spite of our failures. The key for us is to remember who we are and why we are here.

Not to forget the promise and the purpose of God. Not to get short-sighted like Esau or short-sighted like Isaac and begin to react and to live in our circumstances instead of remembering our heavenly citizenship. We have a wonderful, wise, and generous Heavenly Father.

Nothing pleases him more than in Christ to give us all things. But we receive those

things and we enjoy them and we exploit them and we bear fruit in them through faith and through remembering the application of those promises of God. That's our calling.

We need to allocate and spend time in meditation. We need to not only glean the Sophia wisdom that God gives us through his word, but we've got to sit and think about it. We've got to come to understanding and comprehension.

The sunesis that we talked about over in Colossians and in Luke. And realize the implications and the applications of those things in our daily existence. It is not enough to simply meet the exigencies and the demands and the duties of daily life.

We have a higher calling. We have a greater citizenship. We are pilgrims and sojourners.

And it is too easy to forget and to be distracted and to fail. Just as we see illustrated here. But we have a wonderful God who has provided for us in wonderful ways.

And when we remember that, when we live by faith, all things are ours. We share the inheritance of Christ in heaven and in earth. And we fulfill the calling that God has placed on our lives.

Let's close here in a word of prayer. We thank you, Father, for the eternal things that we are heirs of through Christ. We thank you for your promises.

We thank you for the vast resources you have placed at our disposal in your word and through your spirit. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will remind us and enlighten us as to the application and the implications of these things in our daily lives. The outworking of our identity as we sojourn and are tested in this life.

We pray that the result will be that we grow in grace and in knowledge of our Savior. That we reflect his character and his glory in the immediate situations of our lives and in the long term. We pray that in all things our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, will be glorified.

And we ask these things in his name. Amen.