

A
Grief of
Mind

Genesis 26:1 – 35



~ I am not going to allow this chapter of the Bible to bog us down because our second so-called Spiritual Safari seems to be going pretty well – and we could easily become theologically stuck forevermore right here. On the other hand, if I’m only talking to myself, then I should probably take the time and get it all worked out - and I suppose that would be okay, too, because I am one of the only two persons I know of in the entire world, the other being the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, with whom I totally and completely agree. That said, we’re going to keep moving – because we have come to what is an astonishingly dry section of Scripture.

All the wells that Isaac had dug have been stopped by the Philistines. No water out here in this desert means certain death for many. Well, this chapter is all about Isaac. It is really the only chapter we have that’s about him. This life won’t seem very exciting to most of you dear readers. Isaac was a well digger. I’m pretty sure that’s the equivalent of a ditch digger today. Anyways, we’re going to examine this dry chapter of the Bible under a high-powered microscope to get a more accurate and meaningful message from it.

Let’s first recognize how accurate Paul was when he said, “...for whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope.” Today, we’re going to learn hope through patience. I don’t know about you, but I can use as much patience as I can possibly get. I cannot muster it up myself. I truly don’t have it in me. I have a great deal of tolerance - but that’s altogether different. Well, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were very balanced and outgoing men; but without Jacob in the Bible, I would honestly feel like I could not locate myself in Scripture. I am nothing like Abraham or Isaac. They were great men; honest, wealthy, probably good-

looking, generous, noble, upright men. Jacob was a complete and total failure for God. I can only identify with Jacob.

I do like to think of myself as extremely aggressive concerning the teaching of the Bible. I think this present hour is the end of this age of Grace as far as dispensation of the Word of God on the face of the earth is concerned. In fact, I'm sure of it. We must be blunt today. We may not even reach the end of this second safari; who knows? Paul said, "....all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine and for reproof and correction and for instruction in righteousness...." – second Timothy chapter three verse sixteen. So, with all of that dry prerequisite in mind let's come to another thrilling chapter in the Word of God ~

1 And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar.

2 And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of:

~ Remember, Abraham and Lot immediately took off to Egypt when the first famine had come in their days. Unfortunately, God had not told Abraham to go to Egypt at that time, either. Isaac also had an example of the result of disobedience in Egypt in the form of his half-brother. To his credit, Ishmael had, at least, come back for the funeral when Abraham died - and these two buried Abraham. None of the other sons we saw in the last chapter even bothered being at the funeral as far as we can tell. God appears suddenly and definitely to Isaac with a succinct message now because God knows one thing: like father; like son. You can talk about a "generation gap" all you want to; but there's no generation gap with sin, friends. It flows from one to another intact and it even evolves – there is certainly a sinful evolution. Generally, a son will make the same mistake, or worse, than the father made unless God intervenes; and God is intervening when He appears to Isaac to confirm His covenant and to give him directions....

3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father;

4 And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

~ It is important to remember that the physical land of Palestine – or Israel - is inextricably intertwined with God’s covenant to Abraham; and Abraham being a blessing to all nations is directly connected to God’s promise. We must also remember that the Mosaic System of Levitical Law has not been given to Moses at Mount Sinai yet; so Isaac is not bound under any law. Most importantly, when God told Abraham something, Abraham believed God; and he acted upon his faith. I hear so many disguised complaints that say there’s no reality to this thing of the Bible. They say it in the guise of religion all over this forum on which I teach every single day – and it’s the same tired people doing it. They may or may not genuinely trust Christ with their lives - but they don’t really feel anything, either - so they just aren’t sure. I can understand that feeling of uncertainty because I have it in my life every time there is no proper service or accountability of my obedience to the Lord. You know: Bible study! Does that sting? Or maybe it stinks; or does it sound just about right for you, too? If you just sit in the corner twiddling your thumbs and expecting something to happen in your life that will motivate you to undertake a proper, correct and complete consideration of the ENTIRE Word of God, then I think you’re just wasting God’s time with your so-called Christianity. In fact, I know you are! See, Abraham believed God and God accounted it to him for righteousness. You’ll have to know the Bible to know what you believe, friends. Here, God says to Isaac, “I want you to be that kind of a man, too.” So, what does Isaac do? Isaac repeats the sin of his father Abraham on two counts. One, he went to Gerar. It wasn’t Egypt but God said, specifically, “stay in this land.” Two, this whole crazy family sister-lie thing....

5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

6 And Isaac dwelt in Gerar:

7 And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said , She is my sister: for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon.

8 And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw , and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife.

9 And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety she is thy wife: and how saidst thou, She is my sister? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her.

10 And Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us.

~ Abimelech appears to be more righteous than Isaac. He's worried about the well-being of his people, apparently. I think Abimelech respected Isaac and Isaac became a very great man under his rule in his land. I mention that because we're not going to get that impression much from the rest of this chapter. God is with Isaac – even though Isaac is doing some very bad things now. Maybe I can see some Isaac in me. The Lord tells Israel later that when they walk in fellowship with Him they will receive an earthly blessing. Today, we are not promised an earthly blessing. No, we are promised "...all spiritual blessings in the Heavens." On the same terms, though; if you walk with God and permit Him, He wants to bless you with all manner of blessings today in this life – and some might be material. Or it might not. See, obedience is the key here and it is EXTREMELY difficult to attain to; I would say, next to impossible down here. Material stuff that we label a "blessing" may or may not be that – and it is never an indicator of our spiritual health or our closeness to Jesus. Abraham and Isaac represent the intimacy between the Father and the Son; and he that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father....

11 And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.

12 Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the LORD blessed him.

13 And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great:

14 For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him.

15 For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.

~ The Philistines hated Isaac's prosperity and, apparently, they hated Isaac – just because! They likely had hated Abraham, too. Isaac came out one morning and his wells were all filled back up. This, by the way, is the first mention in the Bible of a continual style of warfare that involves filling wells. Stop the water – people die a horrible death. Here, even after all that has happened between Abimelech and Isaac, notice how respected Isaac is. Isaac was causing a great deal of difficulty in Abimelech's land with that sin. Of course, he is just repeating the same sin Sarah and his dad had sinned so long ago....

16 And Abimelech said unto Isaac; Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.

17 And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

18 And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

~ Of course, we are seeing Isaac return to Abraham's original land and old ways here. When we have "water" in the Bible we can always associate it with the Word of God, spiritually speaking. It is a correlation that works out theologically - every time. We are to drink deep of the Word of God - unless we're in prison with Micaiah, then we only get afflicted water and bread - but I digress, sort of. The Word of God is called the "water of the Word." It's sweet for quenching our thirst and it's good for washing! "Ye are cleansed by the Word I have spoken unto you," saith the Lord Jesus unto His apostles. Naturally, water happens to be a very important element in life - mainly because we don't have life without it! Water always has been - is - and will continue to be in constant contention because there is a price you will pay if you are really going to study the entire Word of God. The devil will let you get into ANYTHING on earth that you desire except the true, proper and correct teaching of the Word of God in sound doctrine. The devil wants that well capped - and for you to die. Make some notes, friends....

19 And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.

20 And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him.

21 And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah.

22 And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

23 And he went up from thence to Beersheba.

~ Notice what is happening here. Isaac will dig a well and the enemy would take it away; then he would dig another well and they would take that one away. What does Isaac do? He just keeps moving up and around digging new wells as he ascends. Isaac is a man of peace and a man of patience. I

think he was very hopeful he could make peace with his enemy. David wouldn't have done it this way, to be sure. I wouldn't have done it this way, either. You might want to ask yourself if you would have done it this way. This is a very valuable lesson for all of us who like to label ourselves "Bible teachers," friends; a lesson that just so happens to come from and pertain to the Word of God. You'll do some striving if you are really going to attempt to take the entire Word of God to the entire world in sound doctrine. You can just write that down, again....

24 And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.

25 And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.

26 Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army.

27 And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?

28 And they said, We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee;

29 That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of the LORD.

30 And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink .

31 And they rose up betimes in the morning, and sware one to another: and Isaac sent them away , and they departed from him in peace.

32 And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came , and told him concerning the well which they had digged , and said unto him, We have found water.

33 And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day.

34 And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite:

35 Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah ~

