

SERIES TITLE: #LivingByFaith

PART 6: THROUGH PERSONAL DECISION

TEXT: GENESIS 26

INTRODUCTION. Genesis follows the work of God, moving from creation, to the entrance of sin, to judgment, to the selection of a family through which the nations will be blessed. The promises of God to Abraham are now being passed on to his son Isaac. This chapter chronicles several experiences in Isaac's life that are similar or identical to what happened to his father.

DISCUSSION. Certain things are just fine when you get them secondhand. Other things can't be passed along or reused. What are some examples of items or experiences that have no secondhand value?

Why do children often fall victim to the same issues that troubled their parents? Is this a valid excuse?

EXAMINATION.

Vv.1-6 Note the wording as the narrator wants us to know that this is a separate incident.

Abraham ran to Egypt during a famine and another time went to Gerar, and both times he made a mess. Read Genesis 12:10, and Genesis 20:1.

Note that Isaac is already enroute to Egypt when God speaks to him. Why does God want Isaac to stay put? Is Gerar part of the Promised Land?

V.7 Read Genesis 12:11-20 and Genesis 20:2-18. What possible significance is there in Isaac repeating the same mistakes and lies his father made?

Vv.8-11 "Caressing" is the translation of a word that is a theme in the Abraham/Isaac saga. It means laughter, mocking, playing. It is what Isaac means. See its use in Genesis 17:17; 18:12; 19:14; 21:6, 9.

Why does Abimelech seem to have a higher ethical standard than Isaac?

Vv.12-22 Why would God bless Isaac with all this wealth when Isaac had not been perfect in all his ways? What does this say about God, about Isaac?

Note the repeated difficulties over the wells. Isaac's attempts at reusing wells dug by his dad and even restoring the names given by Abraham continue this theme of repetition. What significance did wells have in that day, and what are the implications?

Vv.23-25 What do Isaac's actions demonstrate about his response to God's promise?

Vv.26-33 Read Genesis 21:22-34 and note all the similarities in these two stories.

The language used by Isaac's visitors is that they have "seen and seen" the Lord was with him. Isaac's life radiated blessings. Consider how Proverbs 16:7 fits this situation.

Why all these similarities between what the father and son experienced? Even though Isaac goes over the same ground and makes some of the same mistakes, he chooses God's way for himself. He worships.

APPLICATION.

Only Firsthand Faith Counts

- Firsthand faith means you can't continually use the failures of others as an excuse. In what ways do people excuse their lack of belief or spiritual indifference by blaming others?
- Firsthand faith means your children must live their own life of faith. How can we avoid the mistaken notion that God will accept us because our parents or spouse was godly?
- Firsthand faith means that each of us must personally respond to the Good News about Jesus. What is it about faith that keeps it from being something we cannot inherit, pass along to others? What makes it deadly?
- Is there anything in Isaac's example from this chapter that helps inform us about developing a firsthand faith?
- Fact: What is a key truth that you understood from this passage?
- React: What did you feel?
- Act: What are you going to do?