

Genesis #17 Ch. 23-26 a Prophecy to Rebekah

by Chuck Missler

This sermon explores the significance of Genesis chapters 23-26, focusing on Abraham's negotiation for Sarah's burial site and the lessons on business ethics and human emotion it conveys.

Duration: 1:22:17

Scripture: Genesis 22:2, Genesis 24:1, Matthew 6:33, 1 Peter 3:4-6

Topics: "Rebekah"

Description

In this sermon, Chuck Misler continues his study of the book of Genesis, focusing on chapters 23 through 26. He begins by briefly mentioning the previous topics covered in the study, including Abraham's offering of Isaac and Eleazar's calling of a bride for Isaac. Misler then jumps into chapter 23, which was skipped in the previous study, and discusses the events surrounding the death and burial of Sarah. He then moves on to chapter 24, where he highlights the story of Eleazar finding a wife for Isaac. Misler concludes by mentioning the upcoming topics of Jacob's conniving nature and the exciting story of Joseph.

Transcript

Welcome to the 17th study in the book of Genesis conducted by Chuck Missler. The subject of this tape, Genesis chapters 23 through 26. Let's open with a word of prayer.

Heavenly Father, we just pause tonight to praise you, to thank you for the privilege of gathering together tonight in safety and in harmony to open your word. We would ask you, Father, to attend us tonight with your Holy Spirit to open our understandings in our hearts and our minds that we might behold Jesus Christ, that we might understand those things that you've placed here for our learning. And Father, we would this hour fellowship with you and we would, Father, just put aside all our other cares and concerns to do but this one thing, to fellowship with you through a study of your word, asking you, Father, to overrule all things in our hearts and minds that we might just focus attention on these, thy gifts, that Jesus indeed, through all these things, might be glorified.

Amen. Amen. Okay, last time we met, we explored a couple of the chapters that are among my favorites.

I can probably say they're my favorites in the study of prophecy. Genesis 22 and its companion chapter, the way we approach it, chapter 24. And I think we covered that adequately without requiring a review.

It left us with a little gap in between chapter 23 that we'll cover tonight. But we did cover the offering of Isaac and to complete our horizon last time of typology, chapters 22 and 24, in many respects, are the high ground of typology, the most elaborate, rewarding, fulfilling examples of the use of models prophetically in the Scripture. And there are many.

But we learned much about the Scripture from our study of the ones we took up last time, Abraham's offering of Isaac and also Eleazar's calling of the bride for Isaac. And I trust if you are with us for the first time or if you missed the last time we got together, you might indeed avail yourself of one of the tape ministries who will make the tapes available free of charge, and you might just review that material, even if you review nothing else in Genesis. I commend to you a review of chapters 22 and 24 from last time.

But in order to tie together the ideas of 24 and 22, we really indulged in the liberty of skipping chapter 23. So my thought tonight, just to round out the study, if you're taking notes or the tapes, if you're collecting the tapes, is to jump into Genesis chapter 23. And you'll discover, I think, as we go now, we're going to, in many respects, the pace will pick up because increasingly Genesis will be a narrative that is relatively self-explanatory, and this deep, digressive style we've had in the early chapters will begin to yield to a little more comfortable pace and a little more narrative pace as we go.

And so those of you that have been taking your Keufel and Esser graph paper and figuring how many chapters we've covered so far and you've made a linear extrapolation and concluded that we'll finish the book about mid-84 or 85, I should point out that our pace will pick up a bit. But anyway, chapter 23. And Sarah was 127 and 20 years old, and these were the years of the life of Sarah.

Very simple little verse, but it's one that should catch your attention if you're real deep students of the Word, because it's the only place in the Bible that the Holy Spirit was given to tell us the age of the woman when she died. It's the only place in the Bible where that happens. Now, I don't think there's anything that profound out of 127 other than with long life, the Lord will bless, and he does here.

But it's interesting. Sarah is an interesting example. It's very provocative to me that in the Scripture, Sarah is singled out in both the Old and the New Testament as an example.

And just to explore that a little bit, turn to Isaiah chapter 51. The first two verses of Isaiah 51 are as follows. Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord.

Look unto the rock from which ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit from which ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah, who bore you, for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him. Now, she's referenced there as an Old Testament reference.

You can turn to 1 Peter chapter 3, verses 4 and 6 primarily. But I'll just point at 6. Verse 6. Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord, whose daughters are ye, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any terror, and so forth. Peter makes the point, but again makes a reference to Sarah.

And it's interesting that Sarah is selected as an example. It's interesting the women that are not selected as examples. Many very famous women are not selected in the Scripture as examples to follow.

An interesting example is Mary. But Sarah is in both the Old and New Testament. So you gals who are interested in that subject, I commit to you a study on your own, with material we've covered already of Sarah.

Study her life, her responsiveness, her attitude towards Abraham and to the Lord. And see what the Holy Spirit shows you there. Verse 2. And Sarah died in Keriath Arba, which means, incidentally, the City of the Four Quarters.

And it's an early name for the city of Hebron. It's an early name for the city of Hebron. And Judges 35, 27, and Joshua 14, 15, and Judges 1, 10, all tie together to demonstrate that.

Those of you that are really interested in concerning yourself. In fact, it says so right here, but it also ties the rest of it together. The same is Hebrew in the land of Canaan.

And Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. Now, the very fact that Abraham mourns is interesting. It's something, a lot of lessons here.

One of which is that just because you're saved doesn't mean God dehumanizes you. He still mourned for her. We're told in Psalm 103 that he knows our frame and that we are his dust.

In our affliction, he is afflicted, Isaiah tells us in chapter 63. In 1 Thessalonians 4, 13, we know that we may sorrow, but it's not a sorrow for lack of hope. It's not as if Abraham lacked hope for Sarah.

But we know from Ephesians 5, 28, and other passages, that husband loves his wife as his own body. And he missed Sarah, he grieved over her, even though she was saved with the Lord, he mourned for her. And I think that speaks to the humanity that we see in Abraham's heart.

But, he came to weep for her, but he stood up from before his dead and spoke unto the sons of Heth, saying, and he goes on, we'll get into the Hittite negotiation here in a minute, but it's interesting that he didn't hang around the cemetery, if you will, or the body. And he may provide for her burial, we'll see in a minute. But he stood up from before his death.

Spoke unto the sons of Heth, now these are the Hittites that we're going to get into here, saying, I am a stranger and a sojourner with you. Give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight. And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him, Hear us, my lord, thou art a mighty prince among us, and in the choice of our sepulchers bury thy dead.

None of us shall withhold from thee his sepulcher, but that thou mayest bury thy dead. And Abraham stood up and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth, and he spoke with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me and entreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar, that he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his field. For as much money as it is worth, he shall give it me for a possession of a burying place among you.

And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth, and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham. And the hearing of the children of Heth, even of all that went in at the gate of his city, saying, Nay, my lord, hear me. The field give I thee, and the cave that is therein I give it thee.

In the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee, bury thy dead. And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land, and he spoke unto Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, But if thou wilt give it, I pray thee, hear me. I will give thee money for the field.

Take it of me, and I will bury my dead there. And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him, My lord, hearken unto me. The land is worth four hundred shekels of silver.

What is that between me and thee? Bury therefore thy dead. And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron, and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the hearing of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant. And the field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre the field, and the cave which was in it, and all the trees that were in the field that were in all the borders round about, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of Heth before all that went in at the gate of the city.

And after this Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre, the same as Hebron in the land of Canaan. And the field and the cave that is in it were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a burying place by the sons of Heth. Now, you may wonder, in terms of the pace at which we're going, and some of the important things we've been dealing with, and on the presumption that I think is valid, the Holy Spirit tends to be economic in His partitioning of the Word.

Why are there some almost twenty verses dealing with the haggling of buying a field? And the books and the libraries are full of analysis as to what's going on here, and a number of things come out of this. Some of them construct... First of all, some people have gone through a lot of trouble. They point out that the price was probably about \$116 by one set of reckoning, which I'm not sure is valid, but at least that was one analysis.

The 400 shekels are regarded by some scholars as being an exorbitant price, because about four shekels per acre was a reasonable price for a field. Doesn't tell how many acres we've got here. And 40, about ten times that much, 40 shekels per acre for a garden, a well-watered garden.

So this field is going at 400 shekels, but we don't know how many acres, so it's a little ambiguous there. There's a lot of issues about that, which I think misses the point. I'll come back to that aspect of it.

But let's just, as we go through this, first of all, it's interesting that here we have the Hittites. We know very little about the Hittite Empire this early in its history and this far south. But the Hittites are explicitly referenced here.

It's interesting that they didn't know the God of Abraham. But it's interesting that they glorified God through Abraham's example, because the whole tone of their relationship with Abraham is that he is a mighty prince. They treated him with respect.

And I think right there it's interesting, in terms of you can get a glimpse as to how Abraham conducted himself. But we also have something here that I think you could make a very comprehensive study of, because here is a business transaction, transacted by none other than Abraham himself, and how busy we are trying to understand business principles from the Scripture. And here's one that we can learn a few things about.

The first thing that's interesting is Abraham starts by bowing himself to them. It's just a question of courtesy. He bowed himself.

And it's interesting, 1 Peter 3, 8, we are admonished to be courteous. He's polite. Good intentions are not enough to be polite or courteous.

I have spent some 20 years or more as an executive in the business field, and I have to tell you that my greatest abuse came not from unbelievers or sharp practices by the unsaved, but by the uninformed good intentions but disastrous moves of Christian businessmen who do not understand the sanctity of a commitment, who do not understand basic business etiquette. And you indeed have to make allowances for people who are in a field or in a level of lack of maturity in a business sense that they will often inadvertently injure someone. But one of the interesting things that I think you can build a case from Scripture is that that isn't the conduct God would have of us.

Part of what Abraham had to know was the proper etiquette for the community within which he dealt. And many Christians are very presumptuous as they get into business circles in terms of some of the basic ground rules of that community. And I'm fascinated as I go through the Scripture to see again and again indications that we have an obligation to be informed.

Just going at it with good intentions is not enough. As we get on here, we notice also that... You also notice that Abraham's goal is to make an equitable bargain. The principle upon which Abraham is attempting to strike the deal is one of mutuality, not one of taking advantage.

In Proverbs chapter 20, verse 14, Solomon also disparages the person who minimizes the value of a thing during the negotiation and then boasts of the bargain after the deal is done. How often we all do that. It's sort of regarded as a standard practice in negotiation.

And yet it's interesting, that's not what Abraham was doing. Abraham's attempt was, hey, let's find out, let's figure out what fair value is and I'll buy it because I have a need for it. That was Abraham's approach.

Just and equitable as a concept, as the basic premise of a negotiation. And it's interesting how in the mature industries, I came from the automobile industry having served as an executive at Ford for many years, six years. I now serve as a chief executive officer in the electronics business, which is a tough, rough and tumble kind of business.

But it's interesting how the mature companies build their reputation and their style on the presumption that the guy they're negotiating with this deal with is the same guy they're going to have to negotiate with a year from now. So in spite of the fact it may be tough bargaining, there is a presumption of mutuality that underlies the negotiation. Among the sophisticated, among the naive, it doesn't work that way.

And many young companies that grow very fast suddenly are injured because they haven't built a reputation of fair dealing. And it's interesting to see the electronics and the semiconductor industry mature. I made a kind of speech a few years ago where I said going into any business in the semiconductor business is like going from a condom to a brothel in terms of the business style.

That's partly because it's young and immature and growing, but essentially as it matures, the professionals tend to operate on a basis of mutuality. I'm discovering that's a prerequisite to the major leagues as far as I'm concerned. Something else that's interesting here, and I just felt burdened as I read this particular passage, there's some theological issues that come to that, but I was fascinated how much we can glean from this little example.

Let's look at verse 16. Abraham harkened unto Ephraim, Abram weighed unto Ephraim the silver, which he had named in the hearing of the sons of Heth, etc. And let's see, there's several places here it makes reference to the fact that this was witnessed.

The whole transaction was witnessed and made sure. It was made secure before witnesses. And I'm impressed is that Abraham saw to it that things were done in order and proper and thorough.

How many of us men in this room tonight have wills for their family properly drawn by an expert in the field and properly witnessed to minimize the taxation and to handle probate in case something should happen to us? It's my guess, just a cynic's guess perhaps, that among the secular professionals there's a relatively high percentage of men who deal with the issues to make sure they don't leave their estate and test it. And yet I'll bet you among the Christians there's a greater percent of negligence there. I'm sorry I didn't have time to check with some attorneys on that kind of a thing.

But I wouldn't be a bit surprised. And I'm guilty myself. There's many things in my personal affairs that need cleaning up because I've been so harassed in travel.

That's one of the things I've got to do is set aside some time and get that in order. If I'm going to be properly accountable as a steward before the Lord, it's interesting that Abraham here not only does this deal but he does it, he handles the procedures in a good, sound, orderly way. And I'm going to suggest that we have a call to be prudent in the business sense.

And it's my suggestion that indiscreet conduct has caused many Christians' names to be disgraced in the business world and brought their families to ruin. And if the Lord witnesses to you through these things, terrific. Otherwise, maybe it's just my own preoccupation with some of these issues that I may be seeing in this.

However, I will show you, this is a good excuse for me to show you a verse that flabbergasted me when I found it. And you girls may hate me after I show you this verse because you are probably like my wife who always felt that the Lord really thinks it's important for me to make sure she's in a nice home. Because obviously our wives should be first and a nice home is important.

And I was shocked to discover that's not what the Lord says. You might turn to Proverbs 24 and there's a principle the Lord gives us that you might find rather interesting. And in the King James, it's not nearly as clear as it is in the Living Bible.

Now, all of you know that the Living Bible is simply Ken Taylor's paraphrase and it makes it very readable. But one, his best work was a book of Proverbs. So if you look this up in the Living Bible, a book of Proverbs, it'll hit you right between the eyes.

In the King James, you may miss the point here. In the King James, verse 27 of Proverbs 24 says, Prepare thy work outside and make it fit for thyself in the field and afterwards build your house. Now, it's buried with a thought that doesn't come through maybe as clearly in the King James as it should, is you build and provide for your business first.

Then you build your house. If you're a farmer, you build the barn first and then your house. If you're a businessman, you establish your business economics before you build your house.

And that was very interesting. I got much more out of it than my wife did, actually. But it's interesting how as you go through the Scripture and if you have your antenna up and you're listening, the Lord tells you a great deal about how to conduct your affairs.

And one of the little pet peeves I have is that we tend in our zeal as new Christians in the Word and as we come to know Jesus Christ and as we allow the Holy Spirit to move in our lives, we often drift into a style of business conduct that leads to disaster. Because we no longer exercise prudence. We no longer go through the detailed follow-through it takes to survive.

And I'm always disturbed by guys who are in business and they come to the Lord, they get active in Bible studies, and their business starts to suffer and all their well-meaning Christian friends stand around the sidelines saying, ah, the Lord is dealing with him. What's happening is the guy is failing to be diligent in his business and gets hurt. And if you go through the Christian bookstores you go a long way before you find any useful helps for the businessman in the Christian vein.

And I think it's tragic because there's a need for maturity in our transactions and our dealings just as Abraham exemplifies here in this purchase of this field. Since I've embarked tonight on a slight digression as a businessman I should also tell you the one principle you learn in business applies here. It's not what you know, it's who you know in business, right? And the same thing here is true in the Scripture.

So obviously I don't want to in any way minimize the need for a Christian businessman to walk in the Spirit and to know the Lord Jesus Christ. But let's not let that, let's not let a charismatic walk stand in the way of being diligent and thorough and exercising due diligence before the law as we say in the trade or prudence as we might in the vernacular. Getting back now to Abraham's purchase it's very interesting that Abraham purchased only one piece of real estate in his entire life that we know of.

That's this piece of real estate as a bearing ground. It's very, very interesting that that's all he purchased of the earth because he was a stranger and a pilgrim on the one hand. On the other hand what's probably also not as obvious in this narrative is the significance of buying this burial ground where it is.

Now yes, it's near the Oaks of Mamre you may have caught that from Genesis 18 and tie that together. But there's another aspect of this that is Abraham buying this field to bury Sarah here is in effect indulging in a testimony to the fact that his progeny would return to the land. Now how long would it be before his progeny would return to the land? Approximately 400 years, right? What was the price of the land? 400 shekels.

What a coincidence. Isn't that a coincidence? Shekels of silver. What does silver mean Levitically? Redemption money.

Right. Blood. Tabernacle was put on sockets of silver.

Judas throwing the silver on the temple. Behold I have betrayed innocent blood. Silver and blood Levitically are always linked together and that's the price of the land.

One other thing though that came out of some research that I thought was very exciting. By the way I might mention not only was Sarah buried there but Abraham is buried there. Isaac.

Rebecca. Jacob is buried there even though he died in Egypt. And Leah is buried there in the cave at Machpelah.

It's near Hebron. It's in two layers. They have never allowed scholars to go into the second layer.

And there's a mosque over it. But it's a place that you can either try to visit. That's if you've got the guts to go near Hebron these days.

It's a troubled spot relative to terrorist activity. But there's something else about this that's kind of interesting. Many scholars for 1900 years I guess have been very hard on the Hittites because as they analyze this passage what Abraham is after is a cave.

And they don't sell him the cave. They sell him the field that the cave is in. You caught that in the narrative.

I won't go through it all again. And scholars have felt that what they were doing was exploiting Abraham. There's all kinds of reasons why they think the price is too high.

I'm deaf to that because I'm not sure we have any ability to analyze that one way or the other. And I look at the 400 shekels of silver mystically anyway. Not that they aren't literal but what value of communication there is to me is maybe what the Holy Spirit is saying in another sense.

But the thing that's interesting is that the Hittites are viewed by most modern commentators or I should say ancient commentators as being exploitive. You wanted a cave you got to buy the whole field. Some very recent archaeology has revealed some insight into the Hittite law.

And the Hittite law required ilku that is feudal services on the land. What we would call taxes. Except in those days they were services.

So if you sold only part of a piece of property you the owner still owed the king feudal services on the land. Abraham was a sojourner and what have you so he was exempt from that. But the guy selling him the property would want to sell him the whole parcel so he would be relieved of the feudal services that accompany that particular parcel.

And there's a whole bunch of archaeological evidence that gives us an insight as to how the Hittites handled those property transactions. There's a very similar procedure a little different but similar in the Code of Hammurabi which is the Babylonian background. What makes that interesting is we have a whole new insight now as to how this what this passage is really saying.

Abraham wants the cave the Hittites will sell him the field that the cave is in because of the practicality of the way their law is written. They're not exploiting him at all. They're just trying to do it as a tax shelter or whatever.

I'm glad I got a giggle on that. I was afraid that that went by. Okay.

It's hard to laugh about taxes I realize. But what makes this interesting is that this is evidence of an early date in Genesis because the Hittite capital Hattusas fell about 1200 B.C. where the influence of their law would evaporate. And so it implies that the Hittite laws that were operative here were operative were operative here therefore it was before that date.

Secondly, it also argues for an early date because most of this is of recent discovery. So I thought that would be I generally stay away from a lot of the archeological stuff because it really gets distracted more than supportive. But I thought that was interesting in this particular case because of all the strange theories you get about this transaction and the weight that's given it there.

Now, before we leave Chapter 23, there is an underexplored idea that I don't know of any commentator treating and it may be totally spurious, it may be invalid, but I'll just throw it out to you for those of you that are interested in this sort of thing is to, if you're interested in the typology, remember we had Abraham as the father, Isaac was the son that was offered as an offering, and we had Eliezer, the unnamed servant, unnamed in Chapter 24, subsequently go and gather a bride for Isaac. And we developed that whole thing. It's very interesting that it's possible that maybe Sarah is the woman that gave birth to Isaac, therefore the woman in the sense of Revelation 12 or Genesis 3, i.e. Israel.

It's very interesting that she is not present when, in other words, she dies before Rebekah, before the bride is gathered, which is kind of interesting. It's also interesting that Rebekah is, when she marries Isaac in Verse 62, Chapter 24, she dwells in the tents of Sarah. So you can make a whole thing of that.

I'm not sure it's valid, because it's one of those ideas that just passes through while you're going through this, but I just throw it out for something you may want to explore as to whether to complete the type, Sarah might be a type of the nation Israel. It falls down, of course, because there is a resurrection of Israel in the sense of the dry bones, which falls after the gathering, and what have you. So that's a whole other issue.

I think we have discussed Chapter 23 enough. Chapter 24, we went through last time in enough detail, I think, that we won't repeat it. It is, of course, the chapter of Isaac, of the gathering of a bride for Isaac, where Eliezer commissioned a servant.

Servant's unnamed in this chapter, which is provocative in the sense that he's the type of the Holy Spirit. He doesn't bear witness of himself, and there's many, many subtleties here as you go through as to how he goes about gathering the bride that you can study by the well and so forth, and the intercession and so forth, and the giving of gifts, and the fact that the entire thing hangs on a personal decision of Rebecca, just as our membership in his church, his ecclesia, is the result of a personal decision, a yielding of sovereignty back to our Lord. And I think what we really ended up doing is getting down to verse 62 last time, where we see Isaac, who is edited out of the record from the time he is offered in chapter 22.

He reappears here in verse 62 of chapter 24, where we see him by the well of the living water, and that's where Rebecca sees him, and they become united, and verse 65 says, For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is who? My master. Therefore she took a veil and covered herself, and the servant told Isaac all the things he had done, and Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, interesting phrase, and took Rebecca, and she became his wife, and he loved her, and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death. Now, with chapter 25, those of you that missed last time can pick up 24 from the tape in more detail, one of the richest studies that you can undertake, I think, in the Old Testament.

But let's go on to 25. Chapter 25, verse 1, Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah, and she bore him Zimram and Jokshan and Midan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah. Very interesting how the gifts of the Lord are without repentance or changing.

The Lord reestablished Abraham's virility supernaturally, and I think that's fascinating. He was barren, I'm sure he was barren, and they both were beyond the childbearing age, but supernaturally the Lord restored both to permit Isaac to be in effect supernaturally born, again being a type of Christ. But it's interesting to me a couple of things.

One is that he had a problem with Sarah in terms of her attractiveness, remember? The Lord didn't just supernaturally have her child able, if you will. She was so attractive that he again, remember back there, he had to resort to the subterfuge, she's my sister, right? And it's interesting, a thought occurred to me in the shower the other day, is that Abraham married, he wasn't lying, she was his half-sister. And the thought that hit me in the shower is that there's another guy that married his sister called Adam.

I don't know if that's valid or not, but you can sort of mull that one over, if that's valid or not. But anyway, it's interesting, yeah, I thought you'd, all right. But it's interesting how the Lord, having restored Abraham's virility in order to accomplish the birth of Isaac, as per the promise, his gifts and calling are without repentance.

So Abraham still had his gift. And he marries again after Sarah's death and has six guys. And we don't know how many daughters.

That's just, right? If you follow me, only the sons are listed here. Anyway, that goes on and gives you the second generation and Joch-Shan begot Sheba and Dedan. Now those two names are familiar to you probably because they show up in Ezekiel 38 and they're tribal names from which, which account for northern Arabia, Saudi Arabia.

But I mean the northern, both Sheba and Dedan are cities there, but also tribal names. And they show up in Ezekiel in the attack of the Soviet Union against the nation Israel after Iran falls and becomes part of the Soviet Union. It's described there.

What's interesting in that whole description is the Soviet allies are enumerated by their ancient tribal names. And the interesting omissions are that Egypt is not among those attacking Israel. Mizrim is the name you'd look for in terms of the ancient tribal name.

And it's not mentioned in that chapter. But also Sheba and Dedan are not joining. They're standing on the sidelines saying, naughty, naughty, don't do that.

And that's kind of interesting. That's extremely interesting. Gee, there's so much we could get into if we wanted to take a departure here.

The theory that the Saudi Arabians may refinance their national debt with low-cost bonds in order to strengthen the dollar, protect their investment, and bring our economy up. And some of my intelligence sources say that was, they're trying to get that wired as the October surprise and didn't make it. And I think I'm glad they didn't.

Because that's a complicated analysis in terms of having that kind, having our debt held by foreigners. At the same time, it's a very interesting mechanic to strengthen the free world. It turns out to be a good deal for both sides.

The government accounts for 80 percent of the credit in the credit markets. If you take them out of the short-term market, the kind of credit that's available and the cost of it, it could be really exciting. But anyway, we'll just sit back and see and watch what happens.

Jachshan begot Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asherim and Letushim and some other unpronounceable. And the sons of Midian were Iphar, Iphar, Ephir, Ephir, Ephir, Ephir, Ephir, Ephir, Ephir, Ephir, Ephir, Why are they listed here? I don't know.

We do see some of them reoccur later in the Scripture. It is God's way of honoring Abraham and fulfillment of his promise that he would be the father of many nations, and many of these seem to co-mingle with the sons of Ishmael so that the strains include the Arab community. Verse five is important.

And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. Now this is not new news, because the Eleazar had told Rebekah that in the caravan coming back. When he called Rebekah to be the bride of the bridegroom, he mentioned there that Abraham had given the bridegroom, had made him the heir of all things.

And here it is reconfirmed. Now that's important, not only in terms of our understanding of the Old Testament and Isaac's role in the genealogy, it's also important in our theological understanding of Isaac as a type of Jesus Christ. Because in Hebrews chapter 1 verse 2, I believe it is, it says that it's pleased the Lord to make Jesus Christ the heir of all things, in a cosmic sense, in a broader sense than this of course.

But in the type, it's interesting that that's there. Which reminds me of something you should be aware of, I think I've mentioned to you before and we will get into it again. In Romans chapter 8, Paul uses a structure, I think it's chapter 31, or verse 31, where he says, and whom he foreknew, them he predestinated, and whom he predestinated, them he also called.

Whom he called, he also justified. Whom he justified, them he also glorified. Remember? Predestination, calling, justification, glorification, in that order.

And Paul builds that case towards the end of Romans chapter 8. What's interesting is Abraham is an example of being predestinated, how God reached to an idol-worshipping Gentile, called him out of the area of the Chaldees, to be the instrument for his dealing with the redemption of the world. Predestinated. Whom he predestinated, them he also called.

And Isaac is his seed called. And Jacob, he was justified. If Jacob can be justified, that's hope for us all.

And we'll get into Jacob, you'll see what I mean by that. And then lastly, Joseph, of course, is an example of the glorification. And it's very interesting, one could argue very clearly, I think, that in Paul's mind, as he wrote Romans 8, had an Old Testament outline in terms of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.

But anyway, getting back to this, Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac, verse 5, verse 6, and unto the sons of the concubines whom Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country. Very interesting. For a guy that's beyond the age of childbearing, he sounds like he had a busy afterlife there, I mean, in terms of... And I don't mean that disrespectfully, I just mean it's interesting how, in fact, the record highlights that.

I find that interesting. Verse 7. These are the days of the years of Abraham's life, which he lived, a hundred and threescore and fifteen years. And Abraham died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people.

And boy, are there arguments about what that means. But I don't think it's a big deal one way or the other. Let it mean whatever you think it means.

Now, it's very interesting that we don't have a lot of insight, but it appears that Isaac and Ishmael buried the hatchet, at least modestly, that they were able to join together at the funeral. You do get the impression they weren't the best of friends. They were very deeply, you know, when Isaac came, Ishmael had to be sent away.

And you can easily visualize the strain between the two. That strain has lasted, what, 4,000 years? And people who seek a near-term Middle East settlement, they are naive. However, it is interesting that Ishmael and Isaac set aside their differences, at least for the duration of burying their father, whom they both honor, even to this day.

Verse 12. Now, these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar, the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, born to Abraham. And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael by their names, according to their generations, the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebejah, Kedar, and Abdeel, and Mibsam.

And I won't try to butcher the pronunciation of these. You can go through them. The interesting thing is that there are 12 of these.

There are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names by their towns and by their encampments, 12 princes, according to their nations. And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, 137 years, and he died and was gathered unto his people. And they dwelt from Havalah unto Shur, that is, before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria, and he died in the presence of all his brethren.

So we have the courtesy of naming the sons of Ishmael. It's interesting that there are 12 tribes, just as there are 12 sons to come of Jacob. Very interesting.

Don't confuse the order, though, because Isaac doesn't have 12. Isaac and Ishmael are brothers. Ishmael has 12 sons.

Isaac has Jacob, who then has 12 sons. Are you with me? Well, it's interesting that they're both 12 tribes, 12 tribes of Ishmael, 12 tribes of Jacob, who is later called Israel. Okay? And these are the generation, verse 19, these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son.

And Abraham begot Isaac when Isaac was 40 years old. He was 40 years old when he took Rebekah, his wife. Now, you see how interesting that is.

That came right after his offering on the mountain. And the idea that Isaac was some little, you know, little kid who didn't have the message, I think is naive. There's some evidence that he was approximately 30, maybe 33 years old.

And furthermore, we know he went in agreement, so he was of legal age because he committed to it, not just he was submissive to his father in that procedure, which is interesting. Isaac was 40 years old, and we're going to discover that the barrenness of his wife Rebekah lasts 20 years, so think about that one. He was 40 years old when he took Rebekah, his wife, the daughter of Bethuel, the Syrian of Paddan-Naram, and sister to Laban the Syrian.

This guy Laban, we're going to run into quite a bit because his nephew Jacob and Laban get into some interesting transactions. And as you get to know the two guys, you sort of feel they deserve each other. But anyway, Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife because she was barren, and the Lord was entreated by him, and Rebekah, his wife, conceived.

Now, later on, when you get down here, verse 26, when she bears, Isaac was three-score years old when the children come. So you've got to recognize that his praying for and patience was significant. It wasn't, gee, Lord, she's barren and, you know, shazam, you know, nine months later she's, you know, got children.

It wasn't that kind of a program. It appears that there was a 20-year interval, and we don't have a lot of comment on his trials and his walk and his life there. The scriptures, in fact, just the opposite is true.

In all the other cases of the four key patriarchs, Abraham and Jacob and Joseph, we have at least twelve chapters dealing with their lives. And with Isaac, we have a little more than one. So Isaac is, in many respects, sort of a mystery, a blind spot, if you will.

We have very little we really know about Isaac, in contrast to the very in-depth narratives of the others. In any case, she conceived, verse 22, and the children struggled together within her, and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord. Very interesting gal, Rebekah.

You notice where she goes to to find out what's going on. I think that's neat. How many of us do that? It's interesting.

The children struggled together with... oh, yeah, verse 23. And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb. That's got to be a blow, if you just stop there.

Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be born of thee. And the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger. And that's a big riddle, because that totally violates the laws of primogenitor.

That is the idea that the firstborn is the legal boss, or big guy, or heavy, if you will, and the juniors are junior, right? Even today in our Western culture, which has perhaps done as much as anything to abandon those ideas, usually the firstborn has still got an edge. But in most cultures, and especially the early tribal cultures all the way around, firstborn was treated by preference. But certainly in the culture we're talking about here, the firstborn is a very key role.

In fact, since this is going to become so important, especially for these two characters, well, we'll talk about that, let's do it when we get to the end of it, we're almost down here a little bit, let's take another verse or two and then commit back to that. Verse 24, And when her days were to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. The first came out red, all over like a hairy garment, and they called his name Esau.

Okay? And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel, and his name is called Jacob. Now, as I think most of you are aware, the name Esau can mean hairy, not H-A-R-R-Y, I'm just wild about, no, different kind of hairy, H-A-R, in other words hairy like a very, you've seen babies born that just have a surprising amount of hair on their head or even already on their skin, and that's what's implied here, and they named him a name that was suggestive of that, and also Jacob, this means supplant her, or upset her, or heel catch her, and so that's Jacob. And now Isaac was three score years old when she bore them, which is just the Holy Spirit's way of letting you know that it all comes, even though Isaac's prayer was answered, that Rebecca's barrenness was relieved, it came in the Lord's perfect timing.

Now, we're going to get into the famous story that concludes this chapter, but before we do, let's talk briefly about the concept of the birthright, because we're about to see a strange little episode occur, and it's more useful if we really understand what the birthright meant, and basically the birthright was the right of the firstborn to take precedence over his brothers. It's that simple. Now, it means some other particular things we'll get into, but that's basically what the birthright means.

We're going to see this exemplified in Genesis chapter 43, later, where the whole concept of a birthright will be explained further. Now, at the father's death, the birthright, which usually fell, in the absence of other circumstances, it fell on the firstborn. Not always.

We'll see exceptions. One of them here and some others later. The birthright included precedence over the brothers, and specifically at the father's death, a double portion of the estate.

If there were five brothers, they divided it in six parts and gave two to the firstborn. If there were ten brothers, they divided it in eleven, and the firstborn got a double portion. Whatever the other guys got, he got twice as much.

You with me? And it exactly happened in the state, among the twelve tribes. Joseph got a double portion. Was he the eldest? No.

Did he get the birthright? Yes. And his double portion then becomes his two sons, it happens, were adopted by his father, their grandfather, Ephraim and Manasseh. So his double portion allows them each to have one, which says there's really thirteen tribes.

The tribe of Joseph was split into two, in a sense. And that's how the Holy Spirit can play the shell game with you. When you want twelve tribes not counting Levi, because they're watching the tabernacle, you get twelve.

If you want twelve tribes counting Levi, you count Ephraim and Manasseh as one, the tribe of Joseph. But if Levi is not to be counted because they're watching the tabernacle, they don't go to war, they don't inherit the land, they inherit certain cities instead, and all that. But if you have the tribe of Levi in the center of the camp, how do you get twelve around? You know, three on each of four sides.

Well, you take the tribe of Joseph, split it in two, and you get Ephraim and Manasseh, and you get twelve tribes not counting Levi. Unless you're sensitive to that, you can spend a lot of Sunday afternoons trying to figure that out, looking at the twenty places the tribes are listed between Numbers and Revelation. Dan is left out in one of these.

He says, in one case, yes, and that's where Ephraim and Manasseh are filled in, in Revelation chapter 7. And the tribe of Joseph, the tribe of Manasseh is mentioned, and then the tribe of Joseph. So Ephraim is there, but not mentioned by calling it Joseph less Manasseh. So even Ephraim.

And there's a whole reason for that. The Holy Spirit has a very specific reason for that, and we won't get into it tonight if you're interested. You can get the tapes on Revelation chapter 7, and it goes into all of that, and why the Holy Spirit has a special deal for Dan, from beginning to end.

But, the point is, the firstborn gets a double portion of the inheritance. That's based on Deuteronomy 21, verse 17, for those of you who want to dig into that. Something else that you might be sensitive to, and this may pinch a little bit, is the firstborn is to be the head and priest of the family.

Now, I mean, I surprise you, sure, he's the firstborn, so he's the head of the family. But when the father's died, he becomes the head of the household. Fine.

He also becomes the priest of the family. How many of you guys are head of your household? You've got a lot of hands, right? How many of you are head of the household? Guys, how many of you are heads of

the household? You singles, by the way, are heads of the household, in case you haven't figured that out. How many of you are priests of your family? I don't see quite as enthusiastic a number of hands.

God holds you accountable to be the priest of your family. Think about that one. Uncle Sam may hold you accountable as the head of the household, but our king will measure your performance and your report card by your priesthoodship.

So you might think on that one a little bit. Exodus 22, Numbers 8, Deuteronomy 21 are places you can sort of poke around if you're interested in that area. Now, here's another point.

The loss of the birthright occurs under several circumstances, most notable of which is if there's a grave offense committed. Reuben committed incest, and that's in Genesis 35 and 49, it's mentioned. First Chronicles 5.1. And because he did, he forfeited his rights, which would have been the firstborn of the Twelve Tribes.

Now, what makes all this relevant to understanding Genesis 27 when we get there is that all of these things are formalized at the Father's testamentary blessing. Just as in the sense that we write a will, there was an occasion in the family evolution where the Father once and for all sanctioned the confirmation, if you will, of the birthright. And that's the blessing that comes about in Chapter 27.

You may wonder, what's all this fuss? Father, will you bless me? Sure, son. Why not do it several times? You'll get a sense from the story that once he did it, he can't undo it. What's going on there? Very simple.

It's a testamentary blessing confirming the birthright. So this transfer of the birthright from Esau to Jacob occurs sort of by two acts of chicanery. Well, this one act isn't really chicanery, it's just a poor bargain, and it's a testimony to the low regard that Esau had for these things, because we're going to see him obviously deal it away for next to nothing.

But it gets formalized by Jacob through the chicanery, that Jacob, I mean through Isaac in his old age, confirms all of this by some mischief that's cooked up between Rebekah and Jacob. And that's a very famous, perhaps not very often understood story. Anyway, we got down to verse 27.

Now let's read this peculiar episode that occurs out in the field of Judea some several thousand years ago, or over a thousand years ago. Let's see, 3,000 years ago or more. Verse 27, And the boys grew, and Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field.

And Jacob was a quiet man dwelling in tents. Now, there's a lot in this verse. First of all, it's obvious that, you know, the basics are obvious.

Esau was a, you know, he was Steve McQueen or whatever. I mean, he was out there going, and he's a, you know, five-speed stick shift kind of guy. And Jacob was a, you know, inside guy, you know, quiet and dwelling inside in tents.

Tells the whole story. You can colorfully paint the picture if you want. Something else is going on.

Now, that's the practical. Obviously, Isaac, we discover, loves Esau, because Esau is a man's man. I mean, he goes for it, you know, all the way.

You can't help but relate to Esau in the flesh. Okay? Jacob, needless to say, is closer to Rebekah. Introspective, inside, close to his mother.

Not knocking him. It's just the personality type you're looking at. But let's notice some other things.

Now that we have, most of us here have been through quite a bit of Scripture together, and we have an insight as to the idioms that the Holy Spirit will use. First of all, we find that Esau was a skillful hunter. Who is the first hunter mentioned in the Scripture? Nimrod, which speaks of the world system.

And what is Esau tagged with by the Holy Spirit here? Something else, maybe. Furthermore, he's a man of the field. What does the Scripture use the field idiomatically of, like in Matthew 13 as an example? The world.

The sower and the seed. There's a principle of expositional constancy that is surprisingly valid. And this suggests the same thing.

We have here a man of the world. Now, we have Jacob was a quiet man. The word there in the Hebrew is tam, which means complete or perfect, amiable, pious, cultured, upright, complete.

Not just quiet in the non-boisterous sense. It carries far more connotation than that. He was complete and perfect, and the same word is used of Job.

Now, don't get confused. This quiet guy is a conniver, and it shows up right here in his boyhood, and it really gets, in my opinion, terrible in the way he deals with his father and the chicanery he deals with Rebekah. Perhaps even more significant than that in terms of his insight into his character is his dealings with Laban.

The one thing, though, is the Lord brings into his life his match, and Laban teaches our friend Jacob two important lessons. He teaches them the principle of the firstborn by switching Leah, right, for Rachel. And our friend Jacob's going to get a very bitter lesson on what the firstborn's all about.

And the second thing is he also gets a feeling for a fast dealing, but that comes later. Anyway, they're boys here. Now, Isaac, verse 28, Isaac loved Esau because he did eat of his venison.

In other words, Esau was the hunter, and he went out and brought him the venison, and Isaac could relate to that. But Rebekah loved Jacob. Jacob, now let's switch to a specific incident.

Now, Jacob boiled pottage, and Esau came from the field, and he was fainting. A couple of points here. The pottage is regarded by most experts to be lentil soup, and that's still a ... the red lentil soup is a big delicacy.

They're now still today, and it doesn't sound like much, but when you really realize all that goes into it, you get the feeling that the lentils are the trivial part. I mean, it's a very hearty meal. And apparently Esau came in from the field and was faint.

Now, we sometimes forget the fact that he was out for the day, and he came in, and he was sort of looking for a snack, hardly. The text implies he was really, really ... he'd been out for a while. He was in fairly serious shape for something to eat.

So we don't ... you wouldn't capture that flavor in a casual reading unless you watch carefully. The indication is that Esau was in a bad way. Verse 30, Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red.

The word pottage is added. The text in the Hebrew makes the suggestion ... he's not even sure what it is. He has such a ... there's a tone of disregard in the Hebrew grammar, because the noun is supplied to make our translations smooth.

But anyway, that same red, for I am faint, therefore his name is called Edom. The word Edom means red, and you'll notice the theme red in here. He looked red when he was born, red and hairy.

And some scholars believe the word Esau meant hairy. There's also evidence it really meant red, and the word Edom meant red, and Esau and Edom are synonyms. We speak of the land of Edom.

That's the land of Esau. It's red also because it happens to be red porridge that is immortalized in this transaction going on here. Now, verse 31, Jacob, always ready for a deal, says, Sell me this day thy birthright.

Now, what's implied here, frankly, is that this could not have even been a meaningful proposition had not Jacob assessed the fact that the birthright was not important to Esau. And we make a big thing of it from where we sit. From Esau's point of view, it probably was looked upon as something ceremonial.

He was going to make his own way, so he didn't really worry about the rest of it. And the idea of being high priest of the family was obviously not his cup of tea. And he just didn't really care about these things.

And we have Scripture on that that you can chase down on your own, that Esau regarded not the birthright. So, that's all implied by Jacob's proposition. He's going to take advantage of that disregard.

Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at a point to die. And what profit shall this birthright do to me? Now, many of us that read that story figure that may be just his way of disparaging it, or, in fact, what the text may be conveying is that his state of hunger may be far more severe than we give him credit.

And I don't know where to put that. You sort of have to come to your own conclusions. But, in any case, his attitude is, you know, if I die of hunger, what do I care about being the firstborn? So, Jacob said, Swear to me this day.

And he swore unto him. And he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils.

And he did eat and drink and rose up and went his way. And thus Esau despised his birthright. Now, this is one of those episodes that we can probably read one of two ways.

It might have been an extremely dramatic, climactic struggle and event. And that's valid. That's a valid view from the text.

Or it might have been one of these casual, we tend often to view it as one of these things that Esau might have regarded quite casually, that becomes significant only in retrospect because of our particular vantage point. But, in any case, that's the sale, the famous sale of the birthright by Esau. And this gets to be extremely important in chapter 27, because the transaction is inadvertently ratified by Isaac through the scheming of Rebecca and Isaac.

I might be, I think what we might do now, we're doing well on time, so good, okay. Let's, let's charge through chapter 26. Chapter 26, verse 1, And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine, that

was in the days of Abraham.

Notice the Holy Spirit making a comparison. There was a famine in the land that drove Abraham to Egypt. That wasn't what Abraham was supposed to do.

He was supposed to have trusted the Lord to provide, but he didn't. He goes to Egypt. What harm can that cause? What caused him to really shame his name before the Egyptian pharaoh by this shenanigan with Sarai, or later called Sarah? It also, they pick up a handmaid, an Egyptian handmaid by the name of Hagar.

What harm can that cause? And it's certainly a failure of Abraham. It's interesting that Isaac's in the same position here, and the Holy Spirit highlights that to us, because it's not only a famine, it calls our attention to the fact that, hey, remember the one over earlier with Abraham in Egypt. And Isaac went unto Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, unto Gerar.

Abimelech, by the way, is a title, probably. That name seems to come up a lot. It's the title.

Very analogous to Pharaoh of Egypt, if you will. He went unto Gerar. Now Gerar is going to be a place of slippage or backsliding for Isaac, you'll notice.

It's the only place he goes. He does not build an altar, and some other hints to that. In any case, verse 2, And the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down unto Egypt.

Dwell in the land which I will tell thee of. 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 swore unto Abraham thy father. Now here's an interesting thing. In this particular case, the Lord himself intervenes to prevent Isaac from going into Egypt.

It's apparently important to the Lord that Isaac not leave the land. Very interesting. He didn't leave the land to get a bride.

A servant was sent to take care of that. He wasn't supposed to marry a Canaanite, so he has to leave the land to get one in another, and Eleazar handles that for the father. You'll notice, if you study Isaac's career carefully, that he never leaves the land.

And Jesus Christ, of course, never left the land, in the traditional sense, that is. Okay. Notice also, the Lord says, sojourn in this land.

In other words, tarry here for a while. And Isaac doesn't do that. He dwells there a long time, we're going to discover.

And that wasn't what God had in mind. Anyway, verse 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 all the nations of the earth. Be blessed.

Verse 5, Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, kept my charge, and my commandments, my statutes, and my laws. Now, and Isaac dwelt in Gerar. That's not sojourning.

There's a distinction between dwelling and sojourning. And the men of the place, incidentally, we are the sojourn here. Revelation speaks of the that dwell on the earth, as an adversary group, not those that are saved.

The book of Revelation uses that phrase all through those passages. They that dwell upon the earth, as opposed to those that dwell in heaven. And you are pilgrims and sojourners, not dwellers.

You are not earth dwellers, in the scriptural sense, I hope. I pray. And the men of the place asked him of his wife, and he said, She is my sister.

See, Isaac is doing the same thing Abraham did. Can you get, can you believe it? All right, chip off the old block. For he feared to say, She is my wife, lest, saith he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah, because she was fair to look upon.

And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, long times, he's dwelling there, not sojourning. But Abimelech the king of the Philistines looked out through a window and saw, and behold, Isaac was caressing Rebekah, his wife. And Abimelech called Isaac and said, Behold, of a surety she is thy wife, and now saidst thou, She is my sister.

And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, lest I die for her. Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? One of the people might lightly have lain with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us. And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man, or his wife, shall surely be put to death.

They didn't mess around, did they? And immediately, of course, all around the palace they had protesters on capital punishment. And Isaac sowed in the land, in that land, and received the same year a hundredfold, and the Lord blessed him. Now this verse 12 has all kinds of comments.

Here's Isaac, obviously not in fellowship, backsliding, dwelling in Gerar, longer than he should have, and in this horrible position with respect to Abimelech, right? And the Lord blesses him a hundredfold. Why? Because he had the promise of blessing him before he did this, and it wasn't conditional. It wasn't conditional.

Remember the blessings of Abraham and upon his seed. I will bless thee, right? Well, suppose your son pulls off a stunt like this with Abimelech. What does the Lord say? I will bless thee.

Suppose King David becomes an adulterer, and a murderer, and what have you. What does the Lord say? I will bless thee. That's what he says to you and I. Our blessings hang on his faithfulness, not ours.

Praise God. Interesting. Blesses him a hundredfold.

Verse 13, And the man became great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great. And he had possessions of flocks, and possessions of herds, and great store of servants. And the Philistines envied him.

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 up with earth. And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us, for thou art much mightier than we. And Isaac departed from there, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

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.

And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water, or living water. And the herdsmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, The springing water is ours. And he called the name of the well Essech, because they strove with him.

And they digged another well, and strove for that also. And he called the name of it Sitnah. And he moved from there, 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 fruit from the land.

And he went up from there to Beersheba. And that's where it gets interesting, because the Lord there appears unto him the same night. The same night he gets there, the Lord appears.

And he said, I am the God of Abraham thy father. Fear not, for I am with thee, and I will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake. And he built an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord.

No altar prior. This is the altar. And pitched his tent there, and there Isaac's servants digged a well.

Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and from Ahuzath, I guess it is, one of his sons, and Phicol the chief captain of his army. And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you? And they said, We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee. And we said, Let there be now an oath between us, even between us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee, that thou wilt do us no harm, 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. And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink. And they rose up early in the morning, and swore one to another.

And Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace. And it came to pass, on the same day that Isaac's servants came and told him concerning the well, which he had digged, and said another unto him, We have found water. And he called it Sheba.

And therefore the name of the city is Beersheba, that is, the well of the covenant, unto this day. Esau was 40 years old when he took, now Esau, change the subject, now we're going to Esau. Esau was 40 years old when he took as his wife Judith, the daughter of Berei, the Hittite, and Bahasemoth, the daughter of Elon, the Hittite, who were a grief of mind, unto Isaac and to Rebekah.

They always say it takes two to make a marriage, an eligible daughter and an anxious mother, right? But no, sorry. Oh, that was terrible. I got a couple of responses.

That was terrible. That was pretty bad. Boo, terrible.

Before we get into this, I shouldn't have gotten into flippancy quite so soon. There are a couple of points we should make here. It's interesting that Isaac speaks of sonship.

He is the heir of all things, reconfirmed twice here in Genesis and then in Hebrews 1, 2 and Romans 8, 17. Never seen outside the land which I've mentioned. He was a man of prayer, we discover, because he's in prayer when Rebekah shows up in chapter 24, verse 62 and 63.

But perhaps more than anything else, he is the man of the well. Did you notice how many wells? Seven times. How interesting.

No more, no less. Seven times. Abraham is the man of the altar.

Jacob will be the man of the tent. And Isaac is the man of the well, digs wells. And it's interesting that Isaac, some of the wells that are associated here in the passage, aren't ones he digs, ones he reopens.

He's in the business of reopening wells that were once fruitful. I think it's very interesting that another son spends time in the New Testament reopening wells that were closed through traditionalism, legalism and other things. And I think that's, you can get into that whole thing with the Gospel of John and others.

And of course, Beersheba is a very key place, the place where Abraham dwelt. It's the well of the oath, the well of the covenant, and indeed is the site of the covenant with the Philistines. And that leads us, and of course we won't try to squeeze through this one tonight, to chapter 27, where we have this very, it's a lengthy chapter, but this detailed description of a deliberate false identity given to Jacob to steal the blessing that Isaac had intended for Esau.

Very strange passage. And many people wonder how, you know, they have a tough time that Rebekah and Jacob conspire this bizarre plot to steal the blessing to confirm the birthright on the one that the Lord had anointed. You get plenty of indication in the Scripture that it was the Lord's design to have the blessing on Jacob, not Esau.

But you're saying, did the Lord require all this foolishness? I don't think so. If they had stayed out of it, the Lord would have found his own way to do things. And just because, in fact, the end is what the Lord had foreordained, doesn't justify these two characters indulging in this bizarre scenario, in my opinion.

Now, you may have better insight on it, but I think it, don't equate the validity of the result from an overview of prophecy as justification for the peculiar means that Rebekah and Jacob resort to to confuse and take advantage of the old man whose eyesight was impaired, and he was on the edge of his life. And, but that will close our discussion, really, of Isaac, because Isaac, after that incident, is no longer mentioned of any significance other than slight references. And we get into the next major phase, which is Jacob.

And the story of Jacob is a kind of a fun one. He is a character. We'll take great comfort from Jacob, because if the Lord can justify Jacob, there's hope for you and I, because he is, he is a character.

The conniver, the shyster, the, you can make a whole list of words that describe this fast dealing, quick buck artist called Jacob. And the fact that the Lord justifies him is, is, is indicating that we're all there by grace. And that's, and I'm serious, that is encouraging.

We then will get into the 12, you know, the whole 12 tribe thing, and that's when it gets, to me, really exciting. And we're not far, we're within reaching distance of the most dramatic story in the scripture, the story of Joseph. And I'm fascinated that with, that the mill before he died didn't cover that one.

He would have made Ten Commandments look like child's play, but Joseph's story is just an incredible scene. And we will publish, I'm going to, those many people have asked about the bibliography. It is my intention to republish it.

There's some I want to add. We'll add the references on the astronomy thing we did back whenever, and a few others I found that, that we'll redo that, because many people have been asking for the bibliography, some 50-odd references that we've touched on. But one of the other things I will publish at the same time, just to hand the logistics down, will be a list of parallels where Joseph is a type of Christ.

Those of you that are, sort of, got time on your hands and want to read ahead, especially over the holidays, since we may not get into that too far by the holidays, I suggest you might just read the story of Joseph, you know, from, you know, through the book of Genesis, and make a list of the ways you can find of, in which Joseph is a type of Jesus Christ. And there are over a hundred of them. It's a very, very interesting study that you probably would not be sensitive to had you not had the experience of Genesis 22 and 24 from the last week, the last time we were together.

But as we get into the story of Joseph subsequently, you'll find that fascinating. It takes a Gentile bride and introduces the bread and wine in the prophetic way, and on and on and on and on. Just actually a list.

I'll publish a list for you with the Old Testament and New Testament references, and it'll have over a hundred and some-odd, I've forgotten now how many, parallels between Joseph and Christ in the ways that they are parallel. And so you'll find that kind of interesting. And anyway, so I commit to you this study of Genesis.

I trust that you will go into tomorrow's election with prayer, and in serious deep prayer for our nation, because I think it is, I think the Lord gives us a promise that he will heal our land. It was tempting to digress from tonight's lesson to get into some of that, but I felt that probably isn't my calling here. But I do think it's worthwhile for each of you to pray on your way home tonight, and when you get up, to just hold our nation up before God, because there's no problem we have that he can't solve, and he's anxious to do so.

And there's plenty of scripture where he looks to and fro to show himself strong, and what we've got to do is ask him to humble ourselves, acknowledge our sin, and ask him to heal our land. And I think that the, I really believe that the endurance of the free world, the freedom of the ability to worship the way we do tonight is at issue. So I'll leave that with you, and I'll see you next Monday night, Lord willing.

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