

## Genesis, pt2: The Lesson of a Godly Legacy

### Genesis 26-27

**MPS** God blesses all who believe in Jesus with eternal life because He perfectly fulfilled the Law for us by taking our curse upon himself.

**OBJ** Every person can understand the blessing of a godly legacy by three life-changing lessons.

**INTRO** **What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?** Think about this for a moment. If you are hesitant to say "the greatest", then think of a great lesson you've learned. In remembering it, you will likely recall the "point" at which that lesson anchored itself in you.

**ILLUS** When you teach a kid to fish, the lesson is all theory until that first fish slams that baited hook. Then, in the fury of remembering everything, and mostly reel, reel, reel, it is at that moment the "lessons" of fishing anchor in you. Consider when a kid takes a math formula they learned and apply it to solve a problem in their life. That becomes an unforgettable lesson. In the same way, when a child reads a story and applies their insight to daily life for deeper understanding, that's life changing. Lessons of life find their way deep within us to do far more than only teach us, but to make us into the people we become. And the instruction we receive, the direction that guides, the counsel to understand, and the training to apply all form the lessons that shape and make us.

**OBJ** Today I want to consider **three lessons of a Godly legacy that transform our life.**

**God blesses all who believe in Jesus with eternal life because He perfectly fulfilled the Law for us by taking our curse upon himself.**

**READ** Genesis 26:1-5

*Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar to Abimelech king of the Philistines. <sup>2</sup>And the LORD appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you. <sup>3</sup>Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father. <sup>4</sup>I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, <sup>5</sup>because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." **Genesis 26:1-5***

**God's promise now transfers to Isaac, Abraham's son.** A great heritage has been entrusted to Isaac, and here we see his legacy as we gain insight into their family. **Isaac is a man with a father's blessing.**

**A new famine arises in the land.** By the Lord's direction, Isaac returns to the land of Abimelech where he had sojourned before with his father. Here the Lord will bless him and establish with him the oath given to his father. The Lord repeats to Isaac the oath originally given to Abraham. Then he tells Isaac it is because Abraham obeyed that this oath shall rest upon him. **Abraham, the father of our faith, bestowed upon his son the heritage of faith by the example of his life.**

**TRANS** From one man's obedience comes a lifetime of blessing. But God's blessing must be stewarded faithfully. Every generation must receive and embrace to "take hold" of the baton passed to them to run their leg of the race.

### **#1. Lesson of God's Blessing Genesis 26:6-33**

Isaac begins to build his life by settling in Gerar. He repeats the sin of his father by calling Rebekah his sister, but it is exposed and Abimelech warns people not to touch Isaac and his family. The Lord blesses Isaac greatly, as He had Abraham. This causes Abimelech to ask them to leave out of fear of their might. So, Isaac journeys into the valley of Gerar, and digs again the wells of his father. Here God repeats the covenant promise to Isaac. Isaac builds an altar to worship the Lord, pitches his tent there and digs a well. Abimelech comes to make a treaty with Isaac, like he had with Abraham,



because he recognized the Lord's blessing upon him. Again, they dig another well and call it Beersheba. [Isaac finds great success and blessing in building his life, but he is not without problems nor frustration.](#)

One repeated practice is used to trace Isaac's path, the digging of wells. [Why is digging wells so important to this story?](#) For nomads, wells represented life, and this process of Isaac digging wells shows us that he was learning how to live in the way of his father. And it is clear that the Lord blessed Isaac just as He had Abraham.

The lesson of God's blessing teaches that a legacy can make our well-digging (life building) easier, following in the imprint and pattern of those who taught and trained us, but it cannot make our life for us. Every person must dig their own wells. Hopefully we learn from their practice modeled for us. But legacy cannot replace the necessity of our own digging. [God desires for every generation to build on their legacy, but to learn personally His blessing in the pattern and practices of life.](#)

The lesson of blessing taught Isaac to learn the place of abundant provision, of oath-established peace with others, of covenant promise and repeated faithfulness from God, of His commanded practice for obedience to expand and multiply, and of peculiar distinction in the world as he worshiped the Lord. But this would not be without trouble and frustration. Isaac found comfort and contentment in the place and practice of journeying to Beersheba because it was one of familiarity. What he came to experience there was learned by him from his father. Far more than only a place and practice, Beersheba was emblematic of a pattern of living whereby the Lord God leads by command of His Word, delivered with the promise of His blessing, and abundant provision from His power that fills our life as we follow Him by faith. [The first lesson from a godly legacy teaches that God's blessing is given to teach us who He is, and to steward all of life for Him.](#)

**TRANS** All God's blessing rested on Isaac in his journey and well-digging by his father's legacy. But instead of stewarding God's blessing, he just spent it, and his whole family suffered as they were not prepared for the second lesson.

## **#2. Lesson of Sin's Misery Genesis 26:34-27**

Genesis 26 ends with an "after-taste" of bitterness from a blessing that has not been stewarded. Esau, who is miserable from life's failure and loss, marries two Hittite women and does what people do enslaved to their misery do, made life bitter for everyone around them. This bitterness introduces us to a greater reality of what was transpiring in Isaac's home and family because of his failure to steward God's blessing faithfully. Isaac lived off the blessing of his godly legacy but did not build it in his own family, so the bitterness and misery of sin would ultimately define and fracture the family.

Isaac in his old age plans to bless his son, but his choice is to bestow his blessing on Esau. In study for this passage, it has remained unclear exactly how Isaac sins here. Either he does not know of God's oracle to choose Jacob(25:23), which demonstrates the spiritual passivity which ruled his life, and follows the natural course to bless his firstborn. OR, and as most commentators think, he acts rebelliously to disregard God's oracle and bless his favored son anyway. Either way, what we do know is that the bitterness that burned from Isaac's failure to spiritually lead his family comes to a head here.

Rebekah hears Isaac and devises a plan of deceit for Jacob to steal the blessing. She prepares a meal for Jacob to take to Isaac and clothes him in skin to conceal his identity, then demands that Jacob follow through on the plan, promising that which she could not provide, to take his curse for him if the plan does not work. Rebekah knew what she was doing, leaving no detail out to ensure her favorite son would be blessed. If we learn anything from this family it must be this, no one else can bear the guilt, shame and responsibility before God of your sin.

Jacob carries out his mother's plan. He goes into his father. Isaac is confused because he hears Jacob's voice, but every test, meticulously planned for, deceives him. Jacob appeals to God's blessing, which Isaac had misappropriated all his life, to touch, and ultimately even to testimony, to which Jacob had mastered his skill of cheat to deceive his father. Though one test remained unproved, Isaac allowed the meal to satisfy as proof. He ate the meal and pronounced his blessing on Jacob.

Almost immediately Esau returns with his meal prepared for Isaac. Isaac and Esau are both shocked. Realizing what has happened, the reality of deception fills the heart of both. In the misery of sin's curse upon them all, Isaac pronounces a



failed blessing on Esau, and Esau burns with anger against his brother. Esau vows to kill Jacob after his father dies. Rebekah learns of the plan and devises another deception to lie and send Jacob away.

The lesson of sin's misery teaches us that sin left un-addressed is a factory of bitterness, guilt, shame, and destruction from lies, deceit, pride and selfishness. Isaac died miserable because at the end of his life he watched his whole family destroyed at his death. Rebekah was miserable with the loss of her family; loss from intimacy with her husband as their secrets separated them, loathing the foreign women who had invaded their family to steal her firstborn and heap misery, and ultimately, the loss of her baby son because of her own lies and deception that caused him to leave and her to never see him again. Esau was miserable because all the accomplishments of his strength and ability didn't satisfy him, so his anger simmered in him all his life until, at last, it boiled over against his brother's cheating and deception, and so he embittered everyone's life around him. Jacob was miserable from exhaustion in playing "catch up", "get ahead", and "scheme and plot one more cheat" to try and salve the simmering ember of his "self-entitled survival narrative" that he continually repeated in his mind. [The misery of sin may simmer for a long time, but if it is not addressed it will ultimately burn down all it touches to leave a life destitute in its misery.](#)

**TRANS** There is only one thing that misery gets right in what it tells us, that all is not right. And this is when we must remember the source of our blessing.

### #3. **Lesson of Faith** Genesis 26:4-5; 26:13

**Two verses indicate how we learn faith in the midst of this mess of sin's misery.** First is the echo of Christ in the model of Abraham (26:5). God promises his blessing to Isaac "*because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.*" In commenting on Genesis 26:5 and the impact of Abraham, John Sailhammer notes that the wording is identical to the commandment in Deuteronomy 11:1, but that there is no indication that Abraham had a copy of the law. He concludes that Abraham is "a true example of one who shows the law written on his heart...the writer's ultimate example of true obedience to the law, the one about whom the Lord could say, "Abraham obeyed me" (v.5). Thus, by showing Abraham to be an example of "keeping the law," the writer has shown the nature of the relationship between the law and faith. Abraham, a man who lived in faith, could be described as one who kept the law."<sup>1</sup> Abraham was a great example, but we know He was not the ultimate obedience. Abraham's righteousness was credited to him because of his faith. And his "credit" becomes ours too when we put our faith in Jesus. [Rom4:22-25 Only by Jesus's perfect obedience can any, but many will, be made righteous.](#) [Rom5:19](#)

The second indication is in the deception of Rebekah, who thought she could bear her child's curse. She couldn't, no matter how much she wanted to or was willing to. But Jesus could, and he did, because he was willing. He bore our curse from sin in his body, so we would not have to live in the misery or die in our sin, but so that through his wounds we can be healed. [Gal3:13; 1 Peter 2:24 We can rest, as our highest trust, in the finished work of Christ, knowing that His perfect obedience to the law is sufficient for us.](#)

**The lesson of faith teaches us that the blessing of a godly legacy MAY come through a great family, but it may not.** Legacy can come from our biological family, but for many today that is not possible. Legacy also comes from the faith family. This is why Titus 2 says that older men and women should teach and train younger men and women. [The lesson of godly legacy is one of disciple-making, teaching people to live by faith in a glorified Savior who is all-sufficient, Jesus Christ.](#)

[God blesses all who believe in Jesus with eternal life because He perfectly fulfilled the Law for us by taking our curse upon himself.](#)

[Have you learned the lesson of faith by repenting of your sin and putting your faith in Jesus?  
Are you learning and training in this lesson, to grow and mature into the mature personhood that is like Jesus Christ?](#)

<sup>1</sup> John H. Sailhammer, "[Genesis](#)," in The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990), 186-187.



## Are you serving and investing so others can do the same?

**APPL** The value of God's blessing through a godly legacy cannot be overstated, as it continues to bless more and more richly throughout all of life. But the true impact of a godly legacy is established not by the parent alone, but by the One who perfectly obeyed the law in every way, Jesus Christ. And He is the One to whom parents must point their children at all times. This is where Isaac learned it, but did not practice it.

Faith is to be learned in the living of life, not in a vacuum, because it is for life. This is why Deuteronomy 6 commands to love the Lord first with our whole being. Then, it tells us to teach and train our children in our first love for God in the everyday aspects of life. This is fundamental to all disciple-making. [The lesson of legacy is that we make our life by bringing obedience by faith to Jesus to the center of life in all things at all times.](#)

As much as we may want to, parents can't take our kids curse for them. We are not saviors, but stewards of our children's lives. [Dad/Mom, your role is not to BE all-sufficient for our kids, but to model for them how to live by faith in the One who IS all-sufficient, Jesus Christ.](#)

