

Reminders of Brokenness

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Preacher: Cedric Moss

[0 : 0 0] This morning is taken from Genesis 25 verses 1 through 18. Genesis 25 verses 1 through 18.

! Abraham took another wife whose name was Keturah. She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shua.

! Jokshan fathered Sheba and Dadan. The sons of Dadan were Asherim, Letujim, Laimim. The sons of Midian were Ephra, Ephra, Hanash, Abedah, and Eldahar. All these were the children of Keturah. Abraham gave all he had to Isaac, but to the sons of his concubines Abraham gave gifts, and while he was still living he sent them away from his son Isaac eastward to the east country. These are the days of the years of Abraham's life, 175 years. Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people. Isaac and Ishmael, his sons, buried him in the cave of Machpelah in the field of Ephraim, the son of Zohar, the Hittite, east of Mamre, the field that Abraham purchased from the Hittites.

There Abraham was buried with Sarah, his wife. After the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac, his son, and Isaac settled at Ber-Lahai-Rui. These are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar, the Egyptian, Sarah's servant, brought to Abraham. These are the names of the sons of Ishmael, named in the order of their birth.

Nebaioth, the first of Ishmael, and Kedar, Ad-Biel, Mibsam, Mishma, Duma, Massa, Hadad, Tima, Jeter, Naphish, and Kedemar.

[2 : 1 5] These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names by their villages and by their encampments. Twelve princes, according to their tribes. These are the years of the life of Ishmael, 137 years.

He breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people. They settled from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt, in the direction of Assyria. He settled over against all his kinsmen.

This is God's word to us. Thank you very much, David. For this past week, I'm sure that most of you, like me, were taking in the news of the sudden passing of Cabinet Minister Obi Rilschke.

I'm no doubt listening to the flood of wonderful tributes being offered in testimony to his life and to his legacy.

He was a mayor, 64 years of age. And the nature of death causes us to consider and reflect upon a person's life in ways that we ordinarily would not reflect on their life.

[3 : 3 8] And oftentimes when we do that reflection, we discover things, we learn lessons that we didn't know before.

And this morning as we come to this section in our sermon series in the book of Genesis, we come to what is like an obituary of Abraham.

We come to this account of his death, and it causes us to reflect on the life of Abraham. And when we reflect on his life, Abraham's life is filled with reminders of his brokenness and also of God's grace.

But as I studied this passage, one of the effects on me was to think of my own brokenness and my own need for grace.

And I pray that that is the effect on all of us this morning. I pray that as we consider this passage, as we look at Abraham's life in a moment in these verses, as we look at his brokenness, as we consider God's grace to him in spite of his brokenness, I pray that we would likewise come face to face with our own brokenness and our own need for grace or how we have already received God's grace in our lives.

[5 : 16] Let's take a moment and pray and ask the Lord to help us as we consider this passage. Father, we thank you this morning for your faithfulness to us. Thank you for bringing us all to this place in your providence to hear what we will hear from you and then, Lord, to respond as you would have us to.

Father, once again, I pray you give us all ears to hear. Give us hearts to respond as we should. God, would you have your way with us as we sit under the preaching of your word this morning.

And may it truly be for our good and ultimately for your glory. And it's in Christ's name we pray. Amen. Genesis 25, 1 to 18 represents a clear transition point in the book of Genesis.

Genesis 25, 1 to 18. We have in it this account of Abraham's death. And we also see the continuation of the covenant through his son Isaac.

But as I mentioned earlier, we also come face to face with the realities of Abraham's brokenness and of God's grace.

[6 : 33] And in our remaining time this morning, I want us to consider these two realities. So two simple points this morning. Number one, Abraham's brokenness. And number two, God's grace.

If you look at this passage, you'll see that the obituary of Abraham is sandwiched between verses 1 to 6 and then verses 12 to 18.

So his obituary is in 7 to 11. And it's sandwiched between the list of his sons by Keturah and his son Ishmael by Hagar and then the sons of Ishmael.

Now prior to Genesis 25, we were made aware that Abraham had a concubine by the name of Hagar who bore to him his first son, Ishmael.

But here now in Genesis 25, we are encountering Keturah. And Keturah bore six sons for Abraham.

[7 : 49] And I was kind of thinking as I approached this and was studying it, and in so many ways it reflects some of the surprises of funerals. Oftentimes we go to funerals and we are surprised to learn that there are other names on the descendants list who aren't there.

And we see something very similar with Abraham. Now, although it starts out by saying that Keturah was Abraham's wife, the evidence is that Keturah was Abraham's concubine.

She was not his wife. Not in a primary sense. She was what they would have called a secondary wife, but she was not a primary wife. Now, I'll try to explain this to show that it is convincing that not only did Abraham father Ishmael with Hagar, but he also had these six sons with another concubine by the name of Keturah.

And so first, if you look at, you'll need to turn that this will be projected for you. In Genesis 16, remember, that was the encounter with Hagar. And in Genesis 16, 3, we read these words.

So after Abram had lived 10 years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar, the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram, her husband, as a wife.

[9 : 19] Now, we know that she was a concubine, but Hagar did this, sorry, Sarah did this, and she gave Hagar to Abram as a wife.

So she was kind of like a wife, but she was a secondary wife, and secondary wives are not legitimate wives. They are concubines. The other thing to bear in mind as we come to this passage this morning is that Genesis 25, what we read in Genesis 25, 1 through 6, is not really in chronological order.

It's not necessarily, as a matter of fact, those verses are dateless. They're just stated as a matter of fact. And we know that they're not chronological for this reason.

They're not in some order of chronology. In other words, it's not that Sarah died, Abraham took a wife. That's not the way Moses is writing it. So look again at verses 5 and 6.

We read, Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac, but to the sons of his concubines, Abraham gave gifts.

[10 : 35] Notice in verse 6 that it refers to concubines, plural, not concubine.

And the concubines are Hagar and Keturah. They were the mothers of Abraham's, they were the mothers of his sons, whom he sent away from his son Isaac to the east.

And this is somewhat easy to miss. And actually, I must confess, it wasn't until I was studying this passage for this sermon that I was alerted to this fact that Keturah was not Abraham's wife whom he married after Sarah died, but he had her as a secondary wife, as a concubine, before Sarah died and fathered these children with her.

Also, another fact that we can consider is over here in, we looked at this last week in Genesis 24 and 36, when the servant was talking to Laban and to Bethuel, he said, and Sarah, my wife's, and Sarah, my master's wife, bore a son to my master when he was old, and to him he has given all that he has.

And so this is before Isaac even got married. If you look at it, you'll think that this is now occurring after the marriage of Isaac, but again, it's not stated in any date-specific order.

[12 : 24] But I think the most conclusive evidence that Keturah was a concubine and not a legitimate wife that Abraham married after Sarah's death is found in 1 Chronicles 1, verse 32.

In 1 Chronicles 1, verse 32, Keturah, in the chronicles of the history and the descendancy of Israel, starting with Adam, she is listed as Abraham's concubine.

So this is centuries later that the chronicler who's writing this history, he states that she was Abraham's concubine.

And so what we have is we have the death of Abraham sandwiched between these children that he fathered by these two concubines.

The six sons of Keturah in verses 1 to 6 and Ishmael and then Ishmael's descendants, his 12 sons in 12 to 18.

[13 : 38] And one of the first things that should stand out to us as we consider this is that this was not God's original design. Polygamy, having additional wives, having secondary wives, was never God's original design.

And we know this because if this was God's design, if God's design was for men to have multiple wives, he from the very outset would have given Adam not just Eve as a wife, but he would have given him multiple wives.

But in the revelation of God's creation, we see that God's design is one man and one woman in marriage. He made them male and female.

And the conclusion that we have in Genesis 2 on marriage is in these words, therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife and they shall become one flesh.

He managed to hold fast to his wife and Abraham didn't do that. He embraced Hagar, he embraced Keturah as concubines, and he did this while Sarah was still alive.

[14 : 56] And if you're wondering why that isn't mentioned in the narrative that we have, the reason is that the narrative is for a particular truth that is being communicated, it's to communicate a particular point.

And so there are some things that are not highlighted because they're not an important part of the story. And sometimes when we are relaying things and we're telling stories, we try to tell it in a very efficient way and we only share what is necessary.

That's what we should do. And clearly that is what Moses is seeking to do in terms of telling the history of the children of Israel, the history from creation and their history through Abraham.

And he's not spending a lot of time on that, although he does share this information about Abraham's fathering of these six sons with his concubine, Keturah.

But God had promised Abraham, when he called him out of Ur of the Chaldeans, God promised him offspring by his wife, Sarah.

[16 : 11] And Abraham's taking Keturah and taking Hagar as concubines were really expressions of sinfulness. They were expressions of brokenness.

He wasn't in those moments fully trusting the Lord. Now, we don't know where Keturah was from. We know where Hagar was from.

She was from Egypt. But Keturah's name means enveloped in a fragrant incense. And biblical historians tell us that the names of her six sons are the names of the people or peoples or areas in Arabia.

And Kent Hughes indicates in his commentary on these verses that biblical scholars believe that these sons of Abraham, these six sons of Abraham, were the principals in the international spice trade.

They were gathering and distributing frankincense and other aromatic substances in that region. But again, in verse five, we're told that Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac.

[17 : 27] And then again, in verse six, we're told that he gave gifts to his other sons, his sons from the concubines, and he sent them away from Isaac Eastwood into the east country.

And again, this would include Ishmael, who we know was sent away earlier. And then we're being told that at some point, these sons were sent away.

Now, it's easy to read these verses as a mass statement of history, a mass statement of fact. But brothers and sisters, these are real people.

These are real people like you and me. These are real people who found themselves in difficult circumstances because of human brokenness. And we're able to see, as we give it thought, the kinds of complexities that came as a result of these choices that Abraham made.

You remember back in Genesis, 16, when Abraham took Hagar as a wife and she had a child, the strife that brought between the two wives, between Sarah and Hagar.

[18 : 44] And then the strife it brought between Abraham and Sarah. And we can only imagine that there must have been strife between Keturah and Sarah because obviously Keturah was pretty nearby.

Abraham had six children with her. And these children grew up and they were around for quite some time. Abraham sent them away at some point, but they had to have been young men, at least, who could fend for themselves.

So it meant that they were around. It meant that they would have had, undoubtedly, connections with Isaac. Ishmael had been sent away some time before, but they would have had some kind of interaction as brothers.

It may have been hostile, we don't know. It may have been friendly, we don't know. It may have been mixed. But the reality is one day, Abraham sent six of his sons away from their brother Isaac.

But he didn't just send them away, he sent them away with a clear understanding that everything that he had was for Isaac and he gave them gifts and they were separated.

[20 : 03] Now, Scripture is not telling us what they felt about that, how they felt about that. We have no record of their emotions.

But I think it's fair to say that that would have been a hard parting. I think it's fair to say that there was difficulty involved in that decision and in that departure.

Abraham was tasked with this. You can only imagine his own heart and having to do this, and he had to do it. It wasn't an option for him to do. This was, this situation was of his own making.

As far as God was concerned, Abraham had one son. And you'd remember this back in Genesis 22. I'd asked you to go and count the number of times where son was mentioned and only son was mentioned.

Repeatedly, Isaac was referred to as his only son. So from divine reckoning, from the way God saw it, as far as God was concerned, Abraham had one son, and that was the son of promise.

[21 : 14] That was Isaac. And so this situation was of Abraham's own doing. But it was no doubt hard for him to send these sons away. The only way that that would not have been hard for Abraham is if he was heartless.

He had no emotion. It was a difficult circumstance that he was faced with, but a necessary circumstance that he had to bring this separation about.

We're told that at the burial of Abraham in verse 9, that somehow Ishmael joined him in the burial of Abraham at the cave of Machpelah.

There's no mention of the six sons of Keturah. Were they present? Were they absent? We don't know. Did they know about Abraham's death?

Did they care about Abraham's death? We don't know. But these are all unanswered questions. And they're all reminders of relational brokenness.

[22 : 26] I think we would all agree that death is hard. Death, no matter how it comes to us, is hard. But the realities of sin and brokenness that we sometimes have to face in death makes death even harder.

And I believe this is one of those occasions. I can imagine how difficult this must have been for Abraham's surviving children. But these expressions that we see of brokenness in these verses, they extend beyond these verses.

The descendants of Keturah and the descendants of Hagar, they grew to become hostile enemies of the descendants of Isaac.

And that hostility remains to this day. And it is an ongoing reminder to us of the realities of brokenness and hostility through the life of Abraham and certainly at this moment of death.

But this account is not all dark. It is not all about brokenness and sin. This account is also filled with reminders of grace that God gave to Abraham and his sons in the midst of all this brokenness that they face.

[24 : 09] And this is my second and final point. The first evidence of God's grace in this account is God's unwavering commitment and patience with Abraham.

It was back in Genesis 15 when Abraham one night was discouraged, was wondering if he'd have a son, was wondering if God would perform his promises to him and God appeared to him and the Lord assured him that he was going to bless him and that his offspring would be so many.

He said to Abraham, he said, if you could count the stars, you'll be able to count your offspring. And then God entered into a unilateral blood covenant with Abraham. Abraham was asleep and the normal covenant was that both parties would be alive and they would be pronouncing curses on themselves if they don't perform the covenant.

Abraham was asleep and God pronounced all the curses on himself if he did not keep his word to Abraham. Abraham, the Bible says that Abraham believed God and God credited it to him as righteousness.

But Abraham, though he believed God, his belief was not perfect. And the evidence of that is not just the single son of Hagar but the six sons of Keturah.

[25 : 39] we don't know the space of time that elapsed between each one of these pregnancies but we can imagine this is over a pretty extensive span of time and God was patient with Abraham.

And in being patient with Abraham God was giving grace to Abraham. Even though he had gone to such great lengths to assure Abraham that he performed his word to him, he performed his promise to him, Abraham was in unbelief and he was in sin.

And yet God was patient to Abraham in this season, extended season of disobedience as he was fathering children outside of the will of God.

verses 7 to 11 really is a summary of God's grace and faithfulness to Abraham. God sustained him for 175 years.

A hundred of those years were lived in the land of promise. God called him when he was 75, he came to Canaan when he was 75, and for a hundred years he lived in the land.

[27 : 03] and God miraculously gave him a son. And God miraculously gave him land in the land of promise. This field where he was going to be buried was a testimony to the faithfulness of God.

Who would have thought that somehow he would get land in this place where people were not interested in giving land and he and his wife Sarah would be buried there.

Another reminder of God's grace to Abraham is in the uniting of Isaac and Ishmael in his burial. We don't know the details of how this came to be.

Certainly there were no phones, there were no emails, there was no modern way of communicating, and what is clear is that the distance that was put between Ishmael and Isaac was very, very vast and significant.

But somehow in the death of Abraham, we find these two brothers who parted under very difficult circumstances. We find them united together in the burial of their father.

[28 : 21] And remember for Ishmael, this is his younger brother, he was the older one, and this is his younger brother who displaced him and inherited everything.

And again, Ishmael was human, he was just like us, and I think we would all agree that only God's grace can overcome such displacement by a younger brother.

God's love. You may remember back in Genesis 21 when the Lord appeared to Abraham and this is after Isaac was, after Ishmael was born, Ishmael was about 12 at the time, and the Lord said to him, you're going to have a son.

You're going to have a son by Sarah. Abraham fell on his face and said, oh, let Ishmael live before you, and God says, no, Isaac is going to be your heir.

Isaac is going to be the one through whom this covenant of blessing is going to continue. And that was a very, very disappointing response that Abraham received from the Lord.

[29 : 38] and I think if there was a way for Abraham to make dying wishes, I believe one of the wishes that he would have made would be that Ishmael would be present to help to bury him.

That was his first son. That was the son who made him a father and the son who he loved so much that he was willing to take and let him be the one through him to whom God's promises would come.

And again, we have no record of Abraham making such a request. Scripture is totally silent on that. What Scripture is not silent on is that somehow Ishmael came to be present at that burial.

And when we think of all that needed to be overcome in that particular process, this is an expression of the sheer mercy and grace of God.

And if the dead were aware, Abraham would smile at his two sons. His eldest son and his son by promise were the ones who were burying him.

[31 : 00] God was the God's We also see another reminder of God's grace in verse 11. Look at what verse 11 says. It says, after the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac, his son.

Why did God bless Isaac after Abraham? He blessed him for one reason, because of his grace. God chose Isaac.

Isaac did nothing to deserve these blessings. Before Isaac was born, God chose him to be the one who would carry on with the covenant blessings that he had promised.

God chose him over his older brother, Ishmael, to be Abraham's heir. We saw this back in Genesis 17. Isaac was named, and he was called as Abraham's heir before he was born, and it was at the same time that God rejected Ishmael, and he did it contrary to Abraham's wishes and desires.

The entirety of the blessings of the life of Isaac was the grace of God. Isaac deserved none of it. Isaac had no reason, no basis to boast in himself, to boast in the position that he had, to boast in the wealth that he received, to boast in the promise that he was given.

[32 : 35] All of that was before he was even born. And that is the grace of God. God gave grace to Abraham's other sons in terms of the material possessions and provisions that he made for them.

They settled on the vast areas of resource rich land in the Arabian desert. And this was not accidental. We shouldn't think for a moment that God just allowed them to meander and they all meandered and they ended up where they ended up.

No, they ended up there because of the providence of God. And they ended up there because that was God's way of providing for them and blessing them and caring for them.

And despite the hostilities that existed between them and Isaac and his descendants, again, that still exists, between their descendants and the descendants of Isaac, the fact that they were away from the promised land, they were not beyond the hope of the gospel.

There was still a gracious and merciful God caring for them and watching over them and God's plan was that through Israel, he would bring all the nations together.

[34 : 10] He would bless all the nations, not just the nation of Israel. And certainly these sons of Abraham who were sent away were included in that number.

There's an easily overlooked verse of scripture in the life of Abraham when we think about the covenant blessings, when we think about the separation between Abraham's sons and Isaac, that is really helpful I think for us to meditate upon.

It's Genesis 18 verse 19. This is the Lord speaking and he's talking about Abraham. This is what he says about Abraham. For I have chosen him that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice so that the Lord may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.

This is the all-knowing, all-seeing God who is confident that Abraham will do this for his children, not just for Isaac, one child, but he will do this for all of his children.

And Abraham did this. And so Abraham's sons whom he sent away from Isaac were commanded by Abraham to keep the way of the Lord.

[35 : 42] They were commanded by Abraham to keep the way of the Lord by doing justice, by doing righteousness. And so Abraham sent his sons away with more than just gifts.

He sent them away with the instructions of the Lord in their hearts, calling them, commanding them to do righteousness and to do justice.

Now it was up to them to accept or reject the instruction that Abraham had given to them, but the point is they were not without hope. They were not with disinterest.

Abraham, God knew, would instruct his children in the ways of the Lord by doing righteousness and by doing justice.

But brothers and sisters, despite the grace that we see in this passage that came to Abraham, that came to his son, this account of Genesis 25, leaves a lot to be desired.

[36 : 54] It helps us to see that there are still loose ends. It helps us to see, it reminds us, really, of the fall of man and our brokenness from sin.

It reminds us that more grace was still needed. It's reminded that more grace was still needed to address the effects of the fall because, again, the outworking of what we see here in this passage is there's going to be hostility between the descendants of Keturah and Hagar's sons and with Isaac and his sons.

And it's a reminder that the one whom God promised back in Genesis 315 needed to come. A lot of times when we are studying scripture, Old Testament scripture in particular, and we think about what's the relevance to this to Jesus Christ.

But the relevance to this and passages like this to Jesus Christ is it shows us our need for Christ. It shows us why Christ had to come because it is only through Christ and his coming that the kind of sin and brokenness that we see will ever be addressed.

And so this passage screams out for more grace that will come through Abraham's greatest son, his greatest son, Jesus Christ.

[38 : 34] And you'd remember in Matthew, the opening verses, Matthew chapter 1, verse 1, Jesus is stated as the son of Abraham.

This was the son that all those promises were given to. This is the son that all those promises pointed to. And this is the son that the brokenness that we see at the end of Abraham's life and the brokenness that is foreshadowed beyond his life will be addressed only through Jesus Christ and through his coming.

And the prophets prophesied about this being addressed, prophesied about this hostility and this separation being bridged and being dealt with.

Let me just point you to two passages in particular. The first one is Isaiah chapter 42 verses 10 to 12, saying to the Lord a new song.

His praise from the end of the earth, you who go down to the sea and all that fills it, the coastlands and the inhabitants, let the desert and the cities lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar inhabits.

[39 : 58] Let the inhabitants of Silas sing for joy. Let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory to God and declare his praise in the coastlands.

Verse 11 speaks to all of Abraham's descendants who dwelled in the Arabian desert. Even though only Kedar is mentioned, who is the second-born son of Ishmael, Israel, all of them are included.

All of the descendants are included because they are among those who dwell in the desert. And the language of chapter 10 includes all the people of the ends of the earth.

That the prophet Isaiah, God through the prophet Isaiah is saying that there's coming this time where there's going to be this gathering of all of these separated people and these separated people will call on the name of the Lord and they will give glory to God and they will praise him to the ends of the earth.

And then in Isaiah chapter 60 verses 1 to 7, this is another prophecy and it's a vision of the people of God, the glory of the people of God that is to come.

[41 : 12] And it envisions the uniting of all people who were formerly separated from the people of God. Isaiah 60 verses 1 to 7, Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth and thick darkness the peoples. For the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you.

A nation shall come to your light, the kings to the brightness of your rising. Lift up your eyes all around and see, they all gather together. They come to you.

Your sons shall come from far, and your daughters shall be carried on the hip. Then you shall see and be radiant, and your heart shall thrill and exult, because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you.

The wealth of the nation shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you. The young camels of Midian and Ephah, all those from Sheba shall come.

[42 : 22] They shall bring gold and frankincense and shall bring good news, the praises of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered to you.

The rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you. They shall come up with acceptance on my altar, and I will beautify my beautiful house.

this is prophetic language. But the prophetic language points to this ingathering of the mounds of separated people around the world.

And in particular, we find the names of some of these sons of Abraham and their descendants who were sent away from the promised land.

Midian is one of the sons of Abraham by Keturah. Ephah is Midian's son, and Sheba is Abram's grandson, the son of his son Jochun.

[43 : 27] Bible scholars tell us that from Midian and Ephah descended an Arabian tribe who lived in the area that is now today known as Northwest Saudi Arabia.

And those who descended from Sheba lived in an area of southern Arabia that corresponds to modern-day Yemen. The people of Kadar lived in the present-day Saudi Arabia, and the people of Nebaioth lived in the present-day Jordan.

And brothers and sisters, this gathering and uniting of the people of God from all the nations is happening now. It's taking place even now as we are gathered here.

And here's the amazing thing, and I marvel at this. We have people in our country who are saying, I'm atheist. And people would say, well, you know, you were born in a quote-unquote Christian nation, you went to Sunday school, you were taught religion in schools, and they are outwardly, openly rejecting God.

and then we hear testimony after testimony of people in nations where you lose your life by professing Christ, and they are coming to Christ by the droves.

[44 : 54] God is gathering his people, and he has his people everywhere. He will have a people from every tongue and every tribe and every nation, and all of the sons of Abraham, those by his concubines, those from Isaac, will be among the people of God.

And not every single one of Abraham's natural descendants through Isaac will be there, only those who believe through Jesus Christ. Theologian Derek Kidner insightfully observed this reality when he wrote these words in his commentary.

He writes, in God's plan, these sons were sent away that there might be a true home in the end to return to.

God's home. The home for them, the home that they would return to, is a multi-nation people of God who have been secured through Abraham's greatest son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

That's happening now, brothers and sisters. Christ is the one who bridges the gaps and who breaks down the walls of separation between the people of God.

[46 : 26] Only he can do that. In Ephesians chapter 3, the apostle Paul talks about how he has brought together Jews and Gentiles and made them one, removing the hostility that existed between them.

And this account in Genesis 25 cries out for that day of uniting when all the things that separate people will be broken down and Christ will bring them together in him.

And brothers and sisters, if we belong to Christ, then God is our father. We have a common father if we truly belong to him.

And so this morning, this passage is a reminder of both human brokenness and of God's grace. And perhaps it reminds you of your own brokenness, whether from your sin or from the sins of others, perhaps it reminds you of brokenness in your family.

I pray that you're also reminded of grace that is available to you and to your family in the midst of it all. God never promised that in this time in which we live, before Christ returns, that we will have a utopia, that every tear of our eyes would be dried and every sorrow of our hearts would be soothed.

[48 : 09] He never promises that. But He does promise that there's coming a day when He will fulfill all of those desires. He will wipe away tears from the eyes of His people.

He will remove death and sickness and sorrow and sadness. And He will do that when He comes to judge the world, when He will punish the wicked, He will reward the righteous, and He will usher in a new heaven and a new earth.

And so the truth is that some of the brokenness that we have to live with will only be addressed when He returns. But that is a hope that we have. Our hope is that there's no brokenness, there's no difficulty that we face right now that is eternal.

It has an expiry date on it. And that expiry date is the date that the Lord chooses to return. We're going to close our time this morning and sing a song that reminds us of that day when Christ returns, when He will make all things right.

He will make all things right. But until then, He will give us sustaining grace. He will sustain us by His grace. Yes, there will be tears. Yes, there will be heartaches.

[49 : 33] Yes, there will be brokenness from our sin. But there's coming a day when He will make it all right. And we get to look forward to that day.

We invite the team to come and let's pray as they do. Lord, we pray that you would fill our hearts with faith, fill our hearts with hope.

I pray, Lord, for all of us that whatever the source of brokenness that may be in our lives, that we would remember that you do provide us with sustaining grace.

And Lord, that you have promised that there's coming a day when you will make it all right. You'll make it all right when Jesus returns. Jesus, I pray that you would fill our hearts with the faith to receive the grace that is available to us now and the faith that one day we will receive that future grace.

We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.