

Like Father, Like Son

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[0 : 00] Today's reading is taken from Genesis chapter 26, from verse 1 to verse 33! God's promise to Isaac.

Now there was famine in the land. Besides the famine that was in the days of Abraham, and Isaac went to Gerar, to Abimelech, king of the Philistines.

And the Lord appeared to him and said, Do not go down to Egypt, dwell in the land of which I shall tell you.

Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you, and I will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all this land, and I will establish the oath that I saw to Abraham your father.

I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, and I will give to your offspring all this land. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

[1 : 21] Isaac and Abimelech. So Isaac settled in Gerar. When the man of the place asked him about his wife, he said, She is my sister, for he feared to say my wife, thinking lest the man of the place should kill me because of Lebekah, because she was attractive in appearance.

When he had been there a long time, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looked out of a window, and saw Isaac laughing with Lebekah, his wife.

So Abimelech called Isaac and said, Behold, she is your wife. So then, she is your wife.

How then could you say she is my sister? Isaac said to him, Because I thought lest I die because of her. Abimelech said, What is this you have done to us?

One of the people might easily have lay with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us. So Abimelech warned all the people, saying, Whoever touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.

[2 : 41] And Isaac sold in that land, and they reaped in the same year a hundredfold. The Lord blessed him, and the men became rich, and they gained more and more, until he became very worthy.

He had possessions of rocks, and the herds, and the many servants, so that the Philistines envied him. Now the Philistines had stopped in the field with earth all the wells that his father's servant had dug in the days of Abraham his father.

And Abimelech said to Isaac, Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we. So Isaac departed from there, and encamped in the valley of Gerar, and settled there.

And Isaac dug again the wells of water that had been dug in the days of Abraham his father, which the Philistines had stopped after the death of Abraham.

And he gave them the names that his father had given them. But when Isaac's servant dug in the valley and found there a well of spring water, the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, The water is ours.

[4 : 06] So he called the name of the well Isaac, because they contented with him. Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that also.

So he called its name Sidna. And he moved from there, and dug another well, and they did not quarreled over it. So he called its name Lehoboth, saying, For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

From there he went up to Beersheba, so he said, Let there be a song packed between us, between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you, that he would not, sorry, between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you, that you will do not harm us, just so we have not touched you, and have done to you nothing but good, and have sent you away in peace.

You are now the blessed of the Lord. So he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. In the morning they rose earlier, and exchanged oaths.

And Isaac sent them on their way, and they departed from him in peace. That same day, Isaac's servants came and told him about where they had dug, and said to him, We have found water.

[5 : 50] He called it Sheba. Therefore, the name of the city is Beersheba to this day. Thank you very much, Vanessa.

I believe those of you who are parents would agree with me, that one of the hardest things to observe is to watch our children make some of the same mistakes that we have made.

It's especially hard when we do all that we can to teach them and to help them not to make those same mistakes.

But to put it more directly, some of the mistakes that we have made, those of us who have lived long enough and experienced many things in life, some of the mistakes that we have made, they're not just bad choices, like not studying hard enough and applying ourselves in school or wasting too much money and not saving enough.

Some of the mistakes we have made, some of the bad choices we have made have been sinful choices. And we try to steer our children away from those sinful choices.

[7 : 13] And sometimes our children heed our advice and they don't make those same sinful mistakes we've made. And sometimes they make other sinful mistakes.

And that's painful to watch as well. As we step back from this, as we think about it, as we think about this reality of sin in our lives and in the lives of our children, it begs a larger question.

Why do we and our children sin as we do? And I think this is an important question for all of us to consider, even those of us who have trusted Christ and have turned away from sin because we still sin.

We don't sin in the same way that we used to sin before we came to Christ, but we still sin. And so it begs this question, why do we sin as we do?

And this question naturally arises in this passage that we have come to this morning as we work our way through the book of Genesis.

[8 : 29] What we see in this passage is that, and some of you, hopefully all of you would remember this if you've been a part of the series so far, what we see is that Isaac is facing the exact same situation that his father faced decades ago, and he acts sinfully in the exact same way that his father does.

And when we consider this, an appropriate way to describe Abraham and Isaac is found in the repeated saying, like father, like son.

And this morning, I want us to consider how and why Abraham and Isaac are like father, like son. But first, let's pray.

Father, we bow our hearts this morning before you. And we do so, Lord, asking for your help that we recognize that we all need.

We ask that you would speak to our hearts. Lord, you have brought us to this place at this time to hear the words of life.

[9 : 48] And we pray this morning, Lord, that you will do for us as we sang, make your glory known. Make your glory known through the words of life.

And Lord, we know that this is only possible if you speak to us. And so I pray that above my voice, we will hear yours. And Lord, may your words to us this morning convict our hearts where we need to be convicted and may they transform all of our lives.

Lord, use them to build this church, we pray. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. This morning, I want us to consider three ways that it can rightly be said of Abraham and Isaac like father, like son.

Three ways from this passage that it can rightly be said about Abraham and Isaac like father, like son. The first way is that both Abraham and Isaac received the same gracious covenant.

The Lord first made this gracious covenant with Abraham going back to in Genesis 12 and he repeated it several times.

[11 : 22] And it was a covenant of blessing. It was a covenant promising him land and promising him offspring. So many that they couldn't be numbered. It was a promise that through him the whole earth was going to be blessed.

And what we see here is starting in verse 2 in Genesis 26 the Lord appears to Isaac and he makes the very same covenant to him.

This is the first time that the Lord is appearing to Isaac. You remember when Isaac was yet to be born the Lord promised that he would be the heir and he spoke similar words over Isaac when he was not yet born.

But now that he is a grown man this is the first time we see God appearing to him and the Lord confirms the exact same covenant to him with the exact same promises telling him I'm going to bless you with land and he's in a foreign land I'm going to bless you with a multitude of children and through you the whole world all the nations of the earth will be blessed.

Let's notice the context in which the Lord speaks these words to Isaac. There's a famine in the land where he is living and you may recall back in Genesis 12 when the Lord had called Abraham that he faced a similar famine and his impulse was I'm going to go to Egypt and he made his way to Egypt and Egypt was a logical place to go because in times of famine which was largely because there was not enough rain Egypt was well watered by the Nile River and so it was a logical place to go and so that's where Abraham went and we see that it's the same thing that Isaac is intending to do.

[13:22] Isaac intends to go to Egypt. Look again at what is happening starting in verse 2.

It says and the Lord appeared to him and said do not go down to Egypt dwell in the land of which I will tell you I shall tell you sojourn in this land and I will be with you and 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 I will multiply your offspring as the stars of the heavens and will give to your offspring all these lands and in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge my commandments my statutes and my laws so Isaac settled in Gerar so Isaac was headed to Egypt just like Abraham was but God stops him he says don't you go down to Egypt I want you to dwell in this land and if you do I will bless you and so once again this is a gracious covenant when we think back on Abraham

Abraham was a moon worshiper and the Lord goes to him above all the other people in Ur of the Chaldeans and the Lord selects him and he says I'm going to bless you and Abraham at that time was an old man he was childless his wife was old beyond the years of childbearing she could not have children and the Lord chooses him and says I'm going to bless you I'm going to give you land I'm going to give you offspring and I'm going to bless the whole world through it was a gracious covenant Abraham didn't deserve it there was nothing he could have done to have merited God to make a covenant with him and to bless him in that particular way and then we think of Isaac and again Isaac's situation was even before he was born the Lord chose him and the Lord chose him over his older brother Ishmael and he said these same promises to him that he announced to Abraham and so it was a gracious covenant they both received a gracious covenant it was by pure grace they didn't deserve it they couldn't merit it and truthfully when we look at their lives when we look at the unfolding of their lives we see even more evidence that they did not deserve to be blessed in the way that they were blessed and so that's the first way that Abraham and Isaac were like father like son they both received the same gracious covenant the second way that Abraham and Isaac were like father like son is they both faced the same spiritual struggle look again at verses six and seven it says so Isaac settled in the land and when the men of the place asked him about his wife he said she is my sister so he feared to say for he feared to say my wife thinking lest the men of this place should kill me because of

Rebecca because she was attractive in appearance so what we see is that Isaac and Abraham received the same gracious covenant and when faced with the same situation they both feared for their lives and rather than trust the same God who made the promises to them to take care of them both of them lied Isaac lied just as Abraham lied and in lying he put his wife at risk of being sexually abused and I think an important question that arises is whether Isaac knew what happened with Abraham and Sarah when they went to Egypt the first time and Abraham lied and when he went to [18:09] Gerar and lied there as well you wonder did Isaac know about that did Isaac know what his father did on those two occasions well the text is silent on it so we cannot be sure that he knew but let's suppose that Abraham did tell him as a good father that Abraham confessed this is what I did to your mother I was fearful and no doubt as a good father would be saying to him don't do this if you are in a situation where you are fearful you need to trust the Lord and no doubt he would have shared with Isaac if this scenario is correct that the Lord protected him and Sarah in the midst of all of that and that God is gracious and kind to him despite his lies and so if Abraham did tell

Isaac why would Isaac make the same mistake in the same place in the same way that his father Abraham did but on the other hand let's suppose that Isaac wasn't told that Abraham did not say anything to Isaac about what happened when he went to Egypt with Pharaoh and what happened when he went to Gerar with Abimelech but even if he didn't tell him and Isaac knew nothing about it the question would still arise how is it that even though Isaac knew nothing about what happened with Abraham in those two situations where he lied and said that his wife was his sister if he didn't know how is it that he would have still made the same mistake in the same place and in the same way that his father Abraham did and I think you can see that it really doesn't matter which it is it really doesn't matter whether he knew or he didn't know the fact is he made the same mistake and it begs the question either way why why did he make the same mistake and why is Moses under the inspiration of the Holy

Spirit chronicling this in Holy Scripture first for the children of Israel as they were making their journey out of Egypt going into the promised land and why is it being preserved for us I think the reason that it is being preserved for us what was preserved for Israel is that under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit Moses is bringing God's people God's people then and God's people now face to face with the reality that bottom line Abraham and Isaac were no different both belonged to God but they were far from perfect they face the same spiritual struggle they serve

God but they also battled sin one minute they are lying and saying their wife is not their wife and the other minute they are building an altar and they are worshipping God an expression of devotion to him and the reason that Abraham and Isaac acted in exactly the same way is that they can rightly be described as like father like son because more than having a biological connection to one another they had a spiritual connection to Adam they were part of Adam's fallen race they were a part of those who experienced the effect of the fall and brothers and sisters we are no different fundamentally that is why they sinned and fundamentally that is why we sin fundamentally that is why

Isaac sinned in exactly the same way that Abraham sinned and fundamentally that is the reason our children sin in exactly the same ways that we sin or in other ways the reason is that the spiritual DNA of Adam because of the fall is in the entirety of Adam's sinful race that's why Isaac acted the way that Abraham did now I don't want you to think that it's all dark about Isaac and Abraham their life was not largely about darkness when you look at their lives overall they were marked more by godliness than ungodliness yes they weren't godly in a lot of ways but overall they were they were godly so for example we see in this passage how Isaac conducted himself in such a godly manner when he faced persecution from the Philistines they envied him because God had blessed him and they drove him out of

[24 : 09] Gerar and we see in verse 17 that he moved to the valley of Gerar and in verse 18 he dug again the wells that the Philistines had stopped up after Abraham's death and he gave them the same names that Abraham had given to them and then we see in verse 19 that his servants dug another well and this was a wonderful well because this well was not just one of those wells that you had to dip water out of this was a this was a springing well this is a well that they call an artesian well the water would just be springing up in it and Isaac they quarreled over that the Philistines quarreled over that well and he moved again and they quarreled over that well again he comes to a third well he digs a third well and they don't quarrel over that one and Isaac recognized that this is the Lord's doing he recognized that the only reason

I have peace for these Philistines is because the Lord has done this he called the well Rehoboth which means a broad place or room because he said for the Lord has made room for us and we shall be fruitful in the land so here we see that Isaac was no brawler Isaac was a godly man just like Abraham you remember when Abraham and Lot faced the same situation back in Genesis 13 there was a fight between them and Abraham graciously and meekly said to Lot if you go to the left I'll go to the right and here we see Isaac in a very similar way being gracious being humble being meek and instead of fighting over these wells that he knows belonged to his father and the wells that he is digging that they are contending over he takes the humble road he walks away and he allows God to take care of it look again at verses 23 to 25 it says from there he went up to Beersheba and the Lord appeared to him the same night and said I am the God of Abraham your father fear not for I am with you and will bless you and multiply your offspring for my servant Abraham's sake so he built an altar there and called upon the name of the Lord and pitched his tent there and there Isaac's servant dug a well how kind of the Lord to appear to Isaac at this very very

difficult time and reassure him of the blessings that he had bestowed upon him because here he is he is in the land that God promised to give him says I'm going to give these lands to you and to your offspring and he's being bullied he's being knocked about he's being marginalized in the land that the Lord promised him and God graciously comes to him and says I'm going to give you this land God reiterates the blessing to him and we see Isaac responding just as his father Abraham did he builds an altar his first altar that he builds we see in this passage actually the only altar that he's recorded as building in this passage and so once again what we see is

Isaac is a struggling saint he lied in an attempt to deceive the philistines about rebecca so that he can spare his life he follows the lord he obeys the lord he stays in gerar he trusts the lord by planting even in a time of famine he meekly walks away from the strife of the philistines trust the lord to make it right he builds this altar!

sacrifice to the lord again brothers and sisters the truth is that our own lives to one degree or another is very similar our own lives just like the life of Isaac those of us who have trusted in Christ is we are struggling saints we are saints who face this spiritual struggle of serving the lord and yet at times finding ourselves falling and giving way to sin reflect the same spiritual struggle that Abraham did and Isaac did and for the same reason that they did and that is we have a common father by the name of

[29 : 06] Adam who plunged all of humanity into sin and we all have the effect of that fallen nature because of sin living within us yes we love the lord we serve the lord and our lives are more marked by serving the lord than by sin but sadly we do at times go our own way seeking our own desires our own pleasures rather than trusting the lord and looking to him to give us all that we need i was thinking about this and an old hymn came to mind it's a hymn that i grew up singing when i would go to chapel at st john's college it's the hymn hark my soul it is the lord and the last verse of the hymn just captures our dilemma so well william cooper a wonderful hymn writer he captures it so well this is he wrote lord it is my chief complaint that my love is weak and faint yet i love thee and adore oh for grace to love thee more and that's the dilemma of those of us who follow christ our love is often weak and faint and we recognize lord i do love you but oh would you help me to love you more would you give me grace to love you more and this was the reality of both

Abraham and Isaac their lives showed evidence of love for God but their lives also showed evidence of sin and disobedience and so how does this work out does God look at us and say well let me see if there's more love for me and serving me than sin and disobedience against me does God do that does he weigh the two and see which one weighs more and then it will go well with us or not go well with us depending on how things fall out does God weigh our sin on the one hand and our obedience on the other hand accepting us if the sin is not as much as the obedience no he doesn't do that you see because with

God he requires perfect righteousness with God even the smallest sin even the smallest sin disqualifies us from being accepted in his sight the smallest sin qualifies us for condemnation in the Lord's sight and I realize this may sound confusing this morning but this is the reality the reality is that to be accepted by a holy God you have to be perfectly holy in his sight if he does anything less if he accepts the smallest degree of sin in our lives that besmirches his holiness to that degree and because he's a perfectly holy God he cannot accept us with any degree even the smallest hint of sin in our lives and so how does this work out how does this work out to be accepted by a holy God with us knowing who we are and the truth is I don't think that any of us this morning because we know ourselves will stand up and say I qualify for God to accept me based on who I am and based on what I do or don't do none of us being honest this morning would take that position so how does this work out how can this work out how can!

we be accepted! by a holy and perfect God being struggling saints being those who fall short to whatever degree from what he requires of us this brings you to my third and my final point and it is that Isaac and Abraham served the same merciful God the law was merciful and patient with Abraham and Isaac and he showed them that they didn't have to lie they didn't have to deceive that he was able to protect them and he was able to keep them against the evil actions of the Philistines look again at verse 8 when he meaning

[35 : 07] Isaac had been living there a long time a long time not a short period of time but a long time Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out of a window and saw Isaac laughing with Rebecca his wife now think about that what are the chances of the king of Jerob what are the chances of Abimelech looking out of the window and just happening to see Isaac in a moment the text says

laughing but theologians who are much smarter than I am said he was actually caressing her he was actually relating to her in a very intimate way in a way that Abimelech recognized you only act like that towards your wife and Abimelech knew based on how he was acting that this was his wife but what are the chances of in that moment and remembering now

Isaac has lied he says this is my sister not my wife he is not going to be acting foolishly out in the open so he is trying to be discreet and so what are the chances of Abimelech just happening to see him when he is relating to his wife as a husband does what are the chances of that the chances of that are none in slim brothers and sisters and really what happened in that situation is in the providence of the Lord the Lord exposed Isaac's lie after a long time Isaac was comfortable he probably thought he had already pulled the wool over them they bought the lie and he was going about his business and he was comfortable living with this lie he was unrepentant about this lie and God in his providence caused Abimelech to see the moment that he was acting in this particular because

God wanted to expose the lie and that brothers and sisters was not because God wanted to shame him God was showing mercy to him God was uncovering a lie that his servant Isaac was willing to live with for a long time and in so doing God was being merciful to him brothers and sisters sometimes the Lord does the same with us not to shame us but to show us mercy because he will not he's long suffering he's patient and he was with Isaac Isaac lived this way for a long time but he providentially exposed it because he wanted to be merciful to Isaac and he was he made Isaac face the thing that Isaac did not want to face Isaac faced a very angry king a king who was more angry with him for what he did than he would have been if he simply said look man this is my wife from day one this is my wife what else you want to!

God exposed it and this angry king confronts him and says why have you done this?

[38 : 48] you exposed a whole community to guilt and to the risk of committing this heinous crime and although Abimelech rebuked him we see Abimelech tells the people he says any of you who touches this man or his wife you'll be put to death when you think about it in that day and time what are the chances of Abimelech naturally acting that way towards this man he only acted that way towards this man because there was a sovereign God over it who providentially caused Abimelech to act in that way and God demonstrated to Isaac in a merciful way I'm able to take care of you you don't need to lie you don't need to scheme I am able to take care of you it's quite surprising that when you look at this account there is no record of the

Lord rebuking Isaac for his lie no record of him rebuking him for his unbelief and that's not to say that the Lord condoned it he he cannot condone sin but I believe the silence and the lack of rebuke simply highlights that the Lord was merciful to Isaac you know sometimes when we have done wrong how many know that it is so obvious we have done wrong nobody needs to say anything it's just so obvious and it's merciful to not say anything and we see Isaac receiving this mercy from the Lord it's after exposing Isaac's lie that we read these words in verses 12 to 14 and Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundred fold the Lord blessed him and the man became rich and gained more and more until he became very wealthy and he had possessions of flocks and herds and many servants so that the Philistines envied him so not only did God act mercifully towards Abraham to Isaac and withhold judgment and wrath from him which his sins of lying and unbelief warranted but God also blessed him materially God caused his fields to reap an unusual kind of harvest in a time of famine this would have been unusual in a regular time but in a time of famine the Lord blesses him in the wake of his sin being exposed and when the Philistines persecuted him because they envied the blessings that God had bestowed upon him God protected him and God fought battles for him that he could never have fought for himself and the Lord helped him to move from place to place digging!

dig a hole and water came up it wasn't that way the nature of deserts is that there are only very select places where you are able to find water and so God had him digging wells a well is when you dig a hole and there's water in it there's no water in it all you dig a hole and what we see is the Lord was leading him directing him to places where he would dig these wells and there would be water in the well and the Philistines envied him but that was God's mercy to him leading him to these places where he was able to find water as he dug and again these expressions of mercy that God showed to Isaac Isaac and

[43 : 27] Abraham served a merciful God and brothers and sisters we serve a merciful God as well this account with Isaac and the Philistines in Genesis 26 ends in the same way that Abraham's

encounter with them ended in Genesis 21 if you read the two accounts they end in exactly the same way King Abimelech comes and he says hey I want to make a peace treaty with you now think about that this is a powerful king over a vast area and he comes to this sojourner he comes to this person who is living among them as a stranger and says I want to make a pact with you I want peace with you and why does he do that we're told in verses 28 to 29 look at what it says again they said we see plainly that the

Lord has been with you so we said let there be a sworn pact between us between you and us and let us make a covenant with you that you will do us no harm just as we have not touched you and have done you and have done to you nothing but good and have sent you away in peace you are now the blessed of the Lord that God was with Isaac was undeniable so much so that even unbelievers had to acknowledge it and why was God so steadfastly with Isaac as he was with Abraham despite the fact that he was not a perfect man it was because God was merciful to him it was because he served a merciful

God Isaac deserved God's judgment and wrath and brothers and sisters let us not think for a moment that you know God could just overlook it he can just overlook it he only overlooks it because of his mercy and the mercy indicates that he should not overlook it the mercy indicates that it is a real issue but because he is merciful he did not deal with Isaac the way Isaac sins deserved and he did not deal with Abraham the way Abraham's sin deserved and brothers and sisters he doesn't deal with us the way our sins!

deserve God is not surprising to a lot of people that the Lord blessed Isaac abundantly despite his deception and the reason they're surprised is because they believe that God is a God of works you do good he blesses you you do bad he doesn't bless you but God is not a God of works God is a God of grace he's a God of mercy and so he blesses us even when we don't deserve it he blesses us even when we act sinfully like Abraham did and like now see Isaac doing and it's not that God blesses because of our sins!

no he doesn't bless because of our sins he blesses it despite our and such grace brothers and sisters should never tempt us to live a careless and sloppy life such grace should never tempt us to do what Paul says shall we go on sinning because grace abounds it should never we should our heart should not be moved in that way instead such grace should spur us to worship and to love God and to serve him even more let me conclude and try to help us to see what I believe is the larger point that Moses is trying to make the point that he tried to make for Israel the point that I believe that he makes for us for all of God's people Isaac lived 180 years he lived five years longer than his father

[48 : 22] Abraham yet! Genesis 26 is the longest account of anything in Isaac's life when you consider Genesis Genesis is largely when you move beyond the creation story and beyond the table of nations and all of that and you come to Abraham Genesis is largely about Abraham and Jacob largely that's the narrative but the covenant was with Abraham Isaac and Jacob but the least amount of space is given to Isaac the most space that Isaac gets in Genesis is right here in chapter 26 and it begs the question of all the things that could have been talked about in Isaac's life over 180 years why is it that it is this account that we have about

Isaac's life in the book of Genesis this account where we see him not at his best we see him lying about his wife being his sister we see him building an altar in the next moment why does Moses under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit why does the Lord inspire Moses to put this account about Isaac in our Bibles and why here why in this location it's pretty apparent that this account in Genesis 26 is not in chronological order Abraham and what is clear is that it is arranged in this way because under the inspiration of the

Holy Spirit Abraham is trying to show us something you'd remember in Genesis 25 Jacob and Esau they're grown men Esau is a hunter and Jacob is a homebody and we see how Esau sells his birthright to his brother Jacob and then you notice at the end of this chapter we didn't read this but we'll catch this the next time when we pick this up but in verse 34 it says that Esau was 40 years old when he took Judith and the daughter of Beerli the Hittite to be his wife and he took another one as well so he's 40 years old here and we're not told exactly how old Isaac is in Genesis 26 we're not told how old he was when he went to Jera he was there for a long time we know he had to have been at least 75 and the reason we know that is because

Abraham died at 175 and Abraham was 100 years older than Isaac because Isaac when Isaac was born Abraham was 100 years old and we're told in this text that the Philistines stopped up these

wells that Isaac redug after Abraham died so Isaac had to at least be 75 years old after Abraham died but it's still hard to tell now if Abraham if Isaac sorry was 75 years old when Abraham died it means that Jacob and Esau would have been 15 years because remember and you can see this if you go back in 25 and in verse 26

Isaac was 60 when they were born so if he was 60 when they were born when he was 75 they had to have been about 15 now if they were about 15 during this time when there was the famine and he moved to Gerar more than likely he would have brought them with him and that would have been pretty much evidence that he was a married man and so one theologian who I respect greatly and I struggled with this this week he actually makes the point and I don't have a whole lot of time to talk about it but he makes the point that this account took place before and that's Bruce Waltke those who might want to check his commentary he said this account he says it took place before the twins were born I'm not sure I think there may be other things going on in the text and again not everything is in chronological order in that way but I say all that to say this and I hope that wasn't confusing to you

[53 : 59] I just say all that to say this whether the twins were born or not at this point what is pretty clear is that this is not in chronological order because you can also see this as well if you come to chapter 27 chapter 27 Isaac is about 100 years old his eyes are dim when we see here in verse 34 in chapter 26 that Esau was 40 years old Isaac would have been 100 years old because he was 60 when Esau was born and so I say all that just to say that it's pretty clear that this that the attempt or the aim of Moses is not so much to teach history as much as it is to teach theology he is not overly concerned with giving us some moment by moment chronology in the book of

Genesis but what he is doing is he is teaching us theology theology about God and also learning about ourselves and so we find this account placed right here right before chapter 27 right after 25 where we see how Jacob twists Esau's hand as it were and gets his birthright and then in chapter 27 we'll see how Rebecca and Jacob deceive Isaac to get the blessing that naturally was supposed to belong to Esau and what we see and I hope we can see this this morning that we see this sin of deception just working through this family we see with Abraham we see it with Isaac and we see it with Rebecca and we see it with Jacob where they are acting in a very deceitful way and one of the things we should see is that it appears as if Abraham I'm getting my names confused now it appears as if Moses is highlighting this issue of deception and the point almost seems to be you don't need to deceive to get a blessing you don't need to deceive for God to bless you but again at the same time he he brings to the fore this reality of struggling saints of those who belong to the Lord who sin in these particular ways and so this is not just about how Abraham and Isaac are like father like son hopefully it also should help us to see that we're in this story as well we're in this picture as well we suffer from the same fallen nature as they suffer from and the only reason we have any hope is because God is merciful it's the only reason we have hope and God is not merciful in a vacuum God is merciful because of his son and all of this is foreshadowing the need for Christ to come it's helping us to see this is why Jesus needed to come Jesus needed to come so that God is able to be merciful with sinners like us because what Jesus would do in his coming is

Jesus would be the one to perfectly please God to perfectly obey the law and then to go to the cross and to take the place of sinners like me and you who cannot perfectly obey the law so that God is able to forgive us and God is able to be merciful towards us and we see the seeds of why Christ needed to come all the way back here in the book of Genesis without that we're all hopeless brothers and sisters we're all hopeless without that our best works of righteousness are filthy rags in God's sight and so it's not just like father like son for Abraham and

[59 : 23] Isaac it's like father like children for all of us and our father is Adam and we all reflect the same sinful and fallen nature and so brothers and sisters God is able to be merciful to us because he was wrathful to his son because Jesus took the wrath and the punishment for our sins that we deserved and how God is able to be merciful towards us and we're going to make heaven we're going to make it to the end not because any of us is perfect we're going to make it to the end because God credits the righteous life and the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ to our account and on that basis he's able to accept us and brothers and sisters this is good news and this is news we should rest in and this is news that we should rehearse day after day after day because it's the only way that a holy

God accepts sinners like us let's pray together father would you open our eyes where we fail to see help us understand oh lord our great need for a mediator our great need for a savior without that mediator without that savior we're all lost and we're all doomed thank you for the mercy and the grace that you have displayed to all of us lord thank you for your patience thank you for your faithfulness that you bear with us even when our lives are less than faithful and we give you thanks now in jesus name amen let's stand for closing song who gro