

GENESIS 24-26

ISAAC & THE REAFFIRMATION OF GOD'S PROMISES

After Abraham, the narrative of Genesis can get confusing and the stories daunting. The chapters become long as it moves from Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to Joseph. What is the main point? We need to see first, the establishment of Abraham's family—from Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob—that will come to constitute the beginning of Israel's history. These are the founding fathers, so to speak. Second, we need to see that God's promises are not dependent just on a generation, but his faithfulness to his promises goes beyond one man, Abraham.

Isaac's life helps us to see this. Abraham affirms his trust in God in Genesis 22 as he follows God's wishes to sacrifice Isaac until God provides a substitute at the last minute (22:9-14). This is not a robotic faith from Abraham—he fully believed in God's power to raise his long-awaited son from the dead (Hebrews 11:17-19). Then, we see God graciously provide a wife for Isaac so that he can continue on the line of promise. But Isaac's story culminates in 26:1-5 as God reaffirms his promises to Isaac. There, God tells Isaac that his three major lines of promise are still going to happen even as Abraham has died. 1) God will give this people the land he has promised (26:3), 2) God will multiply their offspring to be as many as the stars of the heaven (26:4), 3) God will bless them as an instrument to bless the other nations (26:4). What do you notice? All of the main promises that were given to Abraham are now reaffirmed to Isaac. God's promises don't come and go with the passing of generations; he is faithful to do all that he has said he will do.

This is the pattern of Genesis. Promise --> re-affirmation --> re-affirmation ... --> ultimate fulfillment. What does this mean for our lives? We can depend on God to keep the word that he has spoken. Hold on dearly to the promises of God—for he has proven, and will prove faithful to keep them. Believe in his power to bless, save, and give eternal life. Believe in his ability to work as you read the word and spend time in prayer with him. The foundation of our faith—as it was for Abraham and Isaac and Jacob—is that God is faithful and powerful to keep the word that he has spoken. Be encouraged as you see this to be true of God in Genesis—this is the same God whom we follow today.