**Lesson Three: Protection of Rebecca in Gerar**

**Genesis 26:1-11NLT**

**Isaac Deceives Abimelech**

**26**A severe famine now struck the land, as had happened before in Abraham’s time. So, Isaac moved to Gerar, where Abimelech, king of the Philistines, lived.

**2**The Lord appeared to Isaac and said, “Do not go down to Egypt, but do as I tell you. **3**Live here as a foreigner in this land, and I will be with you and bless you. I hereby confirm that I will give all these lands to you and your descendants,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%2026&version=NLT#fen-NLT-696a)] just as I solemnly promised Abraham, your father. **4**I will cause your descendants to become as numerous as the stars of the sky, and I will give them all these lands. And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed. **5**I will do this because Abraham listened to me and obeyed all my requirements, commands, decrees, and instructions.” **6**So Isaac stayed in Gerar.

**7**When the men who lived there asked Isaac about his wife, Rebekah, he said, “She is my sister.” He was afraid to say, “She is my wife.” He thought, “They will kill me to get her, because she is so beautiful.” **8**But sometime later, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looked out his window and saw Isaac caressing Rebekah.

**9**Immediately, Abimelech called for Isaac and exclaimed, “She is obviously your wife! Why did you say, ‘She is my sister’?”

“Because I was afraid someone would kill me to get her from me,” Isaac replied.

**10**“How could you do this to us?” Abimelech exclaimed. “One of my people might easily have taken your wife and slept with her, and you would have made us guilty of great sin.”

**11**Then Abimelech issued a public proclamation: “Anyone who touches this man or his wife will be put to death!”

**LESSON**

As Abraham had declared his wife to be his sister both in Egypt (Genesis 12:10-20) and at Gerar (Genesis 20:1-18) so did Isaac also in the latter place. In the story of Isaac and Rebekah in Gerar offers profound insights into trust, deception, and divine intervention.

Isaac's obedience to God's directive not to go to Egypt but to stay in Gerar despite the famine showcases the importance of trusting in divine guidance during challenging times.

However, Isaac's decision to deceive the people of Gerar about Rebekah being his sister reflects the dangers of resorting to dishonesty out of fear, jeopardizing both their safety and their relationship's integrity.

Yet, Abimelech's discovery of the truth and subsequent proclamation to protect Isaac and Rebekah underscores the significance of honesty and respect for marital bonds in societal interactions.

Ultimately, God's intervention to safeguard Isaac and Rebekah despite Isaac's deception reaffirms His faithfulness and sovereignty over human affairs, emphasizing the vital lessons of trust in divine guidance and the consequences of deceit.

**Key Lessons from Genesis 26:6-11**

In Genesis 26:6-11, Isaac finds himself in Gerar, facing a situation similar to his father Abraham's encounter regarding Sarah. Here are the key lessons from this passage:

1. **Continuity of God's Promises**:
   * **Genesis 12:17-20 (NLT)**: "But the Lord sent terrible plagues upon Pharaoh and his household because of Sarai, Abram’s wife."

* When Abraham, fearing for his life, deceived Pharaoh in Egypt about Sarah being his sister, God intervened to protect Sarah and Abraham by afflicting Pharaoh's household with plagues.

God extends protection to Isaac and Rebekah, affirming His promises across generations.

1. **Consequences of Deception**:
   * **Genesis 26:7-9 (NLT)**: "When the men who lived there asked Isaac about his wife, Rebekah, he said, 'She is my sister.' He was afraid to say, 'She is my wife.' He thought, 'They will kill me to get her, because she is so beautiful.' But some time later, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looked out his window and saw Isaac caressing Rebekah."
     + Isaac, out of fear for his life due to Rebekah's beauty, resorts to deception by claiming she is his sister, fearing the people of Gerar would kill him to take her. This deception sets the stage for potential conflict and highlights the ethical dilemma Isaac faces.
2. **God's Providential Care**:
   * **Genesis 26:10-11 (NLT)**: "But one day, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looked out his window and saw Isaac caressing Rebekah. Immediately, Abimelech called for Isaac and exclaimed, 'She is obviously your wife! Why did you say, 'She is my sister'?' 'Because I was afraid someone would kill me to get her from me,' Isaac replied.
     + Despite Isaac's dishonesty, God intervenes to protect him and Rebekah from harm. Abimelech's discovery of their true relationship showcases God's providential care, emphasizing His faithfulness to His covenant with Isaac.
3. **Learning from Past Mistakes**:
   * **Genesis 12:10-20 (NLT)**: "As Abram approached Egypt, he said to his wife, Sarai, 'Look, you are a very beautiful woman... Please say you are my sister. Then they will spare my life and treat me well because of their interest in you.'"
     + Isaac's repetition of his father Abraham's mistake reveals a failure to learn from past experiences. Despite the consequences of Abraham's deception in Egypt, Isaac follows a similar path, highlighting the need for personal growth and maturity.
4. **Faith vs. Fear**:
   * **Genesis 15:1 (NLT)**: "Sometime later, the Lord spoke to Abram in a vision and said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Abram, for I will protect you, and your reward will be great.'"
     + Isaac's fear-driven deception contrasts with Abraham's faith in God's protection. God's reassurance to Abraham emphasizes the contrast between faith and fear-driven actions.

**Questions:**

1. **Was it prudent for Isaac to lie about his wife? Was God able to protect Rebecca if Isaac had told the truth? If yes, how? If no, why?**

* No, it wasn't prudent for Isaac to lie about Rebekah. His decision to deceive reflected a lack of trust in God's ability to protect them. Had Isaac been truthful, God still could have protected Rebekah. God's protection isn't dependent on deceit. In fact, honesty could have demonstrated Isaac's faith in God's ability to safeguard them. God intervened in similar situations, like with Abraham and Sarah in Egypt, showing His power to protect His people regardless of human actions.

1. **What do you learn about "fear" in this passage of Scriptures? Using specific Scriptures, explain how as a Christian you should deal with fear?**
   * In Genesis 26:6-11, fear leads Isaac to deceive others about his relationship with Rebekah. This shows how fear can drive us to compromise our integrity. As Christians, we're told to trust in God's promises and seek His guidance when we're afraid.

Psalm 56:3-4 tells us to trust in God when we're afraid, acknowledging His power and provision. Proverbs 3:5-6 advises us to rely on God's wisdom rather than our own understanding. So, when we're afraid, we should pray and trust in God's faithfulness. By obeying God and trusting His promises, we can overcome fear and make choices that honor Him.

1. **Discuss at least two other cases in the Bible (one in the Old Testament and the other in the New Testament) where the people of God sinned out of fear of their opponents/adversaries.**

* Israelites' Fear of the Giants in Canaan (Numbers 13-14):

In this account, the Israelites, upon receiving the report from the twelve spies about the giants in Canaan, succumbed to fear and rebelled against God's command to possess the land. Despite God's promise of deliverance and provision, their fear led to disobedience and a lack of faith, resulting in dire consequences for an entire generation. (Numbers 13:31-33)

* Peter's Denial of Jesus (Matthew 26):

Peter, one of Jesus' closest disciples, denied knowing Him three times when confronted by bystanders during Jesus' trial. Despite his previous loyalty and fervent declarations of faith, fear overwhelmed Peter, leading to his denial of Jesus. This act of denial was a betrayal of his relationship with Jesus and a failure to stand firm in faith, showcasing the detrimental effects of fear on one's commitment to God. (Matthew 26:69-75)

1. **Discuss at least four cases in the Bible (two in the Old Testament and the other two in the New Testament) where the people of God spoke the truth or acted with integrity without fear of their opponents/adversaries or the consequences that would follow.**

* In the Old Testament, examples include Daniel's prayer in defiance of King Darius' decree (Daniel 6) and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's refusal to bow down to the golden image (Daniel 3). Both instances demonstrate unwavering faith and integrity in the face of opposition and the threat of severe consequences.
* In the New Testament, we see Peter and John boldly proclaiming the Gospel before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4) and Paul fearlessly defending the faith before King Agrippa (Acts 26). These examples highlight the courage and integrity of believers who spoke the truth despite the potential risks and opposition they faced.

1. **Have you ever experienced a situation where someone, regardless of their beliefs or background, demonstrated unexpected kindness or righteousness towards you, similar to how Abimelech acted towards Isaac?"**

**Personal Reflection**

Reflect on instances where fear led to actions misaligned with faith. Pray for courage to overcome fear of man, aligning actions with faith and integrity.

THE END