

## **WE WILL FLOURISH IN THE LAND**

### **There was a famine in the land (v.1) — but “we will flourish in the land” says Isaac (v.22)**

- Egypt was a richer place whose agriculture was supported by the mighty River Nile. It was the obvious place to go. Why didn't Isaac go to Egypt? What was Isaac believing in order not to go to Egypt? Genesis 26:1-6

### **Fear causes lying (vv.7-11)**

- What motivated Isaac to tell this lie?
- By what process might fear have caused Isaac to lie? How might his father's example have contributed to his moral failure? (See Genesis 20 – Abimelek was most likely the title of the kings of Gerar. This won't be the same man as Isaac had dealings with)
- Since fear makes us vulnerable to committing sins we'll regret, we should be motivated to deal with fear in our lives. Discuss.

### **Blessing is a result of having God's favour — not of behaving well (vv.12-13)**

- As with Abraham, so with Isaac, blessing comes despite sinful behaviour. This points us to a major lesson: the most important thing we need is to have God's favour. So the most important question is: how may I get God's favour? The gospel answers this question. Do you ask this question?
- Once we have God's favour, and know it, that does produce changed behaviour – see vv.23-25.

### **Keep digging wells (vv.14-22 and v.25)**

There was water in this dry land but it was underground. It was freely available – but you had to dig to get it. This water was not a luxury. It was essential to preserve your flocks and herds alive.

Wells are a picture in Scripture of accessing salvation, the water of life, and the gift of the Spirit – see Isaiah 12 and John 7:37-39. And this is not just for yourself, but for your world.

- What motivated the Philistines to block up the wells that Abraham had dug? (vv.14-16)
- What did Isaac do in response? What might we have been tempted to do? (vv.17-18)
- What wells have other people blocked up in our lives with their negativity, complaining, slanders, accusations, etc.? Isaac focussed on reopening the wells, rather than being bitter about the earth and the Philistines who'd thrown it in. Discuss.
- When Isaac started opening new wells, there was quarrelling. All well-diggers will invite opposition and quarrelling. We should not, therefore, be surprised when quarrelling occurs. Jesus was a well-digger opening up the well of salvation — and people opposed him and quarrelled with him. Thank God that he was not put off by quarrelling. Neither should we be. Discuss.
- As a church, we've opened some wells that have been quarrelled over. Other wells have been dug that are not quarrelled over. The important thing is that we keep on digging wells to bring water up for the people. That's because our calling is to be those who connect heaven to earth. Like Isaac we are heirs of the promise that all the nations of the earth will be blessed through us (v.4). Notice how, Isaac let the quarrelling herdsmen have the wells and water! Discuss