

# Three Brothers CFM

Come Follow Me February 24-27

## Genesis 24-27

### “The Covenant Is Renewed”

Hello/welcome members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, our names are Ammon, Topher, and Micah and we are “Three Brothers”, welcome to this week’s CFM discussion where we will give you our three favorite insights in under three minutes and then talk about them.

As always we prove all papers for free, follow the links provided to get both our “three insights” papers as well as our “weekly readings” papers totally for free. The three insights paper is what we will be going over in this video, whereas the “weekly readings” is a paper in which we combine this weeks “Come Follow Me” scriptures (which are the words in gold) with the church’s student manuals (which are the words in purple) with obviously the church’s Come Follow Me family program (which are the words in black) into one easy to read document.

#### Topher’s Insight #1

Why did the Lord choose Isaac and Jacob?

Whenever we talk about the Abrahamic Covenant and the Blessings of Abraham, we always mention the house of Israel as the receivers of this blessing OR the house of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So why exactly did the Lord choose Isaac and Jacob to perpetuate the covenant? We talked about the greatness and faithfulness of Isaac in last weeks CFM. He was Abrahams rightful heir and was given essentially all of Abrahams riches as an inheritance, but did the Lord choose Isaac simply because he was the rightful heir?

#### Student Manual

...the Lord singled out Isaac to become the heir to the covenant. Later, God chose Jacob over Esau, even though Esau was the firstborn and seemed to be his father’s favorite.

Isaac and Jacob were foreordained to their responsibilities. **Through their personal worthiness, however, they justified their callings in the covenant line.**

The important thing is that being Israel, or a covenant person, involves **faithfulness as well as blood lineage**. ...While the blood lineage is significant, it can be **overridden by one’s own faithfulness or lack of faithfulness.**

The Institute manual also explains how most of the blood of the house of Israel is now actually likely scattered amongst all nations which again makes literal lineage of very little importance and therefore makes the quality of the person of far more importance. Our adoption into the house of Israel through baptism resolves this for us anyway. Interesting side note – Joseph Fielding Smith said

“The great majority of those who become members of the Church are literal descendants of Abraham through Ephraim, son of Joseph. Those who are not literal descendants of Abraham and Israel must become such, and when they are baptized and confirmed they are grafted into the tree and are entitled to all the rights and privileges as heirs.” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols., Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954–56, 3:246.)

So again, its clear the only thing that actually matters for us is the qualities of the individual and our own personal faithfulness. Many many times the Lord uses the weak thing to achieve his designs rather than the obvious choice. Moses being slow of speech. David and Goliath. The Lord can prove his might and his word and show his blessings by making the weak things strong

#### **Ether 12:27**

And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for **if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them**

It's not necessarily the weakness I want to focus on but the humility that often accompanies the weakness. We talked about Isaac last week and his many similarities to the Saviour and his humility and willingness to be offered as a sacrifice.

#### **7-7) Genesis 25:27–28. Jacob Was a Plain Man**

In contrast to Esau, who is described as a “cunning hunter,” Jacob is called a “plain man” (v. 27). The Hebrew word used there means “whole, complete, or perfect,” so it is a very positive adjective.

The *loved* of verse 28 is used in the sense of “favored” or “preferred.” Thus, Isaac favored Esau and Rebekah favored Jacob.

So, Jacob was also a “perfect” man and clearly favoured of the Lord EVEN THOUGH HIS OWN FATHER FAVOURED ESAU. The bottom line is it doesn't matter who you are or where you come from or almost even what you've done (as long as you haven't sold your birthright for porridge) – your faithfulness from this point forward is what “justifies” you as a receiver of the blessings as a member of the “covenant line”. Reminds me of the Talk from last General Conference by Elder Clark G. Gilbert about the parable of the slope and as long as your trajectory is trending upward, that's all that matters.

#### Micah's Insight #1

God's covenant with Abraham included the promise that through Abraham and his posterity “shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (Abraham 2:11). That's not a promise that could be fulfilled in one generation: in many ways, the Bible is the story of God's ongoing fulfilment of His promise.

#### **Genesis 26:3–5**

To help your family understand the Abrahamic covenant, you could invite them to find the promises described in these verses. Why is it important for us to know about these promises today? (see “Thoughts to Keep in Mind: The Covenant,” in this resource). (CFM)

President Russell M. Nelson

*“We live in the day that “our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation.”<sup>1</sup> We have front-row seats to witness live what the prophet Nephi saw only in vision, that “the power of the Lamb of God” would descend “upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.”<sup>2</sup>*

*You, my brothers and sisters, are among those men, women, and children whom Nephi saw. Think of that!*

*Regardless of where you live or what your circumstances are, the Lord Jesus Christ is your Savior, and God’s prophet Joseph Smith is your prophet. He was foreordained before the foundation of the earth to be the prophet of this last dispensation, when “nothing shall be withheld”<sup>3</sup> from the Saints. Revelation continues to flow from the Lord during this ongoing process of restoration.”*

(Hear Him, Apr 2020 Sunday Morning Session)

President Russell M. Nelson

*“As you study your scriptures during the next six months, I encourage you to make a list of all that the Lord has promised He will do for covenant Israel. I think you will be astounded! Ponder these promises. Talk about them with your family and friends. Then live and watch for these promises to be fulfilled in your own life.”*

(Let God Prevail, Oct 2020 Sunday Morning Session)

## Ammon’s Insight #1

The servant of Abraham is given a task to head back to Abraham’s hometown and find a wife for his son Isaac. This servant knew Abraham and how much he loved his son and he would have known the kind or quality of woman that Abraham would expect him to return with... Seems like a pretty big task. Abraham made a promise to the servant that an Angel of the Lord would go before him to assist. This is what happened when he arrived:

Genesis 24:14

And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: *let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.*

Verses 12–14. These verses show that the servant, like Abraham, was a man of great faith. Abraham had told him that his errand was a commandment of the Lord (v. 7). So when faced with a tremendously challenging task, the servant turned to the Lord for help. Instead of just asking the Lord to solve his problem, he presented a plan for the Lord to confirm.

Talk about story of Nephi breaking his bow. He didn’t wallow in self pity, he went and built a new one. He did all he could and THEN relied on the Lord to guide him to game. Similar experience writing a talk and leaving it in the car, asked the Lord to

help me and I just opened my mouth and then spoke for 30 mins and remembered everything I wrote down. We need to do the same.

## Topher's Insight #2

Birthright and pottage

Genesis 25

29 ¶ And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he *was* faint:

30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red *pottage*; for I *am* faint: therefore was his name called Edom.

31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.

32 And Esau said, Behold, I *am* at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?

Again, this whole week's CFM readings scream to me that there is a lot more to the story than what we are given. In fact, Joseph Smith said that certain errors had crept into the Bible through "ignorant translators, careless transcribers, or designing and corrupt priests" (Teachings, p. 327) For example, a comparison of the early chapters of Genesis with the fuller accounts revealed to the Prophet (now found in the books of Moses and Abraham) shows how much has been lost. It is possible that the story of Jacob's obtaining the birthright has also lost much or been **changed by unbelievers**. These changes could then **explain the contradictions**.

It seems strange to me that Jacob would even ask for the birthright from Esau in the first place but again I think we don't have the whole story. The Institute manual further clarifies the Birthright story.

### **(7-9) Genesis 25:32**

This rationalization seems to reflect **more scorn than hunger**. Jacob would almost certainly have succored Esau freely if his life were in jeopardy. The point of this account seems to be primarily to show how **little value Esau placed on the birthright**. His immediate bodily needs were more important to him than the rights of the covenant. Additional evidence of this attitude is Esau's marriages to Canaanite women, which broke the covenant line (see Genesis 26:34–35).

The birthright itself should have been a treasured thing. **The highly desirable birthright blessing is the right to the presidency, or keys, of the priesthood**. Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote:

"It appears that anciently under the Patriarchal Order certain special blessings, rights, powers, and privileges—collectively called the *birthright*—passed from the father to his *firstborn son*. (Gen. 43:33.) In later ages special blessings and prerogatives have been poured out upon *all* the worthy descendants of some who gained special blessings and birthrights anciently. (3 Ne. 20:25–27.) Justification for this system, in large part, lies in **the pre-existent preparation and training** of those born in the lines destined to inherit preferential endowments." (Mormon Doctrine, p. 87.)

In the patriarchal order this birthright was passed from father to son, who was often, but not always, the eldest son. **Righteousness was a more important factor than being the firstborn.**

This goes back to my Insight number 1 and the reason why the Lord chose Isaac and Jacob. Their righteousness and “pre-existent preparation and training” is what gave them the birthright and the covenant blessings. Whilst Esau was focusing on temporary, carnal pleasures, his brother Jacob was focusing on his birthright, righteousness and ability to partake in the covenant. Are we readily engaged in “pre-existent preparation and training” to receive these endowments?

### **Matthew 6 – Jesus Sermon on the Mount**

19 ¶ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

21 For where your **treasure is, there will your heart be also.**

### **2 Nephi 9 – Jacob to the people of Nephi**

51 Wherefore, do not spend money for that which is of no worth, nor your labor for that which cannot satisfy. Harken diligently unto me, and remember the words which I have spoken; and come unto the Holy One of Israel, and **feast upon that which perisheth not, neither can be corrupted**, and let your soul delight in fatness.

CFM Manual - ...is there any “pottage” that is distracting you from blessings that are of most value to you? What are you doing to focus on and appreciate these blessings?

M. Russell Ballard has a talk entitled “What Matters Most Is What Lasts Longest” and just the title of that talk alone proves the point about what we should be focused on and what is important.

## Micah’s Insight #2

### Genesis 26:18–25, 32–33

#### **Jesus Christ is the well of living water.**

You may notice that wells and springs and other water sources play important roles in many Old Testament stories. This isn’t surprising, because most of these stories happened in very dry places. As you read in Genesis 26 about Isaac’s wells, ponder what water may symbolize in the scriptures. What insights do you find about spiritual wells of “living water”? (see John 4:10–15). How are you digging spiritual wells in your life? How is the Savior like living water to you? Note that the Philistines had “stopped” the wells (see Genesis 26:18). Is there anything in your life that is stopping your wells of living water? (CFM)

### Isaiah Chapter Three 2 Nephi 13

1 For behold, the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem, and from Judah, the stay and the staff, the whole staff of bread, and the whole stay of water

#### **“The Stay and the Staff” (Student Manual)**

The necessities of bread and water will dwindle during the siege. “The stay and the staff” described in 2 Nephi 13:1 foreshadows a spiritual famine of those who reject the Lord, who is “the whole staff of bread”—the bread of life—and “the whole stay of water”—the living water.

This foreshadows a time where spirituality will be taken from those who reject the fullness of the gospel which is the meaning of the “whole” bread and water. President Nelson in recent years (2018-2020) has repeatedly made the observation that the Church is currently not practicing the fullness of the gospel and is still in the process of being restored. Meaning this rejection of the fullness has yet to take place today. President Nelson also in 2019 asked the members to ponder the question, “what would your life be like if your knowledge of the Book of Mormon was suddenly taken away?” He might as well have asked, “what would your life be like if the spirituality you have obtained was taken away?” From what we just read in Isaiah can such a thing be taken away? The answer is yes. Under what condition? Rejecting the “whole stay of water”. This is explained further in the Book of Mormon in 2 Nephi 28; “Yea, wo be unto him that sayeth we have received and we need no more... Wo be unto him who shall say we have received the word of God and we need no more of the word of God for we have enough...For unto him that receiveth I will give more and from them that shall say we have enough from them shall be taken away even that which they have.” President Nelson in his April 2020 Ensign address said “Why do we need such resilient faith? Because difficult days are ahead. Rarely in the future will it be easy or popular to be a faithful Latter-day Saint. Each of us will be tested....You will have days when you will be discouraged. So pray for courage not to give up! Sadly, some who you thought were your friends will betray you. And some things will simply seem unfair...Do whatever it takes to strengthen your faith in Jesus Christ by increasing your understanding of the doctrine taught in His restored Church and by relentlessly seeking truth.”

That truth we should be seeking is “the whole stay of water and the whole staff of bread”, no one will be able to survive the coming days on borrowed light.

## Ammon’s Insight #2

As we continue the story of Abraham’s servant, he meets with the family of Rebekah and tells them of his experience at the well. He wanted to help them understand that he had come to know that Rebekah was chosen of the Lord to be Isaac’s wife. He then went on to ask if they accepted this fact:

Genesis 24:49-52

**49** And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, **tell me: and if not, tell me;** that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left.

**50** Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, **The thing proceedeth from the LORD: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good.**

**51** Behold, Rebekah *is* before thee, take *her*, and go, and **let her be thy master’s son’s wife, as the LORD hath spoken.**

**52** And it came to pass, that, when Abraham’s servant heard their words, he worshipped the LORD, *bowing himself* to the earth.

I’m blown away by their response! It is something we should all consider carefully and should be exactly how we respond when presented by truth from the Lord. It



does not matter if we ‘feel’ good or bad about something – If it is from the Lord it is truth and it should be accepted “as the LORD hath spoken”.

President Nelson has recently taught us to “Hear Him”. We do that by following his appointed mouthpiece here on Earth, through their teachings in scripture and through compatible personal revelation. And what purpose do we have of ‘hearing him’ except to listen and obey? Regardless as to whether or not we feel it is ‘bad or good’.

How did Abraham feel about being asked to sacrifice Isaac? How did the Saints feel about leaving everything behind in Nauvoo and risking their lives across the plains to Salt Lake? How do we feel about following the counsel from President Nelson today?

We might *feel* the Lord’s instruction to us ‘bad or good’ but in order to truly say that we ‘hear him’ we must listen and obey.

### Topher’s Insight #3

37 And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?

38 And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, *even* me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

39 And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above;

40 And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

### 7-11) Genesis 27:34–46. Subsequent Effects of Jacob’s Blessing

“Esau was also blessed – with the bounties of the earth, and with the potential to cast off the yoke of oppression; but like most of us he valued what he had lost after it was gone and **rued the day** he had traded the birthright off to Jacob. He **bitterly resolved** to get revenge by fratricide when he saw the blessing of transmittal of the birthright actually confirmed upon the head of him to whom he had bartered the right to it.

After all the terrible and thoughtless decisions Esau had made, he finally had to pay the piper. When the piper needs to be paid, we do not like the price. He bitterly resolved to get revenge and rued the day he had made those decisions, but they were permanent decisions. We need to be careful not to make mistakes or judgements of a permanent or eternal nature so frivolously. Remember “What Matters Most Is What Lasts Longest”. How casually and easily can a man be persuaded to sell his birthright for a quick and temporary satisfaction? Most errors can be resolved by repentance, but

some decisions are permanent and will affect our eternities. We are entitled to the blessings of the covenant of Abraham but remember there are also penalties for breaking covenants.

Reminds me of Lucifer being angry that his plan was not chosen and then fighting against the proposed plan and losing everything and then bitterly trying to get revenge by taking down as many of us with him as he can

## Micah's Insight #3

### Genesis 24

#### **Marriage is essential to God's eternal plan. (CFM)**

Today many people make marriage a low priority or even consider it a burden. Abraham had a different perspective—to him, the marriage of his son Isaac was of highest importance. Why do you think it was so important to him? As you read Genesis 24, think about the importance of marriage in God's plan of salvation. You might also read Elder D. Todd Christofferson's message "Why Marriage, Why Family" (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 50–53) and consider why "a family built on the marriage of a man and woman supplies the best setting for God's plan to thrive" (page 52).

#### **(7-6) Genesis 25:21. "Because She Was Barren" (Student Manual)**

The brevity of the historical account in Genesis tends to compress the time it covers. The simple statement about Rebekah's barrenness is more poignant when one remembers the great value people placed on childbearing in those times and that Isaac and Rebekah went childless for twenty years (see vv. 20, 26).

#### **Genesis 30:**

22 And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb.

23 And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away *my reproach*

#### **Isaiah Chapter 4/ 2 Nephi 14**

1 And in that day, seven women shall take hold of one man, saying: We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name *to take away our reproach*.

#### **(13-23) Isaiah 4:1. "Take Away Our Reproach" (Student Manual)**

To be unmarried and childless in ancient Israel was a disgrace (see Genesis 30:23; Luke 1:25). So terrible [will be] conditions in those times ... that women would offer to share a husband with others and expect no material support from him, if they could [just marry] him.

#### **2 Nephi 13:12 "Undermining of the Home and Family" (Student Manual)**

Elder Ezra Taft Benson saw the prophecy in 2 Nephi 13:12 as having a fulfillment in our own day: "And so today, the undermining of the home and family is on the increase, with the devil anxiously working to displace the father as the head of the home and create rebellion among the children. The Book of Mormon describes this condition when it states, 'And my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them.' And then these words follow—and consider these words seriously when you think of those ... leaders who are promoting birth control and abortion: 'O my people, they who lead thee cause thee to err and destroy the way of thy paths.' (2 Ne. 13:12.)" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1970, p. 21).



Moving forward and looking to our future as Saints, let us accept the “whole staff of bread and the whole stay of water”, let us remember the words of President Nelson, “In God’s eternal plan, salvation is an individual matter; exaltation is *a family matter*.” (Salvation and Exaltation, Apr 2008)

## Ammon’s Insight #3

Genesis Ch24:67

67 And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.

I was really touched by this as I read it and I reflected on how special and critical marriage is in my own life.

Today many people make marriage a low priority or even consider it a burden. Abraham had a different perspective—to him, the marriage of his son Isaac was of highest importance.

Elder D. Todd Christofferson’s message “Why Marriage, Why Family”  
(*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 50–53)

“Above the Great West Door of the renowned Westminster Abbey in London, England, stand the statues of 10 Christian martyrs of the 20th century. Included among them is Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a brilliant German theologian born in 1906. Bonhoeffer became a vocal critic of the Nazi dictatorship and its treatment of Jews and others. He was imprisoned for his active opposition and finally executed in a concentration camp. Bonhoeffer was a prolific writer, and some of his best-known pieces are letters that sympathetic guards helped him smuggle out of prison, later published as *Letters and Papers from Prison*.

One of those letters was to his niece before her wedding. It included these significant insights:

Marriage is more than your love for each other. ... In your love you see only your two selves in the world, but in marriage you are a link in the chain of the generations, which God causes to come and to pass away to his glory, and calls into his kingdom. In your love you see only the heaven of your own happiness, but in marriage you are placed at a post of responsibility towards the world and mankind. Your love is your own private possession, but marriage is more than something personal—it is a status, an office. Just as it is the crown, and not merely the will to rule, that makes the king, so it is marriage, and not merely your love for each other, that joins you together in the sight of God and man. ... So love comes from you, but marriage from above, from God.”

Thank you for taking the time to listen to this today, we just feel so blessed to be alive in this day, the days in which the Lord will perform His most wonderful works, the days directly before the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior. We are “Zion or Bust!”, or as President Taylor said “the Kingdom of God or nothing! We know The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the Lord’s church and we are doing everything we can to prepare the world for the Savior’s second coming! If you are interested in learning more, you can check us out on Discord or on Facebook, links always provided below.