

ISAAC

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Abraham looks for a wife for Isaac.

Genesis 24

Isaac is about forty, Abraham is now very old and now instructs his "eldest servant, Eliezer," who was responsible for and in charge of Abraham's household and servants, to return to the place of Abraham's birth to find a wife for Isaac because he does not want Isaac to marry a woman from the Canaanites where Abraham lived now.

The placing of the hand under the thigh was a solemn way of those days which meant that if the person failed his oath, the children, still not born, would hunt down and punish the failure. So Eliezer sets off for Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor.

Eliezer believes in God and prays to God to supply the right woman. He asks God to bring the right woman to him and respond to his special request for help, "Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink;" and she responds with "Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also."

Before Eliezer had finished the prayer God was working, Rebekah, a descendent of Abraham's brother comes to get water.

Eliezer is invited into Rebekah's home and relates the reason for his visit to the area. Eventually asking for Rebekah to come with him to become the wife of Isaac his master. The next day they set off for the home of Isaac.

The end of this chapter gives us a great insight in to the kind of man Isaac was, verse 63 " And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: " A man who likes to be on his own, quite, not aggressive like Abraham his father. Appears to have a deep desire to have a close relationship with God.

While Isaac is sitting thinking, he sees the servants camels coming. Rebekah, on seeing this man and realizes that this is her future husband, hides her face. The simple closing words of the chapter "And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her:" shows how God knew just the right person for Isaac.

The Descendent's of Abraham.

In Genesis 25

We find a list of the descendants of Abraham, through Ishmael and Isaac. In verses 19-28 we find a very compressed details of the twins born to Isaac and Rebekah, the boys Esau and Jacob. They were even fighting before their birth, two nations with a very different attitude to life and God. We also find another problem:-

" 27 And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents.

28 And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob."

Isaac is Tested.

Genesis chapter 26 records an important tests that Isaac goes through. "There was a famine in the land,".

Isaac leaves the area he was living in, the place of worship. Isaac is leaving Canaan and is moving South towards Egypt. However, he stops at Gerar. God was not going to let Isaac enter Egypt, which was a symbol of the world and flesh. God understood the mind of Isaac and knew just how much testing he could stand,

see 1 Corinthians 10:13,

God knew that Isaac had a basic weakness and might never return to Canaan once he left, this was why Abraham brought Rebekah to Isaac, not let Isaac search for himself.

Isaac now receives his first communication from God, "The LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father;" verses 3,4. The word "Sojourn" means "to stay only for a short time."

Genesis 26:6-11

This reminds us of the problems of lack of faith in Isaac heart, it is so like his father Abraham. Isaac had left his fellowship with God and runs into problems resulting in a lie.

"6 And Isaac dwelt in Gerar:

7 And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said, She is my sister: for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon.

8 And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife.

9 And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety she is thy wife: and how saidst thou, She is my sister? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her.

10 And Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us.

11 And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death."

God only planned a short stay in the area but Isaac settles down for a long time, and heads for more problems. verses 12-14.

Even though Isaac had not followed the instructions of God and so was not in true fellowship with the Lord, we find that God has continued to bless him.

In Genesis 26:12-14

We are told that Isaac had sowed the land and received a large harvest. Not only does he have an excellent harvest but his flock increase greatly, as a result the Philistines are jealous, they envied the blessing.

God had instructed Isaac to stay in Gerar just for a short time, but God had also promised to bless Isaac while there,

Genesis 26:3.

God will often bring back Believers who have turned away from Him by showering blessings on them,

See Romans 9:23.

Isaac may have prospered by the blessing of God, but it does not mean that all who prosper are being blessed by God. There are many today who appear prosperous but live a life which is against the Word of God, they may be prosperous because they mis-use their power, their heart may be totally against God,

see 1 Samuel 16:7;

Isaiah 55:8,9;

John 7:34.

We will all one day have to stand before God to receive His judgement on our lives.

Isaac has problems.

The Philistines wanted the wealth of Isaac, they were jealous "Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we." verse 26. They had already filled up the wells that Abraham had dug, Isaac had obviously re-dug them, now the Philistines were filling them up again. In those days digging and owning a well indicated ownership of the land in that area. By doing this they were forcing Isaac to move away from them, just as God wanted Isaac to do. The Philistines were being used by God to fulfil His desires for Isaac.

As Isaac moved away he re-dug the wells in the new area, however, as fast as Isaac located water for his animals, he found problems,

see Genesis 26:19,20.

Over a period Isaac was slowly forced back towards Beersheba, his home. Note that Isaac did not insist on his own rights.

Consider 1 Peter 2:19,20.

Eventually the Philistines stopped destroying the wells, just as planned by God.

Isaac said, "For now the Lord has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."

Look up and consider Romans 8:28,29,;

Hebrews 12:5-7 then 11,12

This is the way God works.

Isaac is back in fellowship.

Genesis 26:24.

As soon as Isaac returns to the place of fellowship, Beer-sheba, "the LORD appeared unto him the same night." While Isaac had been in the land of the Philistines God had not appeared to Isaac. Now He comes with a confirmation of the promise to Abraham. This was to be the second and last direct communication with Isaac. Note that this is the first time God had called Himself, "I am the God of Abraham."

God now pours out many blessings and wealth upon Isaac, this shows that we must be where God wants us to be, to benefit from His blessings.

There is no record that Isaac built an altar while he lived in Gerar. Neither did his relationship with God not have grown during this period.

Consider Matthew 6:33;

John 15:4,5.

Genesis 26:26-33.

Things now start to happen, despite being thrown out of Gerar, Abimelech comes to make peace with Isaac. Once enemies, they now come with a wonderful testimony of Isaac's life and the evidence of his relationship with God. Even though Isaac appeared to have not have been in close fellowship while he lived in Gerar, the King and the people saw that "certainly the LORD was with thee ----- thou art now the blessed of the LORD."

While Isaac had lived in Gerar he had suffered, but he kept himself apart from the people, but treated them with grace and peace. Believers have to live in the world, but they are not part of the world, but must show the love and grace of God for all.

Consider 1 Peter 4:14-16;

Matthew 5:11,16;

John 17:15.