

Genesis

Chapter 26:15-25

✠ **Gen 26:12-14** ¹² *Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundredfold; and the LORD blessed him.* ¹³ *The man began to prosper, and continued prospering until he became very prosperous;* ¹⁴ *for he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and a great number of servants. So the Philistines envied him.*

We are starting back a few verses this week to get the whole picture of what's going before we start in verse 15.

Last week we saw how Isaac had lied like his father did about his wife Rebekah, to Abimelech the king of the Philistines. But God was watching over Isaac and his family and protected them.

Isaac stayed in the land as God had told him to, and the result was that God prospered Isaac just as God said He would.

Then finally at the end of verse 14 we see that the Philistines envied Isaac, or in other words they were jealous of Isaac and how God had prospered him.

How many people become Christians because they see how much you have, as far as possessions goes?

I know you must be laughing, because like me you probably don't have that much, at least as the world sees as being rich.

But my point is, if you look at the life of Jesus, He wasn't rich. In fact He had no money at all. Even when the Pharisees came to Him, and questioning Him about the tax money, He had to ask for a coin because He didn't have a penny to His name.

✠ **Matt 22:19** *"Show Me the tax money." So they brought Him a denarius.*

Jesus was also homeless.

✠ **Matt 8:20** *And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."*

Now honestly, how many homeless, poor people that you see on the streets, would you say that you would want to be like?

But that's what Jesus was, a homeless poor person (earthly riches). He just wasn't a beggar, because He knew God would and did supply all His needs here on earth.

But still when people come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and even now as Christians, we say we want to be like Jesus. Not because He was rich or had a fancy home or chariot. In fact, He had only one garment to wear. But still we want to be like Jesus, not for what He had, but for who He was and is. A man who loved and had

compassion for others; A man willing to give up all, including His life, so that others may live.

But the sad thing is that there are some Christians who God has blessed with the physical things of this world, and others are jealous of them. If you do have a lot, don't let it get you down, rejoice because the Lord has blessed you with the riches. It usually means that God has blessed you because He can trust you with all He has given you. Some may even want to become Christian just to obtain wealth like you may have. Now it's not the fault of those who God has blessed, and it's not a sin to be rich or well off. Rather the fault is in those who are greedy, covet, and lust for the things of this world, and those who want Jesus in their lives only to obtain these riches.

The bible even speaks of those who pretended to be a Christians, or in the case we will look at, may have been a Christian and was caught up in the old life style of money and greed.

✠ **Acts 8:17-20** ¹⁷ *Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.* ¹⁸ *And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money,* ¹⁹ *saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit."* ²⁰ *But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money!"*

So let's start off this weeks study, at the end of verse 14.

✧ **14b** *So the Philistines envied him.*

Let's look at the result of this envy or jealousy.

✧ **Gen 26:15-16** ¹⁵ *Now the Philistines had stopped up all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, and they had filled them with earth.* ¹⁶ *And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we."*

Now why would they stop up the wells?

Think of it as your bank account. If someone put a stop to your account and the money was frozen so you couldn't get to it, then it would be hard with no money to support your family. Or if you had a company that made water filled balloons, and your water supply was cut off. You could no longer make water filled balloons without any water.

In a way, this is what the Philistines were doing. They were stopping the supply of water for Isaac's flock so he couldn't give them water. No water, no flock.

They also showed a fear of God and Isaac. I say this because at the end of verse 12 it says that God blessed Isaac.

Remember from last week's study, that at this time there was a famine in the land and God blessed Isaac in spite of the famine.

Let's see Isaac's response to all of this.

✧ **Gen 26:17-19** ¹⁷ *Then Isaac departed from there and pitched his tent in the Valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. ¹⁸ And Isaac dug again the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham. He called them by the names which his father had called them. ¹⁹ Also Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found a well of running water there.*

Today we would think or say that Isaac tucked his tail and ran. But I don't think that's what he did. The Hebrew word for depart is.

Hebrew word: “*yalak yaw-lak'*” which means to go or walk.

So Isaac just walked away. He didn't run and it does not mention any fear on Isaac's part. You could say he may have heard Jesus voice saying.

✧ **Matt 5:38-42** *"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away."*

“*Yea, but it was Isaac's. His father Abraham dug the well and it was rightfully his.*” you may be thinking.

You're right; it did belong to Isaac, because his father did dig the well. Something also interesting to think about is, that it belonged to Isaac because God gave him the land, including any wells he dug.

But remember that Isaac was rich and in the minds of the Philistines he was mighty also. But we also see that Isaac was humble too.

He may have had the power to higher an army to get rid of the Philistines, or he could have driven them out of the land saying, “God said this land is MINE, so get out of here or I'll sick God on you.”

But Isaac didn't. He was a humble man, with no pride here. He was a peaceable man not wanting to fight but would rather calmly walk away.

I'm almost 60 years old and in the last 60 years I have only been in two physical fights. One when I was about 5 years old because another little boy was picking on a little girl. It lasted about a minute.

The second was when I was around 15 or so, and this was because some friends of ours were trying to make us fight. It also lasted about a minute or so as well.

It's so easy to just turn around and hit someone who you think is doing you wrong. But after it's over, you're feelings are still hurt and so is both of yours body.

Now is that real wisdom? I don't think so.

What material thing has God blessed you with today? Are you holding on to it so tight that you are willing to fight for it then rather lose it?

If God wants someone else to have it then let it go. If not, then God will make sure that it stays with you.

This earth will someday be gone and the Lord will create a new heaven and earth. So if this earth will be gone, so will every single possession that you have, your house, your car, your clothes, your job, your food, everything.

† **Rev 21:1** *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.*

So why hold so tightly to something that will not last forever.

There is only one thing, which we have on this earth that will last forever.

† **Matt 24:35** *Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.*

Jesus says His word will NEVER pass away, so if you need to cling to something, cling to God's word.

So lets read on and see what happens.

✧ **Gen 26:20-21** ²⁰ *But the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours." So he called the name of the well Esek, because they quarreled with him. ²¹ Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that one also. So he called its name Sitnah.*

Esek = Contention, or Quarrel.

Sitnah = Hatred, or Strife.

"OK Steve, Isaac turned the other cheek and they hit that one to; then they hit him in the nose. Jesus didn't teach us to do that right?"

Looking back at Jesus' words in Matthew:

† **But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.**

To resist from the original Hebrew word means:

- 1) *to set one's self against, to withstand, resist, oppose*
- 2) *to set against*

You've heard the term fight fire with fire. But did you know that, that's not in the bible?

When we think of fire we usually think of hell. And what should you fight a fire with? That's right, water. And what does water represent? Right again, the word of God. Don't fight Satan with his own tactics; if you try to, you're just lowering yourself to his level.

But when you fight with the word of God, then Satan has to look up to God's level (because he will NEVER be at God's level!).

It seems there has been a lot of school shootings, and the first response is to get that kid and his parents and kill them. They don't deserve to live.

Let me let you in on a shocking secret. Jesus died for those young boys who fired those guns that killed other kids and adults.

"But wait Steve, Jesus wouldn't allow those boys into heaven if they repented would He? After all they were evil and killed other kids. I even heard that they were satanist?"

Let me have Jesus' half brother (same mother, different Father), James answer that.

‡ **James 2:10-11** *For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.*

If I read this right, it says that if you take a paper clip from work, you are just as guilty as if you committed murder.

"Now wait a minute Steve, you've gone off the deep end with this one."

Have I? What does the bible say about stealing, even if it is a little paperclip?

Ex 20:15 (KJV) *Thou shalt not steal.* Or as it says in the NKJV *You shall not steal.*

Now look at James verse 10 again in the NLT, which is a version said that even a 6th grader could understand.

‡ **James 2:10 (NLT)** *And the person who keeps all of the laws except one is as guilty as the person who has broken all of God's laws.*

Now that's pretty plain. So if you commit a sin you are guilty of all sins. And remember that there is only one sin that will keep you out of Heaven, and that is rejecting Jesus Christ.

So if you have stolen that paperclip, return it if you can. But also be assured that you are forgiven if you have asked Jesus to forgive you.

And even if you murdered someone, or even a lot of people, you will be forgiven if you ask Jesus to forgive you!

- ✠ **1 John 1:9** *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
- ✠ **John 6:37-40** *"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."*

So once again let's see Isaac's response.

- ✠ **Gen 26:22** *And he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he called its name Rehoboth, because he said, "For now the LORD has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."*

Rehoboth = "wide places or streets"

Finally there is peace in the land with no blood shed. But is there really peace?
Let's read on and find out.

- ✠ **Gen 26:23-25** ²³ *Then he went up from there to Beersheba.* ²⁴ *And the LORD appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham's sake."* ²⁵ *So he built an altar there and called on the name of the LORD, and he pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.*

You could call this a time of refreshing, as Isaac rested in the Lord, with the Lord ministering to Isaac.

Just think after all Isaac had went through with the Philistines he needed a rest from the battles.

"Battles, what battles? He just walked away. Isn't that what you said?"

Yes I did, and yes, Isaac did walk away. But the battles I am speaking of are the spiritual battles going on inside of Isaac.

What if Isaac had gone to war with the Philistines and in this war he was killed?

Well eventually they would have taken his wife and sons and killed them also. That would mean an end to God's promise to Abraham and Isaac, because there would be no one to carry on the lineage of Abraham as God promised.

That would also mean that Jesus would not have been born and we would all die in our sins.

I say this because, remember that God told both Abraham and Isaac that all the nations would be blessed through them. And Jesus came from Abraham. (Refer to last week's study)

So I bet Satan was giving Isaac all kinds of thoughts about the Philistines, including thoughts of war. And to have those kind of thoughts are a real struggler or battle. We as Christians also have the same type of struggles today. Maybe not of war, they could be lustful thoughts, or thoughts of greed and power. Maybe you struggle with the thought of your salvation with satan telling you that you're not saved because you're too much of a sinner for God to forgive.

These are all battles that we go through and no one is exempt from these struggles.

✠ **1 Cor 10:13 (NLT)** *But remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it.*

After a long day of struggles with sin you are just exhausted and you need to take time and rest in the Lord, just as Isaac was doing here.

The Lord spoke to Isaac reminding him of His promise to his father as well as Isaac.

That's why it's so important to be in God's word everyday. Spending time in the morning, for your spiritual meal to help keep you strong throughout the day; and at night for a time of rest and refreshing.

Then when you are refreshed, don't forget to thank the Lord as Isaac did. You don't have to build an altar as Isaac did, but give God the praise and glory due Him.

Next week we will see the battles continue for Isaac with the Philistines, and the pack that Isaac made with the Philistines that would affect the children of Israel for years to come.

May God bless you, and remember to stay in God's word, walking in His ways.