

Isaac in Trial and Hardship

Gen 26 ¹There was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines, in Gerar. ²Then the LORD appeared to him and said: “Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land of which I shall tell you. ³Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and your descendants I give all these lands, and I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. ⁴And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; ⁵because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.” ⁶So Isaac dwelt in Gerar.

► In ch26, God calls Isaac to walk in the steps of his father’s _____, trusting the same true & living God, believing the same promises, and facing the same _____.

► Right off the bat, Isaac faces a _____ (1).

– How many are part of Isaac’s clan?

– Where does Isaac move?

► God confirms this move by appearing to Isaac, telling him to remain in Canaan, and renewing the covenant _____ (3-5).

– The promises ultimately refer to _____, the countless multitude united to him by _____, and the inheritance of the _____ – in short the complete _____ of all God’s glorious intentions for man and the earth.

Gal 3 ¹⁶Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “And to your Seed,” who is Christ ... ²⁹And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Rev 7 ⁹After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

Gal 3 ⁷[O]nly those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. ⁸And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, “In you all the nations shall be blessed” ... ²⁶[Y]ou are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus ... ²⁹And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Rom 4 ¹³For the promise that he would be the heir of the world [cosmos] was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Mat 28 ¹⁸“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

► The next trial Isaac faces concerns _____ of harm from the locals over Rebekah (7-11).

⁷And the men of the place asked about his wife. And he said, “She is my sister”; for he was afraid to say, “She is my wife,” because he thought, “lest the men of the place kill me for Rebekah, because she is beautiful to behold.” ⁸Now it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked through a window, and saw, and there was Isaac, showing endearment to Rebekah his wife. ⁹“Quite obviously she is your wife; so how could you say, ‘She is my sister?’” Isaac said to him, “Because I said, ‘Lest I die on account of her.’” ¹⁰And Abimelech said, “What is this you have done to us? One of the people might soon have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt on us.” ¹¹So Abimelech charged all his people, saying, “He who touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.”

– Where have we seen this before?

– What is the fundamental failing?

– How well did it work?

► The third trial Isaac faces is _____ and animosity from the locals due to the prosperity God gave him (12-22).

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

envied him. 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." 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. 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. 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."

► Isaac moves to Beersheba. How does God reassure and bless Isaac, and how does Isaac respond? (23-32)

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 [seed] 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. ²⁶ Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath, one of his friends, and Phichol the commander of his army. ²⁷ And Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, since you hate me and have sent me away from you?" ²⁸ But they said, "We have certainly seen that the LORD is with you. So we said, 'Let there now be an oath between us, between you and us; and let us make a covenant with you, ²⁹ that you will do us no harm, since we have not touched you, and since we have done nothing to you but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the LORD.' " ³⁰ So he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. ³¹ Then they arose early in the morning and swore an oath with one another; and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace. ³² It came to pass the same day that Isaac's servants came and told him about the well which they had dug, and said to him, "We have found water." ³³ So he called it Shebah. Therefore the name of the city is Beersheba to this day.

► Takeaway: It is not in some _____ life that God calls us to worship and walk with him and establish his kingdom over the nations. It is in the real world — this fallen world — and in the midst of real life. It is in the midst of _____ and difficulties and being too busy and one doggone thing after another. This is not a mistake. This is the way God wants it. For Christ died and rose to bring many sons to glory. Even Jesus, God's sinless son, had to overcome

trials, hardship, and opposition to stand up to his full height, become all that it means to be the Son of God, and enter into his glory. How much more is that true for _____ who are sinful?

Heb 2 ¹⁰ For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ¹¹ For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren

► Paul mentions four kinds of hardship in 2Cor 11.23-29:

1) _____ (hostility or threat or danger of the same).

2) _____ hardship (hunger, thirst, lack of proper clothing or shelter; dangerous travels; lack of sleep).

3) Hard and grueling _____ or pressure from the same.

4) _____, concern, and stress over the above, and also over people you care about.

► What is the sin that so easily ensnares us in the midst of trial?

Heb 12 ¹ [L]ay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us ... ³ ... lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.

► How did Jesus overcome in the midst of trial, hardship, and suffering?

Heb 5 ⁷ He ... offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear

– Jesus' obedience was _____ obedience.

– Jesus' obedience was _____ personal obedience, not stoic obedience.