

## EXPOSITION OF GENESIS

### Message #62

### Genesis 26:1-16

A faith that is blessed by God is a faith that will be tested by God and those tests will occur in the trials of everyday life. Mr. John Phillips wrote: “Being a believer does not exempt a person from the ordinary disasters that overtake mankind” (*Exploring Genesis*, p. 216). In fact, God will test a person in these kinds of things, as Dr. Wiersbe said, “a faith that can’t be tested is a faith that can’t be trusted” (*Be Authentic*, p. 15). Satan will tempt to try to bring out the worst, God will test to try and bring out the best.

### **OBEDIENCE TO GOD WILL BRING GREAT BLESSINGS BUT IT WILL NOT MAKE ONE IMMUNE TO SETBACKS, HARDSHIPS AND FAILURES.**

Isaac lived the longest of any patriarch in the Bible living to be 180 years old (Genesis 35:28). However, there is less information about his life than the others. In fact, this is the only chapter in the Bible devoted specifically to his life.

W.H Griffith Thomas wrote: “His (Isaac) was a quiet, peaceful, normal life. He was the ordinary son of a great father, and the ordinary father of a great son. We are accustomed to speak of such lives as commonplace and ordinary, and yet the ordinary life is the “ordered life,” and in the truest sense the “ordained life” (*Genesis*, pp. 237-238).

Ordinary lives can be greatly blessed by God through obedience, however even in an ordinary life, there will always be hardships, obstacles and trials that determine obedience.

**RESULT OF OBEDIENCE #1** - Those who obey have the promise of God’s blessings.  
Genesis 26:1-5

Verse 1 informs us that just because Isaac was in a right relationship with God it did not mean his life was smooth sailing, he is faced with the difficulty of a famine. Verse 1 also makes it clear that before Isaac left for Egypt, he went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines (over 50 miles from Beer-lahai-roi to Gerar) out of respect for the covenant that existed between him and Abraham (20:15; 21:31-34). God had blessed Abimelech with a long life because he had done good to Abraham. Isaac is probably going to say goodbye and inform him he was moving to Egypt. However, verse 2 informs us God stopped Isaac’s plans and informed him that he would specifically direct him.

Verses 3 and 4 promise that if he obeys God he would be blessed with God’s Divine presence (26:3a) which would include the promised land (26:3b); the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant (26:3a), which includes a lineage blessing (26:4a), seed blessings (36:4b), national blessings (26:4c) and international blessings (26:4d).

We may recall that for Abraham all of these blessings were contingent upon him leaving a land (Genesis 12:1), but for Isaac, they were contingent upon him remaining in the land (26:2). Unbelief says run from the problem, belief says stay and learn and trust in the problem.

Lessons:

- 1) It is not those who run in famine times who receive God's blessings but those who stay.
- 2) Abraham's obedience did not mean he was sinless, but he had a heart to obey God's word.
- 3) Not only will a parent pass a sin nature to a child but may also pass on a commitment to God.

**RESULT OF OBEDIENCE #2** - Those who obey face hostile circumstances. Genesis 26:6-7

Isaac's obedience already faced the possibility of starvation, but now it must face the possibility of execution. Rebekah was beautiful and Isaac was afraid that the Philistines would kill him and take her so he decided to lie and say that she was his sister. Isaac was going to have to learn some of the same lessons his dad learned. Strong relationships are always based on truth. Philip Brooks said: "Truth is always strong no matter how weak it looks, and falsehood is always weak no matter how strong it looks."

**RESULT OF OBEDIENCE #3** - Those who obey will be protected by God. Genesis-26:8-11

Abimelech saw Isaac caressing Rebekah and by putting two and two together, he figured it was his wife. Abimelech's mind went back to God's warning in Genesis 20:2-8 and he knew you don't tamper with this family connected to God or you bring death to your own family.

Lessons:

- 1) If we obey God, we need not worry about hostile situations.
- 2) If we obey God, those who hurt us or our family will suffer severe judgment.
- 3) Our lives (including our lies) are lived before others; we do not live to ourselves (Romans 14:7).

**RESULT OF OBEDIENCE #4** - Those who obey will be prospered by God. Gen.26: 12-14a

It may have been a famine time for everyone else, but not Isaac. God dramatically prospered him, including his business (26:12), his reputation (26:13), and his possessions (26:14), both animals and servants.

While the rest of the world was in a famine, Isaac's decision to obey God was bringing him prosperity in every possible way. How could God bless one who just lied? God is faithful to fulfill His covenantal promises even if His people are not faithful to Him (II Timothy 2:11-13).

**RESULT OF OBEDIENCE #5** - Those who obey will be envied by others. Gen. 26:14b-16

The Philistines should have honored Isaac and sought to be properly related to him, but instead they tried to make things as tough for him as possible.

If you faithfully obey God and are being used and blessed by God, don't expect that the vast majority of people around you will rejoice about it. In fact, some will try to make things as miserable as they possibly can. Perhaps you are in a time of spiritual famine or hostile adversity. Don't run, don't quit, stay faithful. Keep obeying, keep trusting and His blessings will come.