

## Letting God be God again

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Genesis 26 is an action packed narrative. Right in the beginning we read that Isaac planned to leave Gerar because of a prevailing famine, yet God would not allow it (V 2). Understandably, Isaac's intention was motivated by the economical challenge to fend for his extended household.

- Lets take it straight from here: How do we tackle economical challenges of that magnitude? Are we inclined to run away from the difficulties? Considering the current deepening financial crisis in the world and the economical meltdown everywhere, do we leave our homes to follow where we expect sufficient provision and economical safety? Or do we listen to what the Lord tells us, even if it means to stay put in tough circumstances?

Well, Isaac stayed. It appears that while the drought still lasted, he obediently planted crops, which the Lord blessed in such a way that he reaped a hundredfold the same year (V 12).

- If my deductions are correct, then this whole event defies any human logic and textbook teaching. You just don't plant crops in times of drought, where water is scarce and the ground too hard, do you? So, would we allow God to ask us to do something so irrational? And would we do it then, even if we became the laughingstock of our society? Or would we brush it aside as nonsense? The Lord is known for asking his people unorthodox things to do. Noah had to build a huge boat without water in sight, Peter had to fish where there could be no fish, ...

Anyway, as time went by Isaac became so wealthy (V 13-14) that his Philistine hosts envied him. Thus they did what envious people do. They started hitting out at Isaac by stopping all the wells his late dad had dug (V 15). And King Abimelech, who also knew Abraham in person, even urged Isaac to leave, because he had become too powerful for them (V 16). So Isaac moved away and had to watch the Philistines confiscating his hard and sustaining work (wells) on several occasions, which caused him to move on time and again, until his adversaries finally gave up (V 17-22).

- If we would be as powerful as king Abimelech considered Isaac to be, would we make use of that power? Would we fight for our inheritance (the wells our dad's dug)? Would we quarrel with those who envy us or rather embrace the discomfort of moving on like Isaac did? In our time fierce competition for economic benefits is considered normal and part of the game. Is it possible that in engaging in this unbiblical approach we rob God of the opportunity to bless us?

Without complaints Isaac pitched his tents wherever the Lord gave him room (V 22). His attitude resulted in an amazing blessing from God (V 25). It didn't take long until king Abimelech rocked up with both his personal adviser and commander of the forces (v 26). In fear of harm they pleaded with Isaac to enter into a sworn agreement, because they had clearly seen the Lord being with him (V 28) and that he was blessed by the Lord (V 29).

- Lets end here, maybe with one more important issue: Does our life and attitude reflect to society what these powerful men saw in Isaac, namely that God was with him and blessed him? Without wanting to be judgmental, I wonder how the world can become attracted to God's people when their lives don't display His greatness and power? And how can a life display the Lord's greatness and power if the person prefers to blend in to the accepted lifestyle of society in fear of offending someone? Perhaps its time for us to be different again, radically different, allowing God to be God in our lives again, so that people take note?