

LESSON 4

GODLY PATIENCE (ISAAC)

CENTRAL TRUTH: Godly patience demonstrates Christian maturity.

MEMORY VERSE: You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. – **Hebrews 10:36.**

LESSON TEXT

Genesis 26:12-20, 27-29, 32-33

Genesis 26:

¹² Isaac planted crops in that land and the same year reaped a hundredfold, because the LORD blessed him. ¹³ The man became rich, and his wealth continued to grow until he became very wealthy. ¹⁴ He had so many flocks and herds and servants that the Philistines envied him. ¹⁵ So all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the time of his father Abraham, the Philistines stopped up, filling them with earth. ¹⁶ Then Abimelek said to Isaac, "Move away from us; you have become too powerful for us." ¹⁷ So Isaac moved away from there and encamped in the Valley of Gerar, where he settled. ¹⁸ Isaac reopened the wells that had been dug in the time of his father Abraham, which the Philistines had stopped up after Abraham died, and he gave them the same names his father had given them. ¹⁹ Isaac's servants dug in the valley and discovered a well of fresh water there. ²⁰ But the herders of Gerar quarreled with those of Isaac and said, "The water is ours!" So he named the well Esek,^[1] because they disputed with him.

²⁷ Isaac asked them, "Why have you come to me, since you were hostile to me and sent me away?" ²⁸ They answered, "We saw clearly that the LORD was with you; so we said, 'There ought to be a sworn agreement between us'—between us and you. Let us make a treaty with you ²⁹ that you will do us no harm, just as we did not harm you but always treated you well and sent you away peacefully. And now you are blessed by the LORD."

³² That day Isaac's servants came and told him about the well they had dug. They said, "We've found water!" ³³ He called it Shibah,^[1] and to this day the name of the town has been Beersheba.

INTRODUCTION

How would you react when you are opposed by the people you live with? Will you fight back or relying on your physical strength or patiently seek God's intervention. Our lesson today introduces us to the secret of Isaac's victory over the philistines when he settled on their land during a period of hunger.

LESSON

Isaac is now a grown-up and God asked him to settle in the land of philistine to escape the famine at the time. Isaac obeyed and settled among the philistines. He became rich as a result of God's blessing. The philistines became envious of his wealth and began to fear him. The philistines thought that he might take over their land as a result of his great wealth. Therefore Abimelech, the king of the philistines asked Isaac to leave their land. Isaac left to settle on a land where his father Abraham had previously settled. He dug wells for water on his new settlement but the philistines fought him over those wells. Isaac did not resist them. He left those wells for them and dug new ones elsewhere. The philistines fought him again. Isaac left and for the third time dug other wells which the philistines did not lay claim on. In all these confrontations, Isaac demonstrated self-control and maintained the peace, although he was strong enough to fight the philistines and lay claim to the wells. This patient attitude demonstrated by Isaac showed how committed he was to live in peace with the philistines and to seek God's intervention.

Isaac did not rely on his physical strength. He looked to God, and God indeed rewarded his patience by giving him peace. No one claimed the wells he dug for the third time. When the philistines realized that the hand of God was upon Isaac, they sought to live at peace with him because they knew that with God on his side there was no way they could defeat him.

Isaac's attitude must be an example for us to follow. When we put our faith in God and patiently wait for his intervention he will surely give us the desired victory over our enemies or detractors. They will seek to live at peace with us because the favour and the power of God will be evident in our lives as it was in the case of Isaac.

LIFE APPLICATION

1. Can Christians expect God to reward them with wealth what kinds as he did for the patriarchs? Why or why not?
2. What are the promises and blessings of the New Testament covenant?
3. What kinds of blessings will Christians receive in this life?
4. How could Isaac be so patient and not fight for what was rightly his? How does this apply to Christians today?

DAILY BIBLE READING

Monday;

Reward of patience

(Psalm 40: 1-4).

Tuesday;

Wisdom of patience

(Ecclesiastes 7:7-12)

Wednesday;

source of patience

(Romans 5: 1-7)

Thursday;

Benefits of Patience.

(Romans 15:1-7)

Friday;

Testing brings patience.

(James 1:2-8)

Saturday;

Instruction in Patience.

(James 5: 7-11).