

Shalom, Be Still

Shalom,

Genesis 25:19—28:9 is the Torah portion that is called **Toldot**, or “**Generations**”, in the Hebrew Scriptures. It relates the story of Isaac, the heir of Abraham who had inherited herds, flocks, and great wealth from his father, and continues into the lives of his sons, Jacob and Esau.

¹ Now there was a famine in the land—aside from the previous famine that happened in Abraham's days. So Isaac went to King Abimelech of the Philistines, to Gerar. ² Then Adonai appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt. Dwell in the land about which I tell you. ³ Live as an outsider in this land and I will be with you and bless you—for to you and to your seed I give all these lands—and I will confirm My pledge that I swore to Abraham your father. ⁴ I will multiply your seed like the stars of the sky and I will give your seed all these lands. And in your seed all the nations of the earth will continually be blessed, ⁵ because Abraham listened to My voice and kept My charge, My mitzvot, My decrees, and My instructions”. (Genesis 26:1-5 TLV)

Circumstances seem to be the primary way people of today, even many believers, allow themselves to be tossed about. There is often a disregard or, at best, a mingled approach to receiving direction. If somebody offers their point of view about things, people are often swayed to pay attention to those things rather than **explicitly, exclusively, adhering to the Word of God and the direction of the Holy Spirit.**

¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. ¹⁶ But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, (2 Timothy 2:15-16 ESV)

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (2 Timothy 3:16 KJV)

For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. (1 Corinthians 2:2 ESV)

It's really easy for us to live in this world and allow ourselves to be glued to the news reports on television or to the myriad of posts available that all tell us what to believe and how to act about every conceivable situation that may come before us. **In contrast to the obedience of Isaac in staying where YHWH had set him, many believers today seem to think that circumstances are God's way of leading them, and they become so fixed on what is occurring naturally and what others want them to think, that they never yield themselves to hear the Good Shepherd speaking, nor do they allow God's Holy Spirit to lead them.** When we listen to people, we may be hearing Satan's report and get things in backward order, that is seeking first all the things they need to feed, clothe, house, and protect themselves, and then giving what's left to seeking God. **Seeking God first is the kingdom way of living and keeps things in their proper order.**

³³ **But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.** (Matthew 6:31-33 TLV)

God's way of doing things will often contradict our logical way of thinking and doing. It will defy conventional human practicality, but without the wisdom of God being revealed to us and followed, we will just react to the circumstances, and miss out on the blessing that the Father has designed for us. **We fail to be in the right place at the right time,** because we find ourselves being tossed about with things that we really have no control over, or we let our minds take us to what seems good at the time, and thus we yield to a convenient course of action that makes natural sense, but leads us away from **the place of blessing the God has already prepared for us.**

⁸ *“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways.” It is a declaration of Adonai.* ⁹ *“For as the heavens are higher than earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts”.* (Isaiah 55:8-9 TLV)

Isaac understood what the LORD was instructing him to do, and He was obedient to carry out those instructions. We read **that Isaac, not only stayed in the land, but he also planted seed in a time when planting was illogical due to a lack of rain.**

¹² *Then Isaac sowed in that land and in that year reaped a hundredfold. Adonai blessed him* ¹³ *and the man became great and continued to become greater until he became very great.* ¹⁴ *He acquired livestock of sheep and livestock of cattle, and numerous servants. Then the Philistines envied him.* (Genesis 26:12-14 TLV)

God had told Isaac to stay in the land, and that He would be with him. It is much better to be in a place of trouble **with God** than to be in comfortable circumstances without Him. **As believers in Messiah, the Lord promises He will never leave us, but if we override His instructions, we can move ourselves from the place where He commands His blessing.** Isaac stayed where God had set him, and because he knew he belonged there, he trusted and prospered. He knew he was in the place where the LORD had promised to bless him and his children after him, and to eventually give them all the land He had promised. **The blessing of the LORD reversed all the negative effects of the famine and caused his good seed to produce the best possible harvest.**

People are prone to get things in backward order. It is common, in our day, for people to move across the country to improve their economic situation, and then we hear them say, “We are looking for a church, or a congregation that meets our specifications.” In the plan of God for people's lives, seeking Him first indicates that His ministry in each of His individual Body parts should come first.

I notice that many of the things I hear today tend to bring agitation into my life. They do not work shalom in me. That should be an immediate sign that we need to change what we are hearing. **The Holy Spirit will always speak in shalom, even when outward events are alarming.** If need be,

He will direct you to action, but **always in shalom**. Don't allow anything, nor any report to rob you of God's promises working in you. Don't allow prophets of doom to frighten you. Never fear! Cast down every imagination that the enemy tries to build in your mind with evil reports. **Trust God! He will direct your path. Set your mind, solely on Him.**

³ You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. ⁴ Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock. (Isaiah 26:3-4 ESV)

⁸ Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. (Philippians 4:8 ESV)

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In perfect shalom,
Terry