



The Zion Letter

The Monthly Newsletter of For Zion's Sake Ministries, Inc.
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Prospering In a Time of Famine

“Now there was a famine in the land, besides the previous famine that had occurred in the days of Abraham. So Isaac went to Gerar, to Abimelech king of the Philistines. The Lord appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land of which I shall tell you. Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.... Now Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold.

And the Lord blessed him, and the man became rich, and continued to grow richer until he became

very wealthy;” (Genesis 26: 1-4, 12-13). Through much prayer recently the Lord reminded me of this passage for a few reasons I believe. To begin, I am confident we must not have a **“Spirit of fear/timidity, but of power and love and discipline,”** (see 2 Tim 1:7) as we go through the Covid-19 plague these last weeks and months ahead; this may not be an easy task for someone who lives paycheck to paycheck, lost their job or who is a high risk person.

Numerous times in both the old Covenant and the New Covenant Scripture God tells us **“Fear Not!”** When we walk in fear, we essentially handcuff God from a blessing us for, **“A double minded man is unstable in ALL his ways... For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord,”** (James 1:8 & 7). Friend, the story of Isaac overcoming his fear was about financial prosperity; God speaks



a lot about money in his Word, such as the parable of the talents in Matthew 25, but while God wants us to prosper financially (even in the midst of this pandemic and terrible economic downturn) He also wants us to first prosper spiritually! Many fear this Wuhan Chinese Corona Virus bomb that has been dropped on the world and is responsible for the reported deaths of over 100,000 people and counting, however, as I said, while God wants us to prosper financially like Isaac in the famine, He tells us to begin Spiritually, **“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you”** (Matthew 6:33). God knows that if we can't take care of ourselves materially, how will be able to minister to others? We will be too busy looking for our next meal or drink. This Word is for believers and unbelievers. The same is true spiritually; if you aren't concerning yourself with your walk with the Lord you can't minister to others spiritually either.

In addition to the fears and struggles I mentioned above, the stock market has tanked and is struggling to come back, businesses are still closed, people are losing their jobs, and some may lose their homes as many are unable to pay their mortgages and rent. Meanwhile the government is spending our money in the trillions of dollars for business loans, paycheck loans, etc. This is putting us all in debt up to our grandchildren's eyeballs. Debt is not good for our economy, *Proverbs 22:7* says, **“The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower becomes the lender's slave.”** Bailouts and stimulus packages are questionable, but I suppose it is necessary for the government to step in; ah, but if only they spent the money where it was needed most. What can you do to make it in times like these? The Bible has answers for every situation imaginable. There

were numerous times of famine (a biblical word for "recession" or "depression") in the Bible. In a time of famine, God sent the prophet Elijah to a brook where he was fed by ravens until the brook dried up. Then God sent him to the widow of Zarephath who provided for him until the famine was over (see 1 Kings 17:7-16). Abraham's son, Isaac, also lived during a time of famine.

Isaac was afraid to stay in the Promised Land during that time of famine. He wanted to pack up his things and move to Egypt. Perhaps he'd heard there were better crops there or more opportunity, but God appeared to Isaac and told him to stay in the Promised Land. So Isaac settled in Gerar. Gerar is located in what would be known today as Gaza. Gaza is part of the land God promised to give to Abraham and his descendants forever. Isaac obeyed God. He defied reason by staying in a land of famine, he sowed in that land and he reaped a hundred-fold in the same year! The Bible even tells us he became very wealthy.

ISAAC'S FEAR:

At first Isaac wanted to flee the Promised Land! He was fearful that he and his family might not survive the famine. Isaac's worry overwhelmed his faith in God -- the same God who had brought his father, Abraham, into the Promised Land many years before, the same God who promised to bless Abraham and his descendants and give them that land forever. Because of his fear, Isaac took his eyes off God and focused on his circumstances. He worried about the economy, the drought, the shortage of food. Are you focused on God these days or are the troubles of this world causing you to worry? Franklin Roosevelt once said, "***The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.***"

The Pandemic and the economic trouble the world is experiencing are surely brought on by greed, the idolatry of materialism, sin, and people generally forgetting about God. But it is fear that will make the situation worse. It is fear that caused people to run out and begin hoarding cleaning supplies, toilet paper, and other items. Now I'm not talking about making reasonable purchases of a few extra items to have on hand, I'm talking about people going from store to store buying every bottle of sanitizer and every roll of toilet paper, disregarding



Abraham's well in Beersheva

their neighbor. Fear causes people to put business plans on hold, to not invest in that new business venture or to build that new house, and it is fear that causes many people to make the mistake of not giving to the Lord. The worst thing people can do because of fear is to stop giving to the Lord in a time of famine, even if they must give less. I never stop paying my tithe nor stop helping where I can. I pray and ask God, "Who can I help?" He always puts people in my path and our ministry. Isaac was afraid and it's normal to be afraid during times like these, but we mustn't stay afraid. Isaac overcame his fear and he prospered in spite of the famine. You can too.

ISAAC'S FAITH

The opposite of fear is faith. Isaac was ready to pack his bags and move to Egypt when God appeared to him. The Bible doesn't tell us whether Isaac sought the Lord in prayer and supplication before God appeared to him, or whether the Lord just showed up. I'm inclined to believe that Isaac had been praying and seeking God for some answers when the Lord showed up. Either way, God appeared to Isaac and told him not to leave the Promised Land. God said, "***Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham.***" (See Gen 26:3). To paraphrase, God was telling Isaac not to worry, but that He was going to feed, clothe, shelter, and protect Isaac and his family. Now that's a promise you can take to the bank! Isaac believed God. He stayed in the Promised Land. Verse 12-13 of Genesis 26 says, "***Now Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. And the LORD blessed him, and the man became rich, and continued to grow richer until he became very wealthy.***"

Isaac didn't just sit still and wait for manna to fall from heaven, he sowed. He planted seed. Notice we don't know what kind of seed he sowed. Perhaps it was literally crops that he planted. Perhaps he invested in a land purchase to grow his livestock; he was a shepherd. Whatever he did, God blessed him for his obedience and his faith. Isaac trusted God to stay in a land of famine. Isaac was obedient to do what God said and God blessed him for it. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "***Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.***" Isaac accepted the terms of the covenant God made

with his father Abraham and because he was in covenant with God; God had to take care of him!

God's Covenant With You:

Have these troubled times got you worried? Are you in Messiah? Are you in Christ? Galatians 3:29 says, **"And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise."** This means what God did for Isaac – He is bound by covenant to do for you! But first we must seek the kingdom God and His righteousness before worrying about food and clothing and wealth (see Matthew 6:33). Yeshua (Jesus) said not to worry about food, clothing and material things, but that God will take care of those needs (Matthew 6:25-32). If you have trusted in Messiah Yeshua for your salvation, then you are in covenant relationship with the God of Israel and He is bound by His covenant promises to bless you and to take care of you just as He took care of Isaac! Speak those promises over yourself and your family; but don't forget Jeremiah 29:11.

God will keep His covenant promises to us, but we must live by faith and not by fear. We must seek God and his kingdom. We must seek His guidance and obey Him. He can't bless us if we are disobedient. Isaac trusted God enough to stay in a land of famine. We must trust God for our provision during hard times too. Isaac obeyed God. We too must obey God by doing what He asks us to do and by going where He asks us to go even when it doesn't make sense. Friend, God has a wonderful plan for your life; if you don't know what it is, look to His word. **"Seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul."** (Deut. 4:29).



Opportunities:

My sons were kicking around being out of school, so we had a motivational talk. I believe that is was God who suggested to me that they begin a social media page called **"Help your neighbor Tri-Cities Covid-19"**; If you click on the Covid-19 button on Facebook and scroll way down past all the information you will see people in need of food, rent money, and electric bills paid; some people in need are parents of 5 children, some are elderly or sick, and some are needing somebody just to go get them groceries. I figured my sons are tech savvy, that they could start a page and I could connect them with haves and have nots and let God do the rest! So far they haven't taken me up on my idea, but perhaps somebody reading this will?

The second opportunity is for you to prosper like Isaac. Jeremiah 29:11 says God wants to prosper you, to give you a hope and a future. Psalm 118 is a psalm of God's call for Israel's prosperity! There are many other verses, Deuteronomy chapter 8 is another one. Warren Buffet is no man of God, but he does have his eccentric remarks as the greatest investor of the 20th century: Buffett said, speaking of the stock market, *"When people are greedy, be fearful, when people are fearful, be greedy"*. Well I'm no expert investor (I'm not telling you where to invest) but I predicted the markets would rise four years ago when President Trump was elected and they did; then I watched from the sidelines and lost the chance to make 40% in one year all because I had nobody to advise me. I'm not telling you where to put your money, I'm just telling you that this is a time of opportunity for those who have money or talents for God. You just need to pray where and what to sow in this time of famine and plague. This is an opportunity for God's people to do great things!

Conclusion:

God isn't worried about the economy or the Covid-19 Virus. In the plagues of Egypt all the plagues went away, some very quickly when Moses prayed; God's people were spared eight out of the ten plagues in the land of Goshen. This too shall pass. In God's kingdom there is abundance and never any lack for those who are abiding in Him. That does not mean

Staying Connected with FOR ZION'S SAKE MINISTRIES

During this time of "Social Distancing"

we are currently holding services on **Livestream feed** (at www.forzionsake.org)
and **Facebook live at For Zion's Sake Ministries FB page**

Periodically Rabbi Joe will host "Meetings from his home" via Facebook-live

All of these links may be found via our web page www.forzionsake.org

We are also archiving his Facebook meetings on our webpage under the
Tab **"Links"** > **"Word from the Rabbi"**

You **do not have to have a Facebook account to view these messages;**

Yes, it will ask you to sign up/in but all you need to do is click on the little x {full screen mode} on the bottom right side of the video and it will open his previously aired message full screen.

Please be patient as we are still working on these new changes

times will not be challenging, but King David said he had never seen the children of the righteous begging bread. If you are in covenant with God through a personal relationship with Yeshua (Jesus), then God is obligated by His own promises to take care of you as He took care of Isaac. But you must obey Him and you must overcome fear with faith. If you have fear, try speaking the word of God to your fear with verses such as (Proverbs 3:5-6, 2 Timothy 1:7). Yeshua said, **"I am the vine and you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing," John 15:5.** To abide in Him means to walk closely with the lord in prayer and obedience to His word. To abide in Him is to obey Him. While others are running scared, you can prosper in a time of famine. Pray and act, then pray more.

Love,
Rabbi Joe and Dawn

Click the live streaming link on our website to join our abbreviated weekly service!

www.forzionsake.org

Stand With Israel!!
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Lion of Judah Messianic Congregation

Saturdays 12:00pm***



Currently we are holding Online meetings due to the Covid-19 virus