

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule
of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)

March 28, 2010

Isaac's wells

by David King

"Now the Philistines had stopped up all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, and they had filled them with earth. And Abimelech said to Isaac, 'Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we.' Then Isaac departed from there and pitched his tent in the Valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac dug again the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham. He called them by the names which his father had called them. Also Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found a well of running water there. But the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, 'The water is ours.' So he called the name of the well Esek, because they quarreled with him. Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that one also. So he called its name Sitnah. And he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he called its name Rehoboth, because he said, 'For now the Lord has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land'" (Gen. 16:15-22).

The main props in this story are Isaac's numerous water wells. In this dry land where Isaac and his neighbors lived, water was a priceless commodity. So the wells, dug at great expense, were essential to life itself. Notice that they even gave the wells names. Like kids and pets, these wells were a part of the family.

But these wells did not stay in the family. Isaac's neighbors contested ownership of the wells, and Isaac had to give them up and dig

new wells. Throughout history, water rights have always been a bone of contention, so it is not surprising to read of such conflict here.

What is surprising, however, is Isaac's reaction to the complaints of his neighbors. Recall that one of his neighbors said of Isaac, "You are much mightier than we" (v. 16). In other words, in the absence of a strong local government that could adjudicate the dispute, Isaac had the means to defend his claim to the wells. But he did not do that. Instead, he meekly surrendered the wells, moved on to other areas, and dug new ones.

Isaac was not a coward. Rather, he was what the New Testament calls a peacemaker (Matt. 5:9; Jas. 3:18; Rom. 12:18). As an alien living among these locals, Isaac knew that pressing his claim to the wells, even though he had grounds for doing so, would breed resentment that would make it impossible to coexist with these people. He could have defended his wells; but he would have spent the rest of his life in constant battle with his neighbors. The better option was to move to a place where he could live in peace, even though it cost him more trouble to find it.

Isaac's behavior is an example for us to follow today. The fact that I have a just cause does not necessarily mean it is in the best interest of all involved to press that claim. A peacemaker is one who is "willing to yield," especially when other options are available (Jas. 3:17-18). Sometimes the higher path is the more costly path; but the payoff—peace with others, favor with God—will be worth it.