

# LESSON 1

## ISAAC REFUSES TO FIGHT

### BEFORE YOU TEACH

#### Digging Wells

Water is a critical component of life. It makes up 60% of our bodies. Humans can live an average of two months without food but only one week without water. Even though water is essential to our survival, we tend to take our water supply for granted. When we need water, we turn on the faucet and we instantly have as much water as we need. We can even choose between hot and cold water.

In the semi-arid climate of Palestine, water was priceless. It was paramount for the subsistence of humans, flocks, and plants. In a land where water was scarce, wells were extremely important.

When we think of wells in early Biblical times, we have mental images of wells surrounded by a large circle of stones. However, most wells in Isaac's day were simple holes in the ground. Wells were more often a hole in a dried-up riverbed, rather than an excavated column going deep into the earth.

Wells were an important part of early family life. When a man dug a well, he was doing more than providing water for his family and livestock. He was indicating that he liked the location and that he planned on staying there for a while.

#### Well Names

Each of the wells Isaac dug had a special name that described the situation he faced at the time. The first was called Esek, which meant "contention, calumny, or wrong." The herdsmen of Gerar argued that the well Isaac's servants had dug actually belonged to them. Isaac gave up this well and did not fuel or prolong the conflict.

When the same herdsmen laid claim on the second well, Isaac named it Sitnah, which meant "strife or hatred." (It is interesting to note that this word has the same root as the word "Satan.") Isaac also turned over this well and did not let the injustice take root in his heart and cause resentment.

Surprisingly, there was no conflict over the third well. Isaac called it Rehoboth, which meant "wide or broad space." Isaac understood that by choosing peace over conflict, God had rewarded him by providing not only a third well, but also enough space so that there would be no tension with his neighbors.

After Isaac moved to the city of Beersheba, his servants dug another well. By then, Isaac and Abimelech had made a vow to respect each other and to maintain peace. Therefore, the last well was named Shebah, which means "oath."

#### What Can We Learn from Isaac?

There are times in our life when circumstances may cause us to move on. Perhaps it's a move to a new area, a job change, or even a change

#### BIBLE TEXT

Genesis 26:13-33

#### BIBLE TRUTH

God blesses the peacemakers.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To understand that we must not be quarrelsome, but rather overcome evil with good.
2. To understand that when we do good and not fight back, God will bless us.
3. To understand that we can show love to our neighbors.

#### MEMORY VERSE

"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

(Romans 12:21)

#### PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Beloved Lord, we thank You for letting us come together to learn how to be peacemakers. In today's lesson, please help us follow Isaac's example. You blessed him because he refused to fight. You blessed him because he repaid others, who had treated him badly, with goodness. We ask You to give us opportunities to be patient and kind to those around us. Hallelujah! Amen.

in our family situation. Isaac should be commended because he realized that God would provide him with a different place to live. So instead of getting hostile and violent, he accepted what God was doing in his life. He decided to move on.

God has allowed circumstances to occur in our life, and instead of getting angry or frustrated, we need to be like Isaac and place ourselves in God's hands. Do you find yourself moaning and complaining to God over your circumstances? Have you lost that spiritual joy? Do you realize that God has a place of rest for you? Maybe all you

can see is your troubles and your sorrow. Perhaps you have become angry and frustrated. We must be willing to continue traveling down the road God has prepared for us.

The only way to understand God's will is for us to be willing to spend time in prayer and seek God's divine direction. In Genesis 26:24, God gives Isaac the promise of assurance and future blessings. As a result of this clear direction from God, Isaac does four things in verse 25—he builds an altar, he calls upon the Lord, he pitches his tent, and his servants dig a well.

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## UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

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Students at this age tend to immediately react to emotional stimulus rather than to patiently hold back, reflect, and formulate a logical plan of action. For example, if one of your students is hit by a peer, their immediate reaction would be to defend themselves or to attack their opponent. Sometimes, the situation is the result of a misunderstanding, but the student's defensive reaction aggravates the conflict.

As teachers, our aim is to help our students learn to consistently act in the correct manner. They should

understand that God expects them to be patient, generous, kind, and peace-loving, regardless of whether someone is injuring or offending someone. We can explain that even if the students have been treated unfairly, God watches their behavior and rewards them accordingly. Although the students are maturing, they still need appropriate guidance. Share specific scenarios they may encounter and discuss what they can say or do to show patience and kindness.

### VOCABULARY

**prosperous:** to be wealthy or to have good fortune

**envious:** to be jealous

**quarrel:** to argue, to fight

**contention:** rivalry, competition

**strife:** trouble, conflict

**pitch:** to set up

**oath:** promise, covenant

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## BIBLE STORY

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Preparation: Prepare pictures of four wells, an altar, and a tent. Use tacks, magnets, or tape to stick them to the whiteboard.

### Isaac

Do you remember who Isaac is? Isaac was the son of Abraham. He was an obedient son. He listened to his father and married Rebekah, even though he had never met her before. He trusted that God would provide what he needed. He learned to obey God. Over time, Isaac became a very prosperous man. He owned a large group of flocks, herds, and servants. At that time, he lived in a land called Gerar. The Philistines also lived in this land. Their king was called Abimelech. When the Philistines saw Isaac become richer and richer, they became envious of his great riches. They didn't want to see someone become rich in their land. Maybe they thought he would become so rich that he might take over the land one day. So finally, King Abimelech told Isaac to leave.

Isaac moved to the Valley of Gerar. This area was not too far from where he was living before [teacher may want to show a map of the coastal region, where the Philistines lived]. Remember that Isaac had many people and animals to feed. They needed water to drink and wash in. In Isaac's time, there were no faucets that they could just turn on. When a family moved to a new place, one of the most important jobs was to look for a well. What might happen if the entire family and animals had no water for more than a few days? [Allow students to answer.] So Isaac's servants began looking for places to dig up wells in the land they had just moved to. Actually, Isaac's father, Abraham, had dug up some wells in the land a long time ago, but the Philistines had filled in and covered them up. Wells were usually holes in the ground, so the Philistines probably poured a lot of sand or dirt into the ground to fill them up. Isaac decided to dig up these old wells and call them by their old names.

### Isaac's Servants Dig

One day, Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found a well of running water there. [Stick the first well onto the whiteboard.] Can you imagine how happy Isaac must have been to find a source of water? [Ask students to share a time when they were thirsty.] Even though he had been sent away from his old home by the Philistines, he had found a well that could feed his family, his servants, his flocks, and his herds.

Just as Isaac's servants were rejoicing over their good luck, the herdsmen of Gerar came and argued that the well was theirs. How disappointed Isaac must have been! He called the first well "Esek." (Write the name under the picture of the first well.) Esek means "contention." Contention means competition or rivalry. Other herdsmen were fighting for the well and this is probably why Isaac

gave it a special name.

Even though he must have been sad, Isaac didn't fight with the herdsmen over the well. He let them have this well. Do you think it was easy for him to give up something that belonged to him? [Ask students what their favorite things/toys are. Would they give them up easily?] Isaac didn't have to give up the well since his servants dug it up. It was hard work and it belonged to Isaac. But Isaac wanted to remain peaceful with his neighbors. So his servants went to another place and dug a second well. [Stick the second well onto the whiteboard.]

### The Second Well

They were happy that they had found another well. Then, they noticed some people coming over to this second well. Who could it be? Yes, you're right! It was the herdsmen of Gerar again. They claimed that this well also belonged to them. How would you feel if someone kept taking things that belonged to you? Raise your right hand if you think you would feel like hurting that person. Raise your left hand if you think you would try to forgive that person. What did Isaac do? He let them have this second well too. Isaac called the well "Sitnah." [Write the name under the picture of the second well.] Sitnah means "hatred or strife." Strife means trouble. Why do you think Isaac gave this second well this special name? [Allow students to share.] Since Isaac moved into this new area, he had only met with trouble. He hadn't been able to dig a well and keep it without people fighting him for it.

### The Third Well

After digging two wells, and losing both of them to the herdsmen of Gerar, what did Isaac do? Did he give up? Did he complain to God? No, he went to another place and started digging another well. [Stick the picture of the third well on the whiteboard.] If you were in Isaac's place, would you have done the same thing or would you have given up? [Let students answer after raising their hands.] Do you know what happened this time? Show me a thumbs down if you think the herdsmen also took this well. Show me a thumbs up if you think Isaac got to keep this well. Well, nobody came to argue about the well this time. By moving away and digging the third well, there was enough room for Isaac and his neighbors. Isaac named this well "Rehoboth," which means a "wide space." [Write the name under the picture of the third well.] Finally, Isaac had a well that could be used by his family and his flocks.

Later on, Isaac moved to the city of Beersheba. There, God appeared to him and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham's sake." How wonderful it must have been for Isaac to see and hear God blessing him after having been

mistreated so many times.

### Build, Pitch, Dig

After this miraculous meeting with God, Isaac did three important things. First, he built an altar so he could worship God. [Stick the picture of the altar on the whiteboard.] Second, he pitched his tent so he and his family could live there. [Stick the picture of the tent on the whiteboard.] Third, his servants dug a fourth well so that they would have a supply of water. [Stick the picture of the last well on the whiteboard.]

As Isaac was settling into his home, he got a surprise visitor one day. King Abimelech came to see Isaac, along with his friend Ahuzzath, and the commander of his army, Phichol. Isaac asked them why they had come, since it seemed that they hated him and had sent him away. They replied, "We have certainly seen that the Lord is with you. So we said, 'Let there now be an oath between us, between you and us; and let us make a covenant with you, that you will do us no harm, since we have not touched you, and since we have done nothing to you but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the Lord.'" Even those who had hurt Isaac knew that God had blessed him for not fighting and for letting others take

over his wells. They wanted to make an agreement so there would be peace between them.

If you were Isaac, what would you have done to those who had mistreated you so many times? Would you have been angry or frustrated with them? Would you have wanted to pay them back for their bad behavior? Probably, but that is not what God would want us to do. In the Bible, God has told us that we should treat our enemies well. Since Isaac knew that God had seen and blessed him for his good deeds, his patience, and his kindness, he did not punish his offenders. Instead, he prepared a feast for them and enjoyed it with his new friends. The next day, they swore to respect each other and keep the peace.

### The Fourth Well

After King Abimelech and his friends left, Isaac's servants came to tell him that they had finished digging the fourth well. Isaac decided to call this well "Shebah." [Write the name under the last well.] Shebah means "oath or promise." This way, everyone who heard about the well would know that Isaac had made a promise to maintain peace with those who had once mistreated him.

## CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. **Why did Abimelech send Isaac away?** Because he grew prosperous and the Philistines were envious of him.
2. **Who came to argue over two of Isaac's wells?** The herdsmen of Gerar.
3. **What was the name that Isaac gave to the first well that he dug?** "Esek." **What was the meaning of this well?** It meant "contention," which signifies competition or rivalry.
4. **What was the name that Isaac gave to the second well?** "Sitnah." **What was the meaning of this well?** It meant "hatred" or "trouble/strife."
5. **Why did Isaac give away his first two wells?** He wanted to overcome evil with good.
6. **What did God promise Isaac?** God would bless Isaac and multiply his descendants.
7. **What three things did Isaac do after he moved to Beersheba?** He built an altar, pitched a tent, and dug a well.
8. **What did Isaac do with Abimelech and his friends?** He prepared a feast for them. He made an oath to maintain peace.

## MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.  
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

**"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (Romans 12:21)**

## HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

- |           |              |
|-----------|--------------|
| 1. Shebah | 6. Gerar     |
| 2. well   | 7. Abimelech |
| 3. Isaac  | 8. altar     |
| 4. Sitnah | 9. tent      |
| 5. peace  | 10. oath     |

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## SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

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### **God blesses those who overcome evil with good.**

#### **1. Have self-control, walk away, and keep the peace.**

Isaac's servants had moved into a new territory. Part of moving into new territory involved finding water for the flocks under their care. As Isaac's men dug wells, the herdsmen living in the new territory argued with them and kept claiming the wells as their own.

Instead of fighting back for the wells that were rightfully theirs, Isaac and his people just kept moving on and digging more wells, until the herdsmen of Gerar left them alone. Isaac exercised self-control and didn't fight for his rights. Isaac and his servants set a good example for all of us about what to do when someone picks a fight with us. The best thing to do is to walk away and keep the peace. What will you do the next time someone picks a fight with you?

#### **2. When we overcome evil with good, God will bless us.**

Isaac dug his first well and named it "Esek," which means "contention" (Gen 26:20). The second well was named "Sitnah," which means "hatred" (Gen 26:21). After that, God appeared to Isaac (Gen 26:24-25). "'And the LORD appeared to him the same night and said, 'I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham's sake.' So he built an altar there and called on the name of the LORD, and he pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.'" This passage is very interesting! Isaac was meeting the same God that his father had met. God said He would bless him. God saw that Isaac did not fight, and instead overcame evil with good. Because of this, God appeared to Isaac and promised him many blessings. If you're insulted or hurt by someone, remember that God will reward you if you choose to overcome evil with good. Think of this verse, "I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you." This can help you remember that God is always with you and that He will bless you if you decide to overcome evil with good.

#### **3. Show love to your neighbors.**

How did Isaac show love to his neighbors? Isaac didn't fight or argue with his neighbors. Isaac moved and dug new wells. We can see that Isaac chose to show love to his neighbors, instead of arguing with them. We can choose to show love to our neighbors, too. When our neighbor does something that bothers us, we should not respond in anger. Think of one nice thing you can do for them.

Who are our neighbors? They are the people who live on our street, our friends, and our family. In fact, everyone is our neighbor! How can we show love to our neighbors? We can go visit them and cook some food for them to enjoy! We can also play with them and most importantly, share with them the gospel of Jesus Christ. Invite them to come to church!

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 ACTIVITIES
 

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**1 My Well of Peace**

**Objective:** To understand the importance of being a peacemaker.

**Materials**

- Small pebbles/rocks
- Blue crepe paper
- White glue
- Brown modeling clay
- Thick cardboard coasters
- Newspapers

**Preparations**

1. Place newspapers on the tables in case of accidental spills.
2. Divide the materials so that each student has one coaster, a handful of small pebbles, a small container of glue, a small chunk of brown modeling clay, and a 4" x 4" sheet of blue crepe paper.

**Instructions**

1. Using the coaster as a base, take the brown modeling clay and make a circular border on the coaster. Lightly press the clay down so that it is attached to the coaster.
2. Line the top of the clay border with glue.
3. Place pebbles on the clay border, on top of the glue.
4. Put glue on top of the first layer of pebbles.
5. Add a second layer of pebbles.
6. Alternate between layers of glue and pebbles (around 4-5 layers) to make the well.
7. Crumple the blue crepe paper and place inside the well to simulate water.
8. Let the well dry. (If desired, students can add other ornaments such as a small water bucket, flowers, etc.)
9. Instruct students to place the well in a visible place in their room. The well should serve as a reminder to follow Isaac's example of being a peacemaker.

**2 Isaac's Altar, Tent, and Well Mosaics**

**Objective:** To remind students about the three things that Isaac did after he saw God at Beersheba.

**Materials**

- Three medium sheets of cardboard
- Old magazines
- Scissors
- Glue sticks

**Preparations**

1. On one sheet of cardboard, trace the outline of an altar with a thick marker. The sheet should be labeled "Altar."
2. On the second sheet of cardboard, trace the outline of a tent with a thick marker. The sheet should be labeled "Tent."
3. On the third sheet of cardboard, trace the outline of a well with a thick marker. The sheet should be labeled "Well."

**Instructions**

1. Evenly divide the students into three groups.
2. Each group can discuss and decide on the two or three main colors they will use for their mosaic.
3. The tasks for each group will be divided as indicated below:
  - a) one student will look for the selected colors in the magazines
  - b) one student will cut up the pages with the selected colors
  - c) one student will glue the pieces onto the cardboard
 (If there are more than three students per group, more than one student can be assigned to each of the tasks listed above. If there are less than three students per group, more than one task can be assigned to one student.)
4. Once the mosaics are completed, hang the three cardboard sheets on a classroom wall to remind students of the three things that Isaac did after he saw God at Beersheba.

E1 Year 1 Book 2 Lesson 1—Isaac Refuses to Fight

# Homework Assignment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Bible Truth:** God blesses the peacemakers.

**Lesson Objectives:**

1. To understand that we must not be quarrelsome, but rather overcome evil with good.
2. To understand that when we do good and not fight back, God will bless us.
3. To understand that we can show love to our neighbors.

**Bible Reading:** Please put a checkmark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

**Prayer:** Please put a checkmark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

## Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Romans 12:21)

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## What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

## Crossword Puzzle

### DOWN

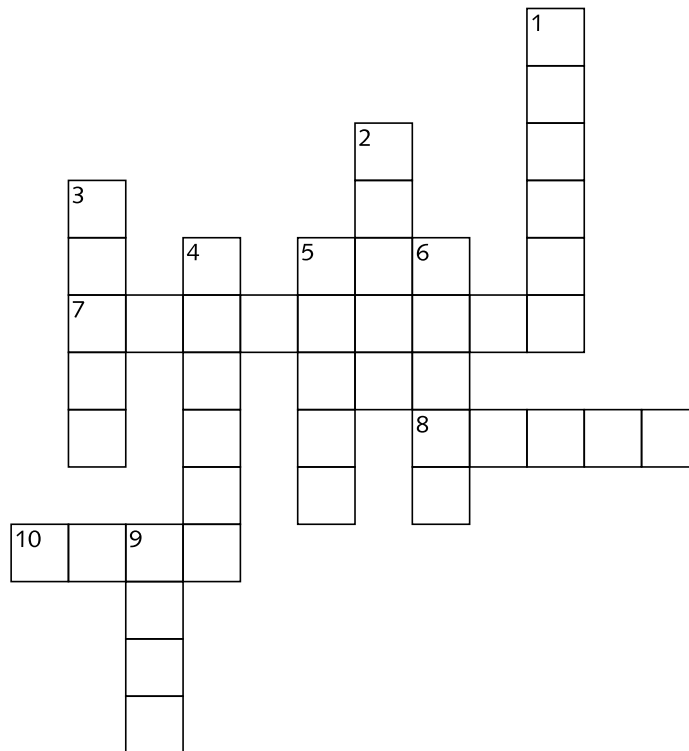
1. After making an oath with Abimelech, Isaac named the last well \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The local herdsmen argued with Isaac’s servants over a \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ was sent away by Abimelech because of his wealth.
4. The second well’s name was \_\_\_\_\_, which means “strife.”
5. God wants us to be \_\_\_\_\_makers.
6. The herdsmen of \_\_\_\_\_ argued over two of Isaac’s wells.
9. After building an altar, Isaac pitched a \_\_\_\_\_.

### ACROSS

7. \_\_\_\_\_ came to visit Isaac.
8. After God blessed him, Isaac built an \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Isaac and Abimelech swore an \_\_\_\_\_ of peace.

**Word Bank**

altar  
 Gerar  
 Isaac  
 tent  
 well  
 Abimelech  
 Shebah  
 peace  
 oath  
 Sitnah



### Life Application

On a separate piece of paper, write about one time when somebody treated you unfairly and made you feel very angry or sad. Based on Isaac’s example, how could you have acted in a peace-loving way? How would the other person have behaved if you had acted in this way? Bring your writing to your RE teacher.