

Dig Another Well – first of three articles

This is the first of a three part series of articles by author and career coach Robert Meier

Introduction- an allegory for Christians who've suffered being fired, downsized or lost a job do to a merger or corporate acquisition (in this day and age, who hasn't?). The story stems from Genesis Ch. Chapter 26, where Isaac journeys from disbelief, for being kicked out of the land where he was succeeding professionally (right after his best fiscal year where the Lord had increased his holdings a hundred fold) and is forced to seek a new way to earn a living. Of course, he should have seen it coming (the Philistines were jealously capping the wells he used to water his livestock). However, like many who hold onto a job too long, even when the "writing is on the wall", Isaac waited until the ax fell. After he dug three new wells, of which two were fought over, he found peace and a path that led straight to God.

Part I – *Dig Another Well after being downsized!*

Oh, how I remember what it felt like as if it were just yesterday. But before I begin, please allow me make your acquaintance, I'm Issac, son of Abraham. You may not be too familiar with my story, so allow me to get us all on the same piece of parchment.

Genesis Chapter 26: verses 12-17; Isaac planted crops in that land and the same year reaped a hundredfold, because the LORD blessed him. The man became rich, and his wealth continued to grow until he became very wealthy. He had so many flocks and herds and servants that the Philistines envied him. 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. Then Abimelech said to Isaac, "Move away from us; you have become too powerful for us." So Isaac moved away from there and encamped in the Valley of Gerar and settled there.

Of course, that's the fancy way to tell you what happened, I'm here to give you the story straight from the camel's mouth. You may have noticed that I just received a hundredfold blessing from the Lord. Boy, did I have it made. I remember thinking the good old days would go on forever. Not that me and Rebekah (my better half) didn't have our share of tough times, mind you, we had moved from Beer Lahai Roi in the first place due to a recession, although we called it a famine in the old days. By the time we reached Gerar, we thought we were planted for life.

I should have seen it coming. The Philistine were pretty jealous and looking for a fight. What I thought was petty bickering over water rights turned into an all out attack on our business model. I could have worked things out fine if they just had

the nerve to talk to me directly, but that didn't happen. Nope, just one well after another got plugged up, making life hard for everybody.

Are you wondering why I didn't see the "writing on the wall?" Look, when you see your income increase a hundred-fold in a single fiscal year, who's asking questions?

Think about it in modern terms. Let's say you earned six figures, or \$100,000 last year and this year you see your salary jump 100-fold, that's a lot of shekels. Matter of fact, do the math; the sum is ten million dollars. I wasn't looking for trouble. I thought everything would work out in the long run. After all, we'd grown fond of the neighborhood, the kids were happy at school and I was well respected around town.

Nevertheless, I wasn't too shocked when king Abimilech dropped by. At least he was diplomatic, making it sound like I had become too successful, his exact words were, "too powerful". He tried to soften the blow with a lot of chitchat about how a young man with my drive, credentials and seasoned abilities would find a new "place to pitch my tent" in no time. Then he offered to buy me out with a golden donkey cart, I bet it was just to appease his conscience. You should have heard Rebekah when Abimilech left, did I get an earful. "How could he just push us out the tent flap like that, what an ingrate!" "Doesn't he know that God's blessing on you, spills over to him?" She did have a good point there. I mean, after all, the Philistines, a rather rowdy bunch, did not have a single war during the time we were there. In addition, I was a big employer, the major beef supplier, and considering the "Multiplier Effect", our impact to the local community was immense. Hadn't he ever heard of "Trickle Down Theory of Economics?" But that's just what you can expect from a heathen.

So what is a son of Abraham to do when the local potentate makes a personal house call to let you know you were being "downsized"? We had to make plans to move forward quickly and I got to work on setting our exit strategy immediately.

-Reader Takeaway-

The result of overstaying your welcome with an employer can lead to stagnation, economic scarcity, and missing other blessings that God wants to give us as we respond to his direction for our career path. If we decide that God, has a static will, it is as if we are putting him in a box. Not responding to God's dynamic will for your life, could be compared to what happens when the course of a living river changes, but a branch of the river keeps going on its own merry way. The new branch doesn't remain fully connected to the main source. The result is a branch filled with stagnate water.

We can become so "rut" minded that it takes shocking jolts to bang us out of our comfort zone. Quite often God gives us an indication that he is moving in a new direction.

When it comes to our career for example, indicators can include:

- -Merger or acquisition rumors that filter down the corporate grapevine
- -A new boss who expects long hours of overtime, including Sunday mornings

- -A technology that has the potential to make your skills obsolete.

These tell-tale markers can be the “writing on the wall” to let us know that we should consider a new career direction.

God in his loving kindness wants us to learn to trust him, to respond to him and to act upon his will. Isaac exemplifies the problem of being stuck in a rut, of being shocked out of the rut, and the need to persistently pursue God’s will in the face of adversity.

Change is the essence of faith, which is defined in Hebrews Chapter 11 verse 1, *“As the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen.”*

God is directing your path; let his Spirit help you reach his perfect destination.