

CouplesInBloom.com – Persecution Validates Blessing

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Jesus said, “Truly I say to you, **There is no one** who forsook house, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake and the gospel, **that will not receive a hundredfold now in this time**, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children, and lands, **with persecutions**; and in the coming age, eternal life.” ⇨ Mark 10:29-30. So... do you *still* want to pray, “*Bless me, Lord!*”? You should:

Proverbs 10:22 ⇨ says “The blessing of God makes rich, and He adds no pain to it.” Persecutions come from people, not from God. God allows persecutions to work for our good (i.e. more blessings) ⇨ Romans 8:28. **Persecution validates God’s blessing by revealing how we respond to resistance... to not let side effects of blessings be our Lord.**

Genesis 26 ⇨ Isaac was in famine. Remembering God’s Word of blessing to his father Abraham (our father of faith ⇨ Romans 4), Isaac *sowed* in the famine. *Need defines seed* means: by faith we *sow* into areas of *need* in life, trusting (*before we see*) God *will* bless.

Isaac *did* reap a **hundredfold** in that year of famine... **with persecutions**. He did the work (of unstopping wells) which went well at first. As He opened his father’s wells which the Philistines had stopped up, he named them with Abraham’s original names. Faith is easy at first, as we begin proving it with obedience; but what about persecutions?

Encouraged, he then dug brand new wells (life was good!). Once new water flowed, persecutions began: shepherds began contending over the water... to the point that Isaac named a new well **Contention**. This illustrates the persecutions that come with walking in faith. He dug another well and opposition started, which represents worse persecutions; he named that well **Opposition**. The more he worked by faith, the more persecutions.

Isaac got tired of these persecutions, so he did the additional work of moving to a new land to dig a new well. **Persecutions** get us *moving*, get us *working harder*, and *validate* God’s blessing in our life. Isaac kept acting on God’s promise, and the new well in the new land had plenty for everyone... and no arguing! Isaac named it **Broad Places**. God tells us to have the tenacity of ants ⇨ Proverbs 6:6-11, with Him being the reason for it.

How to handle famine in marriage: **1) rejoice** that we even **realize** it. Clueless spouses quit, not recognizing their famine. Isaac **knew** he was in a famine. **2) resolve** it God’s way. Isaac **held on** to God’s Word / promise. **3) respond** in faith ⇨ James 2:17. Isaac **kept on** digging (*sowed*) past all the persecutions until he was blessed (*reaped*).

Realize how **persecution validates blessing**: Christianity and marriage are **intimate** relationships: for two to be **one**, there must be a **tenacity that proves that bond**. This is why **covenants** were signified with blood: there were **no limits to the commitment**. Revelation 12:11 ⇨ “They overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the Word of their testimony. And they did not love their soul **even** until death.”

God’s blessings exceed persecutions when we trust Him through those persecutions. Blessings are good; God made them! We are not to be afraid to pray, “*Bless me, Lord!*” We also pray for maturity: that **persecution validates blessing** in our life, as **covenant-based** faith is the premise for receiving God’s promise, regardless of all. ♥ Loren Falzone