

Steve Greenberg's Handout

Week 23, July 29, 2026 Gen 26 Life of Isaac

Genesis 26:1-11 Famine in the land of Canaan (land of promise), the LORD appeared to Isaac, Isaac deceives Abimelech says Rebekah is his Sister

Gen 26:1 There was a famine in the land (of Canaan, the land of promise), besides the first (or previous) famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went (traveled) to Abimelech king of the Philistines, in Gerar (to find a place to live or sojourn where the drought was not as bad)

Quote from Pastor Chuck Smith 3,000 series

The same thing that Abraham his father had did a hundred years earlier. They were living in the interior, the Negev, and over on the coastal plains where the Philistines were living the famine wasn't so bad. They did have more rain on the coastal plains.

This is not the Abimelech of ch 20 with Abraham almost a hundred years earlier. Abimelech was most likely a title, like Caesar or Pharaoh, instead of a proper name. Also Phicol was probably an official title for the commander of the army and not a proper name. Others say they could be son, grandsons, a family name, repeated names, or a title like most suggest

Abram (Abraham) went to Egypt, told his wife Sarai (Sarah) to say she was his sister

Gen 12:10 Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine was severe in the land.

Gen 12:11 And it came to pass, when he was close to entering Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, "Indeed I know that you are a woman of beautiful countenance.

Gen 12:12 "Therefore it will happen, when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, 'This is his wife'; and they will kill me, but they will let you live.

Gen 12:13 "Please say you are my sister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that I may live because of you."

Gen 26:2 Then the LORD appeared to him(Isaac) and said: "Do not go down to Egypt; live (instead or dwell) in the land of which I shall tell you.

Amazing how did Yahwah appear? As a person or distinct physical appearance, it does not say? This was the first time recorded in scripture that the LORD appeared to Isaac, and a second time in v24)

Previously the LORD appeared to Abram

Gen 12:7 Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

LORD appeared to Abram again and talked with him

Gen 17:1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless.

Gen 17:2 "And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly."

Gen 17:3 Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying:

Gen 26:3 "Dwell (**sojourn, live temporarily as a foreigner**) in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and your descendants (**Hebrew seed; also in 26:4, 24**) I give all these lands, and I will perform (**fulfill the solemn promise**) the oath which I swore to Abraham your father (**Gen 22:15–18; 17:7-8, 19; 12:2-3**).

Essential promise

A land (as described);

A nation (descendants multiply as the stars of sky).

A blessing (in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed).

The Messiah would come through your seed

The Son of Promise was always to live in the land of promise;

Gen 22:15 Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven,
Gen 22:16 and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son--

Gen 22:17 "blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.

Gen 22:18 "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

Abram dwelt in the land of promise dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs of the same promise

Heb 11:9 By faith he(**Abram**) dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;

I am the LORD God of Abraham and the God of Isaac

Gen 28:12 Then he(**Jacob**) dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

Isaac is the heir to the promises God made to Abraham.

Gen 28:13 And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: "I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants.

Gen 26:4 "And I will make your descendants multiply (**as numerous**) as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of

the earth shall be blessed (or all the nations of the earth will pronounce blessings, experience blessing repeatedly, on one another using the name of your descendants);

Gen 22:18 (Abraham) "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

Gal 3:6 just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

Gal 3:7 Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

Gal 3:8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."

Gal 3:9 So then those who are of faith (Jew or Gentile) are blessed with believing Abraham (Abraham had right standing with God because he believed and is a believer).

Application today

Rom 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

Rom 10:10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Rom 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.

Rom 10:13 For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

Eph 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith (become a believer), and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

Gen 26:5 (All this will come to pass) "because Abraham obeyed (listened to) My voice and kept My charge (did everything I required of him), My commandments, My statutes (decrees), and My laws."

Remember that this was 400 years before the law was ever given

Now we know that Abraham was not always obedient all the time? His obedience came through faith, believing in God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness

Rom 4:3 For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

Gal 3:6 just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

Jas 2:23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.

Gen 26:6 So Isaac dwelt (or settled and lived) in Gerar.

Gen 26:7 And the men of the place (**Philistines**) asked (**Isaac**) about his wife. And he(**Isaac**) said, "She(**Rebekah**) is my sister"; for he(**Isaac**) was afraid to say, "She is my wife," because he thought (**to himself**), "lest the men of the place kill me for (**on account of**) Rebekah, because she is beautiful to behold (**very attractive in appearance**)."

Isaac says the same lie that Abraham earlier used in both Egypt (Gen 12:10–12) and Gerar (Gen 20). Isaac went from such a high spiritual experience (Gen 26:1-5) down to a sinful experience because of the weakness of his own flesh, and also possible from his father's bad example.

Pro 12:22 Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal truthfully are His delight.

Abimelech king of Gerar took Sarah and God said in a dream you are a dead man
Gen 20:2 Now Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah.

Gen 20:3 But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, "Indeed you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife."

Gen 20:4 But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, "Lord, will You slay a righteous nation also?"

Gen 20:5 "Did he not say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she, even she herself said, 'He is my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this."

Gen 20:6 And God said to him in a dream, "Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. For I also withheld you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her.

Gen 20:7 "Now therefore, restore the man's wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours."

Remember Abraham used a half-truth saying Sarah was his sister, but what Isaac said was a complete lie. Isaac was at least seventy-five years old at this time.

Gen 20:12 (Abraham said)"But indeed she is truly my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.

Afraid: God told Isaac I will be with you and bless you. Fear can be trusting in yourself and your ways, not trusting in God and His Word.

Pro 29:25 The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe (do not fear what man might do, fear God who knows all things and loves you).

Quote from Pastor Chuck Smith

Fear is a sign of lack of faith. He had the same lapse of faith as his father Abraham, fearing that they might kill him in order to get his wife.

2Tim 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Rom 8:13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

Rom 8:15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage (slavery) again to fear (old nature), but you received the Spirit of Adoption (Spirit of Sonship, and Life) by whom we cry out, (excitedly) "Abba, Father."

Gen 26:8 Now it came to pass, when he(Isaac) had been (living) there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked through a window, and saw, and there was Isaac, showing endearment (sporting, caressing affectionately or showing some familiar sign of love more than a sister) to Rebekah his wife.

1Cor 10:12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

1Cor 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

Gen 26:9 Then Abimelech called (summoned) Isaac (immediately, with urgency) and said, "Quite obviously she is your wife; so how could you say, 'She is my sister'?" Isaac said to him(Abimelech), "Because I said, 'Lest I die on account of her (or I was afraid someone would kill me, so they could have her)' "

Sowing and reaping

Gal 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

Gal 6:8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

Gen 26:10 And Abimelech said (explained), "What is this, you have done to us? One of the people (a man among us, knowing she is your sister) might soon have lain (been intimate) with your wife, and you would have brought guilt on us (before God)"

Even as God protected Abraham and Sarah (even in the midst of their sinful conduct), Isaac and Rebekah were also protected by God and probably did not know it.

Remember what happened when Abraham lied to Abimelech's house and kingdom.

Gen 20:9 (Previously) Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, "What have you done to us? How have I offended you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done deeds to me that ought not to be done."

Gen 20:11 And Abraham said, "Because I thought, surely the fear of God is not in this place (not true); and they will kill me on account of my wife.

The LORD had closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech for taking Sarah
Gen 20:17 So Abraham prayed to God; and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants. Then they bore children;

Gen 20:18 for the LORD had closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

Gen 26:11 So Abimelech charged (**made a public proclamation**) all his people, saying, "He who touches (**or harms**) this man (**Isaac**) or his wife (**Rebekah**) shall surely be put to death (**no exceptions**)."

The Faithfulness of the LORD

Psa 105:14 He (the Lord) permitted no one to do them wrong (or oppress them); Yes, He rebuked kings for their sakes,

Psa 105:15 Saying, "Do not touch My anointed ones, And do My prophets no harm (or evil)."

Genesis 26:12-17 The Lord blessed Isaac, conflict because of growth with the King Abimelech

Gen 26:12 Then Isaac sowed (**planted seed**) in that land (**prepared crops as a farmer**), and reaped (**harvested**) in the same year a hundredfold (**hundred times more than what he had planted**); and the LORD blessed (**and gave favor to**) him(**Isaac**).

The Parable of the Sower

Mat 13:8 "But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Mat 13:9 He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Mat 13:23 (explained) "But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

Abraham well advanced in age; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.

Gen 24:1 Now Abraham was old, well advanced in age; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.

Gen 26:13 The man (**Isaac**) began to prosper (**greatly because of the Lord**), and continued prospering until he became very prosperous (**wealthy and distinguished**);

Jer 9:24 But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says the LORD.

Gen 26:14 for he (**Isaac**) had (**multiplied**) possessions of flocks and possessions of herds (**sheep, goats, and cattle**) and a great number of servants (**a great household**). So the Philistines envied him (**became very jealous**).

Have you ever noticed the people envy the graces of God in others?

Gen 26:15 Now the Philistines had stopped up “all” the wells, which his(**Isaac’s**) father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, and they had filled them with earth (**dirt etc.**). (**They usually closed the wells up, so as to discourage herdsmen from watering grazing their livestock in there territories**)

Abimelech said to Abraham, "I do not know what had been done, you did not tell me, nor had I heard of it until today (**Communicate effectively, do not jump to the negative**)

Gen 21:25 Then Abraham rebuked Abimelech because of a well of water which Abimelech's servants had seized.

Gen 21:26 And Abimelech said, "I do not know who has done this thing; you did not tell me, nor had I heard of it until today."

Gen 21:27 So Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them made a covenant.

Gen 26:16 And (**finally**) Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we (**Abimelech ordered Isaac to leave his territory because he had become too powerful for us**)."

Correlation passage: Previously in Egypt

Exo 1:8 Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph.

Exo 1:9 And he said to his people, "Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we;

Exo 1:10 "come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and so go up out of the land."

Gen 26:17 Then Isaac departed (**moved away**) from there (**that region**) and pitched his tent (**camped, settled**) in the Valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

Genesis 26:18-25 Isaac and Gerar Herdsmen Quarrel over the Wells

Gen 26:18 And Isaac dug again (**reopened**) the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them up (**with earth**) after the death of Abraham. He(**Isaac**) called them(**the wells**) by the names, which his father(**Abraham**) had called them.

Gen 26:19 Also Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found a well of running (**literally living**) water there (**fresh flowing spring water coming out, no need to bucket out**).

Gen 26:20 But the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water (**the spring**) is ours." So he(**Isaac**) called the name of the well Esek (**meaning strife, contention or quarreling**) because they quarreled (**or disputed**) with him.

The wells of Genesis have significant names, and are associated with or reflect on events.

Gen 26:21 Then they(**Isaac's men**) dug another well, and they quarreled (**argued**) over that one(**well**) also. So he called its name Sitnah (**meaning contention, opposition or hostility**).

Gen 26:22 And (**Abandoning that one**), he(**Isaac**) moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he(**Isaac**) called its name Rehoboth (**meaning room open spaces, room for us all**), because he said, "For now the LORD has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful (**flourish and prosper**) in the land."

Gen 26:23 Then he(**Isaac**) went up from there (**and moved**) to Beersheba.

Gen 26:24 And the **LORD** appeared to him(**Isaac**) the same night and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; **do not fear (be afraid)**, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham's sake."(**I will make them a great and I will do this because of my promise I made to Abraham my servant**)."

God assures Isaac against all fear by rehearsing the promise made to Abraham.

Gen 26:25 So he(**Isaac**) built an altar there and called on the name of the LORD (**in prayer & worship**), and he(**Isaac**) pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a (**new**) well.

This was to signify that Isaac would serve no other God, but the God of his father Abraham.

Previously Abram built alters also, followed after his father (also Gen 13:4, 18; 22:9; 33:20)

Gen 12:7 Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he **built an altar to the LORD**, who had appeared to him.

Gen 12:8 And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he(**Abram**) **built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD**.

Psa 116:17 I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving, And will call upon the name of the LORD.

Heb 13:15 Therefore by Him (through Jesus) let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.

Genesis 26:26-35 Isaac Makes Covenant with Abimelech

Gen 26:26 Then Abimelech came to him(Isaac**) from Gerar with Ahuzzath, one of his friends (**and confidential adviser**), and Phichol the commander of his army.**

Gen 26:27 And Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, since (or obviously**) you hate me (**or were hostile to me**) and have sent me away from you (**kicking me, off your land**)?"**

Gen 26:28 But they said (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 (**sworn pack, solemn promise, binding agreement**) with you,**

Previously, Abimelech and Phichol asked Abraham to make a vow with them

Gen 21:22 And it came to pass at that time that Abimelech and Phichol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, "God is with you in all that you do.

Gen 21:23 "Now therefore, swear to me by God that you will not deal falsely with me, with my offspring, or with my posterity; but that according to the kindness that I have done to you, you will do to me and to the land in which you have dwelt."

Gen 26:29 (Swear**)'that you will do us no harm, since we have not touched (**or harmed**) you, and since we have done nothing to you but good (**always treated you well**), and have sent you away in peace. You are now, the blessed of the LORD.' "**

Gen 26:30 So he(Isaac**) made them a feast (**prepared a formal banquet to celebrate the treaty**), and they ate and drank.**

Gen 26:31 Then they arose early in the morning and swore an oath with one another (pledging to do nothing but good to each other, like brothers**); and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace (**peacefully and on good terms**).**

Gen 26:32 It came to pass the same day (later on that day**) that Isaac's servants came and told him about the well which they had dug, and said to him, "We have found water."**

Gen 26:33 So he(Isaac**) called it Shebah (**meaning oath, overflow, abundance. seventh or seven wells**). Therefore the name of the city is Beer sheba (**likewise meaning well of the oath or seven wells**) to this day.**

Gen 26:34 (Now**) When Esau was forty years old, he took as wives (**married two Hittite's women**) Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite.**

Esau, the son of Isaac and Jacobs twin brother, went against Abraham pattern, that his descendants should not marry the women of Canaan (Gen 24:3-4).

Gen 26:35 And they(**Esau's Hittite wives**) were a grief of mind (**caused great anxiety and bitterness of spirit**) to Isaac and Rebekah (**Esau's parents**).

Gen 27:46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these who are the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

Gen 28:1 - Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said to him: "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan.

Gen 28:8 Also Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan did not please his father Isaac.

Gen 28:9 So Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.

End, Prayer

Extra Scriptures: