

GENESIS 26: GOD'S GRACE ON ISAAC

I. OVERVIEW

- A. There was a famine in the land
 - i. Isaac went down to Gerar
 - ii. God appeared to him and told him not to go to Egypt
 - a. God would bless him and establish his covenant with Abraham if he stayed in Gerar
- B. Isaac told the men of Gerar that Rebekah was his sister
 - i. Abimelech saw Isaac and Rebekah together and knew they were married
 - ii. Abimelech rebuked Isaac and warned the people not to touch Rebekah
- C. Isaac stayed in Gerar and became very wealthy
 - i. Abimelech started to fear Isaac and sent him away
- D. Isaac left and settled in the Valley of Gerar
 - i. Isaac started to dig three wells
 - a. Herdsman of Gerar quarreled with him over two of them
- E. Then Isaac went up to Beersheba
 - i. God appeared to him again
 - a. Gave him a threefold blessing
 - i. I am with you
 - ii. I will bless you
 - iii. I will multiply your offspring
- F. Abimelech came to Isaac to offer a covenant of peace
 - i. They made the covenant and Isaac sent them away in peace
- G. Esau took two wives from the Hittites
 - i. Judith and Basemath
 - ii. They made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah

II. A FAMINE IN THE LAND – V. 1

- A. Just like Abraham encountered in chapter 12

III. PHILISTINES – V. 1

A. The Philistines probably arrived in Canaan from Crete in the 12th century B.C.¹

i. Based on Egyptian records

a. Philistines had no written records themselves

ii. They had five cities – Gath, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron

B. The people of Gerar may have been Philistines that arrived even earlier

IV. THE LORD APPEARED TO HIM – V. 2

A. First time God has appeared to Isaac

V. DO NOT GO DOWN TO EGYPT – V. 2

A. Don't make the same mistake Abraham did

VI. SOJOURN IN THIS LAND – V. 3

A. God told Isaac to stay in Gerar for a while

i. If he stays there, God will give him the same promises He gave to Abraham

a. Protection, offspring, land

b. Is God's promise conditional?

i. Because Abraham obeyed my voice – v. 5

ii. Invitation to partnership

VII. BECAUSE ABRAHAM OBEYED MY VOICE – V. 5

A. Abraham didn't obey perfectly

i. Genesis 15:6 ***And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.***

B. Obedience is determined by a faithful response

i. Not by being perfect in every single action

VIII. ISAAC SETTLED IN GERAR – V. 6

A. He obeyed God at first

i. Even though he was in closer proximity to those in Canaan than before²

IX. SHE IS MY SISTER – V. 7

A. He couldn't have said this if they had children

i. Must take place before Jacob and Esau were born

B. Isaac did not learn from his father's mistakes

¹ Sauter, M. (2023, April 16). *Who Were The Philistines, And Where Did They Come From?*. Biblical Archaeology Society. <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/people-cultures-in-the-bible/who-were-philistines-where-did-they-come-from/>

² Guzik, D. (2018c). *Study Guide for Genesis 26*. Blue Letter Bible. https://www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik_david/study-guide/genesis/genesis-26.cfm

- i. Even though God had just appeared to Isaac and promised to protect and prosper him
- ii. God knew he would be tempted to lie about Rebekah
- iii. But Isaac takes his protection into his own hands

C. This is not even a half truth as was the case with Abraham

- i. Rebekah was his cousin

D. Some will say this is proof of generational curses

- i. May or may not be the case
- ii. More likely, sins are modeled and taught to successive generations³

X. LAUGHING – V. 8

A. Other translations suggest intimate relationship

- i. Showing endearment (NKJV), caressing (NIV)

XI. BEHOLD, SHE IS YOUR WIFE – V. 9

A. Isaac's sin seemed hidden but it was obvious to others⁴

XII. WHOEVER TOUCHES THIS MAN OR HIS WIFE – V. 11

A. Abimelech never took her to be his wife

- i. He learned from his father

XIII. ISAAC SOWED – V. 12

A. Even though he probably didn't have to⁵

- i. He received everything Abraham had

XIV. REAPED A HUNDREDFOLD – V. 12

A. This was still during a famine

B. Progression of language

- i. Rich, more rich, wealthy
- ii. He could not be more rich⁶

XV. THE LORD BLESSED HIM – V. 12

A. Abraham was given wealth by Pharaoh and Abimelech after lying to them

- i. These men actually took Sarah as a wife

B. Even though Isaac didn't trust God

³ Guzik

⁴ Guzik

⁵ Guzik

⁶ Armstrong, S. (2012, May 21). *Genesis 2011 - lesson 26B*. Verse By Verse Ministry International.
https://versebyversemministry.org/lessons/genesis_26b

- i. God still held up His end of the bargain

XVI. THE PHILISTINES HAD STOPPED... ALL THE WELLS = V. 15

- A. Wells were very expensive to dig
 - i. Shows extreme envy of Philistines to attack in this way⁷
- B. Previous Abimelech had made a covenant with Abraham over these wells
 - i. This Abimelech decided to go on the offensive rather than make peace⁸

XVII. ISAAC DUG THREE WELLS

- A. He quarreled with the Philistines over two of them
 - i. Isaac must have maintained control over them since he named them
- B. First was called Esek
 - i. Means contention
- C. Second was called Sitnah
 - i. Means enmity
- D. Third was called Rehoboth
 - i. Means broad places
- E. Three is the number of testing
 - i. Isaac's faithfulness is being tested
 - a. Will he be a blessing or a curse to the nations?
 - b. Will God provide for him in the midst of attack and opposition?
- F. Wells represent life
 - i. They were the only source of life in many areas especially during dry periods
 - ii. Resource built for many generations

XVIII. HE WENT UP TO BEERSHEBA – V. 23

- A. Where he had been before
- B. Isaac now trusted God to provide for him
 - i. He left his crops behind
 - ii. He understood he was a sojourner in the land⁹

XIX. THE LORD APPEARED TO HIM – V. 24

⁷ Guzik

⁸ Armstrong, S. (2012, May 21). Genesis 2011 - lesson 26B. Verse By Verse Ministry International.
https://versebyverseministry.org/lessons/genesis_26b

⁹ Armstrong, S. (2012, May 21). Genesis 2011 - lesson 26B. Verse By Verse Ministry International.
https://versebyverseministry.org/lessons/genesis_26b

A. For the second time

XX. FEAR NOT – V. 24

- A. Isaac had been afraid of being killed
 - i. He was kicked out of Gerar
 - ii. He was attacked while digging wells
- B. God was reinforcing that Isaac was under God's protection
 - i. God's grace is a theme in Isaac's life

XXI. BUILT AN ALTAR – V. 25

- A. Seven altars were built by Abraham's family in Genesis
 - i. Four by Abraham
 - a. Genesis 12:7 *Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.*
 - b. Genesis 12:8 *From there he [Abram] moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an altar to the LORD and called upon the name of the LORD.*
 - c. Genesis 13:18 *So Abram moved his tent and came and settled by the oaks of Mamre, which are at Hebron, and there he built an altar to the LORD.*
 - d. Genesis 22:9 *When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.*
 - ii. One by Isaac
 - iii. Two by Jacob
 - a. Genesis 33:20 *There he [Jacob] erected an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel.*
 - b. Genesis 35:7 *and there he [Jacob] built an altar and called the place El-bethel, because there God had revealed himself to him when he fled from his brother.*
- B. Establishment and creation of a new priesthood

XXII. JUDITH AND BASEMATH – V. 34

- A. Hittite women
 - i. Abraham's children were not to marry Canaanite women
- B. Multiple wives are a result of sin
 - i. It was done either by ungodly men like Lamech
 - ii. Or out of sinful and impatient desires like Abraham

- iii. Always results in trouble¹⁰

XXIII. THEY MADE LIFE BITTER – V. 35

- A. Because Esau disobeyed the command of God and married Canaanite women
- B. Isaac's trust in God shows he modeled this for his children
 - i. Yet Esau rejected the faith his father modeled for him

XXIV. POINTS TO JESUS

- A. God kept His promise to Isaac because of Abraham
 - i. God keeps His promises to us because of Jesus¹¹
- B. Isaac wandered in the wilderness and was tempted three times to disobey God
 - i. Second well named Sitnah
 - a. From Hebrew *satan*
 - b. The accuser tried to drive Isaac out of the promised land¹²
 - ii. Jesus wandered in the wilderness and was tempted three times to disobey God
 - a. The accuser tried to drive Him out of God's inheritance

XXV. QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- A. Why is it so easy to give into temptation right after we have a significant encounter with God? What do we need to do to avoid giving into temptation (1 Corinthians 10:12)?

- B. What will happen if we try to keep our sin hidden from others? See Luke 8:17

- C. What sins have you noticed that have persisted in your family? What can you do to end that cycle?

¹⁰ Armstrong, S. (2012, May 29). *Genesis 2011 - Lesson 27A*. Verse By Verse Ministry International.
https://versebyversem ministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_27a

¹¹ Guzik

¹² Armstrong, S. (2012, May 21). *Genesis 2011 - lesson 26B*. Verse By Verse Ministry International.
https://versebyversem ministry.org/lessons/genesis_26b

D. What “wells” have previous generations dug that have become a life giving resource for you?

E. What “wells” have previous generations dug for you that have been stopped up? What kind of work is required to re-dig those “wells”?

F. Do you trust God to provide for you and protect you during opposition and attack? What have you gone through in the past that has led you to this faith?

G. What has God used to test you in the past that has built up your trust in Him?

H. Do you have children that have grown up to reject the faith you trained them in? What would be the godly response to this?

XXVI. FURTHER STUDY

A. How did Abraham receive the promises of God? How do we know we will inherit the promises that God has made through Christ (1 John 2:3-7)?

B. What is the significance of God repeating the same promises to Isaac that He made to Abraham? How can Gentiles pray for Israel in light of this? See Micah 7:18-20.

C. What does Proverbs 29:25 say happens if we fear what others can do to us? What does it say is the antidote to this?

D. In what way did Isaac exemplify the values of the kingdom of God in Matthew 5:38-42?

E. What three quotes in this chapter affirm God's presence with Isaac in the past, present and future?
