

Genesis Chapter 26 Commentary

1 And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar.

The first famine was in Isaac's father's, Abraham, time; seen in: ***Ge 12:10 "And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land."*** Thus we see; Isaac is heading in the same direction of his father and is going down into Egypt.

There is a lesson for us here; as we understand that children learn what they see. Parents that do ungodly things and their children see it, the children automatically learn that daddy and mama did it so it must be okay. This should put carefulness in the hearts and minds of all parents to live out "***thus saith the Lord***" in front of their children.

2 And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of:

We see here a prophetic picture of future times even for us today; how? Remember; Isaac is in the Promised Land, but even here there is famine. "***Go not down into Egypt***" God tells Isaac to not leave the land and to not go into Egypt. Isaac has been in this Promised Land all his life, and has seen the mighty hand of God working in preservation of his life, by rescuing him from off the altar of sacrifice. Isaac understands that God will do what he says.

Now, How about you today? We also have a Promised Land, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, in which God has commanded that we dwell therein, and to not depart from it into Egypt, the world. For those who have lived long in the land, the promise of being with God in eternity shines brighter and brighter. While they continue here, this old world loses more and more of its alluring beauty and charm. This world becomes a place of famine as we draw nearer to the land of eternal promise.

We have the same commandment, about departing from the faith, in the New Testament scriptures in:

- ***Lu 9:62 "And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."***
- ***Heb 10:38 "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."***
- ***2Pe 2:20-22; 20 "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. 22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."***

Let us therefore, hold steadfast to that which God has given us here, and do not leave our Promised Land, the Church of Salvation by Christ. By continuing therein; we are giving evidence of our trust and faith in God. We are being salt and light to the world.

3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; 4 And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; 5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

We see a picture here of how God works. Sojourn means; *properly, to turn aside from the road (for a lodging or any other purpose), abide*. God is telling Isaac that if he is obedient, trusts God completely, and does as God says, He will bless him and give him possessions on earth and much fruit. We see that a portion of what Isaac is to obtain is from the diligence of his father Abraham. God is promising this to Isaac because of Abraham's diligence to obey God and be faithful to him. God is telling Isaac; you need to be faithful to me as your father was.

What value has this for us today? I believe; if we are faithful in our own service to God, and Christ, like Abraham was, and rear our children in the faith, showing them how God has worked all things together for good in our own lives, God will also provide them the opportunity to be blest by him as well. It is a warning to us of; how diligent we should be in our faithful service to God, that we bring not any curse upon our children, nor cause them to miss a blessing from God in their lives. Here is one New Testament scripture, which shows the principle taught here: ***Eph 6:4 "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."*** Quite simply put; it is telling us; if we remain in the church, living a godly life, we shall reap from the abundance of God's blessings in our lives.

6 And Isaac dwelt in Gerar:

Let's look at where Isaac is dwelling. ***Ge 20:1 "And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar."*** Abraham was still living here when Isaac was born, seen in: ***Ge 21:1-3; 1 "And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. 2 For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. 3 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac."***

Gerar means; *to turn over in the mind, to chew the cud, as a ruminant, to meditate, muse, ponder*. We see a picture, from the name of this place where Isaac was born, and now dwells in obedience to God's command, that Isaac can spend his days meditating and pondering upon God's promises. We know that Isaac had a habit of meditating because of what we see in: ***Ge 24:63 "And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming."*** We see that Isaac had a habit of meditating, which is what he was doing when he met his wife the first time. If we wish to meet our wife, the church here in the world, we should be meditating upon the things of God, as we see exemplified here. What do you mean? Well, Isaac was aware of all the promises that God made to Abraham, because God also gave those promises to Isaac. As Isaac lives out his life; he can see the promises of God coming to pass, and he can call to remembrance "*ruminant*" these promises made to his father and himself.

In our lives today; we can "*sojourn*" and "*ruminant*", as we abide in the church of Grace; feeding our souls upon God's promises, as we await the coming of our Lord. We do this by reading and

studying God's Word of Truth. We do this by being present to hear the gospel of Christ preached. We do it by being obedient to God, and seeing the fulfilment of his promises to us, such as to provide our every need, and granting to us the abundance of his blessings in our lives in Christ.

7 And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said, She is my sister: for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon.

Here is a great life lesson for us. We see that children learn to do what they see the parents do. Very carefully, we should live our lives in godliness; lest we teach our children the wrong things to do. Isaac did the same thing his father Abraham did, with the exception; Isaac outright lied, because Rebekah was not his sister as Sarah was 1/2 sister to Abraham.

Why did both these men lie about their wives? They were afraid of death. One of the greatest gifts that we receive as a child of God is; we should no longer fear death. Only the lost should be afraid of death. God's people already have victory over death, hell, and the grave, because of the finished work of Christ our Lord and Saviour. We have several scriptural confirmations of this principle, as seen in:

- **1Co 15:50-58; 50 "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."**
- **1Jo 5:1-5; 1 "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. 4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"**
- And finally, even the Old Testament people understood; they would be raised from the dead to be with God, and therefore did not fear death, seen in: **Ps 17:15 "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."**

8 And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife.

How careful we should be in our walks, and talks, that we give not the world a stone to cast, or cause them to stumble in sin, because of our own words or actions. We see that Isaac got caught in his lie, and now he must bear the rebuke of his actions.

9 And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety she is thy wife: and how saidst thou, She is my sister? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her. 10 And Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us. 11 And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.

Again we see, as with Abraham and Sarah, God protected Isaac and Rebekah, and God also protected the people of the land. We learn from this that God's blessings, in the world, are not only to his people, but to the world at large. Does he not rain on the just and the unjust alike?

How can we apply this in our lives? We have here a lesson, that we should be ever faithful in our service to God, not only in our spiritual walk in this world, but in our natural lives also, Why? Because faithfulness to God is rewarded in this world by blessing, in accordance to God's will. Let's look at some scriptures:

- **Isa 1:19-20; 19 "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: 20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."** We see from this text; God does for us, as he does for Isaac in this chapter.
- **Ro 1:5 "By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:"** Having followed the call from Christ, these received the gift of grace and apostleship. When we are obedient to the call of Christ in our lives, we too receive the gifts of grace and are made heirs, in Christ.
- **Ro 5:19 "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."** We see that our living example, Jesus Christ, brought forth for us blessings by his obedience. We have already seen this principle exemplified in this chapter.
- **Ro 6:16 "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"** This teaches us that obedience to God is going to bear good fruit, but unfaithfulness to God is going to bear bad fruit.
- **1Pe 1:2 "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."** This text reminds us that all the good we can do is through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

12 Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the LORD blessed him.

Here in verse 12; we see the fulfilment of God's promise in verse **Ge 26:3 "I will bless thee"** That is not all the promise, just a portion, but it is being manifested in nature in Isaac's life. In today's language, Isaac invested \$1.00 and got a return of \$100.00 in one year. We learn from this; there is indeed a blessing to be had by being obedient to God.

13 And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: 14 For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him. 15 For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his

father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth. 16 And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we. 17 And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. 18 And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. 19 And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.

Springing means; *alive, to live, to revive: keep, leave, or make alive; give or promise life; nourish up, quicken, recover, repair, restore to life, revive, save, be whole.* We find springing water again in: ***Joh 4:14 "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."***

Springing water is a picture of salvation. How? Springing water is what we would call a flowing well. It was the same in this time as today. How? It was necessary that the earth, which covered the water source, be removed that the water might spring up. We must be born again of the Holy Spirit and power of God, when this happens; the earth nature is moved out of the way and the new nature, the Holy Spirit presence, springs forth in our lives. We see the water of life, "Jesus Christ" is our "***well of water springing up into everlasting life.***"

We notice; this well was not a hidden well. This teaches us; when we are born again; we should make that public confession of faith, and not try to hide our light of grace. The child of Grace, when born again, should be visible for all to see. ***Eph 1:4-23; 4 "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. 7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; 8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; 9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: 10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: 12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. 13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. 15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, 16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; 17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: 18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, 19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."***

20 And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him.

Now, I told you in the previous verse that this "*springing water*" was a picture of salvation. We see here, confirmation of that, how? When you are born again; satan immediately begins to strive against you. He would drive you away from the living water and the water of eternal life. You see this well is named "*Esek*" which means; *strife*. How do we know that it is satan? Let's look at the next verse to see.

21 And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah.

Notice; Isaac and his seed removed from the 1st well, a picture of the children of God under the sacrificial law, with the coming of Christ into the world.

Now they dig 2nd well and name it "*Sitnah*" which means; *opposition, accusation, and this is from the root word "satan" which means; to attack, (figuratively) accuse: be an adversary, resist*. This definition gives us the picture coming to pass in this world, when Christ came in the flesh and established the church of grace. Satan, and his minions, unsuccessfully strove to get Jesus to sin against God. Christ yielded up himself to be slain on the cross. Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, and his people under the law service, had to give up this well, and move on in the establishment of the grace church.

22 And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

Let us remember; satan is always striving against God, and the man created of God. He strove with Adam and caused him to fall. He has striven against all who were known as God's people ever since. He is still striving against God's people, and he will continue until God puts him in his prepared place the eternal lake of fire.

Notice that the 3rd well is without strife or contention. Its name is "*Rehoboth*" which means; *a width, i.e. (concretely) avenue or area:--broad place (way), street, house of (the) street*. This definition is a picture of the eternal life, which we are given in the new birth, and which we will have in that place which Christ has gone to prepare for us. There, we will be with the fountain of living waters and in a place where there is no contention.

Well, all that is lovely but it doesn't make sense that satan would take the first two wells. If we look at it in the eternal perspective it makes perfect sense, How? Satan corrupted the sacrificial law system, by getting the people to believe that they had control of their own salvation, and thus they rejected Christ when he came into the world.

Today, we see that satan has infiltrated the church "organized religion" in many ways. He has corrupted the very truth of God's word by creating many versions of the bible. He has got what is called church, to accepting that which is absolutely contrary to the true Word of God. Satan has thereby lulled people into thinking they can save themselves, by filling them with false doctrine.

Now can you see; it is only in the eternal perspective that we shall have true and final peace? In eternity we shall forever drink of the river of the water of life without any strife, as we see portrayed in: **Re 22:1 "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."**

23 And he went up from thence to Beersheba.

Beersheba means; *well of an oath*. We spoke of this in our study of Genesis chapter 21.

Remember; Isaac is living his life based upon the promise from God. We, today, should be living our Christian lives based upon the promises from God.

24 And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.

God renews the promise he gave Isaac at the start of the chapter, and reminds him that he gave that same promise to Abraham, Isaac's father, and that God is still honoring his promise to Abraham.

25 And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.

We see in: **Ge 21:33 "And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God."** We see in **Ge 21:33**; Abraham planted a grove and "**called there on the name of the LORD**" In **Ge 26:25** we see that Isaac built an altar and "**called upon the name of the LORD**" I believe that both of these texts are teaching us; that these men, in faithfulness to the promise of God in their lives, established a place of worship for the Lord, what we would call a church today.

26 Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army. 27 And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you? 28 And they said, We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee; 29 That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of the LORD. 30 And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink. 31 And they rose up betimes in the morning, and swore one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace. 32 And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water. 33 And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day.

Shebah means: *a primitive cardinal number; seven (as the sacred full one)*. Beersheba means; *well of an oath*. Now as we look at this well we see the eternal prospect. How? The name of the well is by definition seven, which is equated to completeness. Thus, when God has accomplished his purpose, and saved all that are to be saved; he will bring them to the city, the New Jerusalem, the well of oath,

where flows the river of the water of life springing from the eternal wellspring of God. This is the fulfillment of God's promise, to ever be with the Lord in the eternal kingdom.

34 And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite: 35 Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah.

We see that Esau is publicly defying the commandment of God in taking two wives. **Ge 2:24** *"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."* He is further defying God by marrying the Hittite women, and thereby joining himself to idolatry. Can you understand why this was a "grief of mind" to Isaac and Rebekah? We understand that it was especially a grief to Isaac because he had a great love for his son Esau as we see in: **Ge 25:28** *"And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob."*

As we consider these verses; we remember that Rebekah had received a promise from God that his blessing would be with Jacob, seen in: **Ge 25:23** *"And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger."* We understand that Jesus was to come to earth incarnate through the lineage of Jacob.

Even though they knew this was God's will, there is always grief in the hearts of parents of disobedient children.