

# GENESIS 26

Written and compiled by Gary Kukis

**Genesis 26:1–35**

**Isaac and Abimelech; God Speaks to Isaac**

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall be have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

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Links to the word-by-word, verse-by-verse studies of **Genesis** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) (that is what this document is). This incorporates 2 previous studies done in the book of Genesis. However, much of this material was thrown together without careful editing. Therefore, from time to time, there will be concepts and exegetical material which will be repeated, because there was no overall editing done once all of this material was combined.

There is a second, less complete set of weekly lessons of Genesis ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)). Every word of that study can be found in the word-by-word, verse-by-verse studies.

This study makes reference to a wide-range of sources. There are quotations from doctrinal teachers, of course; but from Catholic commentaries and from other sources as well. Wherever I found relevant truth, I quoted from it or was inspired by it. Even though it is clear that some churches have a better concept of our reason for being here, that does not mean that there is no truth to be found anywhere else. So, from time to time, I will quote from John Calvin, even though I do not subscribe to 5-point Calvinism; I will quote from some Catholic sources, even though I believe that they are very wrong regarding Mary, the pope, apostolic succession and other such doctrines. The intention is for this to be the most thorough and accurate study of Genesis available anywhere.

Also, **it is not necessary that you read the grey Hebrew exegesis tables.** They are set apart from the rest of the study so that you can easily skip over them (based upon the suggestion of a friend). However, if you ever doubt the translation of a word, phrase or a verse, these translation tables are then available.

**Preface:** There are 2 basic sections and an informative postscript to this chapter. To move away from a drought, God guides Isaac to Gerar, where he deceives the Abimelech, the leader of that region. Isaac is forgiven by the leadership, but his success provokes jealousy among the Philistines, and Isaac and his family are forced to move further and further away. In the second related section, Abimelech and two associates hunt down Isaac to make an alliance with him, recognizing that Gerar was blessed by his presence. The postscript simply names the two Hittite wives of Esau and suggests that they were troublesome daughters-in-law.

There are many **chapter commentaries** on the book of Genesis. This will be the most extensive analysis of Genesis 26, where you will be able to examine in depth every word of the original text. Very careful attention is given first to the correct translation and then to the proper interpretation of the text. This is integrated into a system of theology which is consistent, orthodox and Christ-centered. Wherever appropriate, modern-day applications are made.

Every attempt has been made to make this both a complete and self-contained study. Therefore, all references, vocabulary, and related concepts should be found within this extensive study. Easy access links to more in-depth studies of some vocabulary words, concepts and doctrines are also provided.

#### Quotations:

Rev. Bruce Goettsche: *If you are a parent, at one time or another you have watched your child do something, say something or react to a certain situation poorly and you have cringed because you realized that you were looking in a mirror and what you saw were some of your less laudible traits being played back to you in your child.*

Goettsche continues: *Or maybe you said something, did something, or reacted in a particular way and they shrieked with the realization that you had "become your parents." The very things you swore you would never do or say, you were now doing and saying. Like it or not, we do tend to follow some of the footprints of the influential people of our lives.<sup>1</sup>*

Goettsche later writes: *Like it or not, our children learn to deal with problems the same way we do.*

*blame others*

*make excuses*

*run away*

*whine and complain*

*or patiently trust God.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> From [Union Church.com](http://UnionChurch.com); accessed August 1, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> From [Union Church.com](http://UnionChurch.com); accessed August 1, 2015.

William Wenstrom, Jr.: *Unbelief is the failure to take into account and acknowledge the character and nature of God, His presence and His Word.*<sup>3</sup>

Kukis: In this life, as believers, we have both promises and direction from God. They will *never* be in conflict with one another.

Kukis: God knows our limitations and what God requires of us, we are able to do.

Kukis: Anytime a political movement encourages mental attitude sins, you know you are in the wrong movement.

Kukis: God blessing one man does not mean that God withholds blessing from others.

Sermon Bible Commentary: *These four names are the names of four wells of springing water, dug in a valley, to feed families and flocks. Esek means strife; Sitnah, hatred; Rehoboth, room; and Shebah, oath. Have you not been at them all?*<sup>4</sup>

Gen. 24:2–4 *And Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh, that I may make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell, but will go to my country and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son Isaac." (ESV)*

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<sup>3</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 397); accessed July 24, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/sbc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 29, 2015. I believe that they are citing Parker, The Fountain, April 28th, 1881.

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Many who read and study this chapter are 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> generation students of R. B. Thieme, Jr., so that much of this vocabulary is second nature. One of Bob's contributions to theology is a fresh vocabulary along with a number of concepts which are theologically new or reworked, yet still orthodox. Therefore, if you are unfamiliar with his work, the definitions below will help you to fully understand all that is being said. Also, I have developed a few new terms and concepts which require definition as well.

In addition, there are other more traditional yet technical theological terms which will be used and therefore defined as well.

Sometimes the terms in the exegesis of this chapter are simply alluded to, without any in-depth explanation of them. Sometimes, these terms are explained in detail and illustrated. A collection of all these terms is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

<b>Definition of Terms</b>	
<a href="#">Blessing by Association</a>	Friends and relatives and associates of a spiritually mature believer receive some overflow of blessing from that believer. People in the same geographical area of a mature of maturing believer receive blessings through their association. <b>Blessing by Association</b> ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ).
<a href="#">The Geographic will of God</a>	This is simply stated as, <i>where does God want me to be?</i> The <b>Geographic Will of God</b> ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ).
<a href="#">Pivot</a>	In nearly any nation, there will be believers and there will be mature believers (which is called a <i>pivot</i> ). If these groups are large enough, a nation will be preserved and, in most cases, greatly prospered. If the pivot is small, or if there are very few mature believers in this pivot, then that nation will go down. The concept of a pivot of believers preserving a nation is found in Genesis 18:22–33 Matthew 5:13. For more information, see <a href="#">Bible Doctrine Resource</a> or <a href="#">R. B. Thieme, Jr.</a> (these appear to be identical).

Definition of Terms	
<b>Rebound (Restoration to fellowship with God)</b>	In the New Testament, this is naming your sins to God, so that you are both restored to temporal fellowship with God and are then filled with the Spirit of God. In the Old Testament, naming your sins to God would result in a restoration of fellowship and, in some cases, the empowerment of the Holy Spirit once again (the Holy Spirit was not given to all Old Testament believers). See the <b>Doctrine of Rebound</b> ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ).
<b>The Revealed God (or, the Revealed Lord)</b>	We all come to a time of God-consciousness where we understand the concept and possibility of the existence of God. At that point, we face 2 great questions: (1) do we want to know this God and (2) are will willing to believe in God as He has revealed Himself or do we make a god in our own image and worship that?
<b>Stages of National Discipline</b>	God set up a series of stages that He would go through to discipline the nation Israel, which stages are laid out in Leviticus 26. These are called the <i>cycles of discipline</i> by R. B. Thieme, Jr. See the <b>Doctrine of the Cycles of Discipline</b> . Client nations experience similar discipline from God.
<b>Suzerain-vassal treaty</b>	The is a treaty or contract made between the sovereign ruler of a nation and the people in another location. Often, this contract would demand taxes or some form of remuneration, which brought them both protection from the sovereign and from other foreign powers. It would be the sovereign who proposed the details of the contract. See the <b>Abrahamic Covenant</b> ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ).
<b>Theophany</b>	A Theophany is an appearance by God, the Revealed Lord, before the incarnation of Jesus. A “theophany”...refer [s] to either a visible or auditory manifestation of the Son of God before His incarnation in Bethlehem (Gen. 32:29-30; Ex. 3:2; 19:18-20; Josh. 5:13-15; Dan. 3:26). <sup>5</sup> See the <b>Theophanies of God</b> for more information.
<b>Type, Antitype, Typical</b>	<i>A type is a preordained representation wherein certain persons, events, and institutions of the O.T. stand for corresponding persons, events, and institutions of the N.T. Types are pictures or object lessons by which God has taught His redemptive plan. They are a shadow of things to come, not the image of those things (Col. 2:17 Heb. 8:5 10:1).</i> <sup>6</sup> See the <b>Doctrine of Typology</b> ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ).
Some of these definitions are taken from <a href="http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=1556">http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=1556</a> <a href="http://www.bibledoctrinechurch.org/?subpages/GLOSSARY.shtml">http://www.bibledoctrinechurch.org/?subpages/GLOSSARY.shtml</a> <a href="http://rickhughesministries.org/content/Biblical-Terms.pdf">http://rickhughesministries.org/content/Biblical-Terms.pdf</a> <a href="http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d">http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d</a> <a href="http://www.wordoftruthministries.org/termsanddefs.htm">http://www.wordoftruthministries.org/termsanddefs.htm</a> <a href="http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics.html">http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics.html</a> <a href="http://www.theopedia.com/">http://www.theopedia.com/</a>	

## An Introduction to Genesis 26

**Introduction:** Genesis 26 is primarily about the interaction between Isaac and his family with the heathen of the land. Because there is a drought, Isaac is about to move to Egypt, but God guides him to Gerar instead, where Isaac appears to have a good relationship with the leadership there (with Abimelech). However, the people force Isaac to leave and their mischief push Isaac and family further and further away. However, Abimelech,

<sup>5</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 404); accessed July 25, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> From <http://www.dake.com/dake/types.html> accessed July 30, 2013.

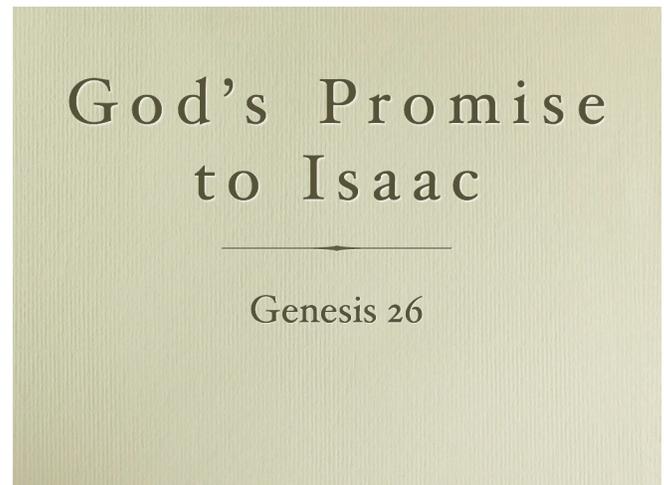
Phicol and another associate seek the banished Isaac out in order to establish an alliance with him. At the end of the chapter, Esau, one of Isaac and Rebekah's sons, marries two Hittite women, and they make life difficult for Isaac and Rebekah.

As one who does not believe that Moses wrote Genesis (at best, he edited it); Abraham's trusted servant probably wrote Genesis 24 and Isaac was likely the author of Genesis 25–26.

Genesis 26 opens with their being a famine in the land, and Isaac makes plans to move temporarily to Egypt. God speaks to Isaac directly and tells him not to. In fact, God reiterates some promises to Isaac that He had previously made to Abraham, and then makes a very unusual statement which I will endeavor to explain.

"I'll tell you where to move to," God promises; and Isaac and family move to Gerar, an area populated by Philistines.

**God's Promise to Isaac Graphic** is from [Portage Church](#), accessed August 3, 2015.



Chapter 26 deals only with Isaac and Rebekah in a situation which parallels the past of Abraham. Abraham recorded in Scripture how he deceived men in the past by claiming that Sarah was his sister. Isaac will do the exact same thing in this chapter. This is not the kind of thing that his father Abraham would have talked about and it occurred before he was born; so what makes the most sense is that he had the beginning of the Bible, much of it written by Abraham, which he carried with him (possibly, Isaac carried this with him in his own head). This is possibly where this idea came from.

There are 3 very similar narratives in Genesis. Abraham twice lies about his relationship with his wife to strangers that he is worried about; and Genesis 26 is about Isaac doing the exact same thing. There are many significant differences between these narratives; but it is interesting that God the Holy Spirit chose these events to record.

Sometimes, we learn a lot about a person when we see them in the same circumstance, but years later; or when we see two different people in the same circumstance. We are going to also learn a lot about the Philistines. The narrative of Abraham and Isaac both going into the land of the Philistines indicates that there have been sociological changes among the Philistines themselves. However, it is going to take us some time before we get there. One verse is going to stop us dead in our tracks. It is a verse you may have read many times, but did not realize just how out of place it is.

Although Isaac clearly mends his relationship with Abimelech, the king of Gerar<sup>7</sup>; the people of Gerar are very jealous of Isaac's success, and they push the king to remove Isaac from their midst. Isaac moves out of town, but Philistines continue to harass him by filling in the wells which he digs; so Isaac moves further and further away until the harassment ends. Isaac continues to dig wells and the Philistines continue to fill them in. Isaac finally puts enough distance between himself and the Philistines to where this behavior stops.

After this, God again speaks to Isaac and gives more assurances to Isaac. As a result, Isaac stops there and builds an altar to God.

Sometime after this—we don't know if it is weeks, months or years later, Abimelech and his general Phicol hunt down Isaac and make peace with him. It is clear that Abimelech recognizes the blessing that he received by being

<sup>7</sup> I often call him the King of Gerar; however, he is twice referred to as the King of the Philistines in Genesis 26.

associated with Isaac, and he tells him this. They share a meal of fellowship and Abimelech and company leave on good terms.

The final interaction between Isaac and his family and the heathen of the land is, Esau, their son, marries two Hittite women. These women make life difficult for Isaac and Rebekah (although it is not clear how).

You may not realize it by the introduction, but this chapter is very up-to-date; the events of this chapter have many contemporary applications. We have a political party whose philosophy, in part, on jealousy. No political movement based upon a mental attitude sin will prosper. Either it will become greatly weakened or they will destroy the country.

It is important to understand what has gone before.

### The Prequel of Genesis 26

Genesis 26 is a fairly self-contained chapter, requiring little introduction. Abraham, called of God to move westward to the Land of Promise, has a son of promise, Isaac (Genesis 12–22). Abraham sends his most responsible servant eastward to fetch a wife for Isaac, and he returns with Rebekah (Genesis 24).

Isaac and Rebekah have twin sons, Jacob and Esau, the latter of whom is spoken of at the end of this chapter. Nothing is said about Jacob; and we have no idea as to the ages of their sons in Genesis 26:1–33. Most of those who deal with the timing of this chapter, suggest that most of this chapter occurred before Jacob and Esau are born.

Genesis 26 will begin with a drought which causes Isaac to make plans on moving to another area.

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We need to know who the people are who populate this chapter.

### The Principals of Genesis 26

Characters	Commentary
Abraham	Abraham is the son of Terah, descendant of Shem; and he is the father of the Jewish people.
Isaac	Isaac is the son of promise born to Abraham and Sarah.
Abimelech	Abimelech is the King of the Philistines in Gerar. This is a title and not a proper name.
Rebekah	Rebekah is the beautiful daughter of Abraham's nephew (Bethuel). She married Isaac.
The Philistines	Genesis 26 prominently speaks of the Philistines, who are only spoken in previously in Genesis 10:14 21:32, 34. They are mentioned 5 times in Genesis 26. A subset of the Philistines also figures prominently into this chapter—the herdsmen of Gerar.
Ahuzzath	Abimelech's adviser.
Phicol	He was the commander of Abimelech's army
Judith	She was the daughter of Beerli the Hittite, who married Esau.
Basemath	She was the daughter of Elon the Hittite and she also married Esau. Both women made life difficult for Isaac and Rebekah, their in-laws.
Esau	Esau is the firstborn of Isaac and Rebekah. Jacob is his fraternal twin.

Some of these from [A Fire in my Bones](#); accessed July 27, 2015 and edited.

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Griffith-Thomas: *ALTHOUGH Isaac lived the longest of all the patriarchs less is recorded of him than of the others. This is the only chapter exclusively devoted to his life. His was a quiet, peaceful, normal life. He was the ordinary son of a great father, and the ordinary father of a [dynamic and colorful]...son. We are accustomed to speak of such lives as commonplace and ordinary, and yet the ordinary life is the "ordered" life, and in the truest sense the "ordained" life. Like the rest of us, Isaac's experiences were marked by light and shade, by sin and discipline, by grace and mercy.*<sup>8</sup>

Steven Cole: *Isaac...wasn't bold like his father Abraham, who made a daring raid against the kings of the east. He wasn't shrewd like his son, Jacob, or a gifted leader like his grandson, Joseph. Yet God used him to work out His covenant promises. His life shows us that there's hope in the Lord for all us ordinary people.*<sup>9</sup>

Pett discusses Isaac, particularly in reference to this chapter.

### Peter Pett on Isaac

After the heart warming record of the obtaining of a suitable wife for Isaac as a result of the direct activity of Yahweh little is told us about him. This is because during his lifetime important covenants and theophanies were few and therefore there was no recording in writing.

The family tribe over which he presided continued to be strong (Genesis 26:16) and he clashed with Abimelech at Gerar but that is almost all we know about him apart from the birth of his children and his part in the continuation of the chosen line. But he did continue Abraham's policy of allying his family with the family of Abraham's father Terah and was upset when Esau departed from it (Genesis 28:9). More dangerously (and with less justification) he also continued the policy of describing his wife as his sister. He seems to be a mirror image of his father but without his effectiveness and personality.

But his importance is that he was part of the fulfilling of God's purposes. He was not charismatic, he was not outstanding, but he was chosen by God and was a necessary part of the chain that led up to Moses, then to David and finally to Jesus Christ. What Abraham began he had to hold on to and continue. And this he did, without fuss and without bravado. He was there when God wanted him.

We too may feel that we are not important, but if we are His and responsive to His words we too are an important part of the chain that leads to the fulfilling of His purposes. Isaac should be an encouragement to us all.

However, Isaac is seen later as an important member of those to whom the covenant was given (2 Kings 13:23; 1 Chronicles 6:16; Psalms 105:9). In Amos 7:9; Amos 7:16 Isaac is used as another name to designate Israel.

From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/pet/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 27, 2015.

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<sup>8</sup> From [http://preceptaustin.org/genesis\\_devotional\\_commentary.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/genesis_devotional_commentary.htm) (Genesis 26); accessed August 2, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> From <http://www.fcfonline.org/content/1/sermons/011997m.pdf> accessed August 1, 2015.

**The Places of Genesis 26 (map);** a google map from [News you can believe](#); accessed July 31, 2015

There was a famine in the land, but God spoke to Isaac and told him to go to a place He would show him, and not down to Egypt. Isaac went to Gerar of the Philistines.

It appears that Isaac moved from Beer-lahai-roi (Genesis 24:62 25:11), which would have been found perhaps 50 miles southwest of Beersheba. He would not have been too far from a trading route that ran from Gerar and Bathsheba down to Egypt. If he went west, he would end up in Egypt; and if Isaac went northeast, he would end up in Gerar (which is how God directs him in this chapter).



Isaac was forced out of Gerar many years later by envious Philistines. He established a well that he named Rehoboth and eventually moved back to Beersheba.

We need to know where this chapter takes place.

### The Places of Genesis 26

Place	Description
Beersheba	Beersheba means "well of oath" or "well of seven." It is where Abimelech and Abraham made a treaty and Abraham lived and where Isaac and Abimelech made a treaty. This is in southern Judah.
Valley of Gerar	Valley of Gerar is Philistine territory where Isaac clashed with the herdsmen of Gerar.
Shibah	Shibah means "oath." It is a well that Isaac's servants dug at Beersheba after he made an oath with Abimelech.
Egypt	Egypt is where Isaac intended to go to survive the famine.
Esek	Esek means "dispute." It is a well where Isaac clashed with herdsmen.
Sitnah	Sitnah means "opposition." It is a well where Isaac clashed with herdsmen.

## The Places of Genesis 26

Place	Description
Rehoboth	Rehoboth means "room." It is a well where the herdsmen finally left Isaac alone.

I took many of these from [A Fire in my Bones](#); accessed July 27, 2015. These were edited.

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## The Patriarchal Timeline for Genesis 26

Legend
Birth or death
God speaks with a patriarch
Historical incidents (most of which are related to one of Israel's patriarchs)
Parentetical dates (2065 B.C.) simply refer to taking the date assigned by the chronologist and using Scripture to determine the next date.
The entire <b>Abrahamic Timeline</b> ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ). The entire <b>Patriarchal Timeline</b> ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ).
With Abraham, there are continual references to his age, which helps to determine relative dates. There are far fewer references to the ages of Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, which means that there is more guesswork involved in determining dates during their lifetimes.

MacDonald (N. Berkeley Bible)	Reese's Chronology Bible	Bible Hub	Ages	Scripture	Event/Description
2234 B.C.	2097 B.C.			Genesis 11:24	Terah, Abram's father, is born. Gen 11:24–26 <a href="#">Nahor lived 29 years and fathered Terah. After he fathered Terah, Nahor lived 119 years and fathered other sons and daughters. Terah lived 70 years and fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.</a>
	1969 B.C.		Noah is 950	Genesis 9:28–29	Death of Noah
2164 B.C.	1967 B.C.			Genesis 11:26–27	Abraham (Terah's son) and Lot (Haran's son) born in Ur of the Chaldeans. Abram would be the 43 <sup>rd</sup> generation from Adam. Gen 11:26 <a href="#">Terah lived 70 years and fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.</a>
2064 B.C. (2066 B.C.)	(1867 B.C.)	2066 B.C.	Abraham is 100	Genesis 21:1–7 1Chronicles 1:34	Isaac born to Abraham. Isaac would be the 44 <sup>th</sup> generation from Adam. Gen 21:5 <a href="#">Abraham was 100 years old when his son Isaac was born to him.</a>
(2026 B.C.)				Genesis 24:1–67 Genesis 25:20	Isaac (Abraham's son) and Rebekah. Genesis 25:20 <a href="#">Isaac was 40 years old when he took as his wife Rebekah daughter of Bethuel the Aramæan from Paddan-aram, and sister of Laban the Aramæan.</a> At this time, Isaac is living in the <b>Negev</b> . It is likely that Abraham lived there as well; or near to there.

MacDonald (N. Berkeley Bible)	Reese's Chronology Bible	Bible Hub	Ages	Scripture	Event/Description
		2026 B.C.	Isaac is 40	Genesis 25:20	Isaac marries Rebekah. Genesis 25:20
2004 B.C.	1807 B.C.	2006 B.C.	Abraham is 160; Isaac is 60	Genesis 25:19, 21–26	Jacob & Esau born to Isaac. Gen 25:26 <i>After this, his brother came out grasping Esau's heel with his hand. So he was named Jacob. Isaac was 60 years old when they were born.</i> Therefore, Abraham would be 160 years old.
(1991 B.C.)				Genesis 25:5–6	Isaac is the heir of all things that Abraham has (but, most importantly, of the covenant of God with Abraham).
1989 B.C.	1792 B.C.	1991 B.C.	Abraham is 175	Genesis 25:7–10	Abraham dies. Gen 25:7 <i>This is the length of Abraham's life: 175 years.</i> He is buried in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, in the field of Nephron (this would be with Sarah).
				Genesis 25:11	God blesses Isaac.
	1782 B.C. 1740 B.C. (Klassen)			Genesis 26:1–5	A famine in the land; God renews covenant with Isaac at Gerar.
				Genesis 26:6–10	Rebekah and Isaac in Gerar.
				Genesis 26:11–16	Isaac is blessed by God in Gerar.
	1782 B.C. 1735 B.C. (Klassen)			Genesis 26:17–22	Strife between Isaac and Philistines in and near Gerar.
	1767 B.C.			Genesis 26:34–35	Esau marries two Canaanite women.
	1757– 1739 B.C. 1733 B.C. (Klassen)			Genesis 26:23–25	Isaac makes an altar in Beer-sheba.
	1738 B.C. c 1732 B.C. (Klassen)	1977 B.C.		Genesis 26:26–33	Isaac's alliance with Abimelech at Beersheba.

## Bibliography

MacDonald's timeline is from: <http://www.bibleistrue.com/qna/qna63.htm> accessed October 11, 2011 and August 12, 2014. Included in MacDonald's timeline is a timeline for Egypt interspersed.

See <http://www.bibleistrue.com/qna/qna63dating.htm> for his justification of his timeline.

The Bible Hub [timeline](#) (accessed January 11, 2015) appears to be pretty thorough, but no one specifically is credited.

From: [http://www.christianshepherd.org/bible\\_study\\_guides/abram\\_to\\_the\\_exodus.pdf](http://www.christianshepherd.org/bible_study_guides/abram_to_the_exodus.pdf) (Christian shepherd). This source believes that the Jews live only a short time in Egypt (210 years).

*The Reese Chronological Bible*; KJV translation; Editor: Edward Reese; ©1977 by Edward Reese and Klassen's dating system ©1975 by Frank R. Klassen; ©1980 by Bethany House Publishers, South Minneapolis, MN; pp. 18–19, 54–74.

*The Modern Language Bible (The New Berkeley Version)*, Revised Edition; ©1969 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; pp. 10–54.

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Ballinger puts together the data to indicate when this chapter takes place.

### Ballinger on the Timing of Genesis 26

1. The timing of the events of this chapter is sometime shortly after the death of Abraham (cf. v. 18).
2. Isaac was 75 years of age at the death of his father Abraham.
3. When Abraham died at age 175, Jacob was 15 years of age.
4. The twins were born when Isaac was 60 years of age.
5. Isaac is tested with a famine similar to the one that his father experienced shortly after Abraham's arrival in the Promised Land (cf. Gen. 12:10 for "the previous/first famine").
6. Approximately one century separates these two famines.
7. Abraham arrived in Canaan in 1871 BC so this would place the 2<sup>nd</sup> major famine at somewhere around 1771 BC (Abraham's age when he first entered Canaan was 75 and he died at age 175).

From <http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/Gen26.htm> accessed July 23, 2015.

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Keith Krell<sup>10</sup> and Scott Grant<sup>11</sup> both suggest that this chapter occurs earlier in time to Genesis 25:21–34 (the birth of Jacob and Esau). Isaac will tell Abimelech that Rebekah is his sister rather than his wife; and having twins would make that a less believable story. I could, however, propose a scenario by which she could have children and he is still her brother; but Isaac will express husband-like affection towards Rebekah in this chapter, and that is hard to do with twins. For that reason, Krell is probably correct. Whether there is some overlap in these chapters (Isaac and Rebekah in Gerar, they leave Gerar, Rebekah gives birth to twins, Abimelech and Phicol seek out Abraham) we don't know. The pieces of Genesis 25 fit together well as do the pieces of Genesis 26. Both could have been recorded by Isaac at two different times (and by *recorded*, I mean that Isaac could have remembered these things and then passed them along to Esau and/or Jacob).

Actually, this leads to some interesting speculation: assuming that the patriarchs themselves recorded their own history and passed it along from generation to generation, the handoff to Jacob may possibly have occurred by means of his mother, Rebekah (Genesis 27). However, the handoff may have occurred after Jacob returns from Syria with his wives (Genesis 33).

This is interesting, as it appears at the end of Genesis 25 that we are next going to enter into the Jacob narrative (as it ends with the twins being born); but then there is suddenly more narrative about Isaac. However, Genesis 25 appears to be mostly about the Arabic line from Abraham. Abraham's wife is mentioned along with their children (as discussed, she probably came along after the death of Sarah). Abraham's death is recorded, which indicates that there will be no more children from him directly; and this leads into the line of Ishmael and his half-brother Isaac (both men gather together for Abraham's funeral). If Isaac is the author of Genesis 25 (and I believe that he is), he is a man concerned with consequential matters: births and deaths and appearances of God. So, his visit with Ishmael would, no doubt, result in finding out about Ishmael's children (more Arabs).

Logically, if one is going to talk about Ishmael's children, then Isaac ought to speak of his own children; and, logically, because Isaac is speaking of the Arabs who were descendants of Abraham, then there is one more to

<sup>10</sup> From <https://bible.org/seriespage/33-famine-feast-genesis-261-33> accessed August 1, 2015.

<sup>11</sup> From [http://www.pbc.org/system/message\\_files/99650/4866.pdf](http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99650/4866.pdf) accessed August 2, 2015.

name, and that is Esau. So, that is how Genesis 25 all hangs together—it is the Arab chapter, where the entire line of Arabs is covered.

But, Isaac, being a man interested with things of consequence, must also tell about his relationship to God, and how God spoke to him. Therefore, God speaking to him begins this chapter, and comes in at the end of this chapter. Isaac records all of the circumstances around God speaking to him.

So, whereas Genesis 25 is the *Arab* chapter; Genesis 26 is the *God speaks to Isaac* chapter. Both chapters were probably written by Isaac; and they individually hold together as cohesive units (with the exception of the final two verses of this chapter).

Interestingly enough, Genesis 27 will indicate that Isaac is old and blind; but additional passages indicate that he will live for a very long time (longer than any of the other patriarchs). So much of his life was continued in a state of blindness and probably in close association with Esau.

Given that, logically, Isaac knew and recited the book of Genesis on up to Genesis 24, and then added two chapters of his own. Who would he have spoken these chapters to? His wife and his son Esau. His wife Rebekah may have impressed these on the mind of Jacob before he left.

When it comes to passing along the Scriptures and writing them, we have clues as to the latter (the very personal nature of the passages related to Jacob and his life); but we have absolutely no outright statements that I can find. My premise has been, chapters would be written (perhaps in the mind of a patriarch) and then passed along to his son or sons, who would add to that. Each generation would have *The History of Man and God* taught to him; and each generation would add a few chapters to that.

However, my only evidence is, the Exodus generation appears to know God, to know who God is; and they know who Abraham and his sons were (and they knew this early on; they did not learn it from Moses). The only way that this could happen is for the Scriptures (Genesis and probably Job) to have been passed down from generation to generation in some way.

One needs to bear in mind, as these Scriptures are passed along from generation to generation, that it slowly became clear, both to Jacob and to Esau, that the blessing of God would go through the line of Jacob. This was not something that was easy for Esau to take. However, as this became clear, God also clearly blessed Esau. Furthermore, Esau was given a great deal of time with Isaac, so Genesis 1–26 could be impressed upon his mind.

Inevitably, I can find someone who summarizes a chapter better than I can.

### **A Synopsis of Genesis 26 (by James Burton Coffman)**

- (1) There was a famine similar to the one that prompted Abraham to go down into Egypt. However, Isaac, heeding the warning of God, remained in Canaan, in Gerar, which was under the jurisdiction of Abimelech, the Philistine king (Genesis 26:1-5).
- (2) Isaac, with similar motivation to that of Abraham passed the word around that Rebekah was his sister. This time, however, Abimelech, knowing of the experience with Abraham and Sarah, looked into the relationship himself, and observing Isaac fondling Rebekah, he confronted Isaac and demanded the truth as well as an explanation from Isaac. Apparently, at the same time he also ordered Isaac out of the vicinity of Gerar (Genesis 26:27), and gave strict laws against anyone's molesting either Rebekah or Isaac (Genesis 26:6-11).
- (3) Isaac then, at some distance from Abimelech's capital, engaged in agriculture, reaping harvests of a hundred fold, and being prospered exceedingly. Again, Abimelech ordered him to move; and Isaac moved further down the valley of Gerar (Genesis 26:12-17).

### A Synopsis of Genesis 26 (by James Burton Coffman)

- (4) The famine then being over, Isaac returned to his home at Beer-lahairoi, near Beersheba, and dug again the water wells which Abraham had dug, the same having, in the meanwhile, been stopped up, presumably by the Philistines. Considerable strife ensued over the water wells, but Isaac diplomatically resolved the difficulties (Genesis 26:18-22).
- (5) God appeared to Isaac at Beersheba, where Isaac built an altar, presumably offered sacrifices, and worshipped Jehovah. He also dug another water well (Genesis 26:23-25).
- (6) King Abimelech, however, was apparently apprehensive with regard to the growth and power of Isaac, and doubtless feared that hostilities might eventually come about. Acting in the same manner as another King Abimelech (presumably) had acted toward Abraham, he at once went to Beersheba and concluded a treaty with Isaac (Genesis 26:26-33). Thus, history repeated itself, however, not without important variations.
- (7) The final paragraph of the chapter relates the marriage of Esau with Canaanite women, much to the displeasure of his mother Rebekah (Genesis 26:34-35).

From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015.

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Several outlines are presented here.

### Matthew Henry Outlines Genesis 26

- I. Isaac in adversity, by reason of a famine in the land, which,
  1. Obliges him to change his quarters (Genesis 26:1).
  2. But, God visits him with direction and comfort (Genesis 26:2-5).
  3. He foolishly denies his wife, being in distress and is reproved for it by Abimelech (Genesis 26:6-11).
- II. Isaac in prosperity, by the blessing of God upon him (Genesis 26:12-14).
  1. The Philistines were envious at him (Genesis 26:14-17).
  2. He continued industrious in his business (Genesis 26:18-23).
  3. God appeared to him, and encouraged him, and he devoutly acknowledged God (Genesis 26:24-25).
  4. The Philistines, at length, made court to him, and made a covenant with him (Genesis 26:26-33).
  5. The disagreeable marriage of his son Esau was an alloy to the comfort of his prosperity (Genesis 26:34-35).

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There are not a lot of different approaches to this chapter.

### Alternate Outline by Jack Ballinger

#### Isaac and His Tests with the Philistines (vv. 1-33)

How Isaac Came to Live Among the Philistines (vv. 1-11)

Isaac Prospers Greatly in Gerar (vv. 12-16)

"Water-Wars" (vv. 18-22)

Renewal of the Promises at Beersheba (vv. 23-25)

## Alternate Outline by Jack Ballinger

Non-Aggression Pact with Abimelech (vv. 26-31)  
 Isaac's Actions Vindicated (vv. 32-33)  
 Esau's Wives (vv. 34-35)

From <http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/Gen26.htm> accessed July 23, 2015.

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This approach has a couple of unique features.

## One More Outline (from Arno Gaebelein)

### CHAPTER 26 Isaac in Gerar

1. The famine (Genesis 26:1)
2. Jehovah appears unto Isaac (Genesis 26:2-5)
3. Isaac in Gerar where he denies Rebekah (Genesis 26:6-11)
4. Isaac's prosperity and the digging of wells (Genesis 26:12-22)
5. Jehovah appears at Beersheba (Genesis 26:23-25)
6. Isaac and Abimelech (Genesis 26:26-33)
7. The wives of Esau (Genesis 26:34-35)

From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/gab/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015.

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God speaks to Isaac twice in this chapter; and Isaac interacts with a number of Philistines (primarily from the area of Gerar).

*J. Vernon McGee: When I was a much younger preacher, this chapter did not seem to be very exciting. It is quite colorless and uninteresting, which is especially noticeable after we have studied a man like Abraham and an exciting man like Jacob who is to follow. This chapter is about Isaac. In fact, it is the only chapter that is really about Isaac, and it just isn't very thrilling. All he does is dig wells. However, in later years I've come to examine these chapters and have found that God has a message for us in this also. In fact, it is a very important message, and Paul stated it quite accurately: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4). This is a chapter that teaches patience, and some of us need that - certainly I am in that category. Yet, we would not have you get the impression that patience is all that God wants of us. The Lord also had men like Abraham, like Jacob, and like David, men who were real go-getters and who were aggressive. God can use that also. But the life of Isaac has a great message for many of us.<sup>12</sup>*

There are many things that we will get from this chapter, which may not be apparent at first. This chapter is very much related to the will of God and to the **geographic will of God**. However, it takes a bit of study to understand how to apply this to your own life.

Many teachers begin this chapter with a personal story that has the tag line, *like father, like son*. Although that is going on in this chapter, there is a specific reason *why*; and it is not because Isaac is doing what he has observed his father doing (Isaac was not yet born). In v. 7, this will be explained. However, the importance of the father-son relationship to this chapter is pointed out by Keith Krell, who observed<sup>13</sup> that the word *Abraham* is found 8 times in this chapter; and the word *father* 6 times.

<sup>12</sup> From [https://archive.org/stream/01\\_Genesis/01-GENESIS\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt) (Genesis 26); accessed July 29, 2015.

<sup>13</sup> From <https://bible.org/seriespage/33-famine-feast-genesis-261-33> accessed August 1, 2015.

I noticed about two-thirds of the way through that some of the Pulpit Commentary was really a translation with some additional information added in between the phrases. So I included some of that under translations.

Throughout this chapter, I allude to current political and historical events and note what year that this was written. I began writing this material in 2013; I completed the writing in 2015. That will explain the disparity of the dates.

With this chapter, I introduce some excellent commentary by Jack M. Ballinger, a pastor-teacher in Oklahoma. His site incorrectly linked to his studies in various books (which I have attempted to inform them of), so I was unable to refer to his work until now. The correct links are found in the footnotes.

### Chapter Updates:

I will use this space to indicate any format changes.

Every verse will be hyperlinked from the first page, so that you can easily go to a specific verse in this chapter.

At the end of the exegesis of every verse, I will make certain that there is a Kukis mostly literal translation and a Kukis paraphrase, both of them marked as such.

I have decided to add spacing between the translation and the commentary.

In the future, I would really like to add a few translations, fill in the translation of this chapter (at the end of this document); and provide additional sources at the end of this document.

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## God Gives Special Guidance to Isaac

Slavishly literal:

**And so is a famine in the land from to a separation the famine the first which was in days of Abraham. And so goes Isaac unto Abimelech, king of Philistines, Gerar-ward.**

Genesis  
26:1

Moderately literal:

**There was a famine in the land apart from the first famine in the days of Abraham. Isaac went to Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, to Gerar.**

**There was another famine in the land, in addition to the one during the time of Abraham. Isaac, therefore, went to the king of the Philistines, Abimelech, to Gerar, their state capitol.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Note: I compare the Hebrew text to English translations of the Latin, Syriac and Greek texts, using the Douay-Rheims translation<sup>14</sup>; George Lamsa's translation, and Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's translation as revised and edited by Paul W. Esposito, respectively. I often update these texts with non-substantive changes (e.g., *you* for *thou*, etc.). I often use the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible instead of Brenton's translation, because it updates the English text.

<sup>14</sup> I have begun to doubt my e-sword Douay-Rheims version, so I now use [www.latinvulgate.com](http://www.latinvulgate.com).

The Septuagint was the earliest known translation of a book (circa 200 B.C.). Since this translation was made before the textual criticism had been developed into a science and because different books appear to be translated by different men, the Greek translation can sometimes be very uneven.

When there are serious disparities between my translation and Brenton's (or the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible), I look at the Greek text of the Septuagint (the LXX) to see if a substantive difference actually exists (and I reflect these changes in the English rendering of the Greek text). I use the Greek LXX with Strong's numbers and morphology available for e-sword. The only problem with this resource (which is a problem for similar resources) is, there is no way to further explore Greek verbs which are not found in the New Testament. Although I usually quote the Complete Apostles' Bible here, I have begun to make changes in the translation when their translation conflicts with the Greek and note what those changes are.

The Masoretic text is the Hebrew text with all of the vowels (vowel points) inserted (the original Hebrew text lacked vowels). We take the Masoretic text to be the text closest to the original. However, differences between the Masoretic text and the Greek, Latin and Syriac are worth noting and, once in a great while, represent a more accurate text possessed by those other ancient translators.

In general, the Latin text is an outstanding translation from the Hebrew text into Latin and very trustworthy (I say this as a non-Catholic). Unfortunately, I do not read Latin—apart from some very obvious words—so I am dependent upon the English translation of the Latin (principally, the Douay-Rheims translation).

Underlined words indicate differences in the text.

Bracketed portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls are words, letters and phrases lost in the scroll due to various types of damage. Underlined words or phrases are those in the Dead Sea Scrolls but not in the Masoretic text.

The Targum of Onkelos is actually the Pentateuchal Targumim, which are The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel. On the Pentateuch With The Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum From the Chaldee by J. W. Etheridge, M.A. Taken from <http://targum.info/targumic-texts/pentateuchal-targumim/> and first published in 1862.

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so is a famine in the land from to a separation the famine the first which was in days of Abraham. And so goes Isaac unto Abimelech, king of Philistines, Gerarward.
Targum (trans. By Cook)	And there was a mighty famine in the land of Kenaan, besides the former famine which had been in the days of Abraham; and Izhak went to Abimelek king of the Philistaeae at Gerar.
Latin Vulgate	And when a famine came in the land, after that barrenness which had happened in the days of Abraham, Isaac went to Abimelech, king of the Palestines, to Gerara.
Peshitta (Syriac)	AND there was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gadar, to Abimeleck king of the Philistines.
Septuagint (Greek)	And there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine, which was in the time of Abraham; and Isaac went to Abimelech the king of the Philistines to Gerar.

Significant differences: *Barrenness* in the Latin probably refers to the famine.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Then came a time of great need in the land, like that which had been before in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines, at Gerar.
Easy English	<b>Isaac and Abimelech</b> Now there was a *famine in Canaan. There had been a *famine in the time when Abraham was alive. But this was another *famine. Isaac went to the place called Gerar. He went to Abimelech, the king of the *Philistines.
Easy-to-Read Version	Once there was a famine [A time when there is no rain and no crops can grow. People and animals often die from lack of food and water.]. This was like the famine that happened during Abraham's life. So Isaac went to the town of Gerar, to Abimelech the king of the Philistine people.
<i>The Message</i>	There was a famine in the land, as bad as the famine during the time of Abraham. And Isaac went down to Abimelech, king of the Philistines, in Gerar.
NIRV	<b>Isaac and Abimelech</b> There was very little food in the land. The same thing had been true earlier, in Abraham's time. Isaac went to Abimelech in Gerar. Abimelech was the king of the Philistines.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	<b>Isaac and Rebekah visit Gerar</b> When a famine gripped the land, a different one from the first famine that occurred in Abraham's time, Isaac set out toward Gerar and toward King Abimelech of the Philistines.
Contemporary English V.	Once during Abraham's lifetime, the fields had not produced enough grain, and now the same thing happened. So Isaac went to King Abimelech of the Philistines in the land of Gerar,...
New Berkeley Version	A famine visited the land in addition to the earlier famine in Abraham's day, so Isaac moved to Gerar, to Abimelech [The name Abimelech, like the name Pharaoh in Egypt, seems to have been a title that applied to successive rulers.] the Philistine king.
New Century Version	<b>Isaac Lies to Abimelech</b> Now there was a time of hunger in the land, besides the time of hunger that happened during Abraham's life. So Isaac went to the town of Gerar to see Abimelech king of the Philistines.
New Life Bible	Now there was another time when there was no food in the land, after the time of no food in the days of Abraham. So Isaac went to Gerar, to Abimelech king of the Philistines.
New Living Translation	<b>Isaac Deceives Abimelech</b> A severe famine now struck the land, as had happened before in Abraham's time. So Isaac moved to Gerar, where Abimelech, king of the Philistines, lived.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	There came a famine in the land, which was greater than past famines in the time of Abraham. So Isaac went to Gerara to [see] Abimelech, the king of the Philistines.
International Standard V	<b>Isaac Lives in Philistia for a While</b>

Later on, a famine swept through the land. This famine was different from the previous famine that had occurred earlier, during Abraham's lifetime. So Isaac went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines, at Gerar.

New Advent Bible

When a famine came upon the land again, like the famine which had visited it in Abraham's time, Isaac was for leaving it; and he had reached the court of Abimelech, king of the Philistines, in Gerara,...

Today's NIV

The land was stricken by a famine—not the earlier famine which happened in Abraham's time—and Isaac went to Abimelech the Philistine king at Gerar.

Translation for Translators

#### Isaac deceived King Abimelech

Some time later there was a severe ◀famine/scarcity of food▶ in the land. That was different from the famine that occurred when Abraham was alive. So Isaac went southeast to Gerar town, to talk to Abimelech, the king of the Philistine people-group. What happened was this: Isaac considered going to Egypt, but Yahweh appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt! Live in the land where I will tell you to go! V. 2 is included for context.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear

Famine was in the land, the first famine that had claimed the days of Abraham. Isaac went to King Abimelech of Palestine (*Gaza Strip*) in Gerar.

Conservapedia

Famine struck the land, a different event from the former famine that had happened in the days of Abraham. Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Avvites, toward Gerar. Traditionally translated as "king of the **Philistines**." Deuteronomy 2:23 says that the Avvites lived in the Gaza Strip until a later "Caphthorite" or Mycenaean invasion (probably from Crete) drove them out; the Cretans or "Sea Peoples" continued as the "Philistines" that contended with **Judges Shamgar**, **Jephthah**, and **Samson**, and Kings **Saul** and **David**. In fact, the name Philistine (**Hebrew** יתְשִׁילִף or philisth) means "one who invades or overruns or makes inroads into a territory", hence an "immigrant."

Ferar-Fenton Bible

*Isaac During a Famine Goes to Gherar*

Afterwards there was a famine in the land, beside the former famine which was in the days of Abraham, so Isaac went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines of Gherar.

Lexham English Bible

#### Isaac and Abimelech

And there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine which was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines, to Gerar.

NIV – UK

#### Isaac and Abimelech

Now there was a famine in the land - besides the previous famine in Abraham's time - and Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines in Gerar.

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible

There was a famine in the land—a second one after the famine that had taken place in the time of Abraham—and Isaac went to Gerar, the land of Abimelech, king of the Philistines.

The Heritage Bible

And there was a famine in the land, separate from the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac walked to Abimelech, king of the Palestinians, to Gerar.

New American Bible R.E.

*Isaac and Abimelech.*

There was a famine in the land [Gn 12:10-20.], distinct from the earlier one that had occurred in the days of Abraham, and Isaac went down to Abimelech, king of the Philistines in Gerar. The promise of land and numerous descendants given to Abraham (12:1-3; 15; 17; 22:17-18) is renewed for his son Isaac. The divine blessing to Isaac is mentioned also in vv. 12, 24, and 29.

New Jerusalem Bible There was a famine in the country -- different from the previous famine which took place in the time of Abraham -- and Isaac went to Abimelech, the Philistine king at Gerar.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible A famine came over the land, not the same as the first famine, which had taken place when Avraham was alive. Yitz'chak went to G'rar, to Avimelekh king of the P'lishtim.

exeGeses companion Bible **YISCHAQ AND ABI MELECH**  
And there is a famine in the land,  
apart from the first famine in the days of Abraham:  
and Yischaq goes to Abi Melech  
sovereign of the Peleshethiym to Gerar.

Hebrew Names Version There was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Avraham. Yitzchak went to Avimelekh king of the Pelishtim, to Gerar.

Kaplan Translation *Isaac and the Philistines*  
There was a famine in the land, aside from the first famine in the time of Abraham [Genesis 12:10. This chapter is the only place where we see Isaac without Abraham or Jacob, and it is here that we see Isaac's life literally as a carbon copy of Abraham's (see Genesis 26:18). While it had been Abraham's task to blaze spiritual trails, it was Isaac's mission to consolidate them.]. *Isaac went to Abimelech* [Probably not the same as the one involved with Abraham; see note on Genesis 20:2. According to one source, this was the previous Abimelekh's son (Targum on 26:28).] *king of the Philistines in Gerar*. See Genesis 20:1. It was on the boundary of the Holy Land, 10:19. From the context, it seems that Isaac was headed toward Egypt. This is difficult to understand, since Isaac lived in Beer LaChai Roi (Genesis 25:11), which is to the west of Gerar, on the way to Egypt. It is possible that Isaac went to Gerar because of Abraham's previous treaty (cf. Ramban). Alternatively, this is connected to the following sentence, and Isaac went to Gerar at God's command (Josephus, Antiquities 1:18:2). However, see note on Genesis 20:1.

Orthodox Jewish Bible And there was a ra'av (famine) in ha'aretz, besides the ra'av harishon that was in the days of Avraham. And Yitzchak went unto Avimelech Melech Pelishtim (Philistines) unto Gerar.

*The Scriptures* 1998 And there was a scarcity of food in the land, besides the first scarcity of food which was in the days of Abraham. And Yitshaq went to Abimelek, sovereign of the Philistines, in Gerar.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible **Isaac Lies to Abimelech**  
Now there was a time of hunger [famine] in the land, besides the time of hunger [former famine] that happened during Abraham's life. So Isaac went to the town of Gerar [20:1] to see Abimelech king of the Philistines.

The Geneva Bible And there was a famine in the land [In the land of Canaan], beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar.

Kretzmann's Commentary **Verses 1-5**  
The Lord Blesses Isaac  
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 adventures of Isaac, as related in this Chapter, have their parallels in the life of Abraham, and show that human nature does not change, but remains selfish and sinful from one generation to the next. A famine having struck Canaan, Isaac found

it advisable to journey down to the land of the Philistines, the hereditary title of whose king was Abimelech.

NET Bible®

There was a famine in the land, subsequent to the earlier famine that occurred [Heb "in addition to the first famine which was."] in the days of Abraham [This account is parallel to two similar stories about Abraham (see Gen 12:10-20; 20:1-18). Many scholars do not believe there were three similar incidents, only one that got borrowed and duplicated. Many regard the account about Isaac as the original, which then was attached to the more important person, Abraham, with supernatural elements being added. For a critique of such an approach, see R. Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 47-62. It is more likely that the story illustrates the proverb "like father, like son" (see T. W. Mann, *The Book of the Torah*, 53). In typical human fashion the son follows his father's example of lying to avoid problems. The appearance of similar events reported in a similar way underscores the fact that the blessing has now passed to Isaac, even if he fails as his father did.]. Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines at Gerar. When it comes to making an actual material change to the text, the NET Bible® is pretty good about indicating this. Since most of these corrections will be clear in the more literal translations below and within the Hebrew exegesis itself, I will not continue to list every NET Bible® footnote. Some of their notes will be reproduced in the exegesis of the chapter.

The Pulpit Commentary

And there was a famine in the land (of Canaan), beside the first (i.e. first recorded) famine that was in the days of Abraham at least a century previous. (vide Genesis 12:10) And Isaac who, since his father's death, had been residing at Hagar's well in the wilderness of Beersheba (Genesis 25:11) went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar (cf. Genesis 20:1, 2 21:22) Seventy or eighty years having elapsed since Abraham's sojourn in Gerar, it is scarcely probable that this was the monarch who then reigned. [I did not notice until this chapter that The Pulpit Commentary essentially gives an expanded translation for each verse.]

The Voice

Once again, a famine spread through the land, similar to the one that occurred in Abraham's time. Isaac went to the land of Gerar to appeal to King Abimelech of the Philistines.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version

And coming is a famine in the land, aside from the first famine which came in the days of Abraham. And going is Isaac to Abimelech, king of the Philistines, to Gerar.

Context Group Version

And there was a famine in the land { or earth }, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines, to Gerar.

English Standard Version

#### God's Promise to Isaac

Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar to Abimelech king of the Philistines.

H. C. Leupold

#### (a) Sojourn in Philistaea (v. 1-11)

And there came a famine in the land, other than the first famine that was in the days of Abraham; and Isaac went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines, to Gerar.

NASB

#### Isaac Settles in Gerar

Now there was a famine in the land, besides the previous famine that had occurred in the days of Abraham. So Isaac went to Gerar, to Abimelech king of the Philistines.

World English Bible

There was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines, to Gerar.

Young's Updated LT

And there is a famine in the land, besides the first famine which was in the days of Abraham, and Isaac goes unto Abimelech king of the Philistines, to Gerar.

**The gist of this verse:**

Because of a famine in the land, Isaac goes to Gerar, to Abimelech, the king of the Philistines.

Genesis 26:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
râ'âb (רָעָב) [pronounced raw-GAW <sup>BV</sup> ]	<i>famine, hunger; scarcity of grain; used figuratively for a lack of God's Word</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7458 BDB #944
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

**Translation:** [There was a famine in the land...](#)

In the ancient world, a famine was simply a year or more with little or no rain. Without the rain, the crops did not grow or produce, so it is called a famine. As a result, there is little to eat.

Today, a recession or depression would be very similar. However, we have famines even today; and the great dust bowl of the mid-west was a time of great famine in the United States. We have a famine in portions of California—something which is in part a manmade famine—where water is not being supplied to many of the central Californian farmers. It is manmade because there is enough water; but millions of gallons of freshwater simply run out into the sea for environmental concerns.

God often uses a famine (or a recession) as one of the early **stages of divine discipline** on a national entity.

Nearly all of the references to *the land* are to the plot of ground that God gave to Abraham; over a small portion of which Abraham, and later, Isaac, traveled.

My first instinct was to say that this famine is possibly designed to cause Isaac to move to another area; but, since God speaks directly to Isaac in this chapter, using the famine may not be necessary (I am assuming that Isaac would have moved if instructed by God<sup>15</sup>). So, which is it? Is it the famine or is it God speaking to Isaac? We already know that when God first told Abraham to separate from his family and move to Canaan, that he half obeyed both orders. He moved with half of his family halfway to Canaan. So, maybe God decides to move Isaac, for a whole host of reasons, but He does not first start out by saying, "Isaac, you are moving to Gerar. Saddle up." We already know that a direct order from God is not always followed. So, God, by means of a famine, gets Isaac ready to move; then God steps in and says, "But not to Egypt; you will move where I tell you to."

**Application:** When I realized that I needed to move from my home city, where I was raised, it was not, "I can't find a job here; why not move to Texas?" I considered two other options first. God had to get me to the point

<sup>15</sup> This is only an assumption, as we know very little about the relationship between God and Isaac. We know the God-ward side of this relationship; but much less about Isaac's perception.

where I realized, *I cannot stay here and spin my wheels*. Then, when my mind was focused on moving (trying hard not to move too far away), Houston, TX loomed large as a possible destination. My point was, it was a two-step process: (1) I have to move; (2) Why not consider Houston?

That is the case for Isaac. (1) he has to move; (2) but not to Egypt. Circumstances made Isaac realize that he needed to move, and then God guided him from there.

A famine, by its very nature, affects a large number of people; and it may have been God's purpose to move these people around. It does appear that, when a large number of people are grouped together, that degeneracy can be a result. God often uses economic situations in order to move people around—many times away from these degenerate situations. In this case, we know nothing about this famine except that it causes Isaac to pick up and move elsewhere.

Isaac will be giving testimony to God in another geographical area. If this general area is facing a famine, it is perhaps because there is no one near Isaac interested in the **Revealed God**.

### Ron Snider on Famine

1. Famines and difficult economic conditions are often a result of the negative volition of a nation and rejection of the plan of God.
2. God intervenes in judgment, as He does here in Canaan, in order to focus men on the realities of Himself and His plan.
3. The fact that people ignore these warnings and attribute them to everything and everyone but God demonstrates their foolishness, and destines them for further discipline and wrath.
4. The events in our country are clearly demonstrating that God is not for America, due to rejection of
5. Things will continue to worsen and intensify until the rapture, but we will go into the Tribulation in good shape.
6. The first famine alluded to in our passage occurred in 1875 B.C., so this one is more than one hundred years later.
7. Abraham responded to the difficult conditions by forsaking the geographical will of God and running down to Egypt.
8. This is how many respond to difficulties in their niche even today, as they move around the country seeking financial blessing instead of Bible doctrine.
9. The believer has to be constantly reminded that the will of God geographically is of paramount
10. When you face the job test or famine test of difficult economic conditions, the answer is not to violate MPR and pursue a job in a different area.
11. Pursue doctrine and allow God to take care of you.

Ron Snider, [Genesis 26](#), accessed July 26, 2015 (slightly edited).

#### Chapter Outline

#### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

*Steven Cole: But the interesting thing is to note that there was a famine in the land. Which land? The promised land! The land God had promised to Abraham and his descendants, later described as flowing with milk and honey. There was a famine in that land. While God easily could have supplied Isaac with plenty of food in spite of the famine around him, He did not do that. God's chosen man had to suffer along with all his pagan Canaanite neighbors. Trials are the ordinary lot of God's people; they always have been and always will be, until Jesus returns. Isaac did not question, "God, why are You allowing this famine in the promised land?" Isaac didn't rebuke the famine in the name of the Lord. Granted, he didn't respond properly. But this wasn't the first nor would it be the last trial of this sort to come on God's people in the promised land.<sup>16</sup>*

<sup>16</sup> From <http://www.fcsonline.org/content/1/sermons/011997m.pdf> accessed August 1, 2015.

Cole continues: *Trials are the normal experience of God's people, even when they're right where He wants them to be. Somehow we've picked up the notion that if God has called us to a place or to a certain ministry, we won't encounter any problems...Former Supreme Court justice, Louis Brandeis, once said to his frustrated, impatient daughter, "My dear, if you would only recognize that life is hard, things would be so much easier for you."*<sup>17</sup>

Genesis 26:1b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ']	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bad (בַּד) [pronounced <i>bah</i> ]	<i>separation, by itself, alone</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #905 BDB #94
These three words together mean, <i>beside, besides, apart from, aside from; in addition to; subsequent to.</i>			
râ'âb (בָּעָר) [pronounced <i>raw-GAW<sup>AV</sup></i> ]	<i>famine, hunger; scarcity of grain; used figuratively for a lack of God's Word</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7458 BDB #944
rî'shôwn (וְשֵׁנִי) [pronounced <i>ree-SHOWN</i> ]	<i>first [in time, in degree, chief, former [in time], ancestors, former things; foremost; beginning; as an adverb: formerly, at first, first</i>	masculine singular adjective; also used as an adverb	Strong's #7223 BDB #911
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâmîym (יָמַיִם) [pronounced <i>yaw-MEEM</i> ]	<i>days, a set of days; time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
The construct phrase is literally <i>in days of</i> ; and this phrase is properly rendered <i>in the days of, during the time of, at the time of</i> . The concept here refers to a <i>particular</i> time.			
'Ab <sup>e</sup> râhâm (אֲבִרָאָה) [pronounced <i>ahb<sup>ve</sup>-raw-HAWM</i> ]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4

**Translation:** ...apart from the first famine in the days of Abraham.

<sup>17</sup> From <http://www.fconline.org/content/1/sermons/011997m.pdf> accessed August 1, 2015.

This writer is clearly aware of a previous famine which occurred in the time of Abraham, which caused Abraham to go to Abimelech, the king of the Philistines in Gerar. Isaac's knowledge of this previous event suggests that he knows what is in the Bible (up until his time in history). Much of that was written by Abraham.

This simple reference to the *days of Abraham* suggest that Abraham is no longer alive<sup>18</sup> (which is in keeping with our **timeline**).

*Steven Cole: Critics argue that Genesis 26 is some editor's confused combination of the stories about Abraham's going down into Egypt during the famine or of his going to Abimelech (see Gen. 12:10-20; 20:1-18). But the text is careful to distinguish this situation from the earlier famine, and many details differ, so there's no reason to doubt the historical accuracy of these events.*<sup>19</sup>

The casual mention here signifies familiarity with the history—probably with the Scriptures—although it may not be understood by Isaac that these are the words of God. Even if Isaac recognizes that he has in his possession (in his brain) *The History of God and Man from the Beginning of the World*; he may not view the Bible as we do today. He accepts it as truth; he knows that it is true; but it strikes me as unlikely that he had a full understanding of the doctrine of inspiration worked out in his own mind.

In the context of that incident, the Bible does not tell us that Abraham moved there because of a famine. However, here, we are told that Abraham moved there because of a famine in the land. What is going to be clear is, there are several similar incidents which occur in both narratives, so the writer here is clearly distinguishing this as being a separate incident. There was a famine in both cases; Abraham and Isaac moved to the land of the Philistines in both cases. There was a king there known as Abimelech in both cases.

Even though there are some similarities between what we read here in Genesis 26 and what has come before in Genesis 12 and 20, these are still separate, distinct and historic narratives.

### Three Separate Incidents

1. Because there will be a set of similar circumstances to what has gone before, some have alleged that there was really only one incident, but that it got multiplied into 3 incidents and then all placed into the same Bible.
2. In Genesis 12:10–20, there is a famine in the land in the time of Abraham.
  - 1) Abraham (Abram was his name at that time) goes down to Egypt with his wife.
  - 2) He tells her that he is concerned that the Egyptians would take her and kill him. Therefore, he asks her to go along with his lie (actually, a half-truth) that she is his sister.
  - 3) Sarai (later named Sarah), his wife, is seen as quite striking, so the Pharaoh takes her to wife and gives Abraham all kinds of livestock and servants for her.
  - 4) God strikes Pharaoh's house with all kinds of diseases.
  - 5) Pharaoh, probably by direct interview, finds out the Sarai is Abram's wife, and he summons Abram, conveys that he is upset, gives him Sarai, and they are sent on their way, including with all the stuff that they had.
  - 6) Logically, this is probably where Abraham and Sarah purchased Hagar, the Sarah's Egyptian maid.
3. Right before Isaac was conceived, Abraham and Sarah lived in Gerar, ruled by Abimelech in Genesis 20:1–17.
  - 1) We find out after the fact, in the narrative of Genesis 26, that there was a famine which caused Abraham and Sarah to move.
  - 2) Upon arriving in Gerar, Abraham said that Sarah was his sister again.
  - 3) This time, God speaks to Abimelech in a dream, telling him that Sarah is Abraham's wife, and Abimelech is afraid and so is his entire state department.
  - 4) God tells Abimelech to return Abraham's wife, and he goes to Abraham, reproving Abraham in the

<sup>18</sup> Ron Snider, **Genesis 26**, accessed July 26, 2015.

<sup>19</sup> From <http://www.fcsonline.org/content/1/sermons/011997m.pdf> accessed August 1, 2015.

### Three Separate Incidents

- process.
- 5) Abraham explains that this was his general policy to present Sarah as his sister; and she is indeed his half-sister.
  - 6) Abimelech brings all kinds of gifts to Abraham, and returns Sarah as well.
  - 7) He also gives them carte blanc to live anyone in his kingdom.
  - 8) At the end, we find out that God closed up every womb while this was going on.
4. In our passage, it is Isaac who is doing what his father did and claiming that Rebekah is his sister. Genesis 26:1–11
    - 1) This may or may not be the same Abimelech as above. It is likely his son or Abimelech is a title of sorts. King David will also interact with a King Abimelech.
    - 2) This Abimelech does not take Rebekah as his wife, but he does, at some point, observe what appears to be more than brotherly affection expressed by Isaac toward Rebekah. He calls for Isaac and questions him about this.
    - 3) When Isaac comes clean, Abimelech expresses concern that anyone of his kingdom could have taken her at this time, implying that she might have been raped.
    - 4) Abimelech decrees an ordinance that anyone touching Rebekah will be executed.
  5. There are clearly similarities in all of these narratives, the chief one being that Abraham lied twice about Sarah being his sister and that Isaac lied about Rebekah. Also, Sarah and Abraham are related, as are Rebekah and Isaac.
  6. In two cases, there is a famine, and in our passage, the previous famine is referenced. It should not be difficult to imagine there being more than one famine during the time of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
  7. Secondly, Abraham made it a practice to lie about his wife; so we would expect that this occurred more than once.
  8. It is not impossible to imagine that Isaac put himself in the same situation, remembered what his father had done (not because he was there but because he was told about this); and that he does the same thing.
  9. Each time, we learn new things about the people with whom Abraham or Isaac interact; and we notice that there are different things which could befall the wives (real or imagined).
  10. We also notice a different response from the sovereigns in charge.
  11. I can think of circumstances in my life which repeated themselves, and played out with slightly different results. Once I responded in one way; another time, I responded in a different way.
  12. The idea that every single experience relayed in the Bible must be completely distinct from every other set of circumstances is far more unrealistic than for there to be some situations with similar circumstances. In the New Testament, our Lord deals with the pharisees and their attempts to make Him stumble by saying the wrong thing. This happened on many occasions. No one says, "Well, this only happened once, but the story got twisted and turned around, so now we have 10 instances which originate from only one incident." That would be silly to assert that.
  13. Here is what is behind the idea that these incidents are simply traditions based upon one original incident: this casts doubt on the veracity of the Bible. Our faith is based upon real, historical incidents; upon real historical people; upon God's intervention in human history. If these incidents become passed off to us as if someone just made them up, or they are the result of rumors and fabrications; then what can we really trust in the Bible? If I question the idea of their being two famines or some similar incident occurring 3 times, then this calls into question all that is found in the Bible.
  14. This approach comes from those who either want to discredit the Bible or find the "kernel-of-truth" in the Bible. Usually, what this means is, we find stuff that we agree with (usually things taught to us by society) and then say, "Here is that kernel of truth." In other words, it is taking the standards of present-day society, and then trying to give them credence by finding them in the Bible; and then, at the same time, dismiss everything else that is in the Bible.
  15. The Bible is the *inspired Word of God*; meaning that this is written by man, but, simultaneously, written by God the Holy Spirit.
  16. The definition of inspiration is as follows: *human authors wrote as moved by the Holy Spirit, so that, without waving their human intelligence, their vocabulary, their personal feelings, their literary style, their*

### Three Separate Incidents

personality, their environmental influences or their individuality, they recorded God's complete and connected message to man with perfect accuracy in the original languages of Scripture, the very words bearing the authority of divine authorship. The is known as the verbal, plenary view of inspiration. Saint Peter gives perhaps the more pedestrian view: **No prophecy was ever made by an act of human volition, but men carried along by the Holy Spirit spoken from God** (2Peter 1:21). Paul says that **all Scripture is God-breathed** (2Timothy 3:16). Chafer wrote: *Plenary inspiration means that the accuracy secured by verbal inspiration is extended fully to every portion of Scripture so that in all its parts Scripture is both infallible as to truth and final as to divine authority.*

17. Therefore, we cannot simply dismiss this or that narrative in Scripture because it is similar to another narrative or there is some great miracle of God found in the narrative. We either accept the Bible as it is, in the original languages; or we have give ourselves the freedom to pick and choose anything that we like in the Bible, and to reject that stuff that we don't like.
18. We learn from this similarities and differences between Isaac and Abraham, his father. We also see the interaction between the Egyptians and Abraham; and between the Philistines and Abraham (and later, Isaac).
19. These differences help us to understand the historic trends which are taking place. The attitude of the Philistines toward the Israelites changed over the centuries; and we see the change simply from one generation to the next.
20. Actually, this is a very scientific approach. We take similar circumstances, change a few things, and then observe the changing results. This is what scientific experiments are all about. Here, these are religious and sociological experiments, which allow us a peak into the psyche of these ancient peoples.
- 21.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted and paraphrased from R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Canonicity*; ©1973 by R. B. Thieme, Jr.; p. 5, who in turn took this from Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*; Abridged Edition; Victor Books, ©1984, Vol. Two, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*; Abridged Edition; Victor Books, ©1984, Vol. Two, p. 80.

Ballinger: *During the lifetimes of father and son their experience of testing was similar in kind if not in degree as this chapter will demonstrate... While their respective experiences were not identical in detail they were very similar in kind.*<sup>20</sup>

Related to this are 3 sets of studies which I have done:

**The Basic Doctrine of Inspiration** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

**The Doctrine of Inspiration** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

**A Study of Inspiration** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

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James Burton Coffman: *To allege that these are simply variants of "an old folk story," is comparable in every way to the proposition that World War I and World War II, as found in our histories, are merely variants of the old struggle between Rome and the Huns!*<sup>21</sup>

It might be easier to see this in a chart. There are 3 similar incidents of patriarchs moving to a foreign destination and lying about their wives there.

<sup>20</sup> From <http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/Gen26.htm> accessed July 23, 2015.

<sup>21</sup> From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015. Burton is quoting Alan Richardson from the *Twentieth Century Bible Commentary*.

<b>3 Separate Incidents Chart</b>			
	<b>Abraham to Egypt</b>	<b>Abraham to Gerar</b>	<b>Isaac to Gerar</b>
Passage	Genesis 12:10–20	Genesis 20:1–18	Genesis 26:1–11
Principals	Abram and Sarai	Abraham and Sarah	Isaac and Rebekah
Destination	Egypt	Gerar	Gerar
Reason	Famine	No reason given; but famine cited by Isaac as the reason	Famine
God's guidance	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	God guided Isaac to Gerar
The woman's beauty	Sarai is seen by the Egyptians as very beautiful.	Sarah's attractiveness is not spoken of (she is 90 at this time).	Isaac says that Rebekah is attractive in appearance.
The king (pharaoh) and the wife	The pharaoh takes Sarai into his harem and gives a great many gifts to Abram.	Abimelech sends for and takes Sarah.	Abimelech does not make any moves on Rebekah. She is not said to be pursued by any man.
Punishment	The LORD afflicts pharaoh and his house with plagues.	Abimelech and his wives and his house stopped producing children.	There is no recorded punishment of Abimelech or of Gerar mentioned.
Discovery of the truth	The LORD warns pharaoh by afflicting him and his house with plagues because of Sarai.	God comes to Abimelech in a dream and warns him.	Abimelech sees Isaac and Rebekah engaging in more than brotherly and sisterly affection.
King or pharaoh's response.	Pharaoh and his house suffered many plagues while Sarai was in the harem of the pharaoh. Abram and Sarai are sent away. They were allowed to keep the gifts given to Abram when Sarai was first taken.	Abimelech is upset that Abraham lied to him and said that he has been made to sin against Abraham and to bring guilt upon his kingdom. He gave many gifts of livestock to Abraham when returning Sarah to him.	Abimelech upbraids Isaac for his lying, and makes a law which protects Isaac and Rebekah, indicating that they remained there for awhile.
Similarities	The patriarchs are coming into a different land and they ask their wives to lie about their relationship and say that they are brother and sister. These terms in the Hebrew allow for their <i>lies</i> to be true. We use the words <i>brother</i> and <i>sister</i> in a very specific way; but we also allow a more relaxed application of these terms—and this is true for the Hebrew as well.		
Aftermath	Abram and Sarai are sent away. Hagar, an Egyptian slave, is brought back home (this is logical conjecture).	Abimelech desires a pact with Abraham. Genesis 21:22–32	Abimelech desires a nonaggression pact with Isaac. Genesis 26:26–31

Have similar circumstances repeat within your own life is not unusual. Have similar circumstances in the lives of two men, father and son, is not unusual.

**Application:** It ought to be quite clear that sometimes, God uses circumstances in order to move us from point A to point B.

The following points demonstrate the similarities between the sin of Abraham and Isaac.

### Keith Krell on the Similarities between Abraham and Isaac in Gerar

- Both failed to trust in God during a famine.
- Both sought relief in Gerar, the land of the Philistines.
- Both had beautiful wives.
- Both feared for their safety.
- Both lied by saying that their wife was their sister.
- Both put their wives, others, and the covenant of God at great risk.
- Both sinned against Abimelech.
- Both were rebuked by the ruler of the Philistines.
- Both failed to recognize the gravity of their sin or repent of it.
- Both entered into a treaty agreement with the Philistines.

From <https://bible.org/seriespage/33-famine-feast-genesis-261-33> accessed August 1, 2015.

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The Pulpit Commentary estimates<sup>22</sup> there to be 70–80 years between the incidents of Abraham and then Isaac going to Gerar. Reese’s Chronological Bible would give the same time frame (see [The Patriarch Timeline](#)). Thomas Constable suggests<sup>23</sup> 70–97 years have elapsed between Abraham and Isaac’s time in Gerar.

In order to determine the time frame here, we make two general assumptions (1) Abraham and Sarah went to Gerar before she is impregnated with Isaac. So, we accept this narrative’s location in the Bible as also the time during which it took place. (2) Isaac and Rebekah would have gone to Gerar *before* Jacob and Esau are born. This means it takes place before some of the narrative back in Genesis 25. So, Abraham is 99 or 100 when they both go to Gerar; Isaac is 40 when he marries Rebekah; and Rebekah bears twins when Isaac is 60. Given these two assumptions, that places the time between these two events at 40–60 years.

Like many things in life, to come to this or that conclusion, assumptions must be made. Most people have no idea what assumptions they are making upon which they base their conclusions. Wenstrom assumes a different set of assumptions.

William Wenstrom, Jr. puts the least amount of time between this chapter and Genesis 21. I will present this in points, as per Wenstrom’s writings.

### Wenstrom on the Time Frame

1. “Abimelech” in Genesis 20:1-18 took place just prior to the birth of Isaac and Abraham was one hundred years of age when Isaac was born.
2. Abraham died at one hundred seventy-five years of age. The events of Genesis 26 took place after the death of Abraham. Therefore, the events of Genesis 26 took place some seventy-five years after the events of Genesis 20:1-18.
3. Also, Abraham’s encounter with “Abimelech” in Genesis 21:22-34 took place right at the time when Sarah died at the age of one hundred twenty-seven.
4. Abraham was one hundred thirty-seven years of age when Sarah died since he was ten years older than

<sup>22</sup> *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, from e-sword, Genesis 26:1.

<sup>23</sup> From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/dcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 30, 2015.

## Wenstrom on the Time Frame

her. Therefore, we see that the events of Genesis 21:22-34 took place approximately forty years prior to the events of Genesis 26.

In v. 3, because of the verbiage **there**, we are going to come up with another assumption, which changes all of these assumptions completely.

From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 392); accessed July 23, 2015.

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### Genesis 26:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הלך) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
Yis <sup>e</sup> châq (ישׂחַק) [pronounced <i>yih<sup>s</sup>-K<sup>HAWK</sup></i> ]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
This is also spelled Yits <sup>e</sup> châq (יצׁחַק) [pronounced <i>yih<sup>s</sup>-K<sup>HAWK</sup></i> ]. When you hear about manuscript discrepancies in the Old Testament, many of them simply involve alternate spellings.			
'el (אל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i> ]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'Ābiymelek <sup>e</sup> (אבימלך) [pronounced <i>u<sup>p</sup>-vee-MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>my father is Melek, my father is king; transliterated Abimelech</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #40 BDB #4
melek <sup>e</sup> (מלך) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
P <sup>e</sup> lish <sup>e</sup> tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	<i>land of sojourners [wanderers, temporary residents]; transliterated Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun); with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
Here, this is spelled P <sup>e</sup> lish <sup>e</sup> tîym (פְּלִשְׁתִּיִּם) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEEM</i> ].			
G <sup>e</sup> râr (גרר) [pronounced <i>gher-AWR</i> ; possibly <sup>e</sup> <i>rawr</i> ]	<i>a lodging place, dwelling; transliterated Gerar</i>	proper singular noun; location with the directional hê	Strong's #1642 BDB #176

The directional hê indicates the direction in which something moves. It is often used with the noun *heaven* and the most literal rendering in the English would be *heavenward*. We can also indicate the existence of the hê directional by supplying the prepositions *to* or *toward*.

**Translation:** Isaac went to Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, to Gerar.

Abimelech is a cognomen applied to a ruler of the Philistines just as Pharaoh is a cognomen of the rulers of Egypt. This is not the same person as we saw in Genesis 20, although it is the same area. Whether this was a nephew or son (or grandson or even unrelated), we are not told. This is almost a hundred years later. There are many people who, by human viewpoint, are in the most enviable positions; and, insofar as the divine viewpoint of history is concerned, we do not even know who they are by name.

ʾĀbiymelek<sup>e</sup> (אַבִּימֶלֶךְ) [pronounced *u<sup>b</sup>-vee-MEH-lek*] means, *my father is Melek, my father is king*; transliterated Abimelech. Strong's #40 BDB #4. Although we do not know if this is a family name, or whether this is the designation of a king of the Philistines. However, since this is 40–100 years later, it is unlikely that this is the same person that Abraham dealt with. Because this name occurs in Genesis and Judges and Samuel (see Psalm 34 inscription); it seems mostly likely that this is an official title, just like *pharaoh* is.

Just as Abraham had done, Isaac moved to the land of the Philistines, apparently aware that, not really that far away, there was land that was receiving a sufficient amount of rain to avoid the famine that they were experiencing.

### The Bible Query on, “Is this the same Abimelech as found in Genesis 20?”

Q: In Gen 26:8-9, was this the same Abimelech of Gerar as in Gen 20:2-3?

A: Based on the name, probably not. Abimelech means "Father is king", and 735 Baffling Bible Questions Answered p.42 says this was probably a title. On one hand there are many instances of a father and son or descendant having the same name, here it is probably a title.

From The Bible Query March 2006 version. Copyright (c) Christian Debater(tm) 1997-2006. Genesis 20:2. Accessed from e-sword.

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This simply affirms the previous doctrine.

### The Bible Query on, *what does Abimelech mean?*

Q: In Gen 20:3,8-10 26:1 Judges 8:31 9:1, what does Abimelech mean?

A: *Ab* means father, and *melech* means king or ruler. It either means father of the king, or father is king. Besides being the name of two kings of Gerar, and Gideon's son, Cyril Aldred in Akhenaten King of Egypt p.186 records that Abimilki was a ruler of Tyre mentioned in the Amarna letters. Photographs of a couple of the Amarna letter tablets are in The New International Dictionary of the Bible p.80 and The Wycliffe Bible Dictionary p.1828.

From The Bible Query March 2006 version. Copyright (c) Christian Debater(tm) 1997-2006. Genesis 26:1. Accessed from e-sword.

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Genesis 26:1 There was a famine in the land apart from the first famine in the days of Abraham. Isaac went to Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, to Gerar. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:1 There was another famine in the land, in addition to the one during the time of Abraham. Isaac, therefore, went to the king of the Philistines, Abimelech, to Gerar, their state capitol. (Kukis paraphrase)

V. 1: And there was a famine in the land, besides the famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines to Gerar. Isaac has been living in the Negev (which is the south portion of

Judah<sup>24</sup>); he has lived in Beer-lahai-roi (where God appeared to Hagar before), and appears to live there at this time (see Genesis 25:11). Gill estimates<sup>25</sup> this to be only 8 miles from Gerar. Gill also suggests<sup>26</sup> that Beersheba is either equivalent to Beer-lahai-roi or that these two places are very close to one another.

William Wenstrom, Jr.: “Gerar” was near the coast about twelve miles south of Gaza and about fifty miles south of Hebron, in the land of the Philistines. According to archaeological excavations, “Gerar” was a prosperous city, controlling a lucrative caravan route.<sup>27</sup>

This verse is carefully worded so that we do not think that this is simply a recycled story about Abraham, but with Isaac’s name in its place. There will be several similarities. They both lived in the land during a famine; they both went to another place where the drought had not been as destructive; and they both lied about their wives to the authorities of that place. Because of these similarities, critics of Scripture would make the unwarranted claim that these are just stories floating about, and that the Bible used the same story twice, but just plugged in different names instead. However, the person recording this information (probably Isaac) knew that this was a famine in the lifetime of Isaac and that this was different from the famine which occurred during the life of Abraham. Therefore, the differences between these accounts are pointed out from the very beginning.

A famine in the land is going to be based upon a drought. Sometimes these droughts can continue for years, which increases the severity of the famine; and sometimes they continue only for a few years. But a famine in the Old Testament is equivalent to an economic downturn in modern times. Many times when such a thing occurs, it is a result of God’s judgment on the land or upon a specific population.

In such economic downturns, people often move from **one place to another**. We have thousands of people moving out of California and New York to Texas and Florida.

I should also point out that we do not have a time frame here. Are Jacob and Esau young adults at this point? If so, where are they? Or, have they simply not been born yet? I don’t see anything yet in this narrative to tie it to a specific point in time. Assuming that most of Genesis is in chronological order, this is taking place after Jacob and Esau have been born.

V. 1 gives us the big picture: **And there was a famine in the land, besides the famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines to Gerar.** Isaac has gone to Gerar because of what God told him (which is in the next verse). Why did God send Isaac to Gerar? Possibly as God’s witness.

V. 1: **And there was a famine in the land, besides the famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines to Gerar.** We should speak about the Philistines, as they will be quite important in this narrative.

### Commentators on the Philistines

Commentator	Commentary
Dr. Thomas Constable	<i>The major migration of the Philistines into Canaan took place in the twelfth century B.C. However, there were some Philistines already in Canaan at this time, as is clear from this reference and others in Genesis (cf. Genesis 21:32; Genesis 21:34).</i> <sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> This area is not yet known as Judah.

<sup>25</sup> Dr. John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:1.

<sup>26</sup> Dr. John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:1.

<sup>27</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 391); accessed July 23, 2015.

<sup>28</sup> From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/dcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 30, 2015.

## Commentators on the Philistines

Commentator	Commentary
<b>Robert Dean</b>	<i>These are the same Philistines that we see later on in the book of Judges and during the time of David, but they really haven't established their full base of operations. This isn't the land of the Philistines yet, there are just a few settlements that have been started here. The Philistines came from the Isle of Crete and so this is the initial wave that occurred during the time of the Patriarchs.<sup>29</sup></i>
<b>Life Application Study Bible Notes</b>	<i>The Philistines would become some of Israel's fiercest enemies. The Philistines were one group of a number of migrating sea peoples from the Aegean Sea who had settled in Palestine. They arrived by way of Crete and Cyprus and were used as mercenaries by Canaanite rulers. These people, living along the southwest coast, were few but ferocious in battle. Although friendly to Isaac, this small group was the forerunner of the nation that would plague Israel during the time of Joshua, the judges, and David. This King Abimelech was not the same Abimelech that Abraham encountered (chapters 20-21). Abimelech may have been a dynastic name of the Philistine rulers.<sup>30</sup></i>
<b>Bob Utley</b>	<i>The Philistines were a mercenary people from the islands of the Aegean. They attempted to invade Egypt, but were repulsed and so they settled in the southwestern coast of Palestine, somewhere around 1200 B.C.</i>
<b>Utley continues</b>	It is surely possible that 1. there were earlier Philistine tradesmen in Canaan 2. that a Canaanite group merged with the Philistines and this name is an anachronism. 3. Philistines are listed in Gen. 10:6-20 coming from Ham and the Canaanites, not Japheth (Islands of the Aegean). It is possible the name refers to several groups associated with Palestine/Canaan (NIDOTTE, vol. 4, p. 1049). <sup>31</sup>
<b>William Wenstrom, Jr.</b>	<i>The Philistines of Abraham and Isaac's day were peaceful and reasonable as demonstrated by Abimelech whereas during the period of the judges and monarchy of Israel, they are highly aggressive warriors. They were ruled by a king whereas during Israel's period of judges and the monarchy they were ruled by five lords. Later on history, "the Philistines" were Israel's greatest enemies during the period of the judges and early monarchy and it appears that they originated from the islands and coastlines of the Aegean Sea.<sup>32</sup></i>

We have seen many circumstances where a people (or person) is named based upon the land where he lives (Laban is called a Syrian, for instance). Let me suggest a general rule (but not a hard-and-fast rule): when a person or family moves into an established area, generally, he becomes associated and even named after the area (Laban is an example of this). When a people conquer an area, then the name of the area is often changed—named after the conquerors.

With the two (or more) waves of people into Philistines into this area, we cannot even be completely certain that these are the same people. There is the possibility that we are calling divergent peoples Philistines simply because they all occupied Palestine. However, I need to quickly add that Isaac is dealing with a leader here called Abimelech (as did his father, Abraham); and King David, a thousand years later, will also deal with a leader called Abimelech. Therefore, I think that it is reasonable to conclude that these are essentially the same people.

<sup>29</sup> From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen120.htm> accessed July 26, 2015.

<sup>30</sup> From <http://newsyoucanbelieve.com/bible/2010/01/09/day-009/> accessed July 31, 2015.

<sup>31</sup> From <http://www.freebiblecommentary.org/pdf/EN/VOL01BOT.pdf> (Genesis 26); accessed July 31, 2015.

<sup>32</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 392); accessed July 23, 2015.

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And so appears unto him Y<sup>e</sup>howah. And so He says, “You will not go down Egypt-ward. Dwell in the land which I say unto you.

Genesis  
26:2

Y<sup>e</sup>howah had appeared to him and He said, “You will not go down to Egypt. Dwell in the land which I say to you.

Jehovah appeared to Isaac and said to him, “Do not go down to Egypt; instead, move into the land that I tell you to live in.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so appears unto him Y <sup>e</sup> howah. And so He says, “You will not go down Egypt-ward. Dwell in the land which I say unto you.
Targum of Onkelos	<u>It had been in Izhak's heart to go down to Mizraim</u> ; but the Lord appeared to him, and said, Go not down to Mizraim; dwell in the land as I have told thee;...
Latin Vulgate	And the Lord appeared to him, and said: Go not down into Egypt, but stay in the land that I will tell you.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the LORD appeared to him, and said, Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the Lord appeared to him and said, Do not go down to Egypt, but dwell in the land which I shall tell you of.

Significant differences: The targums initial statement is certainly implied by the text, but it is not found in the Hebrew text.

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

Bible in Basic English	And the Lord came to him in a vision and said, Do not go down to Egypt; keep in the land of which I will give you knowledge:...
Easy English	The *Lord appeared in front of Isaac. And the *Lord said, `Do not go down to Egypt. Live in the country that I will tell you.
Easy-to-Read Version	The Lord spoke to Isaac. The Lord said, “Don’t go down to Egypt. Live in the land that I commanded you to live in.
<i>God’s Word</i> <sup>™</sup> New Simplified Bible	The LORD appeared to Isaac and said, “Don’t go to Egypt. Stay where I tell you. Jehovah appeared to Isaac and said: »Isaac, stay away from Egypt! I will show you where I want you to go.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Common English Bible	The LORD appeared to him and said, “Don’t go down to Egypt but settle temporarily in the land that I will show you.
Contemporary English V.	...because the LORD had appeared to Isaac and said: Isaac, stay away from Egypt! I will show you where I want you to go.
New Berkeley Version	Then the LORD appeared to him and said, Do not go down to Egypt; remain in the land which I indicate to you.
New Century Version	The Lord appeared to Isaac and said, “Don’t go down to Egypt, but live in the land where I tell you to live.
New Life Bible	The Lord showed Himself to Isaac, and said, “Do not go to Egypt. Stay in the land I will tell you about.
New Living Translation	The Lord appeared to Isaac and said, “Do not go down to Egypt, but do as I tell you.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	And there the Lord appeared to him and said, 'Don't go to Egypt, but live in the land that I'm going to tell you about.
International Standard V	That's when the LORD appeared to Isaac [Lit. <i>him</i> ]. "You are not to go down to Egypt," he said. "Instead, you are to settle down in an area within this land where I'll tell you.
New Advent Bible	...when the Lord appeared to him and said, No, do not take refuge in Egypt; thou art to remain in the land of my choice.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Ancient Roots Translinear	Yahweh saw him and said, "Do not descend to Egypt. Reside in the land of which I said...
Conservapedia	The LORD appeared to him, and said, "Do not go down toward Egypt. Encamp in the land that I will point out to you."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Then the EVER-LIVING appeared to him in a vision and said, "Descend not to Miter [Egypt]; dwell in the land that I promised you;..."
Lexham English Bible	And Yahweh appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land which I will show to you.

**Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):**

The Heritage Bible	And Jehovah appeared to him, and said, Do not descend to Egypt; dwell in the land which I will say to you;...
New American Bible (R.E.)	The LORD appeared to him and said: Do not go down to Egypt, but camp in this land wherever I tell you.
New Jerusalem Bible	Yahweh had appeared to him and said, 'Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the country which I shall point out to you.
New RSV	The Lord appeared to Isaac [Heb <i>him</i> ] and said, 'Do not go down to Egypt; settle in the land that I shall show you.
Revised English Bible	The LORD appeared to Isaac, and said, 'Do not go down to Egypt, but stay in this country as I bid you.

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Complete Jewish Bible	ADONAI appeared to him and said, "Don't go down into Egypt, but live where I tell you.
exeGesés companion Bible	And Yah Veh is seen by him and says, Descend not into Misrayim; tabernacle in the land I say:...
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	The LORD had appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land which I point out to you.
Kaplan Translation	God appeared to [Isaac] and said, 'Do not go down to Egypt. Remain undisturbed in the land that I shall designate to you.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Hashem appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Mitsrayim; dwell in ha'arets which I shall tell thee of;...
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And יהוה appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Mitsrayim, live in the land which I command you.

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

The Expanded Bible	The Lord appeared to Isaac and said, "Don't go down to Egypt, but live [settle; dwell] in the land where I tell you to live.
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- The updated Geneva Bible And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt [Gods providence always watches to direct the ways of his children.]; dwell in the land which I will tell you of.
- Kretzmann's Commentary And the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down in to Egypt, that, evidently, having been the intention of Isaac, since Egypt was the granary of all the surrounding countries, especially in lean years. Dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of;...
- NET Bible® The Lord appeared to Isaac and said, "Do not go down to Egypt [Do not go down to Egypt. The words echo Gen 12:10, which reports that "Abram went down to Egypt," but state the opposite.]; settle down in the land that I will point out to you [Heb "say to you."].
- The Voice The Eternal appeared in a *vision* to Isaac.  
**Eternal One:** Don't go down to Egypt, Isaac. Instead settle in the land I will show you.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

- Concordant Literal Version And appearing to him is Yahweh and saying, "You must not go down to Egypt. Tabernacle in the land of which I apprise you.
- Green's Literal Translation And Jehovah appeared to him and said, Do not go down into Egypt; stay in the land which I shall say to you.
- World English Bible Yahweh appeared to him, and said, "Don't go down into Egypt. Dwell in the land which I will tell you of.
- Young's Updated LT And Jehovah appears unto him, and says, "Go not down towards Egypt, tabernacle in the land concerning which I speak unto you.

**The gist of this verse:** The Revealed Lord appears to Isaac and tells him not to go to Egypt during this famine.

Genesis 26:2a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced waw]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to be seen, to be visible; to let oneself be seen, to appear; to present oneself; to be provided [cared] for (i.e., looked after)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
'el (אֵל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

**Translation:** Y<sup>e</sup>howah had appeared to him...

Although we have a *wâw* consecutive in the previous verse, followed by an imperfect verb, along with the same thing here, that does not make these consecutive actions, because these are different subjects. What the writer appears to be doing is explaining why Isaac went northwest instead of south; why he went to the land of the Philistines, rather than to Egypt. The first part of this reason is, God appeared to Isaac.

Without a doubt, Isaac had been told about God from his father on several occasions; and most of the promises which God made to Abraham were based upon the birth of a son, who is Isaac. Therefore, it should not come as a great shock, from the standpoint of logic, that God would, at some point, speak to Isaac.

This is the first time<sup>33</sup> that God appears to Isaac, and we do not know in what form He did appear—whether in a dream or a vision or what. This is known as a **theophany**—an appearance by God before the incarnation. The Member of the Godhead making the appearance would have been Jesus Christ, as the Revealed Member of the Godhead. This will be the first of two theophanies in this chapter.

Vv. 1 and 2 appear to be concurrent, with consecutive events to be found within each verse. The famine occurs, then Isaac moved to Gerar; God appears to Isaac, and then God speaks to Isaac. The latter two events, in time, fall in between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> events in the first verse. What we actually have here, if everything is placed in chronological order: *And so there is a famine in the land [and Jacob purposes to go to Egypt]. And so Y<sup>e</sup>howah appears to him and so He says, Do not go to Egypt; you will live in the land I will tell you about.” And so Isaac goes to Gerar to Abimelech, the king of the Philistines.* This is logical and obvious. Understanding this might help us to understand a similar construction elsewhere in Scripture.

Genesis 26:2b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	<i>wâw</i> consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'al (אל) [pronounced <i>a]</i>	<i>no, not; nothing; none; neither, nor; do not, let not [with a verb]; let there not be [with an understood verb];</i>	adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done	Strong's #408 BDB #39
yârad (ירד) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAHD</i> ]	<i>to descend, to go down</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3381 BDB #432
Mits <sup>e</sup> rayim (מצרים) [pronounced <i>mits-RAH-yim</i> ]	<i>double straights; transliterated Mizraim; also Egypt, Egyptians</i>	proper noun; with the directional <i>hê</i>	Strong's #4714 BDB #595

The directional *hê* indicates the direction in which something moves. It is often used with the noun *heaven* and the most literal rendering in the English would be *heavenward*. We can also indicate the existence of the *hê* directional by supplying the prepositions *to* or *toward*.

**Translation:** ...and He said, “You will not go down to Egypt.

<sup>33</sup> At least, the first recorded instance. However, it makes little sense for Isaac to leave such an appearance out of the *Record of God's Dealings with Man* (that is, *Genesis*).

It's interesting that Isaac and Rebekah obey God, but then Isaac falls short of revealing any spiritual maturity when he remains in God's geographical will. We will never know what could have happened in Egypt or what God was protecting Isaac from.

This suggests that, at the point that Isaac recognized that there was a recognized famine which necessitated moving, Isaac considered Egypt. God appears to Isaac and tells him not to go that way.

*Barnes: Isaac is now the heir, and therefore the holder, of the promise. Hence, the Lord enters into communication with him. First, the present difficulty is met. "Go not down into Mizraim," the land of corn, even when other lands were barren.*<sup>34</sup>

Y<sup>e</sup>howah had appeared to him and He said, "You will not go down to Egypt. This tells us that Isaac, because of this famine, was thinking of going to Egypt to wait it out. God can see into Isaac's mind. He knows that Isaac was thinking of Egypt; so God specifies that is the one place he will not go.

Therefore, when the famine began, Isaac first considered going to Egypt. God tells him not to go to Egypt. Instead, God will have Isaac move a relatively short distance away into the territory of the Philistines.

This is Isaac's first recorded concern with **the Geographic Will of God**. He wants to move temporarily to Egypt; God's plan is for Isaac to move a very short distance to Gerar.

Whenever the patriarchs got outside of God's geographic will, the result was, increased difficulty in life. Genesis 12 20 26 29.<sup>35</sup> Sometimes the geographic will of God can be somewhat tricky. Obviously, we are not to look to unbelievers for our deliverance (in this case, the deliverance is from famine); but that does not mean that we do not associate with unbelievers. Isaac will be going to Gerar and live in the midst of a great number of unbelievers. That is God's plan for his life; that is God's geographic will for Isaac.

It is interesting that twice, Isaac is kept within the borders of Canaan. When Abraham prepared his top servant to get a wife for Isaac, the servant asked Abraham that, if a woman would not return with him, could he simply come back and get Isaac and take him to Syria so the women can get a look at the merchandise? Abraham answered with an unequivocal no. Here, Isaac is apparently thinking of going to Egypt, and God tells him no. This suggests that, although both Abraham and Jacob could leave the land and be counted on to return, there was not the same certainty with Isaac.

The Bible makes a very big deal out of, *where does God want me to be?* At the same time, you cannot spend your life praying, *should I make a left or a right turn up ahead?* All believers who are growing need to have some familiarity with the Geographic will of God—particularly because, God is not going to come to you in your dreams and say, "You need to move to Chicago, son." See the **Geographic Will of God** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

*Scott Grant: Often times, even those of us who have tasted of the heavenly water encounter a famine of the soul. We thirst for something powerful, something meaningful, something transcendent, but Christ doesn't seem to satisfy us. Our spiritual lives become parched. Then we ask ourselves, "Should I go down to Egypt? Should I go outside of Christ?" We know that there are easier and quicker ways to find relief. Yet the Lord says to us, "Stay in the land. Don't go outside of Christ. I'll provide for you here." And we ask, "When? I am dying of thirst here." And the Lord says, "Stay here. I'll bless you here. Trust me." Keep digging--pray, read, study, write, worship, lament, obey. Defy the famine. Trust the Lord. "I will open rivers on the bare heights, and springs in the midst of valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land fountains of water" (Isaiah 41:18).*<sup>36</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:2–5.

<sup>35</sup> Ron Snider, [Genesis 26](#), accessed July 26, 2015.

<sup>36</sup> From [http://www.pbc.org/system/message\\_files/99650/4866.pdf](http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99650/4866.pdf) accessed August 2, 2015.

Unlike Abraham, to whom God appeared on numerous occasions, the same does not appear to be true of Isaac. Here is the only recorded instance (so far) where God actually appears to him. God will appear to Isaac once again further along in this chapter. In the previous chapter, Rebekah prayed to God and God answered her, but, as is often the case, we do not know what the details are. Did God answer her in a dream? Did He come to her? Did He speak to her through an intermediary? Did someone examine Rebekah after her complains of pain, and tell her that there are two nations within her that would rival one another?

Similarly, we do not know exactly how this played out either. Was Isaac asleep, dreaming, on the night before he would leave for Egypt, and God speaks to him.

You will note that God provides different guidance to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. To Abraham, there was a famine (the result of a drought) and Abraham went down to Egypt. God, at no time, stood in his way and said, "Don't do this." However, here Isaac appears to have intended to go to Egypt, and God redirected him. Later, Jacob will have children and one of them will end up in Egypt (Joseph), and Jacob and all his sons, by God's will, will go to Egypt and reside for the rest of their natural lives there. In fact, all Israel will remain in Egypt for 400 years.

### The Bible Query on, *were Israelites to go down to Egypt or not?*

Question: In Gen 26:2, were the Israelites supposed to go down to Egypt, or not?

Answer: Isaac was told not to go down to Egypt in Genesis 26:2. Jacob, not Isaac, was told to go there in Genesis 46:3. In a similar way, In 2 Samuel 7:5,12-13 David was told that it was not he, but his son that was to build the Temple in Jerusalem. The lesson here is not that going to Egypt is good or bad, but that that we should go where God wants us to go, when God wants us to go.

The answer is, it all depends on God's plan. This is the right thing for one person to do, but not for his son. With Abraham, there is no specific judgment one way or the other. You may recall that Abraham's servant went and fetched a wife for Isaac from his family in the east, but Isaac was not to go east for any reason. However, his son, Jacob, went east himself to take a wife.

*Bible Query*; March 2006 version. Copyright (c) Christian Debater(tm) 1997-2006.; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:2.

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**Application:** Along the same lines, I was asked to leave a job at one point, and I considered it, but then did not leave. That was the correct decision. Many years later, I was asked to leave the same job, and it was the right decision at that time to leave. Very similar circumstances, but a different decision was made.

There are 3 considerations when it comes to *apparent* contradictory guidance being given to different patriarchs: (1) The conditions of the circumstance itself (who is in charge where the person is going; what are the people like?); (2) Who is the person being sent? Is Egypt, for instance, appropriate for a man like Jacob, but not for a man like Isaac? And (3) what does God's plan call for? What is God accomplishing at this point in time?

**Application:** You will face some major decisions in your life. What will you study in life? Where will you go to school? Who will you marry? Where will you take a job? Under what circumstances will you move from one job to another? Under what circumstances will you move from point A to point B (a different city, a different state or even a different country)? You have no idea in advance what you might face in life. These are very common decisions; but they are not the only big decisions that a person faces. The key is doctrine in the soul of the believer as well as a consistent spiritual life in the power of the Holy Spirit. See the **Doctrine of the Will of God** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) for more information on this topic.

Genesis 26:2c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
shâkan (שָׁכַן) [pronounced shaw-KAHN]	<i>to tabernacle, to pitch a tent; to dwell, to reside, to live in, to domicile at, to settle, to settle down, to encamp</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #7931 BDB #1014
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'el (אֵל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39

**Translation:** [Dwell in the land which I say to you.](#)

God does not want Isaac to leave the Land of Promise; and God seems to be quite adamant about keeping a distance between the Jews and the Egyptians (for most of the time).

I have noticed this from time to time, when God issues an order. He does not always tell his servant what he is to do next. God does not tell Isaac, "You're not going to Egypt; you are going to Gerar." Instead, for whatever reason, God does not tell Isaac exactly where he is going to go (you may recall that these were God's orders to Abraham). Our lives seem to be better for not knowing exactly what is coming next. Now, if I knew that, today, a plane was going to crash on the roof of my house, I might be a little apprehensive; and, even more so, if I knew that was my eventual end. How many hours would I spend studying the Word of God if I believed that, one moment I would be typing, and the next moment, I would be lying in the midst of rubble. So God lets all of this play out in its own time, where there will always remain a great many unknowns in our future. Even here, where God is verbally guiding Isaac, He does not yet tell Isaac where he is going to go. Also, this may help you out personally to know this. You may think, "Well, Isaac's life was so much better than mine because God was there telling him what to do." The guidance that God gave Isaac was quite limited and very rare. In the Church Age, believers have a much easier time figuring out what the will of God is than at any other time in history (furthermore, God works through a great many more people in the Church Age than He does in the Age of Israel).

Genesis 26:2 [Y<sup>e</sup>howah had appeared to him and He said, "You will not go down to Egypt. Dwell in the land which I say to you.](#) (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:2 [Jehovah appeared to Isaac and said to him, "Do not go down to Egypt; instead, move into the land that I tell you to live in.](#) (Kukis paraphrase)

After the Jews moved into the land as a nation, being led by Moses, their relationship with the Philistines quickly degenerated into great animosity. However, during this time period, Abraham had a good relationship with the Philistines and Isaac had a so-so relationship with the Philistines. This is one of the things that we learn from chapters like this—God keeps several factors the same, with the primary change being, the next generation of Philistines; and we get to see how they respond to Isaac and God blessing Isaac (as God blessed Abraham).

Unlike Abraham, God did not appear to Isaac very often. This is one of the few times that God did. It appears that when Abraham went down to Egypt, that was a mistake. This was because God did not give that land to Abraham (not in the near future). God wanted Abraham and his seed to remain in the Land of Promise. So, apparently Isaac is about to repeat this mistake, and God guides him in a different direction.

God does not tell Isaac to ignore the drought or to act as if it is not happening. But God is going to lead Isaac to an area not too far from him, which is not suffering the same drought. We who live in Texas understand that completely. We might get 4 inches of rain in one day; and yet, 10 miles away, they only get an inch of rain.

God also reiterates His promise to Abraham and transfers this promise to Isaac.

v. 2 reads: **Y<sup>e</sup>howah had appeared to him and He said, “You will not go down to Egypt. Dwell in the land which I say to you.**

### Wenstrom on Identifying the Voice of God (edited)

- (1) God will never tell us to get involved in any activity or relationship that is inconsistent with the Word of God.
- (2) God will often ask us to do something, which conflicts with human wisdom.
- (3) God will never tell us to do anything that gratifies the old Adamic sin nature.
- (4) God will challenge our faith or trust in Him in order to build our relationship and intimacy with Him.
- (5) God will often call for us to be courageous.
- (6) The Bible is our index or guide for all the other ways God communicates and if we are going to listen to God and discern His voice in the other avenues He uses, we must be listening to His Word, the Bible. God communicates His Word in many ways: through those who teach it formally and informally as the pastor-teacher, in personal exhortation and encouragement, through song or music, through books, tapes, film, etc.
- (7) However, the primary method God has chosen, and that which is foundational to all the other ways God communicates in the church age, is the local assembly when the church is assembled together for the hearing of the Word. Other things are involved, prayer, singing, praise, the Lord’s Table, but at the center is the proclamation of the Word (2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Tim. 4:11, 13; 2 Tim. 4:1-4).

We must also understand that God communicates through the events of our lives:

- (1) Special Times of Worship (singing, praise, prayer, teaching, ordinances).
- (2) Blessings that reveal His love and grace.
- (3) Trials and Irritations that become tools to get our attention and build character.
- (4) [These communications from God must all be related to what] we hear...and rest in the promises and principles of Scripture.

From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 392); accessed July 23, 2015 (edited).

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Steven Cole suggests that Isaac was on his way to Egypt, and that God caught up to him in Gerar and said, “Don’t go to Egypt.” This at first seems like a reasonable theory. However, most of the time, Isaac has been living in Beer-lahai-roi and that general area, so he would go down (southeast) to Egypt, but up to Gerar (or east to Gerar). The only fault I see with Cole’s thinking here is the text: **There was a famine in the land apart from the first famine in the days of Abraham. Isaac went to Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, to Gerar. Y<sup>e</sup>howah had appeared to him and He said, “You will not go down to Egypt. Dwell in the land which I say to you.”** (Genesis 26:1–2). The

final line suggests that Isaac had not yet gone to Gerar, otherwise God would have said, “Stop right here, and live here.”

Sojourn in the land the this and I am with you and I will bless you and to you and to your seed I will give all the lands the these; and I have fulfilled the oath which I swore to Abraham your father.

Genesis  
26:3

Reside in this land and I will be with you and I will bless you and I will give all these lands to you and to your seed; and [by this] I will fulfill the oath which I swore to your father Abraham.

Live in this land and I will be with you and I will bless you and I will give all of these lands to you and to your descendants—by this, I have fulfilled the oath which I swore to your father Abraham.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Sojourn in the land the this and I am with you and I will bless you and to you and to your seed I will give all the lands the these; and I have fulfilled the oath which I swore to Abraham your father.
Targum of Onkelos	Sojourn in the land, and <u>My Word will be for your help</u> , and I will bless you; <u>for to the end</u> to your sons will I give all these lands, and I will establish the covenant which I have covenanted with Abraham your father.
Latin Vulgate	And sojourn in it, and I will be with you, and will bless you: for to you and to your seed I will give all these countries, to fulfil the oath which I swore to Abraham your father.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you; for to you and to your descendants I will give all these kingdoms, and I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father.
Septuagint (Greek)	And sojourn in this land; and I will be with you, and bless you, for I will give to you and to your seed all this land; and I will establish My oath which I swore to your father Abraham.
Significant differences:	Instead of <i>I am with you</i> , the targum has <i>My Word will be for your help</i> . Instead of <i>and to you</i> , the targum has <i>for to the end</i> . The Hebrew word that I have translated <i>fulfilled</i> can also be rendered <i>established</i> .

#### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Keep in this land, and I will be with you and give you my blessing; for to you and to your seed will I give all these lands, giving effect to the oath which I made to your father Abraham;...
Easy English	Stay there. And I will be with you and I will *bless you. I will give all these countries to you and your *descendants. I will do as I promised to your father Abraham.
God's Word™	Live here in this land for a while, and I will be with you and bless you. I will give all these lands to you and your descendants. I will keep the oath that I swore to your father Abraham.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Live here, and I will be with you and bless you. I am going to give all this territory to you and to your descendants. I will keep the promise I made to your father Abraham.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

New Berkeley Version	Live as an immigrant in this land and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and to your descendants I will give all this territory. I will make good the oath I swore to your father Abraham;...
New Life Bible	Live in this land and I will be with you and bring good to you. For I will give all these lands to you and your children. I will keep the promise I made to your father Abraham.
New Living Translation	Live here as a foreigner in this land, and I will be with you and bless you. I hereby confirm that I will give all these lands to you and your descendants [Hebrew seed; also in 26:4, 24.], just as I solemnly promised Abraham, your father.

#### **Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	Stay in this land and I will be with you and bless you, because I'm going to give all this land to you and to your seed. And I will fulfill the oath that I swore to your father Abraham,...
Beck's American Translation	Live as a foreigner in this country, and I will be with you and bless you. I will give you and your descendants all these lands. I will do what I swore to do for your father Abraham.
International Standard Version	Remain in this land, and I'll be with you and bless you by giving all these lands to you and to your descendants in fulfillment of my solemn promise that I made to your father Abraham.
New Advent Bible	Dwell in that land, though it be alien soil, and I will be with thee and bless thee; I mean to give all this land to thee and to thy race after thee, in fulfillment of the oath I took to thy father Abraham.
Translation for Translators	Stay in this land for a while, and I will help you and bless you, because it is to you and your descendants that I will give all these lands, and I will do what I solemnly promised to your father.
Today's NIV	Stay in this land for a while, and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham.

#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Ancient Roots Translinear	'Stay in this land. I am with you and will bless you. I <i>will</i> give all these lands to you and to your seed.' I <i>will</i> raise the oath which I swore to Abraham your father.
Conservapedia	"Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you, for to you, and to your descendants, I will give all these lands, and I will carry out the oath I swore to your father Abraham."
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	...remain in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you, for to you and your race I will give the whole of this country as a dwelling; and I will complete the oath which I swore to your father Abraham;...
Lexham English Bible	Dwell as an alien in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you, for I will give all these lands to you and to your descendants, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father.
NIV – UK	Stay in this land for a while, and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham.

#### **Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):**

Christian Community Bible	Remain in this land, and I will be with you and I will bless you. I will give all these lands to you and your race, and I shall keep the oath I swore to your father, Abraham. For I told him:...
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The Heritage Bible	Dwell in this land, and I will be with you, and will kneel down with goodness to you, because I will give all these lands to you and to your seed, and I have caused my oath to rise which I swore to Abraham, your father; And I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and will give all these lands to your seed; and all peoples of the earth shall be blessed in your seed, Because Abraham attentively heard my voice, and hedged about my guard duty, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws. Vv. 4–5 are included for context.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and your descendants I will give all these lands, in fulfillment of the oath that I swore to your father Abraham. Gn 12:7; 15:18; Ex 32:13; Ps 105:9; Sir 44:22; Heb 11:9.
New Jerusalem Bible	Remain for the present in that country; I shall be with you and bless you, for I shall give all these countries to you and your descendants in fulfilment of the oath I swore to your father Abraham.
New RSV	Reside in this land as an alien, and I will be with you, and will bless you; for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will fulfil the oath that I swore to your father Abraham.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Stay in this land, and I will be with you and bless you, because I will give all these lands to you and to your descendants. I will fulfill the oath which I swore to Avraham your father -...
exeGesés companion Bible	...sojourn in this land and I AM with you and bless you; for I give all these lands to you and to your seed and I raise the oath I oathed to Abraham your father...
Hebrew Names Version	Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you. For to you, and to your seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to Avraham your father.
Kaplan Translation	Remain an immigrant in this land. I will be with you and bless you, since it will be to you and your offspring that I will give all these lands. I will thus keep the oath that I made to your father Abraham.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Sojourn in ha'aretz hazot, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy zera, I will give all these lands, and I will perform the shevu'ah (oath) which I swore unto Avraham avichah;...

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Dwell temporarily in this land, and I will be with you and will favor you with blessings; for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father.
The Expanded Bible	Stay [Sojourn; Live as an alien] in this land, and I will be with you and bless you [12:3]. I will give you and your ·descendants [ <sup>L</sup> seed] all these lands, and I will ·keep [fulfill] the oath I made to Abraham your father.
NET Bible®	Stay [The Hebrew verb גר (gur) means "to live temporarily without ownership of land." Abraham's family will not actually possess the land of Canaan until the Israelite conquest hundreds of years later.] in this land. Then I will be with you and will bless you [After the imperative "stay" the two prefixed verb forms with prefixed conjunction here indicate consequence.] [I will be with you and I will bless you. The promise of divine presence is a promise to intervene to protect and to bless.], for I will give all these lands to you and to your descendants, and I will fulfill the solemn promise I made [Heb "the oath which I swore."] [The solemn promise I made. See Genesis 15:18–20; Genesis 22:16–18.] to your father Abraham.

The updated Pulpit Com. *Sojourn in this land*, viz., Philistia (Murphy, Alford), though otherwise regarded as Canaan (Lange, Keil, Calvin) *and I will be with you, and will bless you*. Of this comprehensive promise, the first part was enjoyed by, while the second was distinctly stated to, Abraham. (Genesis 12:2) God's presence with Isaac of higher significance than his presence with Ishmael. (Genesis 21:20) *For unto you, and unto your seed, will I give all these* *lah* an archaism for *hLaeh* (cf. Genesis 19:8, Genesis 19:25) *countries* (i.e. Canaan and the surrounding lands), *and I will perform the oath* (vide Genesis 22:16) *which I swore unto Abraham your father*.  
 The Voice *Live in this land as a foreigner, but don't worry. I will be there with you. I will put a blessing on you, and I will one day bestow this land on you and your descendants. You can be assured that I will honor the solemn vow I made to your father, Abraham:...*

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version *Sojourn in this land, and I come to be with you and will bless you. For to you and to your seed will I give all these lands, and carry out will I the oath which I swore to Abraham, your father.*  
 Context Group Version *Sojourn in this land { or earth }, and I will be with you, and will esteem you. For to you, and to your seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to Abraham your father.*  
 English Standard Version *Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father.*  
 Green's Literal Translation *Reside in this land, and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your seed I will give all these lands. And I will cause to rise My oath which I swore to your father Abraham.*  
 Third Millennium Bible *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 swore unto Abraham thy father.*  
 World English Bible *Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you. For to you, and to your seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to Abraham your father.*  
 Young's Updated LT *Sojourn in this land, and I am with you, and I will bless you, for to you and to your seed I give all these lands, and I have established the oath which I have sworn to Abraham your father.*

**The gist of this verse:** God tells Isaac to remain in the Land of Promise, and He would be with Isaac and he would bless Isaac and his seed.

Genesis 26:3a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
gûwr (גור) [pronounced goor]	<i>to reside, to temporarily reside, to sojourn; to reside without ownership; to gather together with, band together with</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #1481 BDB #157
NET Bible footnote: The Hebrew verb גור (gur) means "to live temporarily without ownership of land." Abraham's family will not actually possess the land of Canaan until the Israelite conquest hundreds of years later. <sup>37</sup>			

<sup>37</sup> From <http://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen26.htm> accessed March 3, 2013.

## Genesis 26:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75
Although Owen says there is a direct object here, that is a typo on his part.			
zō'th (זֹה) [pronounced zoth]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	feminine of singular zeh; demonstrative pronoun, adverb; with the definite article	Strong's #2063 (& 2088, 2090) BDB #260

**Translation:** Reside in this land...

In the previous verse, God told Isaac that He would specify exactly which land to live in. Although this word can refer to temporarily residing somewhere, I think the NET Bible gets the better sense of this word, that Isaac is living in this land, but without having any ownership of it. The Hebrew verb used here is gûwr (גֹּוֹר) [pronounced goor], which means, *to reside, to temporarily reside, to sojourn; to reside without ownership*. Strong's #1481 BDB #157.

Wenstrom relates this word to the culture of that day.

### Wenstrom on the Hebrew Word Gûwr

The word "sojourned" is the Hebrew verb gur (גֹּוֹר) (goor), which refers to a specific legal status of a person who lives as a resident and is in a dependent legal status and is not a native, but is dwelling upon the land.

In societies, which possess a clan structure, this person is without legal protection since he has no blood ties. Such a person, like Isaac, would have been dependent upon a native to recognize and protect him while he was in Gerar.

The Mari documents (1800 B.C.) indicate that the relationship between "sitting" farmers and nomadic herders (such as Abraham) was that contracts were drawn up concerning grazing and watering rights. This relationship is known as "dimorphism" as these two distinct yet interrelated cultures exist side by side.

Isaac is entering into a land, where he no legal rights and protection, which will affect his decision-making and will cause him to say that Rebekah is his sister. He is a "resident alien" meaning he was a person who moved into Canaan where he had neither land nor clan ties and was without traditional tribal legal support and protection and would be vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 393); accessed July 24, 2015.

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The key is not that God is giving this land to the Jews over temporarily, but that He expects them to live there with faith in Him but without actual ownership of the land where they stay.<sup>38</sup> The faith is that they choose to live there in obedience to God, despite never having ownership of the land until about a half a millennium from this time. This is a very different approach than you or I would have. Today, I may rent this or that house, but that would be temporary, with my sights on purchasing this house or another house in the future.

Now, you will note that this certainly involves some hardship and difficulty to be endured by Isaac and his family. That is, God does not give all the land where he is a perfect amount of rain all of the time. In fact, God intends for Isaac to move for a time to a different area. However, God wants Isaac to remain on the Land of Promise.

What else God has working in His plan is not revealed to us. Is He reducing the number of people in the land; is He keeping people from remaining in the land? We do not know.

**Application:** This is something that the people of the dust bowl needed to know. Many of them were very strong believers; many of them had believed in Jesus Christ and then believed in the Word of God. However, here, because of a drought, Isaac is having to move from The Well of Him Who Sees Me to Gerar; and we may recognize that God has a plan which is in motion in order to get Isaac to move. My point is, no one in the dust bowl area should have said, "I am a believer in Jesus Christ; I have trusted in the Word; and therefore, I must stay in this particular area." That is not necessarily the case. We all need some modicum of flexibility. We cannot lay down stakes and think that this is where we will always live. Nor does this mean that God wants you to move every 3 years. Again, the key is having some modicum of flexibility and being willing to move when that seems to be indicated. I am sure that I have given myself before as an example—I am one of the many who moved to Houston, in part because Berachah was here. I did not know a soul here. God provided in every way possible. Without a single doubt, I know that my moving here was God's will (I was not so certain at the time). When it is time for you to move—if that time ever comes—God will put on the pressure for you to move.

Genesis 26:3b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
‘îm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity; with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

**Translation:** ...and I will be with you...

God makes several promises to Isaac. The first promise is, He would be with Isaac. When we are in God's geographical will, He is right there with us. We are in the right place to do His will. However, when we are outside of His geographical will, then the divine good that we can produce is limited.

*Ballinger: The exact wording "and I will be with you" is here first used in connection with divine reassurance to Isaac and repeated on several occasions to Jacob (28:15; 31:3; 46:4).<sup>39</sup>*

<sup>38</sup> See the footnote on this verse from <http://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen26.htm> accessed March 3, 2013.

<sup>39</sup> From <http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/Gen26.htm> accessed July 23, 2015.

**Application:** Do not get weird here. Do not listen for quiet voices to tell you to move. Do not over-think making a left or a right turn up ahead. God did not come to Abraham every 5 minutes and tell him to make a long step then a short step, and then turn to the right and walk for 20 paces. We simply stay in fellowship, learn Bible doctrine, and do the things which God has given us to do during our lives here on earth (work, school, military, whatever). And God does not give a healthy person (or even a semi-healthy person) the command to sit in front of a television or computer all day long and collect a government check.

Despite the famine, Isaac was to remain in the Land of Promise. He had to maintain faith that this land is given to him from God. God made a series of promises to Abraham, which we will study again; and He is reestablishing these promises with Isaac, as Abraham’s heir of promise.

God being with various believers in His plan is recorded throughout Scripture, as is His promise to remain with us: Genesis 26:24 28:15 31:3 32:9 39:2, 21 46:4 Exodus 3:12 Judges 6:16 Psalm 46:7, 11 Isaiah 7:14 8:10 41:10 43:2, 5 Jer. 1:19 Matthew 18:20 28:20 Phi. 4:9.<sup>40</sup> The very meaning of *Immanuel* is *God with us*. In the Old Testament, it appears that *God with us* is the parallel to the New Testament’s *Christ in you* (John 6:56 14:20, 23 15:5 17:23 Romans 8:10 2Corinthians 13:5 Ephesians 3:17 Colossians 1:27).<sup>41</sup>

Genesis 26:3c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
bârak <sup>e</sup> (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced <i>baw-RAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to invoke God, to praise, to celebrate, to adore, to bless [God]; to bless [men], to invoke blessings; to bless [as God, man and other created things], therefore to cause to prosper, to make happy; to salute anyone [with a blessing]; to curse</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Piel imperfect; with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #1288 BDB #138

Wenstrom: “Bless” is the verb *barakh* (בָּרַךְ), which means that the Lord promised to endue Isaac with power for success, prosperity, fecundity (offspring in great numbers) and longevity.”<sup>42</sup> I don’t know if these quotation marks means that Wenstrom is quoting someone else.

**Translation:** ...and I will bless you...

God would also bless Isaac. And we should recall that God blessed his father Abraham greatly. **Now Abraham was old, well advanced in years. And the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things** (Genesis 24:1).

Vv. 2–3c: Y<sup>e</sup>howah had appeared to him and He said, “You will not go down to Egypt. Dwell in the land which I say to you. Reside in this land and I will be with you and I will bless you... On at least two occasions,<sup>43</sup> Isaac is purposely kept within the confines of the Land of Promise. God will allow Isaac to move a small distance—as opposed to moving out of the land and down to Egypt—and inherent in this direction is God’s promise to bless Isaac.

<sup>40</sup> Go to Genesis 28:15 in the Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge to make a doctrine of this.

<sup>41</sup> Go to Romans 8:10 in Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge in order to make a doctrine of this.

<sup>42</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 393); accessed July 24, 2015.

<sup>43</sup> Abraham clearly directed his top servant *not* to take Isaac outside of the Land of Promise to find a bride.

In this very chapter, we will see this play out. We will see on at least two occasions where God gives great blessing to Isaac; and prospers him even more than a heathen king of that area is prospered. Isaac will be so blessed that all the Philistines will be jealous of him. Not only does he have the most beautiful wife, but his wealth grows exponentially.

God says to Isaac: *“Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you...”*

### The Bible Query on, *does God bless Abraham because of works?*

Q: In Gen 26:3-5, Gen 12:1; Gen 17:1, 9-14; and Gen 22:16 did God bless Abraham because of Abraham's works?

A: No [and yes]. For either Abraham or people in general, there are two distinct issues here: salvation and blessings. Salvation: Abraham's works were not important, in the sense that they did not get him to Heaven. Abraham's works were very important in being the visible expression of his faith in God, and inseparable from his faith in God.

Blessings: Because of works, both Abraham and us often receive both blessings this life and rewards in the next.

God's covenant had both an invariant element and a conditional element. Leviticus 26:44-45 shows that even if God's people fail on the conditional element, the invariant element still stands. See Hard Sayings of the Bible p.129-130 for more info.

*Bible Query*; March 2006 version. Copyright (c) Christian Debater(tm) 1997-2006.; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:2.

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Ballinger: *The words "I will be with you and bless you" is a promise of divine protection and success. For "bless you" see Genesis 12:2; 22:17; 26:24; 27:7).*<sup>44</sup>

When it comes to temporal and eternal blessings in this life, God gives us a very specific pathway upon which to walk. (1) We must be filled with the Holy Spirit and (2) we must have Bible doctrine in our souls. Then God can work through us (not like robots or humanoids, as God preserves our free will); and in working through us, God accomplishes His plan. This is rewardable. All of our ability to partake in this process is based upon grace. We first of all stand upon Jesus Christ, our Savior, Who saves us in grace. The power of the Holy Spirit is given to us in grace. The access to Bible doctrine is also given to us in grace. We are given the privilege of participating in the greatest drama in all the universe—and we choose to be a part or not.

**Application:** When I was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, in P.E., playing football, I was pretty much the least valuable player. Ed Nagle, the team captain, at the end of the game, told me to step over the goal line, turn around, and he'd hit me with a pass. I was pretty much the last person anyone would think would be going out for a pass, so I was totally in the clear. Ed put the football right into my hands and (if memory serves) that was the winning touchdown. Ed's plan, Ed's throw; and my contribution was very little. However, here it is, 52 years later, and I still remember catching a touchdown pass. God gives us the opportunity to catch that touchdown pass; God gives us the opportunity to be a part of His plan. We don't deserve it and, by all accounts, most people might view us as the least valuable players. Yet God can and does use us. It is a matter of grace.

God's directions to Isaac are, *“Stay in the land and I will bless you.”*

Clarke: *While a man acknowledges God in all his ways, He will direct all his steps, though He may not choose to give him the reasons of the workings of His providence. Abraham might go safely to Egypt, Isaac might not; in firmness and decision of character there was a wide difference between the two*

<sup>44</sup> From <http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/Gen26.htm> accessed July 23, 2015.

*men*.<sup>45</sup> What Clarke is saying is, God takes into account Isaac's character when giving him direction. It is possible that if Isaac moved out of the land, he might not return. Remember that Isaac's father required an oath from his servant *not* to take Isaac outside of the Land of Promise. "I am sending you to Paddan-aram to get a wife for Isaac. No matter what, you do not take him there."

God knows our limitations and what God requires of us, we are able to do.

<b>Genesis 26:3d</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's #</b>
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
zera' (זֵרָא) [pronounced <i>ZEH-rahg</i> ]	<i>a seed, a sowing; an offspring, progeny, descendant; posterity</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2233 BDB #282
<p>The NET Bible: <i>The Hebrew term זֵרָא (zera') occurring here and in Genesis 26:18 may mean "seed" (for planting), "offspring" (occasionally of animals, but usually of people), or "descendants" depending on the context.] [To you and to your descendants. The Abrahamic blessing will pass to Isaac. Everything included in that blessing will now belong to the son, and in turn will be passed on to his sons. But there is a contingency involved: If they are to enjoy the full blessings, they will have to obey the word of the LORD. And so obedience is enjoined here with the example of how well Abraham obeyed.</i><sup>46</sup></p>			
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'ârâtsôwth (אֲרָצוֹת) [pronounced <i>uh-raw-TSOHTH</i> ]	<i>lands, countries</i>	feminine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

<sup>45</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:3.

<sup>46</sup> From <http://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen26.htm> accessed March 3, 2013.

## Genesis 26:3d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾêl (אֵל) [pronounced <i>ale</i> ]	<i>these, those</i>	pronoun/demonstrative plural adjective (for masculine and feminine nouns)	Strong's #411 BDB #41

**Translation:** ...and I will give all these lands to you and to your seed;...

This time *land* (or, *earth*) is in the plural. So, the land of Canaan and all of the surrounding lands which were controlled by dozens of different rulers would be put under the direct control of the seed of Isaac. Isaac is to live on that land today, his faith in God, without ownership; with the result that his descendants would own this land.

Although *seed* is in the singular, it can both refer to Isaac's descendants or to the Lord Jesus Christ, Isaac's Seed. Now, just in case you think that it is self for God the Father to give this land to God the Son, bear in mind that we are sons of God in Christ Jesus and we share in His possessions.

## Genesis 26:3e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
qûwm (קוּם) [pronounced <i>koom</i> ]	<i>to cause to raise up, to cause to stand, to establish, to fulfill; to uphold, to perform [a testimony, a vow, a commandment, a promise]</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877

The NET Bible: *The Hiphil stem of the verb קוּם (qum) here means "to fulfill, to bring to realization." For other examples of this use of this verb form, see Leviticus 26:9; Num. 23:19; Deut. 8:18; Deut. 9:5; 1Samuel 1:23; 1Kings 6:12; Jer. 11:5.*<sup>47</sup>

Wenstrom: *The phrase "I will establish" [Context Group Version, ESV, WEB, Young] is inaccurate but rather should be translated "I will make a reality the covenant that has already been established."*<sup>48</sup> *Inaccurate* may be a bit strong here, as that is a legitimate translation. However, Wenstrom's *I will make a reality* may communicate better the thought here.

ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
shebû'âh (שְׁבֻעָה) [pronounced <i>she<sup>b</sup>-voo-GAH</i> ]	<i>a solemn oath, a curse</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7621 BDB #989

Wenstrom: *"Oath" is the noun sh<sup>e</sup>vu`ah (שְׁבֻעָה) (she-voo-aw), which means, "to bind oneself volitionally by one's own words," putting oneself under obligation.*<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> From <http://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen26.htm> accessed March 3, 2013.

<sup>48</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 394); accessed July 24, 2015.

<sup>49</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 394); accessed July 24, 2015.

Genesis 26:3e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾāsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
shābaʿ (שָׁבַע) [pronounced shaw <sup>b</sup> - VAHG]	<i>to swear, to imprecate, to curse, to swear an oath, to take a solemn oath, to swear allegiance</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #7650 BDB #989
lāmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾAb̄erāhām (אֲבִרָאָם) [pronounced ahb <sup>ve</sup> -raw- HAWM]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
ʾāb (אָב) [pronounced aw <sup>b</sup> v]	<i>father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; founder, civil leader, military leader</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

**Translation:** ...and [by this] I will fulfill the oath which I swore to your father Abraham.

Suddenly, we go from God speaking in imperfect verbs to a perfect verb—the word *fulfill* is in the perfect tense. There are two senses in which this may be taken: (1) God promised this to Abraham and to Isaac in eternity past, and these things are as good as fulfilled, even though that was long into the future. Or, (2) by doing the things which God spoke of earlier, being with Isaac, blessing him and giving him and his seed the lands, this itself is a fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises.

Genesis 26:3 *Reside in this land and I will be with you and I will bless you and I will give all these lands to you and to your seed; and [by this] I will fulfill the oath which I swore to your father Abraham.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:3 *Live in this land and I will be with you and I will bless you and I will give all of these lands to you and to your descendants—by this, I have fulfilled the oath which I swore to your father Abraham.* (Kukis paraphrase)

V. 3: *Reside in this land and I will be with you and I will bless you and I will give all these lands to you and to your seed; and [by this] I will fulfill the oath which I swore to your father Abraham.* This is the first and the great handoff from generation to generation. Abraham received the promises and he was given a child to whom these promises would go to. These promises would continue from generation to generation, down to the incarnation of Jesus Christ; and then they continue to the Millennium. Isaac needs to grab onto these promises and believe them and act upon them. These promises are associated with Abraham and his seed (which is Isaac) and with this land upon which Isaac is standing. These promises are associated both with the grace of God and with the obedience of Isaac. Now, that is a little tricky, but God's promises will be fulfilled, even if Isaac is disobedient (this will become more much clear with Jacob, who wants the promises, but uses his own works in order to help things along).

All of v. 3 reads: *Reside in this land and I will be with you and I will bless you and I will give all these lands to you and to your seed; and [by this] I will fulfill the oath which I swore to your father Abraham.* Between Genesis 12 and 25, God makes only one oath to Abraham, which is an oath that Isaac would have heard: *And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you*

have obeyed My voice." (Gen 22:15–18; ESV; capitalized)<sup>50</sup> God has made covenants with Abraham throughout his life, and the substance of the covenants is very similar to the substance of this oath.

Note that God promises this land *to Isaac (and to his seed)*; and Isaac will die before God's oath is carried out. That means that Isaac *must* be resurrected in order to receive this promise from God.

Isaac's response would be a response of faith; and God blesses those who trust in Him.

God's oath to Abraham represented a covenant (contract) made by God. Most of the time, these were covenants made by the powerful with the consent of the weak; also known as the **Suzerain-Vassal Treaty**. A much more powerful nation establishes a relationship with a weaker people, city or nation, often establishing a non-aggression pact (in exchange for tribute paid regularly). This treaty is explained in the **Abrahamic Covenant** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

V. 5 appears to be a continuation of v. 4, so these verses have been combined. V. 5 is quite difficult, and I will *attempt* to understand and explain it.

**And so I have multiplied your seed as stars of the [two] heavens and I have given to your seed all the lands the these; and have blessed [themselves] in your seed all nations of the earth; because that had heard [and obeyed] Abraham in My voice. And so he keeps My guard, My commandments, My statutes and My laws."**

Genesis  
26:4–5

**I have multiplied your seed as the stars of the heavens and I have given to your seed all these lands; furthermore [lit., and], all nations of the earth of blessed [themselves] by your seed. [This is] because Abraham listened to My voice and he kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws."**

**I will continue to multiply your descendants as the stars in the heavens and will give all of these lands to your descendants; furthermore, all nations of the earth cause themselves to be blessed by means of your Descendant. This has been done in eternity past because your father Abraham listened to My voice and kept My ritual observations, My commands, My statutes and My laws."**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so I have multiplied your seed as stars of the [two] heavens and I have given to your seed all the lands the these; and have blessed [themselves] in your seed all nations of the earth; because that had heard [and obeyed] Abraham in My voice. And so he keeps My guard, My commandments, My statutes and My laws."
Targum of Onkelos	And I will multiply your <u>sons</u> as the stars of the heavens, and will give to your <u>sons</u> all these lands, and through your <u>sons</u> will all the nations of the earth be blessed; on account that Abraham obeyed My <u>word</u> , and kept the keeping of My <u>word</u> , My statutes, My covenants, and My laws.
Latin Vulgate	And I will multiply your seed like the stars of heaven: and I will give to your posterity all these countries: and in your seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed. Because Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept My precepts and commandments, and observed My ceremonies and laws.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And I will make your descendants to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give to your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants shall all the nations

<sup>50</sup> God makes an oath here to Abraham, swearing by Himself, as He can swear by none greater.

Septuagint (Greek)	of the earth be blessed; Because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws. And I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven; and I will give to your seed all this land, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in your seed. Because Abraham your father listened to My voice, and kept My injunctions, My commandments, My ordinances, and My statutes.
Significant differences:	The targum has <i>sons</i> rather than <i>seed</i> . The targum also has <i>word</i> instead of <i>voice</i> . The targum has <i>word</i> instead of <i>guard (charge)</i> .

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	I will make your seed like the stars of heaven in number, and will give them all these lands, and your seed will be a blessing to all the nations of the earth; Because Abraham gave ear to my voice and kept my words, my rules, my orders, and my laws.
Easy English	You will have as many *descendants as there are stars in the sky. I will give all these countries to your *descendants. I will *bless all the nations on the earth because of your *descendants. I will *bless the nations because Abraham obeyed my voice. And he carried out my words, my commands, my orders and my laws.'
Easy-to-Read Version	I will make your family as many as the stars of heaven. And I will give all these lands to your family. Through your descendants, [152] every nation on earth will be blessed. I will do this because your father Abraham obeyed my words and did the things I said. Abraham obeyed my commands, my laws, and my rules."
God's Word™	I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and give all these lands to your descendants. Through your descendant all the nations of the earth will be blessed. I will bless you because Abraham obeyed me and completed the duties, commands, laws, and instructions I gave him."
Good News Bible (TEV)	I will give you as many descendants as there are stars in the sky, and I will give them all this territory. All the nations will ask me to bless them as I have blessed your descendants. I will bless you, because Abraham obeyed me and kept all my laws and commands."
The Message	I'll make your descendants as many as the stars in the sky and give them all these lands. All the nations of the Earth will get a blessing for themselves through your descendants. And why? Because Abraham obeyed my summons and kept my charge--my commands, my guidelines, my teachings."
NIRV	I will make your children after you as many as the stars in the sky. And I will give them all these lands. All nations on earth will be blessed because of your children. "I will do all of those things because Abraham obeyed me. He did what I required. He kept my commands, my rules and my laws."
New Simplified Bible	»I will give you as many descendants as there are stars in the sky. I will give your descendants all of this land. They will be a blessing to every nation on earth. »This is because Abraham did everything I told him to do.«

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	I will give you as many descendants as there are stars in the sky, and I will give your descendants all of this land. They will be a blessing to every nation on earth, because Abraham did everything I told him to do.
New Berkeley Version	I will make your offspring as countless as the stars of heaven, and I will give your descendants all these lands. Through your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because Abraham minded My voice and kept My charge, aMy orders, My rules and My laws.

New Century Version	I will give you many descendants, as hard to count as the stars in the sky, and I will give them all these lands. Through your descendants all the nations on the earth will be blessed. I will do this because your father Abraham obeyed me. He did what I said and obeyed my commands, my teachings, and my rules."
New Life Bible	<sup>4</sup> I will make your children and all your children's children as many as the stars of heaven. I will give these lands to them. <sup>5</sup> For Abraham obeyed Me. He did what I told him to do. He kept My Word and My Law."
New Living Translation	I will cause your descendants to become as numerous as the stars of the sky, and I will give them all these lands. And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed. I will do this because Abraham listened to me and obeyed all my requirements, commands, decrees, and instructions."

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	...for I will increase your seed as the stars in the sky; I will give all of this land to your seed, and all the nations of the earth will be blest by your seed, <sup>5</sup> because AbraHam your father listened to My voice and did what I said. He obeyed My Commandments, rules, and Laws.'
Beck's American Translation	I will give you many descendants, like the stars in the sky, and I will give your descendants all these lands, and in your Descendant <i>all the nations of the earth will be blessed</i> , because Abraham listen to Me and kept My rules, commandments, regulations, and laws."
International Standard V	I'll cause you to have as many descendants as the stars of the heavens, and I'll certainly give all these lands to your descendants. Later on, through your descendants all the nations of the earth will bless one another. I'm going to do this because Abraham did what I told him to do. He kept my instructions, commands, statutes, and laws."
New Advent Bible	I will make that race plentiful as the stars in heaven, and grant the whole of this land to thy descendants; in thy posterity all the nations of the world shall find a blessing. Such reward shall Abraham have for obeying me, for keeping every command and charge I gave him, following observance and decree of mine.
Today's NIV	I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because Abraham obeyed me and did everything I required of him, keeping my commands, my decrees and my instructions."
Translation for Translators	I will cause your descendants to be as numerous as the stars in the sky. I will give to your descendants all these lands, and I will cause your descendants to be a blessing to the people of [MTY] all nations on the earth. I will do that because Abraham obeyed me. He obeyed all that I told him to do, all that I commanded him to do, all that I declared and all the laws that I gave him."

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven. I give all these lands to your seed. Your seed will bless all the nations of the land, in reward for Abraham hearing my voice, and keeping my schedule, my commandments, my decrees, and my Torah."
Conservapedia	"I will increase your descendants like the stars in heaven, and will give to your descendants all these lands, and all the ethnic groups of the earth will be blessed through Your Descendant [The particular Descendant here in view is Jesus Christ. ], inasmuch as Abraham listened to My Voice, kept My charge, and followed My instructions, and My statutes and laws."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...and I will increase your race like the stars of the sky; and I will give to your race the whole of this country for a home, and I will bless all the nations of the earth

	through your Heir. In accordance with what I promised to Abraham according to My words; — ‘if you will carefully keep My commands and statutes and laws.’ ”
Lexham English Bible	And I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and I will give to your descendants all these lands. And all nations of the earth will be blessed through your offspring, because Abraham listened to my voice and kept my charge: my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."
New Heart English Bible	I will multiply your seed as the stars of the sky, and will give to your seed all these lands. In your seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed, because Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my requirements, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."
NIV – UK	I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring [Or seed] all nations on earth will be blessed [Or and all nations on earth will use the name of your offspring in blessings (see 48:20)], because Abraham obeyed me and did everything I required of him, keeping my commands, my decrees and my instructions.'

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	I will make your descendants as many as the stars in the heavens, and to them I will give all these lands; and through your descendants all nations in the world will be blessed because you were obedient and kept my charge, my commandments, my decrees and my laws."
New American Bible	I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and give them all these lands, and in your descendants all the nations of the earth shall find blessing— this because Abraham obeyed me, keeping my mandate (my commandments, my ordinances, and my instructions)."
New American Bible (R.E.)	I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky, and I will give them all these lands, and in your descendants all the nations of the earth will find blessing [Gn 12:3; 22:17-18; 28:14; Ex 32:13.]— this because Abraham obeyed me, keeping my mandate, my commandments, my ordinances, and my instructions.
New Jerusalem Bible	I shall make your descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven, and I shall give them all these countries, and all nations on earth will bless themselves by your descendants in return for Abraham's obedience; for he kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes and my laws.'
New RSV	<sup>4</sup> I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven, and will give to your offspring all these lands; and all the nations of the earth shall gain blessing for themselves through your offspring, <sup>5</sup> because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.'

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	<sup>4</sup> I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky, I will give all these lands to your descendants, and by your descendants all the nations of the earth will bless themselves. <sup>5</sup> All this is because Avraham heeded what I said and did what I told him to do -he followed my mitzvot, my regulations and my teachings."
exeGesés companion Bible	...and I abound your seed as the stars of the heavens and give all these countries to your seed: and in your seed all the goyim of the earth bless themselves because Abraham heard my voice and guarded my guard, my misvoth, my statutes and my torahs.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	I will make your heirs as numerous as the stars of heaven, and assign to your heirs all these lands, so that all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your

heirs—inasmuch as Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge: My commandments, My laws, and My teachings.”

Kaplan Translation

I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars of the sky [See Genesis 15:5, 22:17.], and grant them all these lands. All the nations on earth shall be blessed [See Genesis 12:3, 22:18.] through your descendants. All this is because Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My decrees, and My laws.'

Orthodox Jewish Bible

And I will make thy zera to multiply as the kokhavim of Shomayim, and will give unto thy zera all these lands; and in thy zera shall kol Goyei Ha'Aretz be blessed; Because Avraham obeyed My voice, and was shomer over My mishmeret (charge), My mitzvot, My chukkot, and My torot.

*The Scriptures* 1998

“And I shall increase your seed like the stars of the heavens, and I shall give all these lands to your seed. And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because Abraham obeyed My voice and guarded My Charge: My commands, My laws, and My Torot [Torot - plural of Torah, teaching].”

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

*The Amplified Bible*

And I will make your descendants to multiply as the stars of the heavens, and will give to your posterity all these lands (kingdoms); and by your Offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, or by Him bless themselves, For Abraham listened to and obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commands, My statutes, and My laws.

The Expanded Bible

I will give you many descendants [multiply your seed], as hard to count as the stars in the sky, and I will give them all these lands. Through your descendants [seed] all the nations on the earth will be blessed [12:1-3]. I will do this because your father Abraham obeyed me [listened to my voice]. He did what I said and obeyed my instructions [charge], my commands, my teachings, and my rules [instructions; laws]."

NET Bible®

I will multiply your descendants so they will be as numerous as the stars in the sky, and I will give them [tn Heb "your descendants."] all these lands. All the nations of the earth will pronounce blessings on one another using the name of your descendants [Traditionally the verb is taken as passive ("will be blessed") here, as if Abraham's descendants were going to be a channel or source of blessing to the nations. But the Hitpael is better understood here as reflexive/reciprocal, "will bless [i.e., pronounce blessings on] themselves/one another" (see also Gen 22:18). Elsewhere the Hitpael of the verb "to bless" is used with a reflexive/reciprocal sense in Deut 29:18; Ps 72:17; Isa 65:16; Jer 4:2. Gen 12:2 predicts that Abram will be held up as a paradigm of divine blessing and that people will use his name in their blessing formulae. For examples of blessing formulae utilizing an individual as an example of blessing see Gen 48:20 and Ruth 4:11. Earlier formulations of this promise (see Gen 12:2; 18:18) use the Niphal stem. (See also Gen 28:14.). All this will come to pass [The words "All this will come to pass" are not in the Hebrew text, but are supplied for stylistic reasons.] because Abraham obeyed me [Heb "listened to my voice."] and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." Because that Abraham [He commends Abraham's obedience, because Isaac should be even more ready to follow the same: for as God made this promise of his free mercy, so does the confirmation of it proceed from the same fountain.] obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

The Geneva Bible

Kretzmann's Commentary

...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; because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws. Isaac was not to move down into Egypt, because the entire land of Canaan, including the land of the Philistines, was

included in the blessing of Jehovah, and was eventually to be the possession of the descendants of Isaac, as the Lord had promised to Abraham with an oath, Genesis 22:16. But in addition to these temporal blessings, the descendants of Isaac according to the promise should also become the bearers of the Messianic hope, according to which all nations of the earth were to be blessed in that one Seed, in the Messiah. All this was a reward for the obedience of faith which Abraham had shown in keeping the charge of God, the special commission entrusted to him, His commandments or express orders, His statutes, certain prescriptions to cover specific cases, and His Law, the great doctrine of moral obligations as it applies to all men.

The Pulpit Commentary

And I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, (Genesis 15:1–6) and will give unto your seed all these countries (i.e. the territories occupied by the Canaanitish tribes); and in your seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed (cf. Genesis 12:3 Genesis 22:18) Because that Abraham obeyed (literally, hearkened to) my voice (a general description of the patriarch's obedience, which the next clause further particularizes), and kept my charge, custodierit custodiam (Calvin); observed my observances (Kalisch); the charge being that which is intended to be kept my commandments, i.e. particular injunctions, specific enactments, express or occasional orders (cf. 2Chronicles 35:16) my statutes, or permanent ordinances, such as the Passover; literally, that which is graven on tables or monuments (compare Exodus 12:14) and my laws which refer to the great doctrines of moral obligation. The three terms express the contents of the Divine observances which Abraham observed.

The Voice

I will make your children and their children's children as numerous as the stars in the sky. One day I will give them all of these lands. Through your descendants all the peoples of the earth will discover true blessing [Acts 3:25], because Abraham obeyed My voice, stayed loyal to Me, and kept My commands, statutes, and teachings [Genesis 22:16-18].

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And increase will I your seed as the stars of the heavens, and give will I to your seed all these lands. And blessed, in your seed, are all the nations of the earth, inasmuch as hearken did Abraham, your father, to My voice and kept My charge, My instructions. My statutes, and My laws.
Context Group Version	And I will multiply your seed as the stars of the skies {or heavens}, and will give to your seed all these lands. And in your seed shall all the nations of the land {or earth} be esteemed, because Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.
English Standard Version	I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."
Green's Literal Translation	And I will increase your seed like the stars of the heavens, and I will give to your seed all these lands. And all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves in your Seed, because Abraham listened to My voice and heeded My charge, My commands, My statutes, and My laws.
H. C. Leupold	And Yahweh appeared to him and said: Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land I tell thee of; sojourn in this land and I will be with thee and I will bless thee. For to thee and to thy descendants do I give all these lands. And I will fulfill my oath which I swore to Abraham, thy Father, and I will multiply thy descendants as the stars of the heavens, and I will give to thy descendants all these lands, and all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves in thy seed; because that Abraham hearkened

Young's Updated LT

to my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws. Vv. 2–3 are included for context.

I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."

**The gist of this verse:**

God promises Isaac the same thing that He promises Abraham: to multiply his descendants as the stars of heaven and to give them this land. All the nations of the earth would be blessed by them because Abraham obeyed God in all things.

Genesis 26:4a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
râbâh (רָבַח) [pronounced <i>raw<sup>b</sup>-VAWH</i> ]	<i>to make [do] much; to multiply, to increase; to give much; to lay much; to have much; to make great; many [as a Hiphil infinitive construct]</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #7235 BDB #915
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
zera' (זֵרָא) [pronounced <i>ZEH-rahg'</i> ]	<i>a seed, a sowing; an offspring, progeny, descendant; posterity</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2233 BDB #282
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
kôwkâb (כּוֹכָבִים) [pronounced <i>koh-KAW<sup>b</sup>V</i> ]	<i>star; figuratively, it is used of Messiah, brothers, youth, numerous progeny, personification, God's omniscience</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #3556 BDB #456
shâmayîm (שָׁמַיִם) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAH-yim</i> ]	<i>heaven, heavens, skies; the visible heavens, as in as abode of the stars or as the visible universe, the sky, atmosphere, etc.; Heaven (as the abode of God)</i>	masculine dual noun with the definite article	Strong's #8064 BDB #1029

**Translation:** I have multiplied your seed as the stars of the heavens...

God is renewing His promises which He originally made to Abraham. This suggests that, at the time of this narrative, Abraham is dead; which is one of the events of the previous chapter. Therefore, the mantle is passed along to his son, Isaac.

This verse brings into question the timing of this chapter. You may recall that we had a couple of assumptions that we made in **Genesis 26:1**, If Abraham has died, then Isaac is at least 75 years old (Isaac is born when Abraham is 100; if Abraham dies at age 175, then Isaac is 75 at the time of Abraham's death). That makes Esau and Jacob at least 15 years old—which is old enough to where if, Isaac and Rebekah presented themselves as brother and sister, that they would play along with it. That would mean that all of this takes place at least 75 years later than the time when Abraham came into the land.

Making this assumption, which appears to be in keeping with the text of v. 3, returned Genesis 25 and 26 back to chronological order. The estimations that these events in Gerar take place 70–90 years after Abraham in Gerar allow everything to make sense and to remain in chronological order.

So far, v. 3 reads: **I have multiplied your seed as the stars of the heavens...** Again, we have the phrase that God would bless the descendants of Abraham and Isaac as the stars in the heavens. We would expect God to know the number of stars that there are but it is interesting that Isaac probably understood that God was referring to millions upon millions of descendants. Before this phrase was in conjunction with the sand of the sea and here it stands alone.

Furthermore, other nations would receive blessing due to their interaction with the seed of Isaac. This has two meanings: the primary one is that the *seed* of Isaac is Jesus Christ, through Whom all peoples of the earth will be blessed. Secondly, the Jews will bear witness of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of the Universe, and the peoples of the earth will look to them for spiritual guidance.

**Application:** This has become standard in this world. Each generation passes along the spiritual blessings and the spiritual responsibility to the next generation. Here in the United States, we have been given a ton of wonderful blessings from God; but there is the possibility that the generations in the wings lack both the number of believers and the number of mature believers to move the United States forward. Given all of the things which our nation faces today, there is every indication that we may suffer great personal and national disasters.

**Application:** When our schools were founded, they were primarily designed to teach people the Bible and to raise up missionaries. Over a long period of time, the state has taken over most of these institutions; or secular forces have taken them over, and have removed as much of the Bible and Christian thought out of the schools as is humanly possible. As a result, we have a very limited number of people growing spiritually in this land; and that suggests great possible national devastation.

**Application:** Bear in mind, the United States, as long as there are a significant number of believers in the land, it will be the focal point of a spiritual battle. The forces of Satan will look to remove, distort, and/or ridicule the gospel of Jesus Christ. The very amendment intended to be use to preserve religious liberty has been used to limit where Christianity can be found.

**Application:** In the previous chapter, I suggested that we are looking at a great war with Islam as this earth has never seen before. War is one of the few things which takes people who are lackadaisical about their spiritual lives and causes them to make some quick and difficult decisions about their relationship to God. As the saying goes, there are no atheists in foxholes. This could change our entire nation, particularly if we are attacked as a people rather than our military being attacked. So that there is no misunderstanding, I write this in the year 2013 and I do not have the gift of prophecy; this is essentially reading the tea leaves of current events, as it were. Our spiritual condition is easy to ascertain; and the dangers that our nation faces is easy to ascertain. So, I have done nothing more than extrapolate from those things the scenario I have suggested. Continued economic problems seem quite likely, and a failure of government is also imminent, given how much our government overspends each and every year (more than a trillion dollars).

**I have multiplied your seed as the stars of the heavens...** There are 3 different but related entities to which *seed* here can refer: many times, it refers to Jesus Christ, the Seed of Abraham. However, it can also refer to the Jewish race, which has proceeded from the line of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Also, *seed* can refer to Abraham's spiritual seed—those who have believed in Jesus Christ, the Revealed Lord, the God Who Is. To Isaac, this

promise is about those who are born to Jacob; but we are to understand this as all those who have believed in Jesus Christ. We find this promise repeated throughout God's relationship with Abraham: Genesis 13:16 15:5, 18 17:4–8 18:18 22:17

*Stars* can refer to the stars of heaven; but they can also refer to the angels which God created, a third of which followed Satan.

Kelly has an interesting theory, which I am still contemplating: "*Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you; for unto you and unto your seed I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham your father. And I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of heaven.*" Not a word about the sand of the sea. He is as ever exclusively connected with what is heavenly as far as the figure goes. In the case of Abraham appears the double figure: the children were to be as the stars of the sky, but also as the sands of the sea. Isaac has the peculiar place. Abraham takes in both; as we know, he is connected with that which is heavenly, but also with what is earthly. For Isaac we find the heavenly places, a relationship past resurrection as far as this could be set forth in type.<sup>51</sup> I am still pondering this idea; and not below, in v. 4b, we do have Isaac's seed being given *all these lands*.

Genesis 26:4b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâthan (נתן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
zera <sup>c</sup> (זרע) [pronounced <i>ZEH-rahg</i> ]	<i>a seed, a sowing; an offspring, progeny, descendant; posterity</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2233 BDB #282
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'ârâtsôwth (אֲרָצוֹת) [pronounced <i>uh-raw-TSOHTH</i> ]	<i>lands, countries</i>	feminine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75
'êl (אֵלֵּי) [pronounced <i>ale</i> ]	<i>these, those</i>	pronoun/demonstrative plural adjective (for masculine and feminine nouns)	Strong's #411 BDB #41

**Translation:** ...and I have given to your seed all these lands;...

<sup>51</sup> From <http://www.stempublishing.com/authors/kelly/1Oldtest/genesis.html> accessed August 1, 2015 (slightly edited).

There seems to be a double-meaning to be taken from this. God has given to the descendants of Israel all of the lands around Isaac; and God has also given all of these lands to Jesus Christ, Isaac's Promised Seed.

Keil and Delitzsch: *This plural refers to all the lands or territories of the different Canaanitish tribes, mentioned in Genesis 15:19–21, like the different divisions of the kingdom of Israel or Judah in 1Chronicles 13:2; 2Chronicles 11:23.*<sup>52</sup>

This is also known as the Palestinian Covenant. It is the land which God gives to the seed of Abraham.

### The Palestinian Covenant (from Wenstrom)

The "Palestinian" covenant was a confirmation and enlargement of the original "Abrahamic" covenant and amplified the land features of the "Abrahamic" covenant (Gen. 13:14-15; 15:18).

The "Palestinian" covenant was confirmed to Isaac (Gen. 26:3-4) and Jacob (Gen. 35:12), reiterated to Moses (Ex. 6:2-8) who described the geographical boundaries of the land in Numbers 34:1-12 and who prophesied the fulfillment of this covenant during the millennium in Deuteronomy 30:1-9.

The land grant under the "Palestinian" covenant: (1) Most of the land in Turkey (2) Most of East Africa (3) Saudi Arabia (4) Yemen (5) Oman and Red Sea (6) Syria (7) Iraq (8) Jordan.

The land grant has boundaries on the Mediterranean, on Aegean Sea, on Euphrates River and the Nile River.

The Lord promises that this land would be given to Abraham and Isaac's descendants and this promise was fulfilled to a certain extent by Israel under Joshua (Josh. 21:43-45; cf. 13:1-7) and David and Solomon (1Kings 4:20-25 Neh. 9:8).

The "Palestinian" covenant will have its literal and ultimate fulfillment during the millennial reign of Christ (Isaiah 11:11-12 Jer. 31-37 Ezek. 34:11-16 Hosea 1:10-11 Joel 3:17-21 Amos 9:11-15 Micah 4:6-7 Zeph. 3:14-20 Zech. 8:4-8).

From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (pp. 393–394); accessed July 24, 2015.

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At first, the land given to the Jews is the land of Canaan, also called the Land of Promise. This area is naturally bound by the Mediterranean Sea to the west, the Jordan River and the Dead Sea to the east; the Negev in the south, and the Lebanon Mountains to the north. Israel as a nation will begin with 2 million people, so they cannot occupy and defend the complete land given them by God.

One question which has rattled around in my brain for awhile is, God often speaks of Canaan, but He does not really say much about the land east of the Jordan (trans-Jordan). But, the first land that Israel will possess is Transjordan. God needed to suddenly throw Israel into battle, in order for them to appreciate His promises and protection. So, before officially entering into the land (as per the book of Joshua), the Jews suddenly found themselves at war with the people of Transjordan (Num. 21), whom they defeated, as was God's plan. So important were these victories that they will be mentioned at least 10 times in subsequent passages of Scripture). This gave them the confidence (in God) to move forward and to go into the land—even without Moses.

**Application:** In this life, as believers in Jesus Christ, we find that we cannot endure great testing right from the beginning. We need to grow spiritually. As R. B. Thieme, Jr. used to say, we first face the charge of the mosquito; and when we become confident that we can fend off the mosquito; then God allows us to face the charge of the elephant.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 26:1–5.

<sup>53</sup> Not a direct quote; but this is something that Bob said on many occasions.

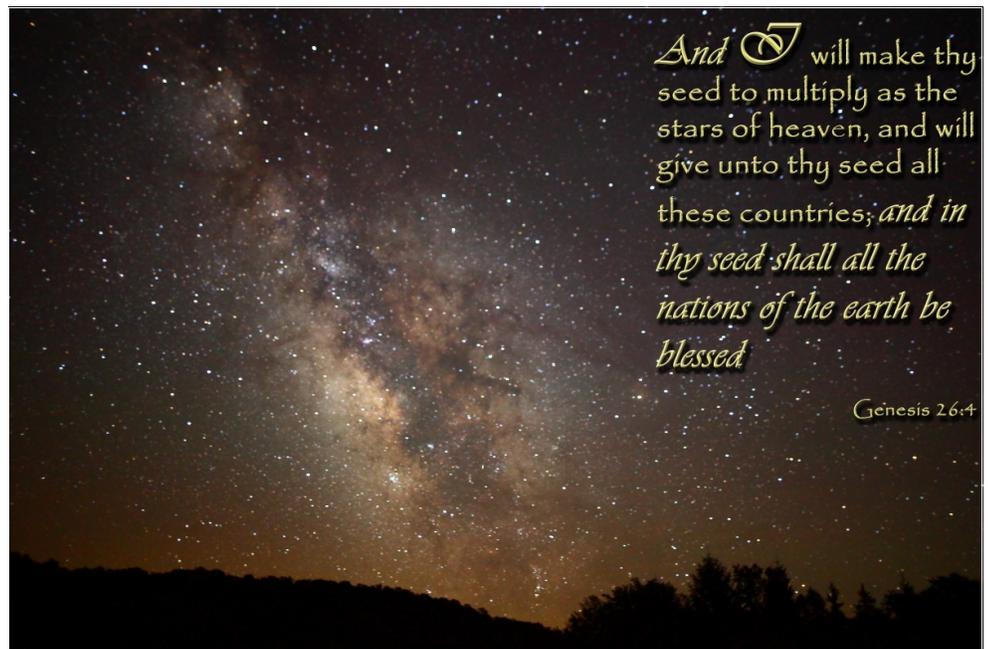
Genesis 26:4c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and; even; in particular, namely; when, since, seeing, though; so, then, therefore; or, but yet; who, which; or; that, in that; with; also, in addition to, at the same time</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bârak <sup>e</sup> (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced <i>baw-RAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to bless oneself, to invoke happiness for ourselves</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Hithpael perfect	Strong's #1288 BDB #138
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
zera' (עֲרָא) [pronounced <i>ZEH-rahg'</i> ]	<i>a seed, a sowing; an offspring, progeny, descendant; posterity</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2233 BDB #282
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
gôwyîm (גּוֹיִם) [pronounced <i>goh-YIHM</i> ]	<i>Gentiles, [Gentile] nations, people, peoples, nations</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1471 BDB #156
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i> ]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

**Translation:** ...furthermore [lit., and], all nations of the earth of blessed [themselves] by your seed.

God promises Abraham, "I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you." This tells us that all nations of the earth will be blessed because of the descendants of Isaac, as well as from the Promised Seed of Isaac.

**Genesis 26:4 (graphic);** taken from [Forest Wander.com](http://ForestWander.com); accessed August 3, 2015.

J. Vernon McGee:  
*God says to Isaac,  
"Don't leave this land,  
don't go down to  
Egypt. I want to  
confirm with you the  
covenant which I  
made with Abraham."*



And He repeats the threefold promise: (1) the land - "I will give unto your seed all these countries"; (2) the nation - "I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of heaven"; (3) the blessing - "and in your seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed."<sup>54</sup>

God is reiterating His promises made originally to Abraham. The Pulpit Commentary: *And I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, (Genesis 15:1–6) and will give unto your seed all these countries (i.e. the territories occupied by the Canaanitish tribes); and in your seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed (cf. Genesis 12:3 Genesis 22:18).*<sup>55</sup>

Here are a few passages which deal with the *Seed of Abraham*.

### The Seed of Abraham

1. God first promises to make Abraham's name (reputation) great; and God tells him that he would be a blessing to others. Genesis 12:1–3
2. However, later God spoke to Abraham again. Gen 12:7 *And Jehovah appeared to Abram and said, To your seed I will give this land. And there he built an altar unto Jehovah, who appeared to him.* (VW) This seed could be understood in two ways: the descendants of Abraham and the Lord Jesus Christ, a descendant of Abraham.
3. There are times when God is clearly speaking of Abraham's descendants: Gen. 13:14–16 *And after Lot had separated from him, Jehovah said to Abram: Lift up your eyes now and look from the place where you are, northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your seed in perpetuity. And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could count the dust of the earth, then your seed also could be numbered.* See also Genesis 15:5 17:7–8.
4. After Abraham offers up his son, in Genesis 22, God speaks of Abraham's seed, but in two different ways.
  - 1) God said to Abraham: "In blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore." (Genesis 22:17a; VW, quotations added) Do you understand that *seed* here refers to Abraham's descendants, who would be multiplied.
  - 2) But God then tells Abraham: "And your Seed shall possess the gate of His enemies. And in your Seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." (Genesis 22:17b–18; VW, quotations added). Notice how the Voice of the Wilderness capitalizes *Seed* here. This is because this refers to the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. David will speak of the Messiah (= *Seed of Abraham*) in Psalm 72:17–19: *His name is eternal; His name shall continue and increase before the sun; and men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed. Blessed is Jehovah God, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. And blessed is His glorious name forever; let all the earth be filled with His glory! Amen and Amen.* (VW)
6. Peter, speaking to the Jews, told them: "You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, And in your Seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (VW, quotations added) This verse appears to allow for both interpretations—the descendants of Abraham would be a blessing to all the families of the earth; and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Seed of Abraham, is a blessing to all peoples of the earth.
7. Paul also begins his reasoning that all people would be blessed in Abraham: *And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel before to Abraham, saying, In you all the nations shall be blessed.* (Galatians 3:8; VW)
8. However, the primary blessing to mankind is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Seed of Abraham: *Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to your Seed, who is Christ.* (Galatians 3:16; VW)

<sup>54</sup> From [https://archive.org/stream/01\\_Genesis/01-GENESIS\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt) (Genesis 26); accessed July 29, 2015 (slightly edited).

<sup>55</sup> *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, from e-sword, Genesis 6:4 (slightly edited).

Abraham's seed can be understood to refer (1) to the Jews, who are genetically related to Abraham; (2) to those who have believed in Jesus Christ (his spiritual seed); and (3) to Jesus Christ.

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V. 4 reads: [I have multiplied your seed as the stars of the heavens and I have given to your seed all these lands; furthermore \[lit., and\], all nations of the earth of blessed \[themselves\] by your seed.](#)

### Blessings from the Seed of Abraham

1. The primary blessing is Jesus Christ. He is known as the *Seed of Abraham*. All who believe in Jesus Christ are saved, and there is no greater blessing than salvation, which is an everlasting relationship with God.
2. There is **blessing by association**, which continues throughout time. When we are associated with the seed of Abraham, we are blessed. The example in this chapter, the people of Gerar are blessed in their association with Isaac (Abraham's seed). Unfortunately, many of them will not appreciate the blessings they receive, because their eyes are on Isaac. Now, even though this is not stated in the text, let me suggest to you that most of the people of Gerar are blessed more than they had ever been blessed before. They were seeing increases in their crops and cattle; but this did not matter to them, because Isaac's blessings were even greater.
3. Throughout history, people associated with Jews and associated with believers (both groups are the *seed of Abraham*) will be blessed by this association.
4. We are blessed in time because the Jews have preserved the Word of God (one of the mandates given to that people). Personally, I am blessed daily by the Scriptures which they have preserved.

Recall God's first promise to Abraham: ["And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."](#) (Gen 12:2-3; ESV)

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Genesis 26:4 [I have multiplied your seed as the stars of the heavens and I have given to your seed all these lands; furthermore \[lit., and\], all nations of the earth of blessed \[themselves\] by your seed.](#) (Kukis mostly literal translation)

V. 4 reads: [I have multiplied your seed as the stars of the heavens and I have given to your seed all these lands; furthermore \[lit., and\], all nations of the earth of blessed \[themselves\] by your seed.](#) Although this promise is repeated, this is the first time that God gives this promise directly to Isaac.

This verse better indicates why God told Isaac to remain there. Isaac was dwelling in the promised land; the land that God had given to Abraham and his descendants. Therefore, like Abraham, God wanted Isaac to observe and see the land that was to be his forever. God did not give him Egypt.

There would be a time for the Jews to dwell in Egypt, but now it was a time for God to give this Messianic line promises and for them to take a hold of these promises. When God promised to multiply the descendants of Abraham and Isaac, He said he would do so in the Hiphil perfect tense which is the causative stem and God looks upon this as a completed action. His reason for keeping Isaac in the land is that this is the land which God has given to Abraham and Isaac's descendants.

I love the reference here to the *stars of the heavens*, because, in the ancient world, human viewpoint would suggest that they knew of a few thousands stars at most. God making a promise that Abraham's descendants would number in the thousands is not that big of a deal. However, we have seen this put side-by-side promising that Abraham's descendants would be as the sand of the seas (and, according to many **estimations**, there are more stars in the heavens than there are grains of sand of the seashore and deserts).

We understand that both of these figures of speech refer to a huge number, but not necessarily a one-to-one correspondence. Abraham and Isaac understood this in the same way. This is known as hyperbole; and hyperbole is found, from time to time, in the Bible. When God promised them that Abraham's descendants would be like the stars in the sky, Abraham and Isaac both understood that this was a huge number.

So far, this is what we have studied: [Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar to Abimelech king of the Philistines. And the LORD appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father. I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed,...](#) (Genesis 26:1–4; ESV)

### Ron Snider on God's Promises to Isaac

1. While Isaac was still in Canaan, before he went to Gerar, God spoke to him and reiterated the contents of the covenant with Abraham.
2. The command was to stay in Canaan, and God promises personal and intimate relationship with Isaac, as well as temporal prosperity.
3. He is told that the land belongs to him and his descendants by Divine design.
4. This matter is settled for God and is not up for debate, revision or reversal.
5. The promise of innumerable descendants is given, focusing on the more distant descendants, likened to stars.
6. The term seed has to be evaluated each time it is used in order to determine which specific person, group, or people is in view.
7. The seed likened to the stars of the heavens refers to the spiritual descendants through faith in Christ, especially Church Age believers.
8. The next seed which is promised the real estate of Canaan refers to the physical descendants of Isaac, the Jews.
9. Both believing and unbelieving Jews have possessed the land, and the same will be true in the future.
10. You did not have to be a believing Jew to fall under the real estate clause of this covenant.
11. The final seed can be none other than the Messiah, the greater son of Isaac, who will be the source of blessing for the entire world.
12. People from every nation will bless themselves by establishing a relationship with the Son of God.
13. The concept of blessing themselves refers to their volitional choice to believe in Christ.
14. Isaac is told that all this will come to him through no activity on his part, but due to the application of Abraham in time.
15. Like believers in Christ all the work was done for us, we bring nothing to the plan of God, but simply prosper through grace.

Ron Snider, [Genesis 26](#), accessed July 26, 2015 (slightly edited).

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What is coming up is a fairly difficult passage which is going to require some explanation.

[Genesis 26:4–5](#) [And I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of the heavens, and will give to your seed all these lands. And in your Seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed, because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My ordinances, and My Laws."](#)

### Introductory Points on Genesis 26:5

1. The Mosaic Law has not been given yet. This will not come on the scene for another 500+ years.
2. There is nothing to indicate that we have a previously enumerated set of laws, statutes and commandments from God. That is, there might be a clear set of moral standards which most of the Jews

## Introductory Points on Genesis 26:5

understood prior to receiving the Law of Moses; but there is no indication that God has already laid out a system of laws to Abraham as He did for Moses. That would have been quite significant, and it is not found in the Bible. What we do have in the Bible is God delineating His promises to Abraham. Furthermore, Abraham appears to have recorded each and every meeting with God. How much sense would it have made for him to forget that meeting where God lays down a whole system of laws?

3. A system of laws is imperative for a society or for a nation. In most organizations, there are bylaws which the members are expected to adhere to.
4. Up to this point in time, there are several people spoken of favorably because of their behavior before God:
  - 1) **And Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he fathered Methuselah. And he fathered sons and daughters. And all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. And Enoch walked with God, and then he was not, for God took him.** (Genesis 5:22–24; MKJV) We are never given a specific set of behaviors or actions; but that Enoch was translated; he walked with God while on earth and just continued this walk into heaven. What Enoch did that was good and right is never specified; what he avoided that was sinful and wrong is never enumerated.
  - 2) All flesh on earth was corrupted, with the exception of Noah and his family (Genesis 6). Noah did all that God *commanded* him to do (Genesis 6:22 7:5, 9, 16, 23 Hebrews 11:7). Noah is also called righteous, which means that he has trusted the Revealed God (Genesis 15:6). God then establishes a covenant with Noah and gives him one law of retribution: a man guilty of murder must be executed (this consequence had not been given before). Genesis 9:6–13
  - 3) So we know some of the things which Noah did which were right (he obeyed God in building the ark). However, we know nothing specific about Noah's behavior prior to the building of the ark.
  - 4) In Noah's day, he was one of the few men who had not been corrupted by the fallen angels. See **Genesis 6** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).
  - 5) Many generations later, God began to give a series of commands to Abram. At first, his obedience was partial; and then he learned to fully obey what God told him to do.
  - 6) Given the information that we have about Noah, Enoch and Abraham, we may conclude that man, generally speaking, at this point in time, had the ability to recognize good and evil, right and wrong; and without having a specifically delineated list of commandments.
  - 7) Logically, knowing right from wrong is not a result of God laying out a clear set of laws to anyone, as this does not appear to have been done until the time of Moses.
  - 8) However, up to this point in time, men have a fairly clear and consistent set of moral standards, which are passed down from Noah to his sons, then from his sons to their sons. Furthermore, Noah's sons are still alive during the time of Abraham.
5. Now, if Abraham is to obey God's voice, and to keep His charge, His commandments His statutes and His laws, then there must be more going on here than mere obedience to what God says that has been recorded.
6. Romans 2:14–15 reads: **For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them...** (ESV) The point Paul is making is, gentiles did not receive the Law of Moses, and yet they do by nature what the law requires (that is, people have a concept of right and wrong in their souls). They are therefore responsible to God for breaking His laws as well. Furthermore, we have briefly studied several sets of laws which were in existence in various nations before God gave the Law to Moses.
7. During the time of Abraham, there were nations all around him where laws were being developed for organized and lawful societies. Man is not willy-nilly about this determination of laws. One society did not make laws prohibiting murder and stealing while another society said that these things are good and should be rewarded. These laws developed in a variety of societies were very similar in nature, *as if* God has written the laws upon their hearts.
8. Having standards and holding to these standards are two very different things. You have no doubt believed in Jesus Christ (otherwise, why would you be reading this?). But there was a time when you did

## Introductory Points on Genesis 26:5

not. Were you completely lawless at that time? You no doubt had ideas of right and wrong, and sometimes you kept to these ideas and sometimes you violated your own concepts of right and wrong (*everyone* has). I had a friend who had moved away from Christianity; and I tried to pin him down on having some fundamental norms that he believed in, and he finally agreed that he believed that we should treat all other men with dignity and respect. However, at the same time, he was carrying on an affair with a married woman, so his respect and dignity for all mankind obviously did not include her husband. My point being, no matter what our norms and standards are—even if they are very weak standards (such as, treating every person you know with dignity and respect), we still violate them. Our violations, however, do not mean that we are lawless. We have a law; we have standards. We just don't always keep to them.

9. It is when societies as a whole move away from such standards that there are problems. We have two early examples in the Bible: the antediluvian population and Sodom and Gomorrah. Those societies had become lawless.
10. In modern-day America, there are tremendous forces at work in our land to redefine the concepts of morality, hatred, tolerance; changing traditional values dramatically. I know people who believe that, if you think that traditional marriage is the right and proper thing, and if you believe that gay marriage is unnatural, you are intolerant and hateful. Good organizations like *Focus on the Family* are referred to as **Christian bigots, Extremists and a Borderline Hate Group**, and **pro-bullying** (really!).
11. However, back in the day, Abraham has a conscience and in that conscience were norms and standards which he learned as a young boy, and he stayed within those norms and standards. The Bible includes his failures along these lines as well.
12. Most of his norms and standards would be in line with God's norms and standards; and his adherence to these norms and standards was Abraham's keeping God's commandments, statutes and laws.
13. Furthermore, these norms and standards would be believed in and adhered to by many of the societies of that day, because the sons of Noah were still alive, as were their sons and their sons' sons. The fact that they were alive and respected and that they brought up their own children with a certain sense of morality, suggests that, throughout the world, at that time, there was a reasonably consistent standard of right and wrong. This did go awry in some distinct societies (witness Sodom and Gomorrah); but there were a lot of things which were clearly understood as right or wrong.
14. For the most part, societies tended to have fairly consistent morals and laws. 3 times, Abraham or Isaac will move to different societies, and in all of these societies, the institution of marriage is respected. Truthfulness is expected. In the final case, which we have not yet studied, it will become clear that the King of Gerar (a Philistine area) will even recognize that God blesses his land because of Isaac.
15. But, bear in mind, all of this that we are studying is taking place while these elders are dying out—and they are all dying out at once. The first four generations since the ark (Noah's sons and the next 3 generations) will all die out during the lives of Isaac and Jacob. So, even though the people spread out over the land, they would have ties with someone from those 4 generations which provided some moral consistency.
16. Interestingly enough, the 4 or 5 generations which followed them had already died out. The first 4 generations out of the ark, after Noah, died out before the birth of Isaac or Jacob. So, during their lives, all ties to those who exited the ark were broken.
17. A lot of this may help to explain the sort of ancestor worship which arose in the far east.
18. This also helps to explain why God is instituting a new program. We have a consistency of human morality defined because there are 4 generations of men from the ark all alive during the time of Abraham. However, they will all die out during the time of Isaac and Jacob. They, as the final human arbiters of morality and human righteousness, will all die at about the same time, so God will have to step in and establish a very specific set of laws, which we often call the Mosaic Law.

## Genesis 26:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
‘êqeb (עָקֵב) [pronounced AY-keh <b>b</b> ]	as a reward of, on account of, as a consequence of, because, because that; that	conjunction	Strong's #6118 BDB #784
’ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	that, which, when, who, whom	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, these mean <i>because (that), as a consequence of [the fact] that.</i>			
shâma‘ (שָׁמַעַ) [pronounced shaw-MAH <b>G</b> ]	to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
The BDB Qal meanings for shâma‘ are 1a1) to hear (perceive by ear); 1a2) to hear of or concerning; 1a3) to hear (have power to hear); 1a4) to hear with attention or interest, listen to; 1a5) to understand (language); 1a6) to hear (of judicial cases); 1a7) to listen, give heed; 1a7a) to consent, agree; 1a7b) to grant request; 1a8) to listen to, yield to; 1a9) to obey, be obedient.			
’Ab <sup>e</sup> râhâm (אֲבִרְחָם) [pronounced ahb <sup>ve</sup> -raw-HAWM]	father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
qôwl (קוֹל) [pronounced koh <b>l</b> ]	sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering	masculine singular noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #6963 BDB #876

**Translation:** [This is] because Abraham listened to My voice...

God tells Isaac why these promises are true. First off, Abraham heard and obeyed the voice of God. The verb *to listen* is the very common verb shâma‘ (שָׁמַעַ) [pronounced shaw-MAH**G**], which means, *to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of.* Strong's #8085 BDB #1033. There is both the concept of hearing someone and obeying them as well. We have followed Abraham throughout the Bible and have observed this.

Vv. 4–5a: I will continue to multiply your descendants as the stars in the heavens and will give all of these lands to your descendants; furthermore, all nations of the earth cause themselves to be blessed by means of your Descendant. This has been done in eternity past because your father Abraham listened to My voice... There is a famine in the land, Isaac is about to take his family to Egypt to get away from this famine, and God speaks to Isaac (apparently for the first time), telling him not to go to Egypt. There are blessing from God to come to Abraham and Isaac and to all the nations because of their Seed. These blessings were conferred up the world in eternity past because God was able to look down the corridors of time and see all that Abraham would do, as a result of Abraham's faithfulness to God. It all begins because Abraham listens (and obeys) God's voice.

The fact that Abraham heard God’s voice and obeyed Him is one of the most significant historic events in human history. There were many kings of many great countries during the life of Abraham, but who is the most renown individual from this time period? Abraham, a nomadic shepherd.

One of the greatest offerings made by any man is Abraham offering up his son Isaac to God. This offering illustrated for us God the Father offering up God the Son in order to pay for our sins.

### Various Commentators on, Abraham listening to the voice of God

Commentator	Commentary
<b>Albert Barnes</b>	[Abraham listened to the voice of God] in all the great moments of his life, especially in the last act of proceeding on the divine command to offer Isaac himself. Abraham, by the faith which flows from the new birth, was united with the Lord, his shield and exceeding great reward (Genesis 15:1) with God Almighty, who quickened and strengthened him to walk before him and be perfect (Genesis 17:1). The Lord his righteousness works in him, and his merit is reflected and reproduced in him (Genesis 22:16, 18). Hence, the Lord reminds Isaac of the oath which he had heard at least fifty years before confirming the promise, and of the declaration then made that this oath of confirmation was sworn because Abraham had obeyed the voice of God. <sup>56</sup>
<b>Jack Ballinger</b>	<i>The foundation of Isaac's blessings is not is own contributions/applications but rather is based on his father's positive volition as noted in: "because Abraham obeyed Me."..."Obeyed Me" is literally, "listened to My voice" or "heard my voice (shama to hear, followed by qol voice)." This refers to the function of GAP with respect to Abraham.</i> <sup>57</sup>
<b>David Guzik</b>	God says that He kept the covenant because of Abraham's obedience. Yet a close look at Abraham's life shows that his obedience wasn't complete or constant. <sup>58</sup>
<b>Matthew Henry</b>	Abraham's obedience is here celebrated, to his honour; for by it he obtained a good report both with God and men. <sup>59</sup>

Abraham listened to the promises of God and acted upon them, even though they were way off in the future. He is our example in this way.

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### Genesis 26:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâmar (שמר) [pronounced shaw-MAR]	<i>to keep, to guard, to protect, to watch, to preserve</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8104 BDB #1036

<sup>56</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:2–5 (slightly edited).

<sup>57</sup> From <http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/Gen26.htm> accessed July 23, 2015.

<sup>58</sup> *David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; Genesis 26:1–5.

<sup>59</sup> Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:1–5.

## Genesis 26:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
mish <sup>e</sup> mereth (מִשְׁמֶרֶת) [pronounced mish <sup>e</sup> - MEH-reth]	<i>custody, guard, watch; a responsibility; an obligation; a service; a keeping; an observance; that which is observed [a rite, a law]</i>	feminine singular noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #4931 BDB #1038
The complete meanings as given by BDB: <i>guard, charge, function, obligation, service, watch; guard, watch, house of detention or confinement; keeping, preserving; charge, injunction; office, function (ceremonial)</i> . Some more updated translations might be: <i>supervision, direction, management, delegated authority and commission, holy orders, appointment, conferment, investiture</i> . In the feminine, it can be a reference to that which is watched ( <i>a charge, a responsibility, a commission</i> ); in the masculine, it is a reference to those who are doing the watching (Genesis 40:3 41:10 Nehemiah 4:9).			
This is the first time this word occurs in the Bible.			
mits <sup>e</sup> vâh (מִצְוָה) [pronounced mits <sup>e</sup> -VAH]	<i>commandment, prohibition, precept, that which is forbidden, constraint, proscription, countermand</i>	feminine plural noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #4687 BDB #846
This is the first occurrence of this word in the Bible.			
chuqqâh (חֻקָּה) [pronounced khoo- KAWH]	<i>that which is established or defined; statute, ordinance, law</i>	feminine plural noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2708 BDB #349
This is the first occurrence of this word in Scripture.			
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
tôwrah (תּוֹרָה) [pronounced TOH-rah]	<i>instruction, doctrine; [human and divine] law, direction, regulations, protocol; custom; transliterated Torah</i>	feminine plural noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #8451 and #8452 BDB #435
This is the first occurrence of this word in Scripture.			
It is unclear whether there is some significance beyond being plural in number for the plural form.			

**Translation:** ...and he kept My charge, My commandments, My statues and My laws.”

This is an interesting statement to make—Abraham keeps His rites, His commandments, His statues and His laws. The Mosaic Law had not yet been given, and we do not know exactly what all of these things are which Abraham kept.

This is a very difficult verse (in my estimation), as these words are found used throughout Scripture, but primarily in the books of Moses *after* (or *while*) the Mosaic Law is given. Most of these words can be associated with various categories of the Mosaic Law. However, the difficulty is, what do these words mean to Isaac and to Abraham, given at a time when there is no Mosaic Law? To answer this, I may spend a great deal of time in a number of passages and drawing from the opinions of a great many commentators.

Genesis 26:5 [This is] because Abraham listened to My voice and he kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

First thing is to see how this is parallel to another Genesis passage, and to see how the writer of Hebrew interprets it.

The ESV; capitalized is used below.

**Parallel and Related Passages to Genesis 26:2–5**

Gen 22:15–18	Gen 26:2–5	Heb 6:13–18
<p>And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."</p>	<p>And the LORD appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father. I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."</p>	<p>For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise. For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.</p>

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At the end of this passage, we have somewhat of a problem.

Genesis 26:4–5 reads: I have multiplied your seed as the stars of the heavens and I have given to your seed all these lands; furthermore [lit., and], all nations of the earth of blessed [themselves] by your seed. [This is] because Abraham listened to My voice and he kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws." This is quite a remarkable verse located in the Bible and during a place in time that we would not expect.

**Questions about Genesis 26:4–5: What does it means for Abraham to keep God’s charge, commandments, statutes and laws**

1. What do these words mean? How should we understand My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws.
2. These words clearly have meaning after the Law of Moses is given; but what do they mean prior to the giving of the Mosaic Law?
3. How does this apply to Abraham? How did he keep Gods charge, God’s commandments, God’s statutes and God’s laws?
4. God says these things to Isaac; so, does this mean that Isaac understands what these words all mean? It seems logical that he would.
5. Since Abraham, his father is referenced, then these words would have meant something to him as well.

I am going to endeavor to answer these questions; I don't know what kind of luck I will have. I have struggled with this passage for several years now.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**2Kings 17:37 graphic** from [Biblepic.com](http://Biblepic.com), accessed April 23, 2014. This is a passage from 2Kings which focuses on these words and how they relate to the Law of Moses.

Verses in the Bible are not thrown it at random. We have 4 words here, at least 3 of which are generally associated with the Law of Moses; and they all show up, all of a sudden, out of nowhere, in this one verse in Genesis. Only one of these words shows up again in Genesis (in the next verse); which word also occurs once in Job. Apart from that, none of these words are found prior to the giving of the Mosaic Law. Let's look at the words which are found here:

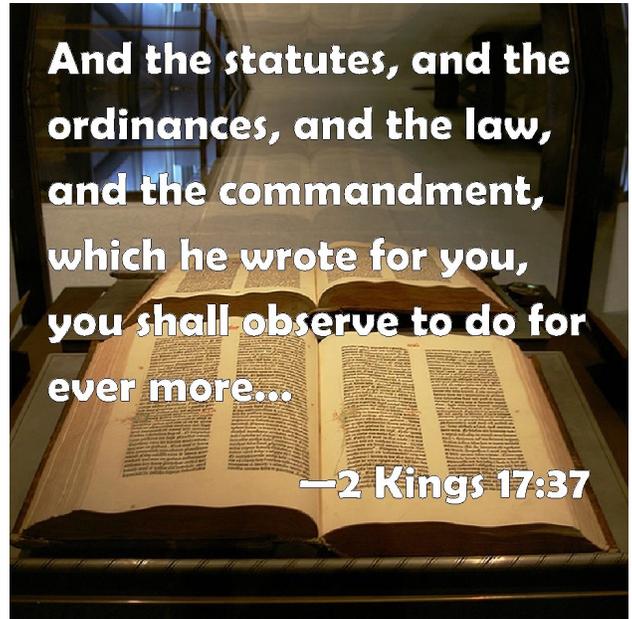
God blessing Abraham went hand-in-hand with Abraham's spiritual growth. When God originally made His promises to Abraham, when he was still in Ur of the Chaldees, you may recall that Abraham did not completely and fully follow God's commands. He did not go as far west as he was supposed to, and he was supposed to separate from his family, and he would not do that either. God still made promises to Abraham and God still intended to keep those promises.

When we believe in Jesus Christ, we receive salvation forever on the basis of grace alone (Ephesians 2:8–9 Titus 3:5). However, as we continue in life, we either grow spiritually or we don't; which means that God blesses us or He does not. We do receive some blessings in life simply from having believed in Him; but there are also blessings which are commensurate with spiritual growth. This was illustrated with Abraham, who became a very wealthy man.<sup>60</sup> But this is even illustrated more by his fellowship with God, which increased around the time that Isaac was conceived, and included a meal with our Lord.

One possible explanation is, this verse suggests that we only have a small fraction of God's speaking to Abraham. These are the exact phrases which are used in conjunction with the Mosaic Law, still to come, indicating that there was a set of laws and ordinances, certainly not as thorough as the Mosaic Law, which Abraham was under. I have placed the *and*'s where they belong, which means that we are dealing with Abraham obeying God's voice and then this is enumerated by the things which Abraham *kept*.

*Kept* is the Hebrew word *shâmar* (שָׁמַר) [pronounced *shaw-MAR*] and it originally meant to hedge about, as with thorns, in order to guard or protect an area. It means *to keep, to watch, to guard, to preserve*. The imperfect tense is for continuous action; Abraham continued to keep God's charge, commandments, statutes and ordinances. This word is found hundreds of times throughout the Old Testament and it is generally translated *keep, to observe*. Strong's #8104 BDB #1036.

What Abraham *kept* follows: *mish<sup>e</sup>mereth* (מִשְׁמֶרֶת) [pronounced *mish<sup>e</sup>-MEH-reth*] is a *watch, a sentry post, the act of guarding*. Here, someone has been entrusted with a responsibility and they have protected and guarded that responsibility or that sentry post. It is often used in conjunction with the tabernacle (Num. 3:28 18:4, 5 31:30, 47 etc.) and in conjunction with the ark of the covenant (Num. 3:31) or of Israel (Num. 3:38 1Chronicles 23:32). So God gave a responsibility to Abraham; He stationed him at a sentry post and Abraham guarded and kept watch



<sup>60</sup> This does not mean that they only blessing from God is material wealth.

over that responsibility. Strong's #4931 BDB #1038. I would guess what Abraham is guarding is the Word of God, which was handed down from generation to generation.

Mits<sup>e</sup>vâh (מִצְוָה) [pronounced *mits<sup>e</sup>-VAH*] is a *commandment* or a *mandate given by God or man*. It is almost always translated by the English word *commandments*. Therefore, God gave Abraham some commandments, some mandates which must be obeyed and Abraham did. Strong's #4687 BDB #846.

Chuqqâh (חֻקָּה) [pronounced *khoo-KAWH*] is a *statute, it is something prescribed* and it is most commonly associated with rituals, symbolic rites, sacrifices and feasts (see Exodus 12:14 13:10 27:21 28:23 Leviticus 3:17 etc.). We have seen Abraham in several instances erect an altar and offer a sacrifice upon that altar. This is an example of him guarding or keeping God's ordinances. Strong's #2708 BDB #349.

Almost all of us are familiar with the word *tôwrah* (טוֹרָה or טֹרָה) [pronounced *TOH-rah*]; and it means *direction, instruction, law*. This word is almost invariably translated *law* and, in Leviticus, it is associated with a detailed prescription for burnt offerings, as in Leviticus 6:9, 14, 25 7:1, 7, 11 etc.). This is the only place where this word is found in Genesis; we do not see it again until Exodus 12:49 and 13:9. It seems to imply the idea of *written, transcribed or transmitted information*. However, I do not see it here as something which was necessarily written down beyond what we find in Genesis. There was likely an oral tradition of morality and animal sacrifice which was more more detailed than what was recorded and and much less detailed than the Mosaic Law. Strong's #8451 and #8452 BDB #435.

In fact, this phrase is one that we would associate with the Mosaic Law. However, there is no manuscript evidence or indication that this may be an insertion insofar as I am aware of. This would imply, a reasonably so, that Abraham had a set of laws, precepts, ordinances, sacrifices, etc. which God had taught him over the years. These were certainly far less detailed than what we find in the Mosaic law, and very likely not even written down but this would make more sense than to expect that Abraham, by accident, just happened to follow many of God's laws and precepts. Since so little of his life is actually recorded, we only have a taste of this in his many stops to sacrifice to God.

We must recall where we are. We are a dozen or so generations out from the flood. Those who were in the ark have now passed away, but Noah taught his sons for 120 years and they have passed this information on as they learned it from their father Noah. To discern man's understanding of theological precepts, we need only look to the book of Job. What we have seen so far in Genesis is limited insofar as theology goes, although we have seen the seed for almost every major doctrine of Scripture planted up to this point in time in the book of Genesis. However, it is my contention that the concepts of the book of Job existed at this time; that is, at least, the ideas and understanding of matters theological as presented in Job were understood by the world's populace at this time. The reason why it is likely that the concepts of book of Job is around at this time is that we see no complex system of sacrifice; there is no mention of Israel or any of the patriarchs; and there is no mention of the Law in the book of Job. Job himself probably lived somewhere between the time of Jacob to the time of the Exodus. The point that I am making is that if Job and his friends understood that much theology, then it is likely that the Patriarchs had an equivalent understanding of God.

Genesis 26:4–5 I have multiplied your seed as the stars of the heavens and I have given to your seed all these lands; furthermore [lit., *and*], all nations of the earth of blessed [themselves] by your seed. [This is] because Abraham listened to My voice and he kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:4–5 I will continue to multiply your descendants as the stars in the heavens and will give all of these lands to your descendants; furthermore, all nations of the earth cause themselves to be blessed by means of your Descendant. This has been done in eternity past because your father Abraham listened to My voice and kept My ritual observations, My commands, My statutes and My laws." (Kukis paraphrase)

**Genesis 26:4–5** And I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of the heavens, and will give to your seed all these lands. And in your Seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed, because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My Laws.”

This is a fascinating passage, as God would give to Moses a plethora of laws and regulations 500+ years hence—not Abraham. Abraham certainly followed God’s instructions. When God told him to go west; when God told him to walk through the land; when God told him to offer up his son, Abraham obeyed God (tentatively and incompletely at first; but completely later on). So, in this way, Abraham obeyed God’s voice and kept His charge.

God, in speaking to Isaac, said: “I have multiplied your seed as the stars of the heavens and I have given to your seed all these lands; furthermore [lit., and], all nations of the earth of blessed [themselves] by your seed. [This is] because Abraham listened to My voice and he kept My charge, My commandments, My statues and My laws.” Therefore, even though we are reading most of these specific words for the very first time in the Bible, they have to mean something to Isaac and they have to have meant something to Abraham. There has to be more here than “Abraham listened to what I said, and so, He did what I told him to do.”

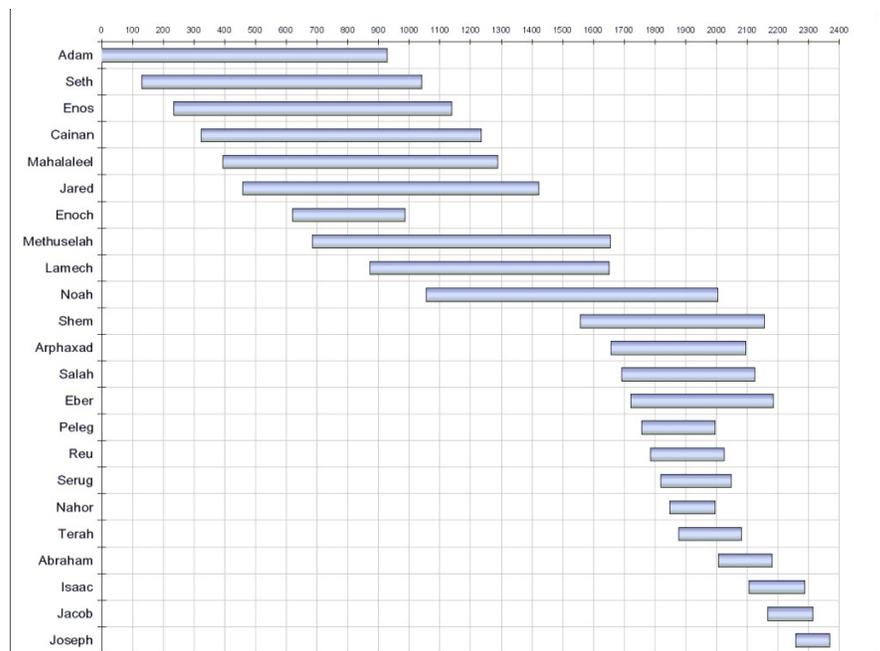
The applicable verb here is *shâmar* (שָׁמַר) [pronounced *shaw-MAR*], which means, *to keep, to guard, to protect, to watch, to preserve*. Strong's #8104 BDB #1036. Let me suggest that Abraham did more than *keep* these things of God—Abraham guarded them, he watched over them and he preserved them. Let me suggest to you that there were moral laws in place, not necessarily given in Scripture; but some of which can be unearthed both in Genesis and in the book of Job, as these men did have an understanding of God’s standards in the world. These are standards of right and wrong which we pass along to our children.

Remember that Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and this could be translated the Tree of the Knowledge of Right and Wrong. Apart from eating the fruit of this tree, there was nothing which Adam or the woman could do that was wrong. However, after eating from it, then there were a myriad of things which they thought of to do that were wrong, as did their sons and their sons’ sons.

In the time of Abraham, there was a uniqueness to life: that, for a time, nearly every person who had been born since the Great Flood was still alive. Even though God had caused man to split up, while Abraham was alive, his progenitors Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, and Terah were all alive as well, and, almost all at once, one set of generations died out; and before Jacob dies, all the patriarchs will be gone. But most importantly, Shem (the son of Noah) and his son, grandson, and great grandson were all still alive, all dying out about the same time as Abraham does.

**Chart of the Ages of the Patriarchs** comes from [ChurchAges.com](http://ChurchAges.com), accessed February 3, 2013. You will note that from Shem on down, all of Abraham’s ancestors are alive when Abraham is alive. The first four generations out from the ark do not die out until after Isaac is born.

Also, during the life of Abraham and before, many kingdoms had been established, and there were laws established in those kingdoms. In fact, it appeared as though there was an attempt in these kingdoms of codify the concept of right and wrong in each kingdom. You may recall that we



acknowledged ancient law codes back in **Genesis 17** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Where did these codes come from? They have many similar concepts. Let me suggest that God told Noah more than simply, [Whoever sheds man's blood, his blood will be shed by man, for God made man in His image](#) (Genesis 9:6; HCSB). And let me suggest that there is more in the souls concerning right and wrong of mankind during this time period, in part because even Shem is still alive (and his brothers), who lived prior to the flood and during the flood. So he would have had a very well-defined sense of right and wrong which he no doubt passed down to his sons and grandsons; and you will note that those in the line of Abraham—Arphaxad, Salah and Eber—are all still alive. All of them would have the moral sensibilities of their forefather, Shem, and this would give a solid foundation to human morality in that time period; as well as a solid foundation in the correct worship of the Creator God.

This would suggest that the first four generations from the ark of the 3 lines of the human race, because they are all still alive, that their influence being made upon their many ancestors. However, they will die out—almost all at once—and there will be a loss of consistency when it comes to morality in the human race. But that will not take place until the time of Jacob.

If there is any question as to what is right and what is wrong, anyone could appeal right back all the way through 9 sets of ancestors, to those who were on the ark. Having all of these men alive at the same time made the concepts of right and wrong reasonably consistent.

I should also point out that, in the Mosaic Law, there are consequences clearly outlined, for those who break the criminal laws which are listed. This is given to Israel and not to Abraham because Israel was a nation, and Abraham was the head of a compound of a few hundred people. The state is to mete out punishment for criminal behavior. This is not something which is to be decided by a group of individuals who are mad about what someone has done. The Bible does not condone vigilante behavior.

Furthermore, human behavior in small groups and small villages is different than human behavior in larger groups and in cities. In small towns, there is often very little by way of violent crime. In large cities, violent crime can envelop such a city. So, when Israel becomes a nation, have a more complex set of laws will be more appropriate.

Therefore, when God assembled a nation to represent Him, He then gave that nation laws, laws which are appropriately enforced by a national entity. Those laws have legal consequences. Those laws are also appropriate to the time and place and culture of that day. These laws are appropriate to a national entity, but not to a tribal compound (as Abraham or Isaac presides over). However, many of the concepts of right and wrong were understood by the people to whom these laws were given. In other words, when God told the people of Israel, ["Do not steal"](#) or ["Do not murder;"](#) this was not brand new information which took everyone by surprise. No one said, "You don't want us to steal? When did that happen?" Everyone has an internal concept of morality.

I recall stealing some toys from my best friend when I was 5 or 6. I knew it was wrong and I hid the toys that I stole because I knew it was wrong. This was, in fact, one of the first things which I did that I knew was unquestionably wrong, and it is why this incident has stayed with me, nearly 60 years later. I have no idea if anyone told me the importance of the concept *do not steal*; but I fully understood that concept when I stole from Eric. I did not need anyone to tell me that after the fact about how wrong I was.

Furthermore, during the time of Abraham, there were external social controls as well, concerning that which is right and wrong. Nearly all of the ancestors are alive, going back to the ark. This provides a consistency of morality.

The United States is an excellent example of a changing morality. When I was younger, there was no question about homosexual acts being wrong; and no community would have tolerated an overt homosexual as a teacher of children. Today, homosexuality is accepted (and those who do not accept it are written off as bigoted and hateful); and there is a lot more out-of-wedlock sexual behavior occurring, between a variety of genders. And, because of homosexual marriage, it seems like the most fundamental right to liberals and the gay community is the one of getting a cake baked for a homosexual wedding.

Essentially, we have made up our own morality, which is not anchored to anything except to the lusts of a particular political constituency. In the time of Abraham, this was much more difficult to do. There was a consistency which spanned many generations because many of these generations were all alive at the same time.

And this is the oddest thing that, in a nation of 70–80% who believe in God (and probably 50–70% of our population is Christian) how is it possible for a majority of people (according to the polls) to favor gay marriage? That indicates that a huge number of churches are simply not teaching the Word of God. People are out there making up their own morality, being confused the cosmic thinking.

Anyway, even though God will, 500 years hence, give the children of Abraham a set of laws, none of these laws are going to be a surprise to them. They may have disobeyed these laws in the past, but their conscience also bore witness against their own actions. They understood, for instance, the sanctity of marriage; and *do not commit adultery* was not some idea out of the blue. In fact, these times when Abraham and Isaac have moved into another culture, it is clear that the prohibition of adultery is fully understood by these other cultures.

Therefore, whether there is a set of laws designed for a particular area or not, it is clear that there is some fundamental agreement on what is right and what is wrong among the peoples of Canaan, Aram and Egypt (quite obviously, there were some areas, like Sodom, where immorality was rampant).

This might be helpful if you see how other commentators have dealt with these words as applied to Abraham.

### Commentators on, My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws

Commentator	Commentary
<b>Albert Barnes</b>	Abraham...kept the charge of God, the special commission he had given him; his commandments, his express or occasional orders; his statutes, his stated prescriptions, graven on stone; his laws, the great doctrines of moral obligation. This is that unreserved obedience which flows from a living faith, and withstands the temptations of the flesh. <sup>61</sup>
<b>Jack Ballinger</b>	"Obeyed Me" is literally, "listened to My voice" or "heard my voice (shama to hear, followed by qol voice)." This refers to the function of GAP with respect to Abraham. Next in the listing is "kept by charge" or "kept my requirements (vb. shamar followed by mishmeret; next use is in connection with the requirement to observe Passover; Ex. 12:6)." "My commandments" (mitswah cognate of vb. tswah to command/order) stresses the authority aspect of the divine directives. "My statutes" (choq) emphasizes the parameters within a specific regulation. Number five is "My laws" emphasizing the legal aspect (torah). <sup>62</sup>
<b>Robert Dean</b>	The word for "obey" is the Hebrew word shamar, meaning to keep, to guard, to observe, or to exercise great care over something. The word for keeping or obeying is related to the word "charge." "Commandments" basically means mandates; "statutes" are the specific stipulations contained within God's mandates. We can speak of the mandates of Scripture: the prohibitions and the positive commands as the law of God in a generic sense. These are specific mandates that relate to His righteousness. The last word is the word "law." This isn't the Mosaic law, that hasn't been given yet, but it relates to any command of God. The word torah has the basic meaning of instruction, and has the idea of being on target. Torah has to with God's instruction on how to hit the bull's eye. When you sin you aren't anywhere near the target. There's no in between when it comes to the Scripture. <sup>63</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:2–5.

<sup>62</sup> From <http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/Gen26.htm> accessed July 23, 2015.

<sup>63</sup> From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen120.htm> accessed July 26, 2015.

## Commentators on, My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws

Commentator	Commentary
<b>Scott Grant</b>	<i>In Abraham, the Lord found an obedient covenant partner: He “kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes and my laws.” This terminology foreshadows the Mosaic Law (Deuteronomy 11:1). It appears that the Lord wrote his laws on Abraham’s heart long before he ever wrote them on stone and scroll. As such, Abraham was a precursor to the participants of the new covenant, who have God’s law written on their hearts (Hebrews 8:10).<sup>64</sup></i>
<b>Matthew Henry</b>	A great variety of words is here used to express the divine will, to which Abraham was obedient (my voice, my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws), which may intimate that Abraham’s obedience was universal; he obeyed the original laws of nature, the revealed laws of divine worship, particularly that of circumcision, and all the extraordinary precepts God gave him, as that of quitting his country, and that (which some think is more especially referred to) of the offering up of his son, which Isaac himself had reason enough to remember. <sup>65</sup>
<b>Keil and Delitzsch</b>	<i>“to take care of Jehovah’s care,” i.e., to observe Jehovah, His persons, and His will, Mishmereth, reverence, observance, care, is more closely defined by “commandments, statutes, laws,” to denote constant obedience to all the revelations and instructions of God.<sup>66</sup></i>
<b>Leopold</b>	<i>Abraham conscientiously did all that God asked, the various forms of divine commandments are enumerated; sometimes, of course, a divine word would fall under several of these categories. They are a “charge” or “observance” if they are to be observed mishmêreth from shamar, (“observe”). They are “commandments” (mitswôth) when regarded from the angle of having been divinely commanded. They are “statutes” (chuqqôth) when thought of as immutable, and “laws” (torôth) insofar as they involve divine instruction or teaching. Under these headings would come the “commandment” to leave home ( ch. 12), the “statute” of circumcision, the instruction to sacrifice Isaac, or to do any other particular thing such as (15:8) to sacrifice, or (13:17, 18) to walk through the land, as well as all other individual acts as they are implied in his attitude toward Yahweh, his faithful God. By the use of these terms Moses, who purposes to use them all very frequently in his later books, indicates that “laws, commandments, charges, and statutes” are nothing new but were involved already in patriarchal religion.<sup>67</sup></i>
<b>The Net Bible</b>	<b>My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.</b> The language of this verse is clearly interpretive, for Abraham did not have all these laws. The terms are legal designations for sections of the Mosaic law and presuppose the existence of the law. Some Rabbinic views actually conclude that Abraham had fulfilled the whole law before it was given (see m. Qiddushin 4:14). Some scholars argue that this story could only have been written after the law was given (C. Westermann, Genesis, 2:424-25). But the simplest explanation is that the narrator (traditionally taken to be Moses the Lawgiver) elaborated on the simple report of Abraham’s obedience by using terms with which the Israelites were familiar. In this way he depicts Abraham as the model of obedience to God’s commands, whose example Israel should follow. <sup>68</sup>

<sup>64</sup> From [http://www.pbc.org/system/message\\_files/99650/4866.pdf](http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99650/4866.pdf) accessed August 2, 2015.

<sup>65</sup> Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:1–5.

<sup>66</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 26:1–5.

<sup>67</sup> From <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/leupold/genesis.xxviii.html> accessed July 31, 2015.

<sup>68</sup> From <http://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen26.htm> accessed March 3, 2013.

## Commentators on, My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws

Commentator	Commentary
<b>The Pulpit Commentary</b>	Because that Abraham obeyed (literally, hearkened to) My voice (a general description of the patriarch's obedience, which the next clause further particularizes), and kept My charge, custodierit custodiam (Calvin); observed My observances (Kalisch); (the charge being that which is intended to be) kept My commandments, i.e. particular injunctions, specific enactments, express or occasional orders (cf. 2Chronicles 35:16) My statutes, or permanent ordinances, such as the Passover; literally, that which is graven on tables or monuments (compare Exodus 12:14) and My laws (which refer to the great doctrines of moral obligation). The three terms express the contents of the Divine observances which Abraham observed. <sup>69</sup>
<b>Ron Snider</b>	The three terms which follow each stress some aspect of the plan of God, with which Abraham complied. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commandments stress the specific things which Abraham was told, like leave Ur, and separate from your family.</li> <li>Statutes stress that which is fixed or definite and refers both to the laws of divine establishment, as well as the established rituals.</li> <li>Laws govern overt behavior and delineate that which is acceptable with God, how one goes about life, one's modus operandi.<sup>70</sup></li> </ol>
<b>William Wenstrom, Jr.</b>	<i>The Lord's statement that "Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws" summarizes Abraham's obedience and indicates that his obedience was comprehensive and thorough. "Charge" is the noun mishmereth (מִשְׁמֶרֶת) (mish-meh-reth), which describes duties or obligations impressed upon Abraham by the Lord. "Commandments" is the noun mitzvah (מִצְוָה) (mits-vaw), which refers to "specific orders or commandments" given to Abraham by the Lord such as when the Lord commanded Abraham to leave Ur and Haran (Genesis 12:1-3; Hebrews 11:8). "Statutes" is the noun chuqqah (חֻקָּה) (khook-kaw), which designates a "divine ordinance" such as circumcision (Genesis 17:9-14) or to sacrifice Isaac (Genesis 22:1-2). "Laws" is the noun torah (תּוֹרָה or הַרְטָה) (to-law), which signifies divine teachings or instructions.<sup>71</sup></i>

I will investigate this further; but this might be as much as you need to see.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

J. Vernon McGee: *At this point God had not yet given the Mosaic Law; Abraham was not under the Mosaic system. However, the important thing is that, when God told Abraham something, he believed God and acted upon it. He demonstrated his faith by action. We have too many folk today who complain of a lack of reality in their Christian lives. A lady came in to talk to me some time ago who said that she believed but that she just couldn't be sure and that she didn't feel anything. Such uncertainty! I didn't have to talk to her long to find out that there was no action in her life. She was just sitting in the corner, twiddling her thumbs, saying, "I believe," and then expecting some great something to take place. That just doesn't happen. When you believe God, you act upon His promises. If you would call me right now to tell me that there is a certain amount of money in a bank in downtown Los Angeles and that you have put it in there for me and I should go down to get it, do you think I would just sit right here the rest of the day? My friend, if you know me, you would know that by the time you hung up the telephone I would have my hat on my head and I'd be going down there. Faith*

<sup>69</sup> *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, from e-sword, Genesis 26:5 (slightly edited).

<sup>70</sup> Ron Snider, [Genesis 26](#), accessed July 26, 2015 (slightly edited).

<sup>71</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 395) accessed July 24, 2015.

*is what you act on. Faith is something that you step out on. Abraham believed God, and God counted it to him for righteousness. God is now telling Isaac that He wants him to be that same kind of man.<sup>72</sup>*

Genesis 26:4–5 “And I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of the heavens, and I will give to your seed all these lands. And in your Seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed, because Abraham obeyed My **voice** and he **kept** My **charge**, My **commandments**, My **ordinances**, and My **Laws**.”

**Preface:** The Bible has 4 different words which are very similar; and all of these words are found early on in the book of Genesis (although some of these words occur only in this particular verse). This is an attempt to draw some distinctions between these words.

When God is speaking to Isaac, and He says these words to him:

Genesis 26:4–5 “And I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of the heavens, and I will give to your seed all these lands. And in your Seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed, because Abraham obeyed My **voice** and he **kept** My **charge**, My **commandments**, My **ordinances**, and My **Laws**.”

This is a very odd place in the Bible to find these particular words. We generally associate them with the Mosaic Law. However, God will not give the Law to Moses for another 500 years, and yet here, we are told that Abraham obeyed God’s voice and kept God’s charge, as well as His commandments, statutes and laws. Which laws, commandments, and statutes are we talking about and what do these various terms mean?

First of all, Abraham has obeyed God’s voice. God told him to come to Canaan and he did (not completely the way God told him to, but that was many years ago). After that, when God told Abraham to do something, he did it. Abraham did not live a perfect life, but we are given a short bio of his nephew Lot to compare to.

The second verb found here is the Qal imperfect of *shâmar* (שמר) [pronounced *shaw-MAR*], which means *to keep, to guard, to protect, to watch, to preserve*. Strong’s #8104 BDB #1036. We more or less understand this in relationship with Moses and with the people of Israel—the Law of God was kept, guarded, protected, preserved and taught from generation to generation. We ought to understand roughly the same thing with Abraham, except that he did not pass this along to a nation as we think of one, but to his wife, his children and to the people who were slaves to him or who worked for him. We do not have, however, a list of specific laws and commandments which God gave to him and which Abraham preserved, other than the promises which God made to him.

Therefore, let’s first see what Abraham was actually responsible for, according to the Word of God:

*Ballinger: Vv. 2-5 represents the first reiteration of the covenant promises to Abraham's son.<sup>73</sup>*

I found it interesting that God did not sit down with Abraham at one point in time, give him all of the promises, and then let Abraham take over from there. There are several reasons for this: (1) doctrine is built upon doctrine; (2) repetition is important to the spiritual life; (3) God gave Abraham enough to apply, and then let Abraham apply it; and (4) God is not a deist. That is, God does not set everything in motion, and then walk away from it, letting us fend for ourselves with what He left us. God is intimately and regularly a part of Abraham’s life; therefore, we will expect God to contact Abraham regularly.

You will notice that God’s message to Abraham becomes more complex with time.

The reason that we are looking at these all at once is so that we can see just what things God told Abraham. What follows is every recorded word of God to Abraham.

<sup>72</sup> From [https://archive.org/stream/01\\_Genesis/01-GENESIS\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt) (Genesis 26); accessed July 29, 2015.

<sup>73</sup> From <http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/Gen26.htm> accessed July 23, 2015.

## God's Covenants with Abraham

### Scripture

### Commentary

Abraham is in Charan (or Haran), which is about 1700 miles northwest of Ur of the Chaldees. Ur is Abraham's likely birthplace, which is not far from the Persian Gulf. God is telling Abraham to move a few hundred miles to the southwest into the Land of Promise.

Now Yahweh said to Abram, "Get out of your country, and away from your relatives, and away from your father's house, to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation. I will bless you, and make your name great. You will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you. In you will all of the families of the earth be blessed." (Genesis 12:1–3).

God first tells Abram that he must move—that is a command. Then God promises that He will make a great nation from Abram and bless him and make him famous. Furthermore, Abram would be a blessing to others. Then God promises to bless those who bless Abram and curse those who curse him. Finally, God promises that *in Abram* all the families of the earth would be blessed (which is a promise of Messiah).

As we have studied, God first spoke these words to Abraham when he was in Ur of the Chaldees (Acts 7:2–3). Abraham half-obeyed God. He moved west, but he stopped at Charan; and he brought much of his family with him. Abraham was not quite up to complete obedience until his father, Terah, died in Charan (Genesis 11:32). It appears that God came to Abraham again, while he was in Charan, and spoke these words to him a second time (Genesis 12:1–3). Or, Abraham called these words to mind. Abraham then almost completely obeys God, except that he will take his nephew Lot with him.

Abraham enters into the Land of Promise.

Abram passed through the land to the site of Shechem, at the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. But the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "I will give this land to your offspring [= *seed*]." So he built an altar there to the LORD Who had appeared to him. From there he moved on to the hill country east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the LORD and worshiped Him (Genesis 12:6–8).

God first tells Abram that He will give his seed (Seed) the land in which he stands. Abram goes into Canaan and God tells him that this will be the land of his offspring.

These are all promises from God to Abram; and Abram has preserved them. He preserved them and taught them to his wife and eventually to his son Isaac. Apparently Rebekah, his wife, will be aware of these promises; and they both taught them to their sons, Jacob and Esau.

God waits for Abram to first separate from Lot, which he chooses to do from his own volition.

Yahweh said to Abram, after Lot was separated from him, "Now, lift up your eyes, and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, for all the land which you see, I will give to you, and to your offspring [= *seed*] forever. I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then your seed may also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it to you." (Genesis 13:14–17).

God then promises Abram a huge chunk of land, which would be as far as Abram could see in all directions. Furthermore, those who have been descended from Abram will be like the dust of the earth (i.e., an old and childless Abram would have millions of descendants). Therefore, God has expanded upon His promises from Genesis 12.

Then God tells Abram to wander throughout the land which He has given him—a *commandment* which Abraham obeyed (and which he preserved in the book of Genesis).

## God's Covenants with Abraham

Scripture	Commentary
<p>For the next passage, Abram has just enjoyed a tremendous military victory and he has met with the great High Priest, Melchizedek, Who is a <b>type</b> of Christ. There is a chance that Abram was given the Holy Scriptures at this point as well (the first 10–12 chapters of Genesis; and perhaps the book of Job). Or what Abraham had and what Melchizedek gave him made up together the first portion of Genesis and the entire book of Job.</p>	
<p>After these things [the rescue of Lot and the great military victory] the word of Yahweh came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Don't be afraid, Abram. I am your shield [and] your exceedingly great reward." (Genesis 15:1)</p>	<p>God explains to Abram what He is to him. God is Abram's shield, as was proven in the previous chapter when Abram and his men defeated a great army and literally changed world history in that battle. Furthermore, God is Abram's great reward.</p>
<p>Abram said, "Lord Yahweh, what will you give me, seeing I go childless, and he who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" Abram said, "Behold, to me you have given no seed: and, behold, one born in my house is my heir." (Genesis 15:2–3)</p>	<p>However, rather than show gratefulness, Abram starts out by complaining that he is childless and that his heir will be someone to whom he is not even related.</p>
<p>Behold, the word of Yahweh came to him, saying, "This man will not be your heir, but he who will come forth out of your own body will be your heir." Yahweh brought him outside, and said, "Now look toward the sky, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." (Genesis 15:4–5a)</p>	<p>God makes it clear that Abram's heir will come directly from him. Then God <i>repeats</i> His promise, that Abram will have billions of descendants (using stars this time as an illustration).</p>
<p>He said to Abram, "So will your seed be." He [had] believed in Yahweh; and He [God] imputed it to him [Abram] for righteousness. (Genesis 15:5b–6)</p>	<p>Abram's faith is counted to him as righteousness. Abram had believed in God back when he was in Ur. That was when God imputed righteousness to Abram. Here, God speaks, and Abram believes Him; that is righteousness imputed to Abram in time. You will note that, even in time, God does all the work, God makes all of the provisions, and Abram is allowed to take from that—and it is considered righteousness to Abram. Abram is the model for all believers in this.</p>
<p>He said to him, "I am Yahweh who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give you this land to inherit it." (Genesis 15:7)</p>	<p>God then <i>repeats</i> the promise that Abram would inherit all of the land upon which he stands.</p>
<p>He said, "Lord Yahweh, how will I know that I will inherit it?" He said to him, "Take me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon." (Genesis 15:8–9).</p>	<p>What God is doing here is making a covenant with Abraham. This is how Abraham <i>knows</i> that God will keep His promises.</p>

## God's Covenants with Abraham

Scripture	Commentary
<p>He took him all these, and divided them in the middle, and laid each half opposite the other; but he didn't divide the birds. The birds of prey came down on the carcasses, and Abram drove them away (Genesis 15:10–11).</p>	<p>God illustrates what will happen in the future. The land will be given to the Jews, and various groups will continually try to take this land away from them, and God, through the Jews, will continually have to drive them away. The birds of prey are the heathen nation; and Abram symbolizes God here.</p> <p>God is not dealing with Abram's unbelief, at this point, but the unbelief of the generations which will follow him.</p>
<p>When the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. Now terror and great darkness fell on him. He [God] said to Abram, "Know for sure that your seed will live as foreigners in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them. They will afflict them four hundred years. I will also judge that nation, whom they will serve. Afterward they will come out with great substance. (Genesis 15:12–14).</p>	<p>Then God prophesies to Abram what would happen to his descendants over the next 400+ years. Again, God is not as concerned with Abram's lack of faith as He is with the generations which will follow him.</p> <p>God tells Abram what the future will be for his seed.</p>
<p>But you will go to your fathers in peace. You will be buried in a good old age. In the fourth generation they will come here again, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full." (Genesis 15:15–16).</p>	<p>Much of the Bible is prophetic, and this information would stay with Abraham and his son Isaac and his son Jacob. And because Abraham keeps, guards and preserves these words, they are known to the children of Israel over the next 400+ years.</p> <p>The Jewish slaves in Egypt will call out to this God of Abram for their deliverance. This means they had to know about Abram and about his God. This is indicates that Abram preserved God's commands and ordinances.</p>
<p>It came to pass that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace, and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. (Genesis 15:17).</p>	<p>The smoking furnace and the flaming torch are ways that the Preincarnate Christ and God the Father revealed Themselves to Abram. These things represent judgment, and God's judgment will always be a part of His relationship to mankind.</p>
<p>In that day Yahweh made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites." (Genesis 15:18–21).</p>	<p>God becomes very specific about the land which He is giving to Abram and to his descendants: the land which lies between the Nile (the River of Egypt) and the Euphrates River. This would include a small portion of modern Egypt, along with all of Jordan, Israel, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and most of Iraq. Right now, Israel occupies approximately 0.2% of the Middle East; God is giving to them approximately half of the Middle East (this is because most of the Arabs who occupy this land today will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire).</p>
<p>Unfortunately, at the urging of his wife, Abram will misapply this doctrine in Genesis 16 and he will father a child by Sarai's personal servant girl, Hagar.</p>	

## God's Covenants with Abraham

Scripture	Commentary
<p>God appears again to Abram to straighten him out about who his true heir will be. God comes to Abram at a time when he is 99 and his bastard son Ishmael is about 13 years old.</p>	<p>God tells Abram to walk as a mature believer before Him. God tells Abram to pay close attention to what He says.</p> <p>Over this period of time, Abraham has reached a point where God can command him to be spiritually mature.</p>
<p>When Abram was ninety-nine years old, Yahweh appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty. Walk before Me, and be complete [spiritually mature]. I make My covenant between Me and you, and I will multiply you exceedingly." Genesis 17:1–2).</p>	<p>What had not been promised before is, Abram would be a father of many nations.</p> <p>God changes Abram's name from <i>Abram (exalted father)</i> to <i>Abraham (father of a multitude)</i>.</p>
<p>Abram fell on his face. God talked with him, saying, "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you. You will be the father of a many nations. Neither will your name any more be called Abram, but your name will be Abraham; for the father of a multitude of nations have I made you. (Genesis 17:3–5).</p>	<p>God promises dried up old Abraham that he would be made exceedingly fruitful.</p> <p>Finally, all of the land through which Abraham is walking, would be given to him and to his seed. "I will be their God" indicates that this does not go to everyone descended from Abraham but specifically to those who have a relationship with God.</p>
<p>I will make you exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of you. Kings will come out of you. I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your seed after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and to your seed after you. I will give to you, and to your seed after you, the land where you are traveling, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession. I will be their God." (Genesis 17:6–8).</p>	<p>Abraham has seemed to forget what God has promised him, from time to time, so God is going to make certain that he remembers this time.</p> <p>Circumcision is hidden from others, but the male who is circumcised is aware of it. Every time a male urinates, he is reminded of his circumcision.</p> <p>As we have studied, circumcision represents the new life; taking that which was dead and making it alive once again (specifically, this is a reference to Abraham's sexual potency, which represents life where there was once death).</p>
<p>God said to Abraham, "As for you, you will keep My covenant, you and your seed after you throughout their generations. This is My covenant, which you will keep, between me and you and your seed after you. Every male among you will be circumcised. You will be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin. It will be a token of a covenant between me and you. (Genesis 17:9–11).</p>	<p>Spiritually, this refers to being born again. The circumcision speaks of being born into a new life (the concept of being <i>born again</i> did not begin with Jesus speaking to Nicodemus in John 3).</p> <p>The idea is, the relationship between Abraham and God—which is founded upon new life—was to be passed down to all his descendants.</p>
<p>He who is eight days old will be circumcised among you, every male throughout your generations, he who is born in the house, or bought with money of any foreigner who is not of your seed. He who is born in your house, and he who is bought with your money, must be circumcised." (Genesis 17:12–13).</p>	

## God's Covenants with Abraham

Scripture	Commentary
[God continues speaking to Moses]: "My covenant will be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. The uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that soul will be cut off from his people. He has broken my covenant." (Genesis 17:14)	Note here that there are some commands, and with these commands are consequences. The person descended from Abraham who is not circumcised was to be cut off from Abraham's seed, because he has broken God's covenant with Abraham. The idea is, the lack of circumcision represents a lack of this new life.
God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you will not call her name Sarai, but her name will be Sarah. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. Yes, I will bless her, and she will be a mother of nations. Kings of peoples will come from her." (Genesis 17:15-16)	As has been discussed, there have been some cults out there that make a big deal out of changing a person's name when they enter into the cult. When names are changed in the Bible, generally speaking, God is doing the name change Himself.
Then Abraham fell on his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, "Will a child be born to him who is one hundred years old? Will Sarah, who is ninety years old, give birth?" (Genesis 15:17)	Abraham has the objection that, what God is suggesting is simply impossible. They are simply too old to have children. However, this is the key to circumcision; which represents this new life being given to Abraham.
Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before you!" (Genesis 15:18)	Furthermore, in Abraham's eyes, fathering a child by Sarah is unnecessary, because he already has a son, Ishmael (and Abraham clearly loved Ishmael).
God said, "No, but Sarah, your wife, will bear you a son. You will call his name Isaac. I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him. As for Ishmael, I have heard you. Listen, I have blessed him, and I will make him fruitful, and I will multiply him exceedingly. He will become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this set time in the next year." When He finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham (Genesis 17:19-22).	<p>Ishmael is not going to be Abraham's heir. Recall that, he will be a wild ass of a man, indicating that he has no authority orientation. Furthermore, his descendants will be evil. God is able to know this.</p> <p>It is amazing that this holds true, even until today. If you were given the choice of living in some Middle Eastern nation, you would choose Israel. In fact, Israel is so different from every other nation in that region that, you may not have even associated them with the phrase <i>Middle Eastern nation</i>.</p>
Now, how does God know, 4000 years ago, that Abraham's son Ishmael was not the family to watch, but Abraham's yet unborn son Isaac was the man to watch? God knew this 4000 years ago, and the results are clear for us to see, even today.	
The rest of Genesis 17 is a narrative about Abraham circumcising those in his encampment.	
God appears to Abraham once again:	
Y <sup>e</sup> howah appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day. He lifted up his eyes and looked, and saw that three men stood opposite him. (Genesis 18:1-2a).	The 3 men represent the Trinity, even though only one of them is the Revealed God.

## God's Covenants with Abraham

Scripture	Commentary
When he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself to the earth, and said, "My Lord, if now I have found grace in Your sight, please don't go away from Your servant. Now let a little water be fetched, wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. I will get a morsel of bread so you can refresh your heart. After that You may go your way, now that You have come to Your servant." (Genesis 18:2b-5a).	You will note that this time, Abraham immediately recognizes Y <sup>e</sup> howah God. The meal is a picture of fellowship. Abraham was excited and happy to see God. With Abraham's continued spiritual growth, spending time with his LORD became more and more a time of pleasure and enjoyment.
They said, "Very well, do as you have said." (Genesis 18:5b).	Because of the dispensation in which we live, and what has gone before, we enjoy fellowship with all 3 members of the Trinity.
Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quickly make ready three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes." (Genesis 18:6)	Abraham involves his wife in this fellowship with God. God has promised Abraham that he would father a uniquely-born son through her.
Abraham ran to the herd, and fetched a tender and good calf, and gave it to the servant. He hurried to dress it. He took butter, milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them. He stood by them under the tree, and they ate. (Genesis 18:7-8)	Abraham organizes a large meal, and everything is made from scratch. He does not offer up leftovers, as Lot will appear to do in Genesis 19.
They said to him, "Where is Sarah, your wife?" He said, "See, in the tent." He said, "I will certainly return to you when the season comes round. Behold, Sarah your wife will have a son." Sarah heard in the tent door, which was behind him. (Genesis 18:9-10)	The Revealed Member of the Trinity for the first time puts a rough date on the birth of their promised child and tells Abraham that it is Sarah who will have his child (which God told Abraham before).
Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age. It had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old will I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" (Genesis 18:11-12)	The writer of Genesis makes certain that we know that Abraham and Sarah are past the age of having sexual relations; and Sarah is past the age of bearing children.  Because God designed all the rules of biology, He can modify and overrule them if He so chooses to.
Yahweh said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Will I really bear a child, yet I am old?' Is anything too hard for Yahweh? At the set time I will return to you, when the season comes round, and Sarah will have a son." Then Sarah denied, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid." He said, "No, but you did laugh." (Genesis 18:13-15)	In order to parallel and foreshadow the birth of Jesus, this birth needs to be miraculous. God asks Abraham if there is anything too difficult for Him to do.
I doubt that there is any race or family of people which now resides in the land which they originally lived in. Abraham, as a Jew, moved to the Land of Promise, and God gave him that land. And the Jews are still there today, 4000 years later, despite the absolute insane hatred which is felt by most of those who live around them.	
The reason that we reviewed these promises, is so that we can have a list of everything which God told Abraham that Abraham recorded (prior to the birth of Isaac). These are all the things which God spoke to Abraham, insofar as we are aware.	

I have left out Genesis 18:17–33, where God uses Abraham in order to establish the concept of a **pivot**; and where Abraham steps in as an intercessory between God and Sodom.

I have left out the interchange between God and Abraham, when Sarah, having given birth to Isaac, wanted Hagar and Ishmael out of her house. God told Abraham that was okay, and Abraham obeyed Him. Genesis 21:9–13

I have left out God telling Abraham to offer up his uniquely-born son, Isaac (Genesis 22:1–14). However, *after* Abraham offered up his uniquely-born son, God said this:

And the Angel of Y<sup>e</sup>howah called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares Y<sup>e</sup>howah, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." (Genesis 22:15–18)

This is what God said to Abraham after he showed himself to be willing to offer up his son.

We see an interaction between increased obedience and increased blessing (*your descendants will possess the gate of their enemies is a new blessing*).

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**Genesis 26:4–5** [God is speaking to Isaac, Abraham's son] "And I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of the heavens, and I will give to your seed all these lands. And in your Seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed, because Abraham **obeyed My voice** and **kept My charge, My commandments, My ordinances, and My Laws.**"

The word translated *obeyed* is the Qal perfect of *shâma'* (שמע) [pronounced *shaw-MAHG*], which means *to listen, listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and act upon, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, listen and take heed to, listen and take note of, listen and be cognizant of*. Strong's #8085 BDB #1033. The word for *voice* simply means *voice*. God spoke to Abraham and Abraham listened. The things which God said to Abraham are all recorded above.

Also, the word here for *listen* is actually stronger than that, indicating that Abraham heard and acted upon what God said to him. God made many promises to Abraham and Abraham listened and believed those promises; and because he had believed God, righteousness was imputed to him (Genesis 15:6).

The second thing which Abraham did was the Qal imperfect of *shâmar* (שמר) [pronounced *shaw-MAR*] which means *to keep, to guard, to watch [over], to preserve*. Strong's #8104 BDB #1036. What Abraham did was, preserve those things which God told him; he kept those things. We know what God said to Abraham 4000 years later because he preserved those words. We do not know exactly how he preserved them. It is my guess that Abraham repeated these things on many occasions to Isaac who passed them along to Jacob. We have no idea at exactly what point in time these things were actually written down, but it was likely before Moses. However, it is my contention that man, near the time of the flood, had a much better memory than man does today. He was both physically and mentally superior to man today. Therefore, hearing and memorizing the first 12–50 chapters of Genesis was much easier for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to do than it would be for us to do.

This is why we first studied the things which God said to Abraham. Abraham preserved these words; these words of God would have included God's charge, His commandments, His ordinances and His laws for Abraham at that point in time.

Now, specifically, God said that Abraham **"...kept My charge, My commandments, My ordinances, and My Laws."**

Therefore, apart from whatever norms and standards were written on the heart of Abraham, we have those actual words from God which Abraham was to preserve.

These specific words are not used and differentiated when God spoke to Abraham. God did not say, “Now, this would be a list of My commandments; and tomorrow, I will give you a list of my statutes.” He just gave the words recorded above; and then God tells this to Isaac, who has surely received all of these commands and promises of the covenant from his father Abraham. Therefore, in this way, Abraham has guarded and preserved this covenant. Furthermore, Abraham recorded and kept a report of all the things which resulted from his interaction with God. He recorded what God said, and he recorded what he did as a result.

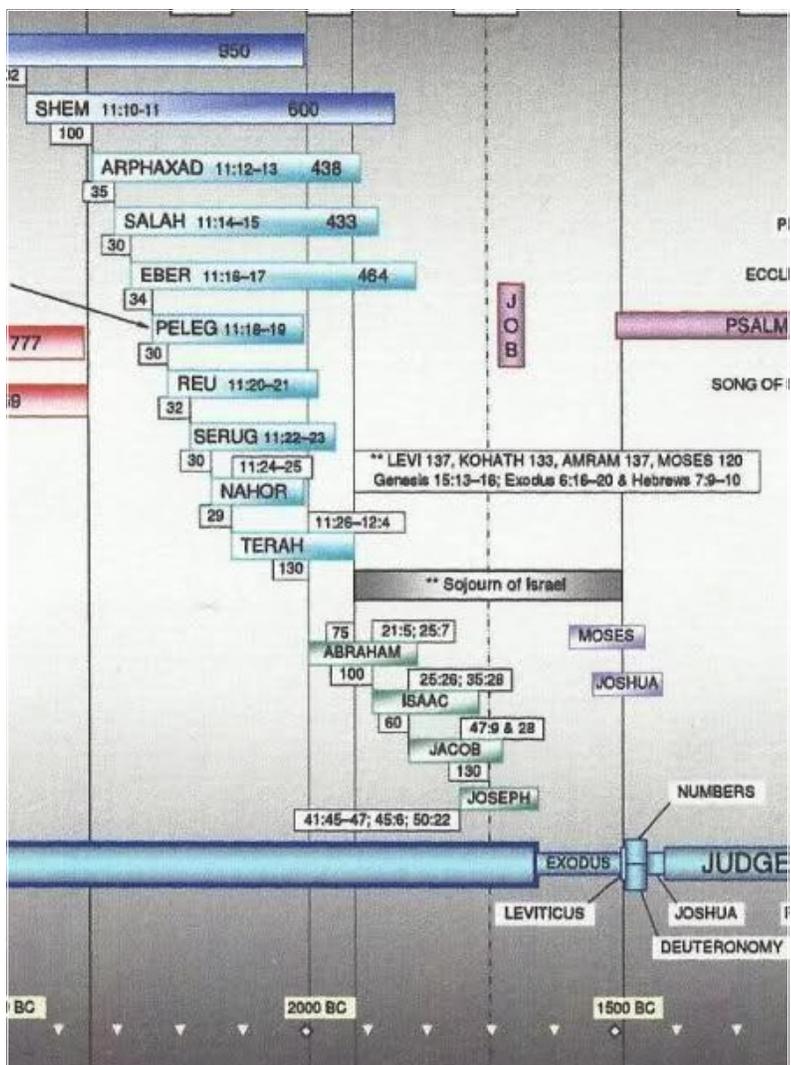
These words of God would have been preserved because Abraham taught them to Isaac.

The **book of Job** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) reveals to us how men with positive volition thought about God’s charge, commandments and ordinances. We hear Job’s opinion and the opinions of his 3 friends as they discuss suffering and moral issues. Job would have lived a few generations prior to Abraham,<sup>74</sup> so he and his friends are good gauges as to what man knew and believed in that era. We might consider them messengers from the age of the gentile patriarchs (that is, sons of Shem, Ham or Japheth prior to Abraham).

Before going any further in our study of the meaning of the words *charge*, *commandments*, *ordinances* and *laws*, we also need to notice something which is unique about the time of Abraham. His ancestor Shem, who lived on earth before the flood, was still alive. So were Shem’s son, grandson and great grandson in the line of Abraham.

The **Patriarch Overlap Chart** is from [TinyPic.com](#), and was accessed May 19, 2014. You will note that the patriarchs Shem, Arphaxad, Salah and Eber are all alive during the life of Abraham; and all of them will die during the lifetime of Isaac.

What this means is, there was a far greater consistency of morality and social contracts in that era, because all of these men were still alive. It is much different than today where each new generation can essentially makes up its own concept of morality and right and wrong, to some degree. Many organizations and movements make every effort to insert themselves into our learning institutions so that their views might be taught to children from the earliest age. That was not the case with Abraham. His oldest living relatives actually lived when God judged the earth with the flood. God definitely spoke to Noah, Shem’s father. So, even though it is 9 generations later, the wisdom of Shem and the next 3 generations following him essentially provided the concepts of right and wrong all the way down to the time of Abraham. It would have been difficult to argue about matters being right or wrong, as these elders were still alive and could be consulted at any point in time.



<sup>74</sup> When Job lived exactly is certainly debatable.

This does not mean that there are not cities and areas which are out of control, morally speaking. Sodom is an example of this—which city God destroyed.

**Genesis 26:4–5** “And I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of the heavens, and I will give to your seed all these lands. And in your Seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed, because Abraham obeyed My **voice** and **kept My charge, My commandments, My ordinances, and My Laws.**”

At what point does these words make sense to mankind? When God spoke these words to Isaac, did Isaac understand them? If so, I see several general options here: that God had given out a set of laws, only spoken of in part in Genesis 9, but with a great deal of specificity. This would suggest that there was a great deal of revelation given by God—likely to Noah and to his sons—which they did not bother to write down (except for the one command of Genesis 9). God, through His interaction with mankind, said what was right and wrong. I see this option as highly unlikely.

Another option is, Adam and the woman came with a very nearly perfect concept of right and wrong, after eating from the fruit of the tree (it is this tree that gave them this knowledge). And the first thing that they realized is, they were naked. They would have passed these norms and standards along to their children and grandchildren; but even with Cain and Abel, there was a problem: Cain killed Abel. Perhaps many of these laws were so self-evident to Adam and the woman that it never occurred to them to tell their children, “Do not kill each other.” Furthermore, no person had ever died up to that time. So they may not have even realized that people could actually be killed.

Concerning the idea of this concept of right and wrong being in their souls from the beginning, these concepts would no doubt be distorted by the sin nature.

If you examine any of the age charts of the patriarchs which preceded Abraham, you will notice that most of their lives overlapped the life of Abraham, but that they all died out during Isaac’s life.<sup>75</sup> And about the time that God began speaking to Abraham and guiding him was about the time that those in the flood and their sons and sons’ sons began to die off. So, there was this great wisdom—this knowledge of right and wrong—to come from Noah and his sons—all of whom lived before the flood. However, there came a point where all of the *ancestors* began to die out, almost all at once. Therefore, God took a new approach, coming first to Abraham and then to his son and grandson—and eventually speaking to Moses and to nation Israel, all of whom came from the loins of Abraham.

**Application:** When it comes to children, and then to their children, this would have been a different matter. Although we develop some limited concept of right and wrong, much of this comes from our parents and much of it comes from our environment. We can see great generational shifts occur before our very eyes, with children doing things which we find unimaginable. Our youth can be incredibly affected by what they are taught in school, something which many interest groups have discovered. For the 2012 election, some polling indicated that same-sex marriage and gay rights was the **#1 issue** among the youth. You would think that any young person with half a brain would realize that the economy and the debt of the nation *should* be most important political issue to them, as they would inherit that debt and possibly have their lives destroyed by it, but it was not. Now, you may wonder, *where does that come from?* One of the strongest political forces in the United States today is the various groups of the LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bi-sexual Transgendered), who, despite being perhaps 3% of the U.S. population have a **political strategy** and fight constantly to **put** their **message** into the **schools**.

**Application:** Political groups have found the youth to be a great fertile ground for recruitment, as we have seen with the **Nazi** and **Communist youth**; with the liberal appeals in schools, and in this example, the gay agenda movement in the schools and media<sup>76</sup>. This combined with a positive gay message in television and movies (even though the presentation of various gay characters was often very inaccurate) changed the thinking of a generation.

<sup>75</sup> Because of one missing person in this chart, these men may have mostly died during Abraham’s lifetime.

<sup>76</sup> One of the brilliant political moves of the gay movement was to go after both the Disney name and enterprise as well as after the youth in schools.

They have managed to take something which has been understood to be sin and confusion for generations, and have turned it into a moral positive.

**Application:** The global warming crisis was sold to children in schools. For over a decade, Al Gore's film, *An Inconvenient Truth*, was shown in classrooms across the world, and a generation of children were brought up believing global warming to be a worldwide crisis which only government, with a huge infusion of money, could solve (they could help by recycling and driving the right kind of cars). And Al Gore, like many others, appealed to the arrogance of children ("There are some things about our world that you know that older people don't know"). What Al Gore does not do is travel throughout the country and **debate this issue** (a "debate" video has been released).

My point here is, Adam and the woman were physically mature when they partook of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil; but their children were born like all other children, just with superior intellects and bodies. They had to receive their teaching from somewhere—which would suggest Adam and the woman, as well as from the Revealed Lord.

It ought to be noted, however, that experiments have been done to show that children, before they can speak, have moral sensibilities. They have concepts of right and wrong, even in infancy.

So, somehow, Abraham knew and kept God's commands. "I have multiplied your seed as the stars of the heavens and I have given to your seed all these lands; furthermore [lit., and], all nations of the earth of blessed [themselves] by your seed. [This is] because Abraham listened to My voice and he kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws." Abraham had an internal guidance system; he had the teaching of his parents; he had the teaching of the patriarchs, going all the way back to the ark.

Finally, Abraham spoke one-on-one with God. These things taken together made Abraham's understanding of and preservation of God's charge, commandments, statutes and laws.

Taken from **Laws, Commandments, Ordinances and Statutes** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

### The Shortened Doctrine of Laws, Commandments, Ordinances and Statutes

1. This entire topic comes from: [Genesis 26:4–5](#) [God is speaking to Isaac, Abraham's son] "And I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of the heavens, and I will give to your seed all these lands. And in your Seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed, because **Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My ordinances, and My Laws.**" The problem is, we do not associate these words with Abraham, but with the giving of the Law to Moses. What we will attempt to do is to determine what these various words means and then associate them with Abraham.
2. God spoke to Abraham and Abraham heard what God had to say and he obeyed God's voice. He did not obey God fully at first (he was supposed to leave his family and go all the way to Canaan, but he took his family and moved about  $\frac{3}{4}$ <sup>ths</sup> of the way there. However, after a few years, Abraham believed God and obeyed Him fully in what God required of Abraham.
3. Secondly, Abraham *kept* God's charge, commandments, ordinances and laws. *To keep* is the Qal imperfect of *shâmar* (שָׁמַר) [pronounced *shaw-MAR*] which means *to keep, to guard, to watch [over], to preserve*. Strong's #8104 BDB #1036. What Abraham preserved was the first third of the book of Genesis, along with all of the things which God said to him; and possibly the book of Job.
4. The first thing that Abraham was to keep was the **charge** of God, which word means: *guard, charge, function, obligation, service, watch; guard, injunction*.
  - 1) Apart from this passage, the next time this word is used is in association with the observance of the Passover (Exodus 12:6). It is also associated with other ritual (symbolic) observances: the Sabbath (Exodus 16:23); the manna (Exodus 16:32–34); the Tabernacle and the testimony (Num. 1:53), and with cleanness (Leviticus 22:9). It is associated with not doing the abominable things which the heathen did in the land (Leviticus 18:30).
  - 2) One interpretation for this passage has been that, the words which follow *mish<sup>er</sup>mereth* represent

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- the *responsibility* or *obligation* of Abraham, which he kept.
- 3) The second interpretation is, Abraham continued the sacrifices to God, as Adam had done, as Abel had done and as Noah had done. The sacrifices look forward to our Lord's work on the cross on our behalf.
  - 4) Another obligation which Moses kept was, God told him before Isaac was conceived, that Moses needed to be circumcised, as did all of the males in his compound. Circumcision was a one-time ritual which represents the new life, or life where there previously was no life. This is regeneration, which comes as a result of believing in the Revealed God (in our era, that is Jesus Christ).
  - 5) God also had Abraham offer up his son Isaac to God as a sacrifice, and Abraham obeyed God, ready to slay his own, uniquely-born son. This foreshadowed the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. See the **Offering of Isaac** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).
5. The second thing that Abraham is said to have kept or guarded is the **commandments** of God. This word is the feminine plural of *mits<sup>e</sup>vâh* (מִצְוָה) [pronounced *mits<sup>e</sup>-VAH*], which means, *commandment, prohibition, precept, that which is forbidden, constraint, proscription, countermand*. Strong's #4687 BDB #846. This is nearly always translated *commandment* or *commandments* in the KJV and as *command* or *commands* in Young's. It is most often found as a plural.
- 1) Although we do not find this noun except here in Genesis and then in the Law, its verbal cognate is found many places in the book of Genesis. It is the Piel of *tsâvâh* (צָוָה) [pronounced *tsaw-VAW*], which means *to commission, to mandate, to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge, command, order; to instruct* [as in, giving an order]. This is a verb found almost exclusively in the Piel. Strong's #6680 BDB #845.
  - 2) Regarding the noun translated *commandments*:
    - (1) This is the word used with the *Ten Commandments* in Exodus 20:6 34:29 Leviticus 27:34 Deut. 4:13 5:10, 29 10:4.
    - (2) These commandments are often associated with life and death. Proverbs 4:4 7:1–2
    - (3) These commandments are often associated with the Jews prospering in the land of Canaan. Exodus 15:26 Deut. 4:40 5:29 6:17ff Deut. 11:8
    - (4) These commandments are often associated with blessing and cursing. Leviticus 25:14ff Psalm 89:31–34 Isaiah 48:18
    - (5) Keeping these commandments was showing love toward God. Deut. 5:10 7:9 Joshua 22:5 Daniel 9:4
  - 3) These appear to be the most important mandates to come from God.
  - 4) Based upon the points above, I would associate the commandments with the **laws of divine establishment** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). It is these laws which are to the benefit of the people in the land, which would be naturally associated with blessing and cursing (cursing when the commandments are not kept).
  - 5) Adhering to the laws of divine establishment result in blessing from God as well as natural blessing, which a nation can expect from following the directives of God.
  - 6) During this era and to the time of Moses, we have a number of emerging countries, and they all seem to have one thing in common—they have a leader who attempts to put together a set of **unifying laws** which will guide and protect the people of the country. This does not mean that these laws would be carbon copies of each other—particularly those laws developed after the death of the patriarchs. Bear in mind that there is always the distortion of the sin nature of those who formulated the laws.
  - 7) Logically, such laws are also appropriate to us today—particularly commandments #5–10, most of which were probably known and understood by Abraham without having God delineate them. That is, when God said, “**You will not steal**,” this should not have been a great shock to any of the Israelites. No one objected, saying, “But I thought that stealing was a good thing!” We did not have a variety of societies where some thought stealing was good; others saw it morally neutral; and others saw it as wrong. This, along with the other commandments (#5–10) were generally fundamental to most societies. We have already studied two instances of where two different groups (the Egyptians and the Canaanites) clearly understood the sanctity of marriage (Genesis

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12:18–19 20:1–10).

- 8) We may assume, based upon this verse, that Abraham adhered to these commandments in some form or another. He would have learned these as a young man, likely from his father or grandfather; and he held to these establishment values for all of his life. As we have discussed, these concepts of right and wrong would have come down from Shem the son of Noah, and his sons and his sons' sons, who were all still alive during the time of Abraham.
6. The third word is *chuqqâh* (חֻקָּה) [pronounced *khoo-KAWH*], which means, *that which is established or defined; statute, ordinance, law*. Strong's #2708 BDB #349. This is the feminine plural found in our passage. Found 106 times in the Bible. It is only found this one time in Genesis and not found at all in Job. The masculine form of this word found more often in the Old Testament: *chôq* (חֹק) [pronounced *khoke*], and it means, *decree, that which is decreed; statute; boundary, defined limit; an appointed portion of labor, a task*. The key concept here is the setting of a boundary or a limit. Strong's #2706 BDB #349. Sometimes these kinds of words can have very different meanings and sometimes the shadings are lost to us. These seem to be used almost the same number of times. The masculine version is found 126 times. For the points which follow, I will follow out the masculine and feminine occurrences.
  - 1) We find this word used twice in Job 23:12–14, where Job is speaking about God to his associates: "I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my **portion** of food. But He is unchangeable, and who can turn Him back? What He desires, that He does. For He will complete what He **appoints** for me, and many such things are in His mind." (ESV, capitalized) The concepts of specificity and limitation are found here.
  - 2) Job uses *chôq* in a way that we would easily recognize it in Job 28:26–27 **When He made a decree for the rain, and a way for the flash, the thunderclap, then He saw it, and declared it; He prepared it, and He also searched it out.** (Green's literal translation) Job is saying that God designed a set of laws which go along with the falling of rain, which includes lightning and thunder. That is, these were not random events, but they followed a set of laws.
  - 3) God uses this word when describing the limitations that He placed upon the oceans: "Or who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb, when I made clouds its garment and thick darkness its swaddling band, and prescribed **limits** for it and set bars and doors, and said, 'Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed'?" (Job 38:8–11; ESV)
  - 4) In these two examples, God is establishing natural law; or what we call today *scientific laws* (which is a misnomer, as *science* did not originate these laws nor does science enforce them).
  - 5) In short, the key to understanding this masculine version of this word is *limitations and specificity*.
  - 6) The word *chuqqâh* (חֻקָּה) [pronounced *khoo-KAWH*], which means, *that which is established or defined; statute, ordinance, law*. Strong's #2708 BDB #349.
    - (1) *Chuqqâh* is mostly translated *statute, statutes, ordinance, ordinances* in the KJV.
    - (2) It appears to be associated with much of the ritual found in the Mosaic Law. Exodus 12:14, 17, 43 13:10 27:21 28:43 29:9, Leviticus 3:17, Leviticus 7:36, Leviticus 10:9, Leviticus 16:29, 16:31, 16:34 17:7 23:14, Leviticus 23:21, 23:31, 41 24:3, Num. 9:14 10:8 15:15 18:23 19:2, 10, 21 27:11 31:21 35:29
    - (3) For this reason, the word would be best associated with the rituals which Abraham observed—the animal sacrifices which he offered up to God.
    - (4) The various rituals were very specific in how they were to be performed.
7. The final word is *ṭôwrah* (תּוֹרָה) [pronounced *TOH-rah*], which means, *instruction, doctrine; [human and divine] law, direction, regulations, protocol; custom*; it is transliterated *Torah*. Strong's #8451 and #8452 BDB #435. It is nearly always translated *law, laws*. Genesis 26:5 is the first time that this word occurs in Scripture. God has always had instruction, doctrine and laws for mankind to follow. It is this word which is used to describe the first 5 books of the Bible, which are often called the Torah of Moses.
8. However, up to this point, God has not given an enumeration of His laws and requirements or the consequences for violation of same (with the exception of mankind needed to have a consequence for murdering someone, that consequence being execution—(Genesis 9:5).
  - 1) Like most English words, there are a variety of ways in which this word is used. It can refer to the

## The Shortened Doctrine of Laws, Commandments, Ordinances and Statutes

principle of an over-arching principle from God; as well as to an enumeration of regulations concerning a variety of things, which may be ceremonial or moral.

- (1) Therefore, there is the Law of God written on the hearts of men; and this is the concept of right and wrong. Whether these laws would be similar or equivalent is another matter; but there are clearly standards—sometime very nebulous ones—which men have. Law can refer to the overarching principles of right and wrong, known to God, but written on the hearts of men. Romans 2:14–16 **For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.** (ESV)
- (2) It can also stand for the content of all that Moses taught the people, as we find in Deut. 4:44 17:11, 18–19 23:3, 8 27:26 28:58, 61 29:21, 29 30:10 31:9, 11–12, 24, 26 32:46 33:4. Deut. 23:3 reads: [Moses is giving a command to the people] **“And you shall write on them all the Words of this Law when you have crossed over, so that you may go into the land which Jehovah your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as Jehovah the God of your fathers has promised you.”** This use of the word *tôwrâh* has become the most common way that this word is used.
- 2) In this primary usage, Moses said that this law should be recorded in a number of formats, even by a future king for himself, and it should be both read and taught to the people. Deut. 31:11–12 32:46 33:10
9. In short, Abraham heard the voice of God and he obeyed Him. He also preserved God’s charge (rituals and obligations), His commandments (God’s prohibitions; those things which are associated with cursing and blessing), His ordinances (rituals and animal sacrifices) and His laws (God’s instructions, doctrines and protocol).
10. As a result of what Abraham preserved, we have one of the greatest books in human history, the book of Genesis, within which is the seed of nearly every doctrine that is related to God and man. His son Isaac and his grandson Jacob continued to preserve these words.

The complete doctrine of **Laws, Commandments, Ordinances and Statutes** is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

So far, this is what we have studied:

Gen. 26:1–5 **Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar to Abimelech king of the Philistines. And the LORD appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and I will bless you, for I will give all these lands to you and to your offspring, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father. I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and I will give to your offspring all these lands. And by your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."**

This sent us on quite an excursion, determining the meaning of God’s words to Isaac about Abraham.

When this takes place actually changes the color of this narrative considerably. The discussion of Abraham makes it sound as if he has died and that God is now dealing with Isaac. That would make Isaac at least 75 years old, which would make Esau and Jacob at least 15 years old (they will not be in view in this narrative). Isaac is probably older than this.

There is no reason for God to speak to Isaac, if Abraham is still alive—particularly about what God had promised Abraham and about Abraham having obeyed God's voice, etc. Abraham is spoken of in what appears to be the past tense (although there is no *past tense* in the Hebrew, *per se*).

Abraham will be spoken of as having died when we get to Genesis 26:18. At the end of this narrative, Esau will be said to be 40 years old when he marries. Although we do not have a clear transition from the Gerar narrative to Esau's marriage, this sets up at least the limits of Isaac's age—he must be at least 75 years old but no more than 100 years old, which is when Esau would take a wife.

As an aside, Isaac will live to be 180 (Genesis 35:28). So, his physical appearance at age 100 might be like a 40 or 50 year old today. The same would be true of his younger wife.

## The American English Bible on the Commandments, Statutes and Laws

### Introduction

Although almost everyone thinks they understand this subject (and there are many contradictory opinions), it is surprising to see how few have made the effort to research what the Bible says, and to think the matter through thoroughly. So, what we will do here is examine what the Bible tells us about God's laws and principles, starting from the beginning, and on through each era of the history of both men and God's messengers (angels), to see whether Biblical principles do in fact supersede God's Laws as some claim.

#### Before God Created Humans

Although the Bible tells us very little about the period before God created humans, there are enough indicators available for us to draw some critical conclusions. It appears to be true that in the very beginning, after God created His heavenly sons, He had given them no laws. He was simply their Father and He showed them the things that He wanted them to accomplish.

We draw this conclusion from the fact that until the Slanderer rebelled and lied to Adam and Eve, there was no mention of a law to condemn him or other heavenly messengers to death. In fact, the first mention of a penalty for his (the Slanderer's) disobedience is found at Genesis 3:15, where the curse on the snake (and the one behind its words) was cryptically foretold to be a 'watching for its head.'

So, if there were originally no laws from God, why hadn't He created them? He obviously realized that His sons could choose to rebel, because He deliberately created them each with the ability to choose for themselves whatever they wished to do. And for the heavenly sons, both right and wrong and the results of displeasing God must have been obvious. So, God didn't have to create the possibility of a negative relationship by telling them what would happen should they choose to disobey Him.

Then, why did the Slanderer feel that he could openly defy God? Because, as the results proved (where as Revelation 12:4 says, '**a third of the stars of heaven**' were dragged to the earth), he knew that he had raised an issue that all living creation in heaven and on earth was watching.

#### The First Law

The first law that we read of in the Bible is the simple one that was given to Adam and Eve in the Paradise of Pleasure, when God told them not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and bad. And in this first instance, a penalty was spelled out: Death to the offender.

What a witness this simple rule must have provided to all of God's heavenly creation. It showed for the first time what God's sentence would be for those who chose to rebel against Him. And as such, it became a primary goal for the one who was likely the first universal rebel, to have this rule broken. So, he set out to challenge God by lying to the first humans; and he raised the question for all living creatures of whether God has the right to

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expect their obedience and love.

It's interesting that God's law to Adam and Eve was so simple. Once again, no negative thoughts of the possibility of murder, theft, rape, or any of the hundreds of other human vices were mentioned. There was just the one command, 'This is mine, don't touch it.'

### The First Murder

When we think of the worst crime that is possible for us to commit, we usually think of murder. And as might be expected, the second sin mentioned in the Bible was when Cain murdered his brother, Abel. Here, it is interesting to note that God's penalty on Cain wasn't death, but the curse of having to live a hard life.

The fact is; there was no law until then that forbade murder. There was just the good example set by God's love, and what we call 'conscience' or good sense, to tell all intelligent living creatures what was right and wrong. Yet, as the Bible tells us, murder and other human vices continued to increase to the point that, as it says, 'God saw all the badness that men were doing on the earth was increasing, and that the entire motivation of their hearts was always twisted toward evil.'

So, except for the righteous man Noah and his family, He destroyed all of humanity and much of the animal kingdom.

### God's Laws After the Downpour

After Noah and his family left the chest (ark), God gave him some basic guidelines as to what would happen to those who did extremely bad things. You can't really call them laws, because He didn't tell men what not to do, He simply told them what results to expect if they were guilty of wrong conduct. These guidelines are often associated with the Sacred Agreement of the Rainbow. However, notice that they preceded that Agreement, which was simply a one-sided promise by God.

Here's what God said at Genesis 9:3-6, 'All living and slithering animals can serve as meat for you. I have given them all to you as though they were green vegetation. But you must not eat flesh with its blood of life. Otherwise, I will require your blood at the hand of all the wild animals. I will also require a man's life at the hand of his human brothers. Whoever spills the blood of men will also have their blood spilled, because I made man in the image of God.'

So, there were just two evil actions that He said would provide bad results. They were:

- The blood of animals was not to be eaten (it was to be poured out as some sort of a sacrifice to God), otherwise the violator would be liable to be killed by wild animals
- Every man who murdered another was liable to be killed by fellow humans.

Since these instructions were given to the common forefather of all post-downpour humans, they are obviously still valid, regardless of traditions, modern ideas, and so-called 'politically-correct' thinking.

And while the ban on murder is quite well understood, the reason for the warning against eating animal blood is particularly interesting. We want to remember that in God's instructions to Adam in the Paradise, and to Noah following the downpour, the responsibility that was given to men was to 'Rule over the fish of the seas, the winged creatures of the skies, all the herding animals of the ground, all the slithering animals that crawl on the ground, and the whole earth.'

Notice that no mention was made in the beginning of men being allowed to kill and eat the animals that were

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entrusted to their care. However, likely due to what had become common practice prior to the downpour, God made allowances for men to eat animals, as long as they poured the blood (which is described as the psyche or life) on the ground.

So, what conclusions may we reach from all the above? The evidence shows that; contrary to common human thinking, Jehovah was never a God of laws and rules; rather, these things were forced on Him by the inventiveness and badness of human imagination.

### The Examples of the Patriarchs

One of the most interesting stories to outline what human life and its goodness was like before there were any laws from God on such matters, is the story of the actions and thinking of Jacob's son, Joseph. You likely remember what happened as he served as a slave in the house of an Egyptian named Petrephes (Heb. Potiphar).

Petrephes' wife was attracted to Joseph and she tried to seduce him. Yet, Joseph resisted and ran away. His thinking? He said, 'Why, my master doesn't even know what I do around this house and he has put me in charge of everything . So, how could I do such a bad thing and actually sin against God?' (Genesis 39:7-9).

Now in this case, God apparently hadn't given a law forbidding illicit sex or adultery. However, Joseph used his good sense of propriety in understanding that having sex with another man's wife (especially his master's) was wrong. So, no law was required for a righteous man to make the right decision.

The same was true of the righteous man Job. Again, before God provided any laws, Job repeatedly spoke of things that he knew would be displeasing to God.

From <http://www.2001translation.com/Laws.html> accessed March 3, 2013. I am not yet sure how much of this I want to use.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

This is what we have studied so far:

**Genesis 26:1–3** There was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines, to Gerar. Yahweh appeared to him, and said, "Don't go down into Egypt. Dwell in the land which I will tell you of. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you. For to you, and to your seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. (WEB)

In a circumstance reminiscent of his father's history, Isaac faces an economic downturn, and decides to move. God guides him to Philistia, at a time when the relationship between the Jews and the Philistines was much better.

**Genesis 26:4–5** And I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of the heavens, and will give to your seed all these lands. And in your Seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed, because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My Laws."

There is something about the sentence structure here which stands out, but I don't know exactly what it means. What tends to be common in the Hebrew is to list one thing after another with the wâw conjunction in between (or one action after another with the wâw consecutive in between), but it is rare in the Hebrew (and common in the English) to have a list where a copulative is used one time before the last item on the list. This is what we find here, and so far, I have been unsuccessful in determining what sort of meaning ought to be attached because of

this (Bullinger talks about *no-ands* and *many-ands*; but not about *one-and*).<sup>77</sup> This is just how we speak and write in English; but this was not the way that Hebrews spoke and wrote. They threw in *ands* in between every noun or clause. That is just the way that they did it.

**Genesis 26:4–5** And I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of the heavens, and will give to your seed all these lands. And in your Seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed, because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My Laws.”

Interestingly enough, these final 3 feminine plural nouns are only found together one more time in the Old Testament, and that is Nehemiah 9:13 (and, actually, the word translated *statutes* is similar to the one found here; it is not the exact same word). However, 3 of the 4 nouns (sometimes with *mish<sup>e</sup>mereth*) are found here: Genesis 26:5 Deut. 30:10 1Kings 2:3 2Kings 17:13, 34, 37 2Chronicles 19:10 Nehemiah 9:13–14 10:29 (some are in the singular; and sometimes there is the alternate word for *statutes*). These words occur in pairs in many places throughout the Old Testament.

Now, if you will look back at vv. 1–5, we get a contextual understanding of why God said these things. God is telling Isaac what to do. Isaac wants to leave the drought-stricken area and go to Egypt; God tells him, “Don’t do that; I will tell you where to go. By the way, your father Abraham figured out that obedience to Me was the best way to go.”

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### Isaac Deceives Abimelech about Rebekah

Because v. 6 is so short, vv. 6–7 will be combined here. As you can see, some translations place these verses together; others separate them into different paragraphs. It can be treated as the end of vv. 1–5 (**Therefore, Isaac is living in Gerar**); and it can be seen as the beginning of the deception passage, vv. 7–9 (**While Isaac was living in Gerar,...**). The *wâw* consecutive and the imperfect verb allows for both interpretations.

In this next passage, Isaac will deceive the King of Gerar much as his father had deceived the King of Gerar previously (40–100<sup>78</sup> years ago). Sometimes, sins are repeated from generation to generation; and both Abraham and Isaac possessed one each a sin nature. Isaac will give in to the mental attitude sin *fear, worry*; and as a result, he will lie to Abimelech, the King of Gerar.

**And so lives Isaac in Gerar, And so ask men of the place to his wife; and so he says, “My sister [is] she;” for he feared to say “my wife; lest kill me men of the place upon Rebekah, for good a seeing [is] she.”**

Genesis  
26:6–7

**Isaac is living in Gerar, and so the men of [that] place asked concerning his wife, and he answered [them], “She [is] my sister;” for he was afraid to say, “[She is] my wife, lest the men of [that] place kill me because of Rebekah, for she is good to look at.”**

**When Isaac began living in Gerar, the men of that area asked about his wife. He told them that she was his sister, because he was afraid to say, “She is my wife.” He was afraid that the men there might kill him because of Rebekah because she was attractive.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

<sup>77</sup> Seow was not helpful in this regard either.

<sup>78</sup> Dr. Thomas Constable gives the range of 70–97 years in *Dr. Constable’s Notes on Genesis*, the 2013 edition; Copyright © 2013 by Thomas L. Constable; p. 192.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so lives Isaac in Gerar, And so ask men of the place to his wife; and so he says, "My sister [is] she;" for he feared to say "my wife; lest kill me men of the place upon Rebekah, for good a seeing [is] she."
Targum of Onkelos	And Izhak dwelt in Gerar. And the man of the place inquired concerning his wife; and he said, She is my sister: for he reasoned in his heart, Lest the men of the place should kill me for Rivekah, because she was of beautiful appearance.
Latin Vulgate	So Isaac abode in Gerara. And when he was asked by the men of that place, concerning his wife, he answered: She is my sister: for he was afraid to confess that she was his wife, thinking lest perhaps they would kill him because of her beauty.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Isaac dwelt in Gadar; And the men of the place asked him concerning his wife; and he said, She is my sister; for he was afraid to say, <u>She is</u> my wife; lest the men of the place should kill <u>him</u> on account of Rebekah, because she was fair to look upon.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Isaac dwelt in Gerar. And the men of the place questioned him concerning Rebecca his wife, and he said, She is my sister (for he feared to say, <u>She is</u> my wife, lest at any time the men of the place should kill <u>him</u> because of Rebecca, because she was beautiful).

Significant differences: The Syriac and Greek both add *she is*; they both have *him* instead of *me*.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	So Isaac went on living in Gerar; And when he was questioned by the men of the place about his wife, he said, She is my sister; fearing to say, She is my wife; for, he said, the men of the place may put me to death on account of Rebekah; because she is very beautiful.
Easy English	So Isaac lived in Gerar. The men that lived there asked him about his wife. So Isaac answered, 'She is my sister.' He could have said that Rebekah was his wife. But he was afraid that then the men would kill him. One of them would then be able to take Rebekah as a wife for himself. She was beautiful.
Easy-to-Read Version	So Isaac stayed and lived in Gerar. Isaac's wife Rebekah was very beautiful. The men of that place asked Isaac about Rebekah. Isaac said, "She is my sister." Isaac was afraid to tell them Rebekah was his wife. Isaac was afraid the men would kill him so that they could have her.
Good News Bible (TEV)	So Isaac lived at Gerar. When the men there asked about his wife, he said that she was his sister. He would not admit that she was his wife, because he was afraid that the men there would kill him to get Rebecca, who was very beautiful.
<i>The Message</i>	So Isaac stayed put in Gerar. The men of the place questioned him about his wife. He said, "She's my sister." He was afraid to say "She's my wife." He was thinking, "These men might kill me to get Rebekah, she's so beautiful."
NIRV	So Isaac stayed in Gerar. The men of that place asked him about his wife. He said, "She's my sister." He was afraid to say, "She's my wife." He thought, "The men of this place might kill me because of Rebekah. She's a beautiful woman."
New Simplified Bible	Isaac moved to Gerar. His wife Rebekah was very beautiful. He was afraid that someone might kill him to get her. So he told everyone that Rebekah was his sister.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Isaac moved to Gerar with his beautiful wife Rebekah. He was afraid that someone might kill him to get her, and so he told everyone that Rebekah was his sister.
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New Berkeley Version	So Isaac stayed at Gerar. When the men of the community inquired about his wife, he said, "She is my sister," for he was afraid to say, "She is my wife," (thinking) the men of this place may kill me to get Rebekah, who is beautiful.
New Century Version	<sup>6</sup> So Isaac stayed in Gerar. <sup>7</sup> His wife Rebekah was very beautiful, and the men of that place asked Isaac about her. Isaac said, "She is my sister," because he was afraid to tell them she was his wife. He thought they might kill him so they could have her.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So Isaac started living in Gerar. And when the men there asked him about Rebekah his woman, he told them, 'She's my sister;' because he was afraid to say, 'She's my woman,' so the men there wouldn't kill him for Rebekah (because she was very pretty).
International Standard V	<sup>6</sup> So Isaac lived in Gerar. <b><i>Isaac Lies about His Wife</i></b> <sup>7</sup> Later on, the men of that place asked about his wife, so he replied, "She's my sister," because he was afraid to call her "my wife." He kept thinking, ".otherwise, the men around here will kill me on account of Rebekah, since she's very beautiful."
New Advent Bible	So Isaac remained where he was, at Gerar. And now, when certain of the inhabitants asked him about his wife, he told them, She is my sister; he was afraid to own that she was his wedded wife, thinking they might be tempted by her beauty to kill him.
Translation for Translators	Isaac went and asked King Abimelech if he would permit him to live in the Gerar area. The king said, "Okay," <sup>6</sup> so he stayed there along with his wife and sons. <sup>7</sup> When the men in Gerar town asked who that woman was, Isaac said, "She is my sister." He said that because he was afraid to say, "She is my wife." He thought, "Rebekah is very beautiful, so they will want her. <i>If I say that she is my sister, they know they will have to negotiate about a bride price because I am her older brother; but if I say that she is my wife, no negotiation is possible</i> right away. They will just kill me to get her." No idea why the verse is cut up so weirdly.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Isaac dwelled in Gerar. The men of the place asked of his woman. He said, "She's my sister." He feared to say, 'My woman', for 'Otherwise the men of the place will slay me over Rebekah for her good appearance.'
Conservapedia	So Isaac lived in Gerar. The men of the place asked him about his wife, and he said, "She is my sister." He was afraid to say, "She is my wife," because he said to himself, "The men of this place would kill me for Rebekah, because she is so lovely."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	So Isaac remained in Gerar. When the men of the place asked about his wife, he replied, "She is my sister," for he feared to say, "My wife," lest the men of the place murder him for Rebekah, for she was beautiful to look upon.
Lexham English Bible	So Isaac settled in Gerar. When the men of the place asked concerning his wife, he said, "She [is] my sister," for he was afraid to say, "my wife," thinking [Or "lest"] "the men of the place will kill me on account of Rebekah, for {she was beautiful} [Literally "good of appearance"]."
NIV – UK	<sup>6</sup> So Isaac stayed in Gerar. <sup>7</sup> When the men of that place asked him about his wife, he said, 'She is my sister,' because he was afraid to say, 'She is my wife.' He thought, 'The men of this place might kill me on account of Rebekah, because she is beautiful.'

**Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):**

Christian Community Bible	So Isaac stayed in Gerar. When the men of that place questioned him about his wife, he replied, "She is my sister." He would not say, "She is my wife," for he was afraid and he thought, "The men of this place might kill me because of Rebekah who is very beautiful."
The Heritage Bible	And Isaac dwelt in Gerar; And the men of the place asked him of his wife, and he said, She is my sister, because he feared to say, My wife, Lest, he said, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah, because she was beautiful in appearance.
New American Bible (R.E.)	So Isaac settled in Gerar. When the men of the place asked questions about his wife, he answered, "She is my sister." He was afraid that, if he called her his wife, the men of the place would kill him on account of Rebekah, since she was beautiful. This scene is the third version of the wife-in-danger story (cf. chaps. 12 and 20). The mention of the famine in 26:1 recalls the famine in 12:10; the name Abimelech, king of the Philistines in Gerar, recalls 20:2. The deception, according to all the stories, is the claim that the wife is a sister. This story (from the Yahwist source) departs from the two previous accounts in that the wife is not taken into the harem of the foreign king.
New Jerusalem Bible	So Isaac stayed at Gerar. When the people of the place asked him about his wife he replied, 'She is my sister,' for he was afraid to say, 'She is my wife,' thinking, 'The people of the place will kill me because of Rebekah, since she is beautiful.'
New RSV	<sup>6</sup> So Isaac settled in Gerar. <sup>7</sup> When the men of the place asked him about his wife, he said, 'She is my sister'; for he was afraid to say, 'My wife,' thinking, 'or else the men of the place might kill me for the sake of Rebekah, because she is attractive in appearance.'
Revised English Bible	Isaac settled in Gerar, and, when the men of the place asked questions about his wife, he told them that she was his sister, for he was afraid to say Rebecca was his wife, in case they murdered him because of her; for she was very beautiful.

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Complete Jewish Bible	So Yitz'chak settled in G'rar. The men of the place asked him about his wife, and out of fear he said, "She is my sister." He thought, "If I tell them she's my wife, they might kill me in order to take Rivkah. After all, she is a beautiful woman."
exeGesés companion Bible	And Yischaq settles in Gerar: and the men of the place ask him of his woman; and he says, My sister: for he awes to say, My woman; lest the men of the place slaughter me for Ribqah; because she is of good visage.
Kaplan Translation	Isaac thus settled in Gerar. When the local men asked about his wife, he told them that she was his sister. He was afraid to say that she was his wife. Rebecca was so good-looking that the local men could have killed him because of her.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Yitzchak dwelt in Gerar; And the anshei hamakom asked him about his isha; and he said, She is my achot; for he feared to say, She is my isha; lest, said he, the anshei hamakom should kill me for Rivkah; because she was beautiful to look upon.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Yitshaq dwelt in Gerar. And when the men of the place asked about his wife, he said, "She is my sister." For he was afraid to say, "She is my wife," thinking, "lest the men of the place should kill me for Ribqah, because she is good-looking."

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

The Expanded Bible	So Isaac ·stayed [resided; settled] in Gerar [20:1]. His wife Rebekah was very beautiful, and the men of that place asked Isaac about her. Isaac said, "She is my
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sister," because he was afraid to tell them she was his wife. He thought they might kill him so they could have her [12:10-20; 20:1-18].

Kretzmann's Commentary

**Verses 6-16**

Rebekah's Danger

And Isaac dwelt in Gerar, remaining there after the Lord had appeared unto him. 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. Rebekah had been a beautiful woman at the time of her marriage, Genesis 24:16, and she had retained her beauty. Isaac was so well aware of this that he, knowingly or unknowingly, followed the example of his father, Genesis 12:11-12; Genesis 20, replying to the questions concerning the woman living with him that she was his sister. This was a foolish and dangerous perversion of the truth, as events showed.

NET Bible®

So Isaac settled in Gerar.

When the men of that place asked him about his wife, he replied, "She is my sister [Rebekah, unlike Sarah, was not actually her husband's sister.]. He was afraid to say, "She is my wife," for he thought to himself [Heb "lest." The words "for he thought to himself" are supplied because the next clause is written with a first person pronoun, showing that Isaac was saying or thinking this.], "The men of this place will kill me to get [Heb "kill me on account of."] Rebekah because she is very beautiful."

The Pulpit Commentary

And Isaac dwelt in Gerar as God had shown and enjoined him. And the men of the place (i.e. the inhabitants of Gerar) asked him (literally, asked, or made inquiries; probably first at each other, though ultimately the interrogations might reach Isaac himself) of his wife (being in all likelihood fascinated by her beauty); and he said, falling into the same infirmity as Abraham. (Genesis 12:13 Genesis 20:2) She is my sister: which was certainly an equivocation, since, although sometimes used to designate a female relative generally, (vide Genesis 24:60) the term "sister" was here designed to suggest that Rebekah was his own sister, born of the same parents. In propagating this deception Isaac appears to have been actuated by a similar motive to that which impelled his father for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest, said he (sc. to himself, the words describing the good man's secret apprehensions), the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; the historian adding, as the explanation of his fears because she was fair to look upon. (vide Genesis 24:16)

The Voice

So Isaac settled into *the land of Gerar*. When the men of the area asked him about his wife, he was afraid to say, "Rebekah is my wife," because he thought, "The men here might kill me in order to have her *for themselves*. She is *after all* an attractive woman." So Isaac said instead, "She is my sister."

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version

And dwelling is Isaac in Gerar. And asking are the mortals of the place as to Rebecca, his wife. And saying is he, "My sister is she. For he fears to say, "My wife is she, lest the mortals of the place kill him on account of Rebecca, for a good appearance has she.

Darby Translation

And Isaac dwelt at Gerar. And the men of the place asked about his wife. And he said, She is my sister; for he feared to say, my wife, [saying to himself,] Lest the men of the place slay me on account of Rebecca -- because she was fair in countenance.

English Standard Version

So Isaac settled in Gerar. When the men of the place asked him about his wife, he said, "She is my sister," for he feared to say, "My wife," thinking, "lest the men of the place should kill me because of Rebekah," because she was attractive in appearance.

The Geneva Bible	And the men of the place asked [him] of his wife; and he said, She [is] my sister: for he feared to say [By which we see that fear and distrust is found in the most faithful.], [She is] my wife; lest, [said he], the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she [was] fair to look upon.
Green's Literal Translation	And Isaac lived in Gerar. And the men of the place asked about his wife. And he said, She <i>is</i> my sister, for he was afraid to say, My wife, lest the men of the place kill me on account of Rebekah, for she <i>was</i> beautiful of form.
H. C. Leupold	And Isaac dwelt in Gerar; and when the men of the place asked him about his wife, he said: She is my sister, for he was afraid to say: She is my wife lest the men of the place slay me because of Rebekah, for she was beautiful to look at.
NASB	So Isaac lived [Lit dwelt] in Gerar. When the men of the place asked about his wife, he said, "She is my sister," for he was afraid to say, "my wife," <i>thinking</i> , "the men of the place [Lit lest...place] might kill me on account of Rebekah, for she is beautiful."
New King James Version	So Isaac dwelt in Gerar. And the men of the place asked about his wife. And he said, "She <i>is</i> my sister"; for he was afraid to say, "She <i>is</i> my wife," <i>because he thought</i> , "lest the men of the place kill me for Rebekah, because she <i>is</i> beautiful to behold."
Webster's Bible Translation	And Isaac dwelt in Gerar: 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.
Young's Updated LT	And Isaac dwells in Gerar; and men of the place ask him of his wife, and he says, "She is my sister:" for he has been afraid to say, "My wife—lest the men of the place kill me for Rebekah, for she is of good appearance."

**The gist of this verse:** Isaac, while living in Gerar, tells any who ask that Rebekah is his sister rather than his wife....to protect himself.

Genesis 26:6			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâshab (בָּשַׁב) [pronounced yaw-SHAH <sup>AV</sup> ]	<i>to remain, to stay; to dwell, to live, to inhabit; to sit</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
Yis <sup>e</sup> châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced yihs <sup>e</sup> -KHAWK]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
G <sup>e</sup> râr (רָגַר) [pronounced gher-AWR; possibly <sup>e</sup> rawr]	<i>a lodging place, dwelling; transliterated Gerar</i>	proper singular noun; location	Strong's #1642 BDB #176

**Translation:** Isaac is living in Gerar,...

You may recall the right before Isaac was born, Abraham moved to the Gerar area. His wife had not yet been impregnated (insofar as we know), but there was apparently a famine, which caused Abraham to move there in the first place (which we actually hear about for the first time in this chapter).

Genesis 26:6 **Isaac is living in Gerar...** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Instead of moving down to Egypt, during this drought, Isaac moved his family to Gerar. God told Isaac not to move to Egypt, and Isaac obeyed God. We have fairly limited information about Isaac; but we certainly know of his obedience in this thing. We also know that God promised to bless Isaac if he continued to live in the Land of Promise (v. 3).

Scott Grant: *Isaac...[like his father Abraham] is an obedient covenant partner: He defies the famine, listens to the Lord and remains in Gerar, within the Promised Land.*<sup>79</sup>

This narrative only focuses on Isaac, Rebekah and Abimelech, the king of Gerar. However, you may recall that Abraham had a very large encampment, so it is reasonable to assume that Isaac, as his heir, has a very large entourage as well, along with a great many sheep. There might be as many as 1000 people with Isaac; and possibly even more.

**A Map of Isaac's Journeys.** This excellent map is from the **Berean Bible Study Group** (accessed December 3, 2012). This city is right on the Philistia border, depending upon the era. Usually, the Philistines controlled this area. Therefore, Isaac will be dealing with the Philistines, and he will carry with him some of his father's attitudes about the Philistines.

It is possible that Gerar is Isaac's birthplace. You may recall that Abraham and Sarah move to Gerar in Genesis 20:1; and Isaac is born in Genesis 21:1. As we studied, there was not really a lot of time that passed here. Assuming chronological order, Genesis 20:1–21:1 is less than a year.



Something which would support this is, when Hagar and her son were cast out, she went to the Beer-sheba in the Negev. Now, they were living in Beersheba at this time, then Hagar, when dismissed, wandered down the street just a few blocks. However, if they were living in Gerar, then Hagar going to the Negev would have been a reasonable distance away.

Interestingly enough, we are going to have the 3<sup>rd</sup> historical narrative about one of the patriarchs being somewhat dishonest about his own wife. Some Bible critics claim that this are just 3 takes on the same story; but there are many things in history with eerie similarities (like the assassinations of **Lincoln and Kennedy**<sup>80</sup>).

Let me add that, Abraham may have been in the habit of speaking about his wife in this way when in heathen territory; and it is not out of the question that Isaac followed in his father's footsteps. Therefore, the similarities of these three historical events is not something which is that remarkable or apocryphal.

<sup>79</sup> From [http://www.pbc.org/system/message\\_files/99650/4866.pdf](http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99650/4866.pdf) accessed August 2, 2015.

<sup>80</sup> Some of these similarities are trivial; and a couple of them are incorrect. However, the simple fact is, there can be situations which are similar in a person's lifetime.

What interests me more is, why would God the Holy Spirit include this similar set of events in the book of Genesis?

This does reveal that both men were not perfect. Lying to your host country or host king would be a sin. There is a lack of faith expressed in this as well.

There are some exceptions to this, and those would be applied during a time of war (Rahab the prostitute would have had to have lied to her people when she acted on behalf of Joshua).

Genesis 26:7a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâ'al (שאל) [pronounced shaw-AHL]	<i>to ask [petition, request, inquire]; to demand [require]; to question, to interrogate; to ask [for a loan]; to consult; to salute</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7592 BDB #981
'ânâshîym (אנשיים) [pronounced uh-NAW-sheem]; also spelled 'îyshîym (אישיים) [pronounced ee-SHEEM]	<i>men; inhabitants, citizens; companions; soldiers, followers</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #376 BDB #35
mâqôwm (מקום) [pronounced maw-KOHW]	<i>place, situated; for a soldier, it may mean where he is stationed; for people in general, it would be their place of abode (which could be their house or their town)</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4725 BDB #879
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'îshshâh (אשה) [pronounced eesh-SHAW]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #802 BDB #61

**Translation:** ...and so the men of [that] place asked concerning his wife,...

When you went to an area like this, often those working for the king would ask about some of the women. Rebekah was apparently attractive enough to be noticed. Therefore, some men from this area apparently asked about her.

As Gill writes, there was more than simply civil inquiry occurring here; Rebekah was an attractive woman. From the words of Abimelech spoken later, it is clear that these men, although not prone to adultery, are not against fornication.<sup>81</sup>

So that there is no misunderstanding, this is a normal reaction to a new woman brought into one's geographical periphery. Single men will, no doubt, be interested. Although some might be filled with sins of lust; others might simply be interested. There is nothing here which suggests one way or the other.

<sup>81</sup> More or less paraphrasing Gill; Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:7.

Given God's assurances to Isaac, there is nothing here which should be perceived as threatening to Isaac.

Genesis 26:7b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'âchôwth (אחות) [pronounced <i>aw-KHOWTH</i> ]	<i>sister, half-sister; relative; beloved [bride]; figuratively of intimate connection; metaphorically for relationship between Israel and Judah; another</i>	feminine singular noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #269 BDB #27
hîy' (היא) [pronounced <i>hee</i> ]	<i>she, it; also used as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>is</i> , <i>is</i> implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

**Translation:** ...and he answered [them], "She [is] my sister;..."

It is very likely that Isaac knew of his father's history, and, in particular, his history in this particular place. From who else would Isaac have heard the stories of Abraham but from his father directly. Very likely, Isaac had learned the book of Genesis from his father up to Genesis 23; and Genesis 24 was a (true) bedtime story read to his sons by Abraham's main servant or by Rebekah herself.

Anyway, Isaac panics, and suddenly does what his father had done at least twice before—he lies about his wife, claiming that she is his sister. Follow the logic out here: Isaac is worried that Rebekah will be taken from him because of her beauty; but if she is his sister, there is even a greater likelihood that she will be taken (however, he would not be harmed). So all of this is done in order to protect Isaac, not to protect his wife; and certainly this is not the response of faith. Remember, God sent them in this direction to begin with.

The word for *sister* can refer to a relative, which Rebekah is. However, Isaac's intent was to deceive. He knew that these men were asking about Rebekah in order to determine if she was unattached, and his answer suggested that she was. Like his father Abraham, Isaac did this to protect himself. This half-lie potentially opens up Rebekah to physical assault.

Robert Dean: *[Isaac] apparently has the same paranoid streak that his father had and is afraid to say that she is his wife. Instead of relaxing and trusting in God and the provision God, he has just made up lies about his wife.*<sup>82</sup>

Peter Pett: *"She is my sister." There is a half truth in the statement for they are cousins, and she is therefore a close blood relation and relationships were not then so cut and dried. But it shows lack of faith in Yahweh and is inexcusable.*<sup>83</sup>

<sup>82</sup> From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen120.htm> accessed July 26, 2015 (slightly edited).

<sup>83</sup> From <http://www.studyight.org/commentaries/pet/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 27, 2015.

Although many commentators began this section saying, *like father, like son*; and they often had a story to illustrate this, bear in mind that, when Abraham lied about his wife in Gerar, she was apparently not yet pregnant with Isaac. So, how did it occur to Isaac to do what his father did? Let me suggest that he carried the Scriptures—which included Abraham’s memoirs—with him (probably in his head). Each generation told the next generation what had happened, from the beginning of human and angelic time up to their time and place. Many people knew *The History of God and Man* (that is, the book of Genesis). So Isaac knew it, up to his life, and he knew because of what his father taught him, what his father had done in Gerar.

**Application:** In case there is any confusion here, it is the husband’s duty to protect his wife. As the stronger vessel, we are to protect the weaker vessel.

What appears to be the case is, God has given Isaac the promise, and Isaac then goes out and immediately falls on his face, spiritually speaking.

### Genesis 26:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong’s #3588 BDB #471
yârêʿ (אָרַי) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAY</i> ]	<i>to fear, to be afraid; to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong’s #3372 BDB #431
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong’s # BDB #510
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
ʾishshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAW</i> ]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong’s #802 BDB #61
pen (פֶּן) [pronounced <i>pen</i> ]	<i>lest, peradventure, or else, in order to prevent, or, so that [plus a negative]</i>	conjunction	Strong’s #6435 BDB #814
hârag (הָרַג) [pronounced <i>haw-RAHG</i> ]	<i>to kill, to slay, to execute; to destroy, to ruin</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong’s #2026 BDB #246
ʾânâshîym (אֲנָשִׁים) [pronounced <i>uh-NAW-sheem</i> ]; also spelled ʾîyshîym (אִישִׁים) [pronounced <i>ee-SHEEM</i> ]	<i>men; inhabitants, citizens; companions; soldiers, followers</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong’s #376 BDB #35
mâqôwm (מִקוֹמ) [pronounced <i>maw-KOHM</i> ]	<i>place, situated; for a soldier, it may mean where he is stationed; for people in general, it would be their place of abode (which could be their house or their town)</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong’s #4725 BDB #879

## Genesis 26:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
‘al (לְעַ) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, because of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, with, by, besides, in addition to, to, toward, together with, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
Rib <sup>e</sup> qâh (רִיבְקָה) [pronounced <i>rihb-KAW</i> ]	<i>ensnarer; a noose; fat, fattened; a quarrel appeased; which is transliterated Rebekah, Rebekkah, Rebecca</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #7259 BDB #918

**Translation:** ...for he was afraid to say, “[*She is*] my wife, lest the men of [that] place kill me because of Rebekah,...

At some point, Isaac explained why he said that Rebekah was his sister. I have made this into a complete quote, because of the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular suffix which is found, referring back to Isaac in the 1<sup>st</sup> person. I also considered the possibility that this was a slip up in Isaac’s writing style, admitting his fear and speaking of himself in the 1<sup>st</sup> person rather than in the 3<sup>rd</sup> (which writers generally do).

He was worried for his own life.

*Wenstrom: Unbelief is the failure to take into account and acknowledge the character and nature of God, His presence and His Word. Unbelief operates in the sphere of the old Adamic sin nature and contradicts faith and leaves God out. Unbelief blinded Isaac as to the presence of the Lord in his life, which he saw firsthand, causing him to see only the difficulties in the land of the Philistines. Isaac’s unbelief had produced cowardice to the extent that he is willing to sacrifice his wife for his own personal safety.<sup>84</sup>*

When Isaac expresses his fears, *lest this place should kill me* is also spoken. However, there are no words in the Hebrew for *he said* for this particular quote. The KJV version recognizes that this is a quote, which is why they have the words *said he* but they are in italics (which means that they were supplied for clarity by the translator(s) but are not in the original text. This ellipsis puts great emphasis upon what Isaac said as opposed to the fact that he said it.

Abraham was tested in this same way and he failed twice. His testimony was weakened before the Gentiles due to this lack of honesty (as they perceived it) and lack of trust and reliance as God properly perceived it. Isaac is guilty of the same thing—he is dishonest with the men of Gerar and he is not relying upon God. This does not mean that we have to be naive or stupid in our dealings with man; however, God has unequivocally promised to Isaac and to Abraham that their descendants would be as the stars of heavens. Isaac is not concerned about Rebekah here; he is concerned for his own skin. God has already promised him concerning his descendants, so he does not have to worry about his fate when in the land of these Gentiles. God’s promise precludes any harm.

*Clarke suggests: Did Abraham never mention this circumstance to his son? Probably he did not, as he was justly ashamed of his weakness on the occasion - the only blot in his character; the son, therefore, not being forewarned, was not armed against the temptation. It may not be well in general*

<sup>84</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 397); accessed July 24, 2015.

for parents to tell their children of their former failings or vices, as this might lessen their authority or respect, and the children might make a bad use of it in extenuation of their own sins.<sup>85</sup> My best guess is, this information had become a part of Scripture, something which Isaac knew. As I suggested earlier, Isaac certainly would not have understood the concept of divine inspiration as we do, but this does not preclude him from knowing what Abraham recorded.

Genesis 26:7d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kîy (כי) [pronounced kee]	for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
ṭôwb (טוב) [pronounced toh <sup>b</sup> v]	pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved	masculine feminine singular adjective which can act like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373
mar <sup>eh</sup> (הַאֲרָמָה) [pronounced mahr-EH]	the act of seeing, sight, vision; appearance, that which is seen	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4758 BDB #909
hîy' (איה) [pronounced hee]	she, it; also used as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one)	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb is, is implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

**Translation:** ...for she is good to look at.”

The reason Isaac was worried is that Rebekah was attractive. Interestingly enough, Rebekah is never said to be a flaming beauty; she is always called ṭôwb (טוב) [pronounced toh<sup>b</sup>v] mar<sup>eh</sup> (הַאֲרָמָה) [pronounced mahr-EH]. Individually, the words are not as dramatic. The first is ṭôwb (טוב) [pronounced toh<sup>b</sup>v] and it means *pleasing, pleasant, agreeable, good often in relationship to the senses (here, the sense of sight)*. Mar<sup>eh</sup> (הַאֲרָמָה) [pronounced mahr-EH] is the act of vision, which describes how she was *fair, good, or pleasant*. This word is even used of a vision. Therefore, she was very physically attractive; enough to cause Isaac to fear for his life when he was among people that he did not know well.

Genesis 26:7 ...and so the men of [that] place asked concerning his wife, and he answered [them], “She [is] my sister;’ for he was afraid to say, “[She is] my wife, lest the men of [that] place kill me because of Rebekah, for she is good to look at.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:6–7 Isaac is living in Gerar, and so the men of [that] place asked concerning his wife, and he answered [them], “She [is] my sister;’ for he was afraid to say, “[She is] my wife, lest the men of [that] place kill me because of Rebekah, for she is good to look at.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:6–7 When Isaac began living in Gerar, the men of that area asked about his wife. He told them that she was his sister, because he was afraid to say, “She is my wife.” He was afraid that the men there might kill him because of Rebekah because she was attractive. (Kukis paraphrase)

Jack Ballinger: [Isaac] feared for his very life even though God had just told him that he would be with him and bless him (etc.). So, like his father before him, he resorts to a survival mode not placing his trust in God to protect him and his wife from harm.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:7.

<sup>86</sup> From <http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/Gen26.htm> accessed July 23, 2015.

James Burton Coffman questions her beauty: *Another, somewhat humorous, thought that comes to mind here is that Rebekah, at the time, a woman approaching sixty, and with two grown sons at home looking after affairs that Isaac could not have brought with him on this trip, might not have been as beautiful and seductive in appearance as Isaac seems to have thought. At least, nobody bothered her.*<sup>87</sup> It is possible that, after the previous incident with Abraham, that perhaps Abimelech Sr. warned Abimelech Jr. not to just take a woman that he desires.

This is an interesting blessing that both Abraham and Isaac married extremely beautiful women; and at least one of Jacob's wives was extremely beautiful. Rebekah is perhaps 20 years younger than Isaac, putting her between 55 and 80 years old; and she, at that age, is apparently still very attractive with a good figure (the Bible tells us this). Given the life span of that era, she might be similar to a very attractive woman in her late 30's or early 40's today. We assume that Genesis 24–26 are roughly in chronological order (obviously, the listing of any genealogical line will fall outside a series of specific events).

Barnes estimates her age as follows: *Rebekah was at this time not less than thirty-five years married, and had two sons upwards of fifteen years old. She was still however in the prime of life.*<sup>88</sup>

The Philistines would become quite a warlike people, and they fought Israel constantly over various portions of the land (after Israel became a country). However, this was not the case during the time of Abraham and Isaac. They did have their issues, and they were involved in a great many mental attitude sins. So, Isaac was concerned about what they might do—and perhaps Abraham warned him about their ways. But, there was not this great and constant animosity between Abraham, his descendants and the Philistines. However, in the chapters of Genesis, we will see the relationship between them deteriorate.

I wonder if we could draw the conclusion that Philistine women did not age well; or perhaps were generally unattractive in general when compared to Sarah and Rebekah. Both of these women were significantly older women but apparently quite fit and attractive to the Philistine men.

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Barnes sums up vv. 8–11: *Abimelech observes Isaac sporting with Rebekah as only husband and wife should, constrains him to confess that she is his wife, charges him with the impropriety of his conduct, and commands his people to refrain from harming either of them on pain of death.*<sup>89</sup>

**And so he is that were long to him there the days and so looks out Abimelech king of Philistines through a window and so he sees and, behold, Isaac playing with Rebekah his woman.**

Genesis  
26:8

**And it was when the days were long to him there that Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looks out through a window and, behold, he sees Isaac playing with Rebekah his wife.**

**Isaac lived there for many days. Abimelech, the Philistine king, looked out through a window and he suddenly saw Isaac playing with Rebekah his wife.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so he is that were long to him there the days and so looks out Abimelech king of Philistines through a window and so he sees and, behold, Isaac playing with Rebekah his woman.

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<sup>87</sup> From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015.

<sup>88</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:6–11.

<sup>89</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:8–11.

Targum of Onkelos	And it was when days had increased to him in abiding there, that Abimelek the king of the Philistae looked from a window, and beheld, and Izhak was disporting with Rivekah his wife.
Jerusalem targum	And he looked.
Latin Vulgate	And when very many days were passed, and he abode there, Abimelech, king of the Palestines, looking out through a window, saw him playing with Rebecca, his wife.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And it came to pass when he had been there a long time that Abimeleck king of the Philistines looked out of a window and saw Isaac fondling Rebekah his wife.
Septuagint (Greek)	And he remained there a long time, and Abimelech the king of Gerar <u>leaned</u> to look through the window, and saw Isaac sporting with Rebecca his wife.
Significant differences:	The Jerusalem targum appears to lack a lot of text. <sup>90</sup> The Latin and Greek leave out <i>and behold</i> .

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English	After Isaac had lived there for a long time, Abimelech looked out of a window. Abimelech was the king of the *Philistines. He saw Isaac hug his (Isaac's) wife Rebekah.
Easy-to-Read Version	After Isaac had lived there a long time, Abimelech looked out his window and saw Isaac and his wife playing.
Good News Bible (TEV)	When Isaac had been there for some time, King Abimelech looked down from his window and saw Isaac and Rebecca making love.
NIRV	Isaac had been there a long time. One day Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, looked down from a window. He saw Isaac hugging and kissing his wife Rebekah.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	After Isaac had lived there for some time, the Philistines' King Abimelech looked out his window and saw Isaac laughing together with his wife Rebekah.
New Century Version	Isaac lived there a long time. One day as Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out his window, he saw Isaac holding his wife Rebekah tenderly.
New Life Bible	When Isaac had been there a long time, Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out of the window. And he saw Isaac loving his wife Rebekah.
New Living Translation	But some time later, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looked out his window and saw Isaac caressing Rebekah.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, he had lived there a long time when AbiMelech (the king of GeraRa) leaned over to look out his window, and saw IsaAc playing with RebekKa his woman. The account at Genesis 21:9 speaks of Hagar's son IshmaEl 'playfully making fun of' Sarah's son IsaAc. The Greek word that we have used to translate this phrase is paizonta. It refers to child's play or a sporting activity or game, but the root comes from the Greek word empaizo, which means to deride or make fun of. As the result, we have concluded (from Sarah's reaction) that some sort of disrespectful act was implied in the play. However, the same word is also used to describe IsaAc's actions with his wife Rebecca (at Genesis 26:8), which caused King AbiMelech, the king of GeraRa, to recognize that she was IsaAc's wife, not his sister. So, 'making fun of' wouldn't convey the proper implication in this case.
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<sup>90</sup> I am not certain that I get the entire Jerusalem targum from my one source.

International Standard V	After he had been there awhile, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looked out through a window and saw Isaac caressing [Or <i>fondling</i> ; the Heb. verb is a word play on the name Isaac and sounds like it.] his wife Rebekah.
New Advent Bible	And one day, when he had already spent a long time in the country, the Philistine king, Abimelech, looked out of a window and saw Isaac and his wife in dalliance together.
Translation for Translators	When Isaac had been there a long time, one day Abimelech, the king of the Philistine people-group, looked down from a window in his palace and was surprised to see Isaac caressing his wife Rebekah.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	His days there were lengthened. King Abimelech of Palestine overlooked through a window and saw and beheld Isaac laughing with Rebekah his woman.
Conservapedia	And it happened, when he had been there many days, Abimelech king of the Avvites looked through the window of his palace, and saw something strange: Isaac making sport with his wife Rebekah.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	After he had resided a considerable time, it happened that Abimalek the king of the Philistines was looking out of his window, when he saw Isaac sporting with his wife Rebekka.
Lexham English Bible	And it happened [that], {when he had been there a long time} [Literally "when the days there were long to him" ], Abimelech the king of the Philistines looked through the window, and saw--behold--Isaac [was] fondling Rebekah his wife.
NIV, ©2011	When Isaac had been there a long time, Abimelech king of the Philistines looked down from a window and saw Isaac caressing his wife Rebekah.

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And it was, when he had been there many days, that Abimelech, king of the Palestinians, looked out at a window, and saw, and lo, Isaac was laughing with Rebekah his wife.
New American Bible	But when he had been there for a long time, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, happened to look out of a window and was surprised to see Isaac fondling his wife Rebekah.
New RSV	When Isaac had been there a long time, King Abimelech of the Philistines looked out of a window and saw him fondling his wife Rebekah.
Revised English Bible	But when they had been there some considerable time, Abimelech the Philistine king looked down from his window and there was Isaac caressing his wife Rebecca.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	But one day, after he had lived there a long time, Avimelekh king of the P'lishtim happened to be looking out of a window when he spotted Yitz'chak caressing Rivkah his wife.
exeGesés companion Bible	And so be it, as his days prolong, Abi Melech sovereign of the Peleshethiym looks through a window and sees, and behold, Yischaq entertaining with Ribqah his woman:...
Hebrew Names Version	It happened, when he had been there a long time, that Avimelekh king of the Pelishtim looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Yitzchak was caressing Rivka, his wife.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	When some time had passed, Abimelech king of the Philistines, looking out of the window, saw Isaac fondling his wife Rebekah.

Kaplan Translation	Once, after [Isaac] had been there for some time, Abimelekh, king of the Philistines, was looking out the window, and he saw Isaac enjoying himself with his wife Rebecca.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And it came to pass, when he had been there for many days, that Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, looked out of the window, and he saw, and behold, Isaac was jesting with Rebecca his wife.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Avimelech Melech Pelishtim (Philistines) looked out at a chalon, and saw, and, hinei, Yitzchak metzachek (was caressing) Rivkah his isha.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	Isaac lived there a long time. One day as Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out his window, he saw Isaac ·holding [fondling; playing with; <sup>c</sup> a word related to the name Isaac] his wife Rebekah tenderly.
The Geneva Bible	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 [Or showing some familiar sign of love, by which it might be known that she was his wife.] with Rebekah his wife.
Kretzmann's Commentary	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. By chance Abimelech, looking out of a window of his palace, became witness of the fact that Isaac, who probably occupied a house with its open court nearby, was treating his wife Rebekah with such familiar endearments as are altogether in order between husband and wife, but would hardly be considered permissible between brother and sister.
NET Bible®	After Isaac [Heb "and he"; the referent (Isaac) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] had been there a long time [Heb "and it happened when the days were long to him there."], Abimelech king of the Philistines happened to look out a window and observed [Heb "look, Isaac." By the use of the particle הִנֵּה (hinneh, "look"), the narrator invites the audience to view the scene through Abimelech's eyes.] Isaac caressing [Or "fondling."] his wife Rebekah.
The Pulpit Commentary	And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time (literally, when were prolonged to him there the days), that Abimelech king of the philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife i.e. caressing and using playful liberties with her, which showed she was not a sister, but a wife paizonta (LXX), jocantem (Vulgate).
The Voice	After they had lived there for a while, King Abimelech of the Philistines looked out of his window one day and saw Isaac <i>affectionately touching and caressing</i> his wife Rebekah.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And coming is it that his days there are long. And gazing is Abimelech, king of Gerar of the Philistines, through a window, and is seeing, and behold! Isaac is having fun with Rebecca, his wife.
Darby Translation	And it came to pass when he had been there some time, that Abimelech the king of the Philistines looked out of the window, and saw, and behold, Isaac was dallying with Rebecca his wife.
English Standard Version	When he had been there a long time, Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out of a window and saw Isaac laughing with [Hebrew may suggest an intimate relationship] Rebekah his wife.

Green's Literal Translation	And it happened when his days were many to him there, Abimelech king of the Philistines looked through the window and saw; and, behold, Isaac was sporting with his wife Rebekah.
H. C. Leupold	And it came to pass after quite a number of days had passed, that Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looked out of his window, and, behold, Isaac was caressing Rebekah, his wife.
NASB	It came about, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out through a window, and saw, and behold, Isaac was caressing his wife Rebekah.
New King James Version	Now it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked through a window, and saw, and there was Isaac, showing endearment to Rebekah his wife.
Third Millennium Bible	And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out a window and saw, and behold, Isaac was frolicking with Rebekah his wife.
World English Bible	It happened, 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 caressing Rebekah, his wife.
Young's Updated LT	And it comes to pass, when the days have been prolonged to him there, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looks through the window, and sees, and lo, Isaac is playing with Rebekah his wife.

**The gist of this verse:** Abimelech observes something unusual—something more than a brother-sister relationship—going on between Isaac and his Rebekah, whom he said was his sister.

### Genesis 26:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Without a specific subject and object, the verb hâyâh often means <i>and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass</i> (with the wâw consecutive). It may be more idiomatically rendered <i>subsequently, afterwards, later on, in the course of time, after which</i> . Generally, the verb does not match the gender whatever nearby noun could be the subject (and, as often, there is no noun nearby which would fulfill the conditions of being a subject).			
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
'ârak <sup>e</sup> (אָרַךְ) [pronounced <i>aw-RAHK</i> ]	<i>to make long, to extend, to stretch out; to be long; to grow long, to continue long; to display length</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #748 BDB #73

## Genesis 26:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâm (שם) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
yâmîym (יָמַיִם) [pronounced yaw-MEEM]	<i>days, a set of days; time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

**Translation:** And it was when the days were long to him there...

The closest masculine singular noun appears to be Isaac, so that the days are long to Isaac there, indicating that he remained in Gerar for a longer time than he expected. This is really not unusual. Isaac may have gone to Gerar with the idea that he was going to live there until the drought was over; but he apparently remained there longer than he expected to.

*Wenstrom: The fact that Isaac and Rebekah enjoyed a long and trouble-free existence in Gerar for a long time demonstrates that Isaac's fear of the Philistines had no basis.<sup>91</sup>*

We might guess that, on occasion, he sent people back to where he was living before, to see if the drought had stopped or not (this is not found anywhere in the text). In any case, he continued to live in Gerar.

**Application:** It is not abnormal for a person or family to move to another city or state, with the idea that this would be a temporary move; and yet, the move ends up being permanent or semi-permanent. This has happened to many a person who has gone off to school or gone off into the military, always expecting to return home, but staying much longer than expected.

Isaac will leave Gerar, but very much because the Philistines of Gerar causing him to move because of his mental attitude sins.

## Genesis 26:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâqaph (שָׁקַף) [pronounced shaw-KAHF]	<i>to look out [forth, down], to lean over and look; to overhang, to hang over</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #8259 BDB #1054
ʾĂbiymelek <sup>e</sup> (אֲבִימֶלֶךְ) [pronounced u <sup>b</sup> -vee-MEH-lek]	<i>my father is Melek, my father is king; transliterated Abimelech</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #40 BDB #4

<sup>91</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 397); accessed July 24, 2015.

Genesis 26:8b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	king, ruler, prince	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
P <sup>e</sup> lish <sup>e</sup> tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p <sup>e</sup> -lish-TEE]	land of sojourners [wanderers, temporary residents]; transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun); with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
Here, this is spelled P <sup>e</sup> lish <sup>e</sup> tîym (פְּלִשְׁתִּיַּם) [pronounced p <sup>e</sup> -lish-TEEM].			
ba'ad (בְּעַד) [pronounced BAH-gad]	by, near; because of; behind, after; about, round about; between [two things], through; into, among; pro, for; away from, behind; on behalf of	generally a preposition of separation or nearness	Strong's #1157 BDB #126
Even though ba'ad is covered in roughly half a page in both BDB and Gesenius, it still has a great many meanings (and only some of their material overlapped). With verbs of falling, letting down, leaning forward so as to look out, it means <i>through, out through</i> (lit., <i>away from</i> ) a window, etc. With verbs of shutting, it means to shut <i>behind, after, up or upon</i> . It can be used as follows: to seal <i>up</i> ; to hedge <i>about</i> ; to fence <i>round about</i> . It has metaphorical uses: <i>on behalf of, for the sake of, on account of</i> . This preposition can denote nearness, as in <i>by, near; between [two things]; into, among; pro, for</i> (in the sense of exchanging).			
challôwn (חַלּוֹן) [pronounced khal- LOWN]	window	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2474 BDB #319

**Translation:** ...that Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looks out through a window...

Now, whereas Abraham and his very large compound lived out away from the city, that does not appear to be the case for Isaac. He seemed to actually be in town and not far from the king.

Abimelech, the king, is perhaps on a second floor looking out over his kingdom. Isaac is revered and trusted enough to apparently have a place near to the king. They are close enough to where the king is able to see through the window. We might well imagine that this was unusual, as a long time had passed before the king observed this.

Whether the opening that the king saw through was a tent opening; or whether the king was looking from his own palace seems to be determined by the verb *shâqaph* (שָׁקַף) [pronounced *shaw-KAHF*], which means (in the Niphal), *to look out [forth, down], to lean over and look; to overhang, to hang over*. All of this suggests that Abimelech is looking down from his palace and he observes this. Strong's #8259 BDB #1054.

We are not given any details or background; whether this was something which just happened, or whether someone had alerted Abimelech to what had been going on.

Gill suggests: *Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window; in his own palace, near to which, in all likelihood, were the apartments that Isaac and Rebekah dwelt in; and this he did accidentally, and not out of curiosity, or with any intention to observe or pry into the behaviour and conduct of these two persons one towards the other.*<sup>92</sup> This is an assumption; but a reasonable one.

<sup>92</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:8.

Peter Pett: *Isaac was possibly living for a time in a building which was by the king's house, and was not aware that it was possible for someone to see into his rooms from one of the windows. Alternately it may be that the king's house looked out over an open space where the tents of Isaac were pitched. In that case the king may have seen the silhouette of what was happening in a lighted tent.*<sup>93</sup>

Matthew Henry: *He was rejoicing with the wife of his youth (Proverbs 5:18)...Nowhere may a man more allow himself to be innocently merry than with his own wife and children.*<sup>94</sup>

We have no idea of the sort of home that Isaac and Rebekah lived in when in Gerar. No doubt, they dwelt in tents when traveling and even when stopped; but we don't know when it comes to Gerar. Furthermore, there is nothing here which requires Isaac and Rebekah to be in their domicile.

Genesis 26:8c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced hin-NAY]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
Yis <sup>e</sup> châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced yih <sup>s</sup> -KHAWK]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
tsâchaq (צָחַק) [pronounced tsaw-KHAHKH]	<i>jesting; making sport of; toying with; making a toy of; playing; laughing with, revealing intimacy with shared humor</i>	Piel participle	Strong's #6711 BDB #850
<i>Wenstrom: the piel form of the verb tsachaq...is a euphemism for foreplay that precedes sexual intercourse and is a play on Isaac's name, which means, "laughter, joy."</i> <sup>95</sup>			
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

<sup>93</sup> From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/pet/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 27, 2015.

<sup>94</sup> Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 2:6–11.

<sup>95</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 397); accessed July 24, 2015.

## Genesis 26:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Rib <sup>e</sup> qâh (רִיבְקָה) [pronounced <i>rihb-KAW</i> ]	<i>ensnarer; a noose; fat, fattened; a quarrel appeased; which is transliterated Rebekah, Rebekkah, Rebecca</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #7259 BDB #918
ʾishshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh- SHAW</i> ]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #802 BDB #61

**Translation:** ...and, behold, he sees Isaac playing with Rebekah his wife.

The word *behold* here suggests that something suddenly caught his eye; he sees something that he did not expect to see.

This is also interesting—we have an obvious show of affection between Isaac and his wife, not something which we find very often in the Bible. The word found here is the Piel participle of tsâchaq (צָחַק) [pronounced *tsaw-KHAKH*], which means, *to jest; to make sport of; to toy with; to make a toy of; to play; to laugh with, to reveal intimacy with shared humor*. This verb is not necessarily one of sexual intimacy, although many Bible translations take it in that way. This word is used in Exodus 32:6, which may have a sexual connotation (*And they rose up early the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.* —ESV). In the Qal stem, this verb usually means *to laugh*; however, the Piel stem is intensive, and it means *to mock, to sport, to entertain*, and possibly *to laughingly enjoy sexual intimacy with*. Strong's #6711 BDB #850. The final couple definitions are based upon this use in Genesis 26:8 Exodus 32:6. Interestingly enough, this is the verb upon which Isaac's name is based. So Isaac and Rebekah were *Isaac-ing* together.

There are a variety of ways that this verb is translated: Darby Translation: *was dallying with*; Concordant Literal Version: *having fun with*; Green's Literal Translation: *was sporting with*; New King James Version: *showing endearment to*; NASB: *was caressing*; Third Millennium Bible: *was frolicking with*. These are pretty much *one-of* translations for this verb. It is clear that there is more going on than this verb actually says; but it is very likely that this verb could have a more sensual meaning.

Although Owen translates this word *caress* and BDB gives the meaning of the word as *conjugal caresses*, what we have here is the word that Isaac was named after—laughter—and most translators go with the translation that Isaac was sporting or laughing with Rebekah. However, this would not enough to cause Abimelech to realize that Isaac was married to Rebekah. What we likely have here is *playful, but familiar caresses* hidden behind this word. It might even be a matter of modesty on Isaac's part. He does not use a word which would be embarrassing to his wife (as his son will read this); however, he implies that was what was occurring by Abimelech's response.

This is actually a play on words here where the verb which is the basis for Isaac's name is used, and generally, it means *to play, to jest, to make fun of*. However, there appears to be another kind of meaning here which suggests intimacy. Since this is not how this word is usually used, we might understand this to be a euphemism—that is, the writer of Scripture (probably Isaac) does not come right out and say exactly what was occurring, but uses a nicer word which is understood by many; but it is a word that can be uttered out loud in public in mixed company. Often when speaking of sex, the Bible uses the verb *to lay, to lay down, to lay with*. This is a verb which can be used without any sort of sexual innuendo; however, in the right context, it can refer to having sex. In other words, the Bible does use euphemisms. When it comes to the translation, a euphemistic translation best captures the Hebrew of the Bible.

As Clarke puts it: *Whatever may be the precise meaning of the word, it evidently implies that there were liberties taken and freedom used on the occasion, which were not lawful but between man and wife.*<sup>96</sup>

Howard Hendricks: *Whatever this sport was, it's obvious that you don't play it with your sister. And Isaac was a real pro at the sport—in fact, the sport was named after the guy.*<sup>97</sup>

In any case, what Abimelech observes suggests a relationship between Isaac and Rebekah which was intimate beyond that of a brother and sister. Abimelech obviously has some kind of morality or else seeing Isaac caress his sister would not have been a cause for concern. This indicates that there was some form of accepted morality and standard of behavior. Isaac is flustered and put on the spot so his speech is stilted. He knows that he has done wrong to lie to these people who have treated him fairly and with respect. He does blurt out an honest response, however.

Genesis 26:8 *And it was when the days were long to him there that Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looks out through a window and, behold, he sees Isaac playing with Rebekah his wife.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:8 *Isaac lived there for many days. Abimelech, the Philistine king, looked out through a window and he suddenly saw Isaac playing with Rebekah his wife.* (Kukis paraphrase)

This also indicates that Abimelech is in close proximity to Isaac. Although Isaac appears to live in a tent throughout most of his life, it seems more likely that he lives in a house next door to Abimelech's palace. As one of the richest men in all of Gerar, it would make sense that Isaac lives in a place of honor.

Robert Dean: *It was typical that the king's house was higher than any other building in the town, so Abimelech could look down on everything from the vantage point of his roof, and he saw that Isaac was showing endearment to Rebekah his wife. It was obvious that the relationship was more than the relationship of a brother and a sister.*<sup>98</sup>

**And so calls Abimelech for Isaac and so he says, "Surely behold your woman she [is]; and how [could] you have said, 'My sister [is] she'? And so says unto him Isaac, "For I said, 'lest I die upon her.' "**

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26:9

**Abimelech called for Isaac and he said, "Indeed she [Rebekah] [is] your wife. How could you say, 'She [is] my sister'?" And Isaac said to him, "Because I thought [it was a good idea], so that I did not die because of her."**

**Abimelech summoned Isaac and said to him, "Surely this woman is your wife and not your sister. How could you have told us that she was your sister?" And Isaac answered him, "I thought I might die because of her."**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so calls Abimelech for Isaac and so he says, "Surely behold your woman she [is]; and how [could] you have said, 'My sister [is] she'? And so says unto him Isaac, "For I said, 'lest I die upon her.' "

<sup>96</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:8.

<sup>97</sup> From <http://www.fcsonline.org/content/1/sermons/011997m.pdf> accessed August 1, 2015.

<sup>98</sup> From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen120.htm> accessed July 26, 2015 (slightly edited).

Targum of Onkelos	And Abimelek called Izhak, and said, <u>Nevertheless</u> she is your wife; and why have you said, She is my sister? And Izhak answered him, Because I said <u>in my heart</u> , Lest they kill me on her account.
Latin Vulgate	And calling for him, he said: <u>It is evident</u> she is your wife: why didst you feign her to be your sister? He answered: I feared lest I should die for her sake.
Peshitta (Syriac)	So Abimeleck called Isaac, and said, Behold, she is your wife; how then did you say, She is my sister? And Isaac said to him, Because I said, Lest I may die on account of her.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Abimelech called Isaac, and said to him, Is she then your wife? Why have you said, She is my sister? And Isaac said to him, I did so, for I said, Lest <u>at any time</u> I should die on her account.
Significant differences:	The Greek leaves out <i>surely behold</i> . The Latin renders this <i>it is evident</i> ; the targum, <i>nevertheless</i> (both are reasonable translations). The targum adds <i>in my heart</i> . The Greek adds <i>at any time</i> .

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

God's Word™	Abimelech called for Isaac and said, "So she's really your wife! How could you say, 'She's my sister'?" Isaac answered him, "I thought I would be killed because of her."
Easy English	So Abimelech called Isaac. And Abimelech said, 'Look! She is your wife. Why did you say that she was your sister?' Isaac replied, 'I thought that you would kill me. So then you could take my wife into your house.'
The Message	Abimelech sent for Isaac and said, "So, she's your wife. Why did you tell us 'She's my sister'?" Isaac said, "Because I thought I might get killed by someone who wanted her."
New Simplified Bible	Abimelech called him in and said: »Rebekah must be your wife! Why did you say she is your sister?« »I thought someone would kill me,« Isaac answered.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	So Abimelech summoned Isaac and said, "She's your wife, isn't she? How could you say, 'She's my sister'?" Isaac responded, "Because I thought that I might be killed because of her."
Contemporary English V.	Abimelech called him in and said, "Rebekah must be your wife! Why did you say she is your sister?" "Because I thought someone would kill me," Isaac answered.
New Berkeley Version	Abimelech then summoned Isaac and said, "See here, she is really your wife. How could you say, 'She is my sister'?" Isaac told him, "Because I reasoned that else she might cost me my life."
New Century Version	Abimelech called for Isaac and said, "This woman is your wife. Why did you say she was your sister?" Isaac said to him, "I was afraid you would kill me so you could have her."
New Living Translation	Immediately, Abimelech called for Isaac and exclaimed, "She is obviously your wife! Why did you say, 'She is my sister'?" "Because I was afraid someone would kill me to get her from me," Isaac replied.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So, AbiMelech called IsaAc and asked him, 'Is she your woman? [And if so, then] why did you say she's your sister?'
International Standard V	So Abimelech called Isaac and confronted him. "She is definitely your wife!" he accused him, "So why did you claim, 'She's my sister?'" Isaac responded, "Because I had thought 'otherwise, I'll die on account of her.'"

New Advent Bible	Whereupon he summoned him, and said, It is plain enough, now, that she is thy wife, why didst thou pretend she was thy sister? I was afraid, he answered, that she might be the cause of my death.
Translation for Translators	So Abimelech summoned Isaac and said to him, "Now I realize that she is really your wife! So why did you say, 'She is my sister'?" Isaac replied to him, "I said that because I thought that someone here might kill me to get her."
Today's NIV	So Abimelech summoned Isaac and said, "She is really your wife! Why did you say, 'She is my sister'?" Isaac answered him, "Because I thought I might lose my life on account of her."

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Abimelech called Isaac, and said, "Behold, she's your woman! How can you say, 'However, she's my sister'?" Isaac said to him, "I said <i>it</i> , otherwise I <i>will</i> die over her."
Conservapedia	Abimelech called Isaac, and said, "Wait a minute: this woman is your wife, isn't she? So why did you say, 'She is my sister'?" And Isaac said, "I was afraid I might die on her account." Isaac said to him, "I was afraid you would kill me so you could have [thought I might die because of] her."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Abimalek therefore summoned Isaac, and said; "Now she is your wife! —then why did you say to me, 'she is my sister'?" And Isaac answered, "Because I said to myself, I fear they will kill me because of her."
HCSB	Abimelech sent for Isaac and said, "So she is really your wife! How could you say, 'She's my sister'?" Isaac answered him, "Because I thought I might die on account of her."
Lexham English Bible	And Abimelech called Isaac [Or "to Isaac"] and said, "Surely she [is] your wife. Now why did you say 'She [is] my sister'?" And Isaac said to him, "Because I thought I would die on account of her."

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Surely she is your wife, and why did you say, She is my sister? And Isaac said to him, Because I said, Lest I die for her.
New American Bible (R.E.)	He called for Isaac and said: "She must certainly be your wife! How could you have said, 'She is my sister'?" Isaac replied, "I thought I might lose my life on her account."
New RSV	So Abimelech called for Isaac, and said, 'So she is your wife! Why then did you say, "She is my sister"?' Isaac said to him, 'Because I thought I might die because of her.
Revised English Bible	He summoned Isaac and said, 'So she is your wife! What made you say she was your sister?' Isaac answered, 'I thought I should be put to death because of her.'

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Avimelekh summoned Yitz'chak and said, "So she is your wife, after all! How come you said, 'She is my sister'?" Yitz'chak responded, "Because I thought, 'I could get killed because of her.'"
exeGesés companion Bible	...and Abi Melech calls Yischaq and says, Behold, surely she is your woman: and how say you, She is my sister? And Yischaq says to him, Because, I say, Lest I die for her.

Kaplan Translation	Abimelekh summoned Isaac. 'But she is your wife!' he said. 'How could you have said that she is your sister?'
Orthodox Jewish Bible	'I was afraid that I would die because of her,' replied Isaac. And Avimelech called Yitzchak, and said, Hinei, of a surety she is thy isha; and why saidst thou, She is my achot? And Yitzchak said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die because of her.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And Abimelech called Isaac and said, See here, she is certainly your wife! How did you [dare] say to me, She is my sister? And Isaac said to him, Because I thought, Lest I die on account of her.
The Expanded Bible	Abimelech called for Isaac and said, "This woman is your wife. Why did you say she was your sister?"
NET Bible®	So Abimelech summoned Isaac and said, "She is really [Heb "Surely, look!" See N. H. Snaith, "The meaning of Hebrew `ak," VT 14 (1964): 221-25.] your wife! Why did you say, `She is my sister'?" Isaac replied, "Because I thought someone might kill me to get her [Heb "Because I said, `Lest I die on account of her.'" Since the verb "said" probably means "said to myself" (i.e., "thought") here, the direct discourse in the Hebrew statement has been converted to indirect discourse in the translation. In addition the simple prepositional phrase "on account of her" has been clarified in the translation as "to get her" (cf. v. 7).]."
The Pulpit Commentary	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 (sc. in my heart, or to myself), Lest I die for her.
The Voice	So Abimelech called Isaac to his court. <b>Abimelech:</b> I see that she is your wife! Why did you say then, "She is my sister"? <b>Isaac:</b> Because I thought I might die because of her!

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And calling is Abimelech Isaac and saying to him, "Yea, behold! Your wife is she! And how say you, `My sister is she'? And saying to him is Isaac, that, "I say it lest I die on her account.
Context Group Version	And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Look, certainly she's your woman {or wife}. And how have you said, She's my sister? And Isaac said to him, Because I said if I didn't I would die because of her.
English Standard Version	So Abimelech called Isaac and said, "Behold, she is your wife. How then could you say, 'She is my sister'?" Isaac said to him, "Because I thought, 'Lest I die because of her.'"
Green's Literal Translation	And Abimelech called Isaac and said, See, surely she <i>is</i> your wife, and how have you said, She <i>is</i> my sister? And Isaac said to him, Because I said, lest I die on account of her.
H. C. Leupold	And Abimelech summoned Isaac and said: Look here, she certainly is thy wife, and how is it that thou saidst: She is my sister? And Isaac said to him: (I did it) because I said: that I might not die on her account.
New King James Version	Then Abimelech called Isaac and said, "Quite obviously she is your wife; so how could you say, `She is my sister'?" Isaac said to him, "Because I said, `Lest I die on account of her.'"
World English Bible	Abimelech called Isaac, and said, "Behold, surely she is your wife. Why did you say, 'She is my sister'?" Isaac said to him, "Because I said, 'Lest I die because of her.'"
Young's Updated LT	And Abimelech calls for Isaac, and says, "Lo, she is surely your wife; and how have you said, She is my sister?" And Isaac says unto him, "Because I said, Lest I die for her."

**The gist of this verse:** Abimelech calls in Isaac and asks why he led them to believe that Rebekah was his sister and not his wife. Isaac said that he was worried that he would be killed for his wife.

Genesis 26:9a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i> ]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lamed]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
'Âbiymelek <sup>e</sup> (אֲבִימֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>u<sup>b</sup>-vee-MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>my father is Melek, my father is king; transliterated Abimelech</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #40 BDB #4
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ']	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Yis <sup>e</sup> châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced <i>yih<sup>s</sup>-KHAWK</i> ]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850

**Translation:** [Abimelech called for Isaac...](#) Or, better, [Abimelech summoned Isaac.](#)

More than likely this was done with some formality where some of the king's staff went to Isaac's home, banged on the door (or, whatever; depending upon Isaac's domicile), and said, "The king requests your presence—now." So Isaac goes to the king.

It is unclear as to how formal or informal the proceedings were. In any case, Isaac was hauled in before the king.

It is going to be clear that Abimelech does not have any personal animosity towards Isaac; however, he is now aware that Isaac had lied to him.

Genesis 26:9b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

Genesis 26:9b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'ak <sup>e</sup> (אָךְ) [pronounced ahk <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>surely, truly, certainly, no doubt, only, but; only now, just now, only this once; nothing but</i>	adverb of restriction, contrast, time, limitation, and exception. Also used as an affirmative particle	Strong's #389 BDB #36
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced hin-NAY]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
'îshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAW]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #802 BDB #61
hîy' (הִיא) [pronounced hee]	<i>she, it; also used as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>is</i> , is implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

**Translation:** ...and he said, "Indeed she [Rebekah] [is] your wife.

There is no doubt a bit of preliminary talk which occurs. It is not clear that Isaac saw Abimelech watching him, but Abimelech's knowledge of Isaac and Rebekah appears to be assumed at this point—indicating that there was likely some sort of mention made of it. The conclusion is, "Surely, Rebekah, the woman you said was your sister, is indeed your wife." It is this phrase which gives meaning to the word *playing* in the previous verse. It may not seem like much happened until Abimelech indicates that this is clearly the sort of behavior husbands and wives engage in. Again, this was probably a euphemistic use of this word.

Genesis 26:9c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êyk (אֵיךְ) [pronounced ayeche]	<i>how; where</i>	interrogative adverb; also used as an exclamation	Strong's #349 BDB #32
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'âchôwth (אָחוּת) [pronounced aw-KHOWTH]	<i>sister, half-sister; relative; beloved [bride]; figuratively of intimate connection; metaphorically for relationship between Israel and Judah; another</i>	feminine singular noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #269 BDB #27

## Genesis 26:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
hîy' (היא) [pronounced <i>hee</i> ]	<i>she, it;</i> also used as a demonstrative pronoun: <i>that, this (one)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>is</i> , is implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

**Translation:** How could you say, 'She [is] my sister?'

Therefore, Abimelech demands to know, "How could you tell me that Rebekah is your sister?" Abimelech is quite upset, which will be discussed in the next verse.

Abimelech is generally well-disposed toward Isaac. However, his anger and exasperation evidenced here are a result of his fondness for and respect of Isaac.

## Genesis 26:9d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'el (אל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i> ]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Yis'châq (ישׂחַק) [pronounced <i>yih'se-KHAWK</i> ]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
pen (פן) [pronounced <i>pen</i> ]	<i>lest, peradventure, or else, in order to prevent, or, so that [plus a negative]</i>	conjunction	Strong's #6435 BDB #814
mûwth (מוֹת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i> ]	<i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

Genesis 26:9d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
‘al (עַל) [pronounced gahl]	upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, because of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, with, by, besides, in addition to, to, toward, together with, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to	preposition of proximity with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

**Translation:** And Isaac said to him, “Because I thought [it was a good idea], so that I did not die because of her.”

Abraham used this dopey idea at least twice, and Isaac would have been aware of it, as these two stories were probably in his head as a part of the Scriptures of God.

We do not know if this is all that Isaac said. I inserted some text, as others have done. *To think* is the normal word to say. However, it is reasonably translated *I thought*. Isaac expresses his concern of being killed for his wife. This indicates that he has a fairly low opinion of these Philistines. They see a woman that they desire, so they will just kill the husband and take the wife. Essentially, he is saying that is what he was worried about.

Genesis 26:9 Abimelech called for Isaac and he said, “Indeed she [Rebekah] [is] your wife. How could you say, ‘She [is] my sister’?” And Isaac said to him, “Because I thought [it was a good idea], so that I did not die because of her.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:9 Abimelech summoned Isaac and said to him, “Surely this woman is your wife and not your sister. How could you have told us that she was your sister?” And Isaac answered him, “I thought I might die because of her.” (Kukis paraphrase)

Societies can be fluid in their morality. When we previously studied a similar situation with Abraham, it appeared as though the people of Gerar obeyed the laws of divine establishment and that they were believers in the Revealed Lord. Remember, at that point, we were close enough to the Great Flood that Shem, Ham and Japheth and their sons and grandsons were all still alive or only recently deceased. Therefore, there is no reason to assume that every society had fallen into a Sodom-like state. It is likely that the culture in the United States today is far more immoral than the culture of the Philistines back then (who are not related in any way to the Palestinians today).

Both Isaac and his father Abraham had a very negative opinion of Philistine culture. Both men believed that, if their marriage was known, Philistines would kill the husband and take their wives. Now, whereas it will become clear that the Philistines do have their moral shortcomings—including some sexual immorality—what Isaac and Abraham feared was baseless. Given what God had promised Abraham and Isaac, they did not need to fear for the safety of their wives at any time. Even though God specifically called Abraham and then Isaac; their wives were vital to the fulfillment of God’s promises to them.

**Application:** You need to know doctrine and the promises of God. Then you need to apply them in your daily life so that you are not afraid.

V. 9: Abimelech called for Isaac and he said, “Indeed she [Rebekah] [is] your wife. How could you say, ‘She [is] my sister’?” And Isaac said to him, “Because I thought [it was a good idea], so that I did not die because of her.” Dishonesty, in the Bible, is a serious transgression (unless it is counterinsurgency, and then lying is allowed). Isaac had prejudged his hosts as being heathenistic enough to kill him and take his wife. Here is the big problem with Isaac’s theory: God has promised his father, Abraham, a great posterity. Furthermore, God promised Isaac:

“Don’t go down to Egypt [because of the drought]; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you [that is, go to Gerar]. Remain in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father.” So, this incident reveals an underlying distrust by Isaac in the promises of God. Isaac has remained in the land, as God required of him. Therefore, Isaac should have no reason to fear. God has both given Isaac promises and direction; these things cannot conflict with one another.

**Application:** In this life, as believers, we have both promises and direction from God. They will *never* be in conflict with one another.

And so says Abimelech, “What [is] this you have done to us? As little has lain down one of the people with your woman and you have brought upon us guilt.”

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Abimelech then said, “What [is] this [that] you have done to us? Easily one of the people could have lain with your wife and you [would] have brought guilt upon us.”

Abimelech then said, “What have you done to us? It would have been easy for one of the people to have lain with your wife, thus bringing guilt upon this city.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Abimelech, “What [is] this you have done to us? As little has lain down one of the people with your woman and you have brought upon us guilt.”
Targum of Onkelos	And Abimelek said, Why have you done this to us? <u>It might have been that the king, who is the principal of the people</u> , had lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us.
Jerusalem targum	And Abimelek said to him, What is this that you have done to us? Very possibly might one of the young men have lain with your wife, and there would have been great guilt brought upon us.
Latin Vulgate	And Abimelech said: Why have you <u>deceived</u> us? Some man of the people might have lain with your wife, and you would have brought upon us a great sin. And he commanded all the people, saying:... There is no real difference in the Latin, apart from having a portion of v. 11 placed with v. 10.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Abimeleck said to him, What is this thing that you have done to us? One of the people might easily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought sin upon us.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Abimelech said to him, Why have you done this to us? One of my kindred might soon have lain with your wife, and you would have brought a sin of ignorance upon us.
Significant differences:	The Latin has <i>deceived</i> rather than <i>done</i> . The targum adds some additional text.

#### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Then Abimelech said, What have you done to us? one of the people might well have had connection with your wife, and the sin would have been ours.
Easy English	Abimelech said, ‘You have done a wrong thing to us. Someone might have had sex with your wife, and then we would have suffered because of our *sin.’
Easy-to-Read Version	Abimelech said, “You have done a bad thing to us. One of our men might have slept with your wife. Then he would be guilty of a great sin.”

Good News Bible (TEV)	"What have you done to us?" Abimelech said. "One of my men might easily have slept with your wife, and you would have been responsible for our guilt."
<i>The Message</i>	Abimelech said, "But think of what you might have done to us! Given a little more time, one of the men might have slept with your wife; you would have been responsible for bringing guilt down on us."
NIRV	Then Abimelech said, "What have you done to us? What if one of the men had sex with your wife? Then you would have made us guilty."
New Simplified Bible	»Do you know what you have done?« Abimelech shouted. »If someone had slept with her, you would have made our whole nation guilty!«

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Abimelech said, "What are you trying to do to us? Before long, one of the people would have slept with your wife; and you would have made us guilty."
Contemporary English V.	"Don't you know what you've done?" Abimelech exclaimed. "If someone had slept with her, you would have made our whole nation guilty!"
New Berkeley Version	Abimelech retorted, "What is this that you have done to us! One of my men might readily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us."
New Living Translation	"How could you do this to us?" Abimelech exclaimed. "One of my people might easily have taken your wife and slept with her, and you would have made us guilty of great sin."

#### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And Abimelech said, 'Why would you do such a thing to us? Before long, one of my relatives would have had [sex] with your woman, and you would have brought a sin upon us in our ignorance!'
International Standard V	"What have you done to us?" Abimelech asked. "Any minute now, one of the people could have had sex with your wife and you would have caused all of us to be guilty."
New Advent Bible	<sup>10</sup> What is this trick thou hast played on us? said Abimelech. One of my people might easily have dishonoured thy wife, and so thou wouldst have led us into grievous guilt. Then he issued his command to all his people, <sup>11</sup> If anyone touches this man's wife, his life must pay for it. Vv. 10–11 are placed together for context.
Translation for Translators	Abimelech said, "«You should not have done this to us!/Why did you do this?» [RHQ] One of our people might have «had sex with/slept with» [EUP] your wife, and you would have caused us to be guilty of a great sin!"

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Abimelech said, "Why do this to us? One of a few people <i>could have</i> laid with your woman, bringing a guilt-payment over us."
Conservapedia	Abimelech said, "What have you done to us? One of my people might have thought nothing of taking your wife to bed with him, and you would have brought guilt on us."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	"Why did you do this to us?" Abimelech said, "perhaps one of the people might have lain with your wife, and you would have brought sin upon us."
Lexham English Bible	And Abimelech said, "What [is] this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have slept with your wife! Then you would have brought guilt upon us!"
NIV – UK	Then Abimelech said, 'What is this you have done to us? One of the men might well have slept with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us.'

#### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And Abimelech said, What <i>is</i> this you did to us? Shortly one of the people would have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt on us.
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New American Bible	"How could you do this to us!" exclaimed Abimelech. "It would have taken very little for one of the men to lie with your wife, and you would have thus brought guilt upon us!"
New American Bible (R.E.)	"How could you have done this to us!" exclaimed Abimelech. "It would have taken very little for one of the people to lie with your wife, and so you would have brought guilt upon us!"
New Jerusalem Bible	Abimelech said, 'What a thing to do to us! One of the people might easily have slept with your wife. We should have incurred guilt, thanks to you.'

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Avimelekh said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the people could easily have slept with your wife, and you would have brought guilt on us!"
exeGesés companion Bible	And Abi Melech says, What is this you work to us? Had one of the people lain with your woman, you had brought guiltiness on us.
Kaplan Translation	'What have you done to us?' demanded Abimelekh. 'One of the people could easily have slept with your wife! You would have made us commit a terrible crime!'
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Avimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have slept with thy isha, and thou shouldest have brought asham (guilt) upon us.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And Abimelech said, What is this you have done to us? One of the men might easily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt <i>and</i> sin upon us.
The Expanded Bible	Abimelech said, "What have you done to us? One of our ·men [ <sup>L</sup> people] might have ·had sexual relations [lain] with your wife. Then ·we would have been guilty of a great sin [ <sup>L</sup> you would have brought guilt/punishment on us]."
The updated Geneva Bible	And Abimelech said, What [is] this you have done unto us? One of the people might lightly have lien with your wife, and you should have brought guiltiness upon us. In all ages men were persuaded that Gods vengeance would come on adulterers.
Kretzmann's Commentary	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. The reproof which Abimelech administered was well merited on Isaac's part, and his excuse that he feared to be put to death on her account was very lame. The Lord's promise is that He will keep those that trust in Him in all their ways, that is, as long as they conduct themselves in conformity with His Word. The weakness of Isaac is related as a warning to us.
NET Bible®	Then Abimelech exclaimed, "What in the world have you done to us [Heb "What is this you have done to us?" The Hebrew demonstrative pronoun "this" adds emphasis: "What in the world have you done to us?" (R. J. Williams, Hebrew Syntax, 24, §118).]? One of the men [Heb "people."] might easily have had sexual relations with [The Hebrew verb means "to lie down." Here the expression "lie with" or "sleep with" is euphemistic for "have sexual relations with."] your wife, and you would have brought guilt on us!"
The Pulpit Commentary	And Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lain with thy wife, literally, within a little (cf. Psalm 73:2 119:87) one of the people might have lain with thy wife and thou shouldest i.e. (within a little) thou mightest have brought (or caused to come) guiltiness upon us (cf. Genesis 20:9, where haFj is used instead of

Syndein/Thieme And Abimelech said, "What is this you have done unto us? One of the people might lightly have had sexual relations with your wife, and you should have brought guiltiness upon us."

The Voice **Abimelech:** <sup>10</sup>What's the matter with you? What have you done to us? One of my people might easily have slept with your wife. Then you would have brought great shame and guilt upon me and my kingdom!

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version And saying is Abimelech to him, "What is this you do to us? As if it were a little thing if one of my people lie with your wife and you bring the guilt upon us!"

Context Group Version And Abimelech said, What is this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have lain with your woman { or wife }, and you would have brought wickedness on us.

Green's Literal Translation And Abimelech said, What is this you have done to us? One of the people had in a little lain with your wife, and you would have brought on us guilt.

H. C. Leupold And Abimelech said: What, now, hast thou done to us? Quite easily some of the people might have lain with thy wife, and so thou wouldest have brought guilt upon us.

World English Bible Abimelech said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt on us!"

Young's Updated LT And Abimelech says, "What is this you have done to us? As a little thing one of the people had lain with your wife, and you had brought upon us guilt;"

**The gist of this verse:** Abimelech expresses deep concern that someone in his kingdom might have lain with Rebekah and have brought down great sin upon them all.

Genesis 26:10a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced waw]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'Ăbiymelek <sup>e</sup> (אבִּימֶלֶךְ) [pronounced u <sup>b</sup> -vee-MEH-lek]	my father is Melek, my father is king; transliterated Abimelech	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #40 BDB #4
mâh (מַה) [pronounced maw]	what, how, why; what [thing]; anything, something, whatever	interrogative; exclamatory particle; indefinite pronoun; relative pronoun	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
(1) Mâh can also be used as an exclamatory adverb <i>how</i> ; as in "How incredible is this place!" (Genesis 28:17b). (2) Mâh can also be used as an interrogatory adverb <i>how</i> to express that which is impossible, as in "How shall we justify ourselves?" (Genesis 44:16b). These two uses are often followed by an adjective or verb. (3) Mâh can also be used as an adverb of interrogation, meaning <i>why, wherefore</i> .			
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	here, this, this one; thus; possibly another	masculine singular demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260

## Genesis 26:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
I suspect that all 3 particles above combine to mean something together. Gesenius suggests <i>why then</i> ; various translators suggest <i>why [should]</i> ; <i>why [is] this</i> ; <i>why</i> . See <i>zeh</i> listings as well.			
‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

**Translation:** Abimelech then said, “What [is] this [that] you have done to us?”

Abimelech is complaining about the potential for harm to his people.

As mentioned before, *Abimelech* may simply be the title of a Philistine king, like *melek*. Therefore, this may or may not be the king Abraham met and tried to fool. Given that this takes place at least 60 or 80 years after Abraham's meeting (assuming this falls into a chronological order), this is likely a different king than Abraham met.

## Genesis 26:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
m <sup>e</sup> aṭṭ (מְעַט) [pronounced <i>m<sup>e</sup>-ṢAHT</i> ]	<i>a little, fewness, few</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4592 BDB #589
Together, the kaph preposition and m <sup>e</sup> aṭṭ mean <i>nearly, almost, within a little, shortly, quickly, suddenly; easily; scarcely, very little, very few</i> .			
shâkab (שָׁכַב) [pronounced <i>shaw-KAH<sup>B</sup>V</i> ]	<i>to lie down, to lie down [to sleep, to have sexual relations, to die; because of sickness or humiliation]; to relax</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7901 BDB #1011
’echâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced <i>eh-KHAWD</i> ]	<i>one, first, certain, only; each, every; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone</i>	numeral adjective; masculine singular construct	Strong's #259 BDB #25
’Echâd can function like an indefinite article, and be rendered <i>a certain [person, place or thing]</i> . ’Echâd can be used elliptically to mean <i>one time, once</i> .			
‘am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

## Genesis 26:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
This preposition can also refer to being in one's possession or in one's keeping. This can also mean <i>to proceed from someone</i> . The key to this word is <i>close association with, close proximity to</i> beyond simple geographical proximity.			
ʾîshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAW]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #802 BDB #61

**Translation:** Easily one of the people could have lain with your wife...

You will recall the previous Abimelech went about and collected wives. This Abimelech is concerned about the people of Gerar, that a man might have sexual relations with Rebekah.

Note what Abimelech does not say: "One of the men of this city might have taken Rebekah as his wife." So Abimelech is not talking about someone seeing Rebekah, falling in love with her, and then making her his wife. Abimelech is concerned that someone might have sex with Rebekah.

For the uninitiated, sex is not something which could just occur by accident; a Philistine does not accidentally have sex with Rebekah. This would have been a free will choice on the part of some Philistine. Therefore, we can draw some conclusions about this Philistine society: (1) premarital sex occurred and there was no great immorality attached to it; (2) adultery was forbidden; (3) the king understood that there might be a negative impact on Philistine society if someone committed adultery (which implies they he believed in judgment from God). These moral values seem to be very close to the **moral values of our society** (I write this in 2015).

Furthermore, logically, Rebekah would have said *no* to sex with some Philistine. So, how could this happen? How could someone of the Philistine population have had sex with her? What seems to be the suggestion here is, Rebekah could have been raped by one of Abimelech's subjects (very possibly, one of those in Abimelech's military). This suggests that there is less control at this point in time with this Abimelech compared to the one that Abraham knew. Hence, sexual immorality has spread to the people. You may wonder "Why does God disallow many wives to a king? He can support them, can he not?" The problem is, the immorality spreads from the king (in that day, the #1 celebrity of any city or state) to the people. So it is now 60 or more years later, and this king Abimelech is concerned about one of his people having non-consensual sex with Rebekah (that is, rape). His father apparently had several wives; and this very likely titillated the people and gave them more latitude in the sort of lifestyle they wanted to lead.

**Application:** What I have done is merely sketched out how a society might have retrogressed morally. We had the exact same thing in our society. When our commander-in-chief treated some type of sexual contact as not being sexual contact, this quickly spread throughout society—particularly to our young people. Statistics from the 2010's indicates that *each year, one in four teens contracts an STD/STI* and that *one in two sexually active persons will contract an STD/STI by age 25*.<sup>99</sup> I came from a generation where sexual contact in high school was quite rare.

<sup>99</sup> From <http://www.ashasexualhealth.org/stdsstis/statistics/> accessed July 12, 2015.

Genesis 26:10c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bôw' (בּוֹ) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to take in, to bring [near, against, upon], to come in with, to carry, to cause to come [in], to gather, to bring to pass</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah]</i>	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, because of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, with, by, besides, in addition to, to, toward, together with, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to</i>	preposition of proximity with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
'âshâm (אָשָׁם) [pronounced <i>aw-SHAWM</i> ]	<i>guilt, fault, blame, responsibility [for sinful actions]; a guilt-offering; possibly this word can apply to the actions for which one is guilty (trespass, offense)</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #817 BDB #79

**Translation:** ...and you [would] have brought guilt upon us.”

Here is why he is concerned; he understands that guilt might be brought upon them. So he understands the danger here of a national judgment. He has learned this both from his father and from the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. I can guarantee that every person in that region was aware of Sodom and Gomorrah and the wrath of the Revealed God. So this king is seriously concerned about this guilt.

Abimelech reveals even a higher regard for morality. He understands that it is wrong to commit adultery, which puts him ahead of many people today who are *more evolved* and he understands that there is more to it than just simple adultery to Isaac. Otherwise, he could slough it off as it was Isaac's fault for not being straight with him. However, Abimelech has a higher concern that even committing the act in ignorance would result in guilt.

*Griffith-Thomas: Like his predecessor before him Abimelech was a man of uprightness, for he very plainly rebuked Isaac and reminded him of the serious consequences that might have accrued to him and to Rebekah if the facts of the case had not become known. Is there anything sadder in this world than that a child of God should be rebuked by a man of the world?*<sup>100</sup>

It is also very likely that Abimelech knows, probably from his father, the Abimelech that Abraham met, that there were consequences to mess with the line of Abraham. His father and he both believe this. They knew Abraham, they knew the power of God, and making a mistake like this concerned them greatly.

However, you will note at the same time that this king appears to be unable to do what would be necessary to keep a rape from occurring in his realm. Although it is not an everyday occurrence, it is obviously of great concern to this king. That suggests that a rape would not be the odd occurrence.

<sup>100</sup> From [http://preceptaustin.org/genesis\\_devotional\\_commentary.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/genesis_devotional_commentary.htm) (Genesis 26); accessed August 2, 2015.

Abimelech reveals that he has a very clear sense of right and wrong. In the ancient world, unlike today, even heathen understood the importance of marriage and fidelity. Knowing that this woman was Isaac's wife would have automatically made her off limits to the males of that city. This indicates that this place was not nearly as heathenistic as Isaac believed it to be. Abimelech also believed that there would possibly be retribution brought upon them, had any of them laid with Rebekah. What this suggests is, there was a firm morality in Gerar—some of it based upon a fear of God—but there has been some loosening up of sexual mores. Abimelech is acknowledging here both respect for marriage and a disdain for lying, but he also leaves open the idea of a sexual union outside of marriage (which might even include rape).

Obviously, Rachel would not have personally consented to a sexual relationship outside of her marriage, whether they lied about their marriage or not. So, if one of the people had relations with her, that would have been forced.

Genesis 26:10 Abimelech then said, "What [is] this [that] you have done to us? Easily one of the people could have lain with your wife and you [would] have brought guilt upon us." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:10 Abimelech then said, "What have you done to us? It would have been easy for one of the people to have lain with your wife, thus bringing guilt upon this city." (Kukis paraphrase)

In any case, Abimelech being concerned about guilt being brought upon the city, suggests that these people feared God as well. He understood then—better than people do today—that the immoral acts of a society can have consequences for that society. In other words, he understood that God does judge and that He does discipline cities and nations as a whole. And he fully understood that taking the wife of a man of God could be disastrous.

Clarke concurs, writing: *Abimelech was a good and holy man; and he appears to have considered adultery as a grievous and destructive crime.*<sup>101</sup>

J. Ligon Duncan: *[N]otice that Abimelech's respect for marriage shows us the power and the reality of the light of conscience. Abimelech didn't have the Bible. Abimelech had no scriptures. Abimelech had no weekly worship service where the law of God was propounded. But Abimelech knew that marriage was a sacred relationship and it ought not be violated. And he was afraid that his people might violate it. And so he calls in Isaac and he rebukes him. Isn't this a testimony to the power and the reality of the light of conscience God has written His law on all our hearts? Isn't this a testimony of the law of nature and of nature's God? Isn't this a testimony to the reality of what Paul speaks of in Romans 2:15 when he says that God has written his law on our hearts? That's exactly what we're seeing in Abimelech. He has no Bible, but he knows that marriage ought to be respected...though Abimelech has no Bible, he knows right from wrong. The ultimate source of morality is found in the Creator God. And that standard of morality which is set by the very character of the Creator God is not only revealed to us in the Bible, but God tells us in the Bible that he writes it on our hearts. And so even Abimelech knows right from wrong.*

Duncan then adds: *it is a testimony to the depths of our depravity in modern America that we, at least our culture around us, doesn't think that marriage needs to be respected and even this Philistine knew that marriage ought to be respected.*<sup>102</sup>

Interestingly enough, in our American society today (I write this in 2015), adultery is still seen by most people as immoral (93%) and sex between unmarried couples is not (67% approve). So our society is not dramatically different from the Philistine society of Abimelech.

<sup>101</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:10.

<sup>102</sup> From [First Presbyterian Church](#); accessed July 30, 2015.

vv. 9–10: Abimelech called for Isaac and he said, “Indeed she [Rebekah] [is] your wife. How could you say, ‘She [is] my sister?’” And Isaac said to him, “Because I thought [it was a good idea], so that I did not die because of her.” Abimelech then said, “What [is] this [that] you have done to us? Easily one of the people could have lain with your wife and you [would] have brought guilt upon us.”

### The Thinking of Abimelech

1. There are two sins which Abimelech clearly understands: lying is wrong and adultery is wrong. Modern Americans agree with the latter; it is questionable how much they agree with the former.
2. The Apostle Paul says that even unbelievers have an inner moral code: Rom. 2:14–15 **For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them...** (ESV)
3. Abimelech also recognizes that, if someone from Gerar took Rebekah and had sex with her, this would bring divine discipline upon his people. Americans sin in a variety of ways, many feeling no guilt or apprehension for what they have done. The modern-day gay movement actually glorifies their sins and pushes for others to accept their actions as normal behavior.
4. Abimelech appears to be genuinely concerned for his people.
5. This proceeds from his statement indicating concern for the guilt that would be brought upon his people. We can infer from this statement that Abimelech believes in God (and later passages will indicate that he believes in Abraham and Isaac’s God).
6. Interestingly enough, he also appears to recognize that sex apart from marriage, and rape, are a part of his peoples’ norms. Rape would have been the only way that someone from Gerar would have lain with Rebekah.
7. In the next verse, Abimelech will issue an order to his people, forbidding them from touching Isaac’s wife. This indicates that God is protecting Isaac and Rebekah through Abimelech; and that Abimelech is a leader who can be trusted.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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**And so charges Abimelech all the people to say, “The one touching [or, *violating*] in the man the this and in his woman, dying he will be made to die.”**

Genesis  
26:11

**Abimelech issued an edict to [lit., *ordered*] all the people, [which] said, “Anyone touching [or, *violating*] this man or his wife, will surely be executed.”**

**Abimelech ordered his people, saying, “If anyone touches or violates this man or his wife, he will certainly be executed.”**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so charges Abimelech all the people to say, “The one touching [or, *violating*] in the man the this and in his woman, dying he will be made to die.”

Targum of Onkelos

And Abimelek instructed all the people, Whoever shall go near to injure this man or his wife, shall verily be put to death.

Latin Vulgate

[And he commanded all the people, saying:] He that shall touch this man's wife, shall surely be put to death. What is in brackets is part of v. 10 in the Latin.

Peshitta (Syriac)

And Abimeleck charged all the people, saying, Whoever harms this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.

Septuagint (Greek)                   And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, Every man that touches this man and his wife shall be liable to death.

Significant differences:           The targum leaves out *to say*. In the Hebrew, the man and woman are treated as two people; in the Latin, we have *the man's wife* instead.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English                            So Abimelech warned all the people, 'Do not touch this man or this woman. Otherwise I will have someone kill you.'

Easy-to-Read Version                So Abimelech gave a warning to all the people. He said, "No person must hurt this man or this woman. If any person hurts them, then that person will be killed."

*The Message*                         Then Abimelech gave orders to his people: "Anyone who so much as lays a hand on this man or his wife dies."

NIRV                                      So Abimelech gave orders to all of the people. He said, "You can be sure that anyone who harms this man or his wife will be put to death."

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

New Living Translation              Then Abimelech issued a public proclamation: "Anyone who touches this man or his wife will be put to death!"

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible              So, AbiMelech gave a command to all his people, saying, 'Any man who touches this man or his woman will die!'

International Standard V             So he issued this order to everyone: "Whoever touches this man or his wife is to be executed."

Translation for Translators         Then Abimelech commanded all his people, saying, "Do not harm/molest this man or his wife! Anyone who does that will surely be executed!"

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear          Abimelech commanded all his people, saying, "Touch this man and his woman and ||die||!"

Conservapedia                         Abimelech instructed his people, saying, "Anyone who touches this man or his wife will incur a sentence of execution." The Hebrew repeats the concept of "put to death" for emphasis.

HCSB                                      So Abimelech warned all the people with these words: "Whoever harms this man or his wife will certainly die."

Lexham English Bible                 Then Abimelech instructed all the people, saying, "The [one who] touches this man or his wife shall certainly die."

NIV – UK                                 So Abimelek gave orders to all the people: 'Anyone who harms this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.'

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible                    And Abimelech spoke to all his people, saying, Anyone touching this man and his wife, he, being put to death, shall be put to death.

New American Bible                  Abimelech therefore gave this warning to all his men: "Anyone who molests this man or his wife shall forthwith be put to death."

New American Bible (R.E.)          Abimelech then commanded all the people: "Anyone who maltreats this man or his wife shall be put to death."

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

exeGesés companion Bible	And Abimelech misvahs all his people, saying, Whoever touches this man or his woman in deathifying, deathify him.
Kaplan Translation	Abimelekh issued an order to all the people: 'Whoever touches this man or his wife shall die.'
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Avimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his isha shall surely be put to death.

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

The Expanded Bible	So Abimelech ·warned [commanded] ·everyone [all the people], "Anyone who touches this man or his wife will be put to death."
Kretzmann's Commentary	And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death. The bad experience of the people in the king's house upon the occasion of Abraham's sojourn in Gerar, although three fourths of a century ago, had not been forgotten, hence the strictness of the in junction on Abimelech's part, which obtained for both Isaac and Rebekah the greatest security, the Lord thus holding His protecting hand over them in spite of their weakness.
NET Bible®	So Abimelech commanded all the people, "Whoever touches [Heb "strikes." Here the verb has the nuance "to harm in any way." It would include assaulting the woman or killing the man.] this man or his wife will surely be put to death [The use of the infinitive absolute before the imperfect makes the construction emphatic]."
The Voice	(warning his people) Whoever so much as touches this man or his wife will be put to death. Isaac repeats the ruse his father used in Egypt and Gerar many years earlier. Abraham told another Abimelech (likely the father or grandfather of this Philistine king) that Sarah was his sister to avoid being killed. Isaac tries the same trick for the same reason but is soon found out. Many rulers in that day would have killed or severely punished a man for telling such tales and jeopardizing their reign. Somehow, however, Abraham and Isaac not only survive, but they grow rich from the experiences.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

English Standard Version	So Abimelech warned all the people, saying, "Whoever touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death."
Green's Literal Translation	And Abimelech commanded all the people, saying, Anyone touching this man and his wife dying shall die.
H. C. Leupold	And Abimelech gave orders to all his people, saying: He that toucheth this man or his wife shall without fail be put to death.
Third Millennium Bible	And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, "He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death."
World English Bible	Abimelech charged all the people, saying, "He who touches this man or his wife will surely be put to death."
Young's Updated LT	And Abimelech commands all the people, saying, "He who comes against this man or against his wife, dying does die."

**The gist of this verse:** The king warns his people not to disturb this family; and if they do, they face the death penalty.

Genesis 26:11a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
tsâvâh (צוּ) [pronounced tsaw-VAW]	<i>to commission, to mandate, to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge, command, order; to instruct [as in, giving an order]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #6680 BDB #845
ʾĂbiymelek <sup>e</sup> (אָבִימֶלֶךְ) [pronounced u <sup>p</sup> -vee-MEH-lek]	<i>my father is Melek, my father is king; transliterated Abimelech</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #40 BDB #4
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʿam (עַם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

**Translation:** Abimelech issued an edict to [lit., ordered] all the people,...

Abimelech issues an order. In that day, a king could issue whatever decree he wanted to at any time. Kings had to be careful about this; they could not issue orders willy nilly, or that could threaten their power. In fact, this explains a portion of Esther, where a king issued an order, which meant that he could not just change his mind and retract that order. That would be a bad idea. It would indicate that he was not smart enough to issue the correct order in the first place.

In any case, this man was fully able to issue orders that could be depended upon; and he knew from the beginning that he needed to make sure that Isaac and Rebekah were never harmed.

This strikes me as an interesting order, in this way: the king does not give a blanket ban on rape or harassment; but makes these specific the Isaac and Rebekah. This suggests to me that he is not strong enough to enforce a complete ban on such crimes; or that his society is beginning to disintegrate. However, he himself recognizes the importance of and blessing in association with Isaac, Abraham's son. An individual ban here is enforceable.

Genesis 26:11b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

Genesis 26:11b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
nâga' (נָגַע) [pronounced naw-GAHG]	<i>the one touching, the person reaching into; whoever is violating, injuring; coming to a person</i>	Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #5060 BDB #619
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural) with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'îshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAW]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #802 BDB #61
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced mooth]	<i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed</i>	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced mooth]	<i>to be executed, to be killed, to be assassinated</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hophal imperfect; pausal form	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

**Translation:** ...[which] said, “Anyone touching [or, violating] this man or his wife, will surely be executed.”

Execution is the result. Now, we do not know if this statement of execution is patterned after what is said in Genesis 2 (it is a different form of the second verb). However, this does follow the verb pattern from Genesis 2, which suggests possibly that this man even was aware of Scripture.

Abimelech reveals great morality and accuracy in dealing with people and protects both Isaac and his wife. He probably realizes that Isaac does have a certain *in* with God, which results in discipline and local devastation if the people of that area retaliate or cause Isaac any grief.

One would think that rape, in general, was outlawed. However, it appears as though it were not. It is quite likely that this Abimelech knew all about Abraham and knew about the blessing that Gerar received due to a relationship with Abraham. He would have also known about the worries that his father suffered due to taking Sarah (Abraham's wife) into this harem. So, Abimelech declares a ban on raping this one particular woman.

Genesis 26:11 Abimelech issued an edict to [lit., *ordered*] all the people, [which] said, "Anyone touching [or, *violating*] this man or his wife, will surely be executed." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:11 Abimelech ordered his people, saying, "If anyone touches or violates this man or his wife, he will certainly be executed." (Kukis paraphrase)

Gill writes: *that does any injury to one either by words or deeds, or behaves immodestly to the other, or attempts to ravish her; this being sometimes used as a modest expression carnal knowledge of a woman; or that does either of them any harm or hurt in any respect whatever.*<sup>103</sup>

Scott Grant: *Abimelech, speaking of the guilt that would have been incurred by someone who had lain with Rebekah, demonstrates moral sensitivities by the king of the "this place" that take Isaac by surprise. He even acts to protect Isaac and Rebekah, raising the specter of a death sentence for anyone who harms either of them. Isaac was worried that being straightforward would lead to his death. Now the threat of death is applied to anyone who harms him or Rebekah. If he had been straightforward in the first place, such protection would have been his [from the start].*<sup>104</sup>

Abimelech makes it known that Isaac is married to Rebekah and that they are not to be bothered. This tells us that the Philistines not only had a healthy respect for marriage, but they also knew about the Jews and the God of the Jews (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were not necessarily called *Jews* at this time). Abimelech knew that they did not want to be judged by the God of Abraham and Isaac (or, they understood Abraham's God to be the True God).

Clarke: *Death was the punishment for adultery among the Canaanites, Philistines, and Hebrews.*<sup>105</sup>

Let's look at these 3 verses: *When he had been there a long time, Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out of a window and saw Isaac laughing with Rebekah his wife. So Abimelech called Isaac and said, "Behold, she is your wife. How then could you say, 'She is my sister'?" Isaac said to him, "Because I thought, 'Lest I die because of her.'" Abimelech said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us." So Abimelech warned all the people, saying, "Whoever touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death." Gen 26:8–11; ESV)*

### Snider Summarizes Genesis 26:8–11

1. Isaac and Rebekah have spent no small amount of time in Gerar, perpetrating this lie that they are not married.
2. Every day the pressure on Isaac would have been the same, worrying about whether or not he might die.
3. Some people put themselves under a particular test, and rather than deal with it, they keep themselves under the same pressure day after day.
4. Isaac is under self induced misery, lying to save his own skin.
5. This manifests a lack of faith in God, by resorting to this lie to supposedly ensure his safety.
6. Isaac has received specific promises about his line; he is also related to Abraham, so he knows that he can trust God about the future.
7. When you are under a particular test day in and day out, you ought to consider the fact that you may be the source of your own problem.
8. There may be some issue of doctrine you have been avoiding or failing to apply which causes you to be under constant pressure.
9. The pressure for you, like Isaac, will not go away until the issue is dealt with.
10. After an extended period, Isaac's sex drive gets the best of him and he meets Rebekah for some intimate recreation.

<sup>103</sup> Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:11.

<sup>104</sup> From [http://www.pbc.org/system/message\\_files/99650/4866.pdf](http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99650/4866.pdf) accessed August 2, 2015.

<sup>105</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:11.

### Snider Summarizes Genesis 26:8–11

11. He supposes that he is safely out of eyesight and begins foreplay with his wife.
12. He is spotted by the ruler of the Philistines, who may have been suspicious before this.
13. He observes them through a window doing that which brother and sister obviously do not do.
14. He formally summons Isaac to him, and interrogates him.
15. He asks Isaac what he was thinking that could have made him do such a dangerous and stupid thing.
16. Isaac replies that he was in fear of being killed, since Rebekah was such an attractive woman.
17. This is the answer of a wimp who basically says that I would rather endanger my wife than myself.
18. Abimelech delivers a well deserved rebuke, pointing out that someone may have attempted to have sex with his wife, and that was not acceptable behavior in their kingdom.
19. The Philistines still appear to be establishment and recognize that sex with a married woman is not acceptable behavior.
20. After dealing with Isaac, the king gives a command to the entire kingdom, stating that no one is to bother Isaac or Rebekah in any way.
21. As the absolute ruler in the kingdom, the king has the right to make and enforce laws.
22. The purpose of laws should be to protect person, privacy and property of individuals in that kingdom.
23. He states in no uncertain terms that anyone who attempts to harm Isaac or his wife in any way will die without fail. This means, the penalty for adultery is death.

Ron Snider, [Genesis 26](#), accessed July 26, 2015 (edited and appended).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Abraham had been in the land for 25 years and had Isaac; and Isaac was 75 or older at this time. So, for at least a period of 100 years, Abraham and/or Isaac have been in the land; and the Philistines were well aware of them and their God.

This tells us that many of the heathen in the land were moral and feared God. However, they were not above covetousness. This is the chink in their armor.

Now let's take a look at this passage and at God's promises: Gen 26:2–4 [And the LORD appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father. I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed,..."](#) And this passage reads: Abimelech said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us." So Abimelech warned all the people, saying, "Whoever touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death." (Gen 26:10–11; ESV; capitalized) God sees to it that Isaac is protected and prospered. There needs to be a genetic connection between Abraham and the Lord Jesus Christ. This cannot happen if Rebekah is taken by some heathen. God guided Isaac to a place where he and his wife would be protected, even though Isaac is dishonest with his host. There can be no question about the line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (which is another reason why the other lines are followed out in a limited way).

*Ballinger: The upshot of this incident was a royal decree that had the effect of securing special protection for Isaac and Rebekah during their residency in Gerar (v. 11). He made it a capital offense for anyone to harm/molest in any fashion Isaac and his wife during their stay there. As God had promised, He was protecting and blessing them even though Isaac had sinned against his gracious host.<sup>106</sup>*

<sup>106</sup> From <http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/Gen26.htm> accessed July 23, 2015.

## The Jealousy of the Philistines

Vv. 12–13 are being taken together. The general idea behind v. 13 I believe is fairly obvious; however, a smooth literal translation is not.

And so sows Isaac in the land the that and so he finds in a year the that a hundred-fold. And so blesses him Y<sup>e</sup>howah. And so becomes great the man and so he goes going and becoming great above that he became great very.

Genesis  
26:12–13

Isaac sowed [seed] in that land and he discovered that year [that he reaped] a hundredfold. Therefore Y<sup>e</sup>howah is blessing him. So the man became great and advancing [in life] he advances. Becoming great he surely became very great [or, *he became greatly celebrated and valued*].

Isaac sowed seed in that land and reaped a hundredfold, indicating that Jehovah was blessing him. So he became great in life, making progress and advancing further. As he became great, he was greatly celebrated and valued.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so sows Isaac in the land the that and so he finds in a year the that a hundred-fold. And so blesses him Y <sup>e</sup> howah. And so becomes great the man and so he goes going and becoming great above that he became great very.
Targum of Onkelos	And Izhak sowed unto righteousness in that land, and found in that year a hundred for one, according to his measure. And the Lord blessed him, and the man increased, and went forward increasing until he was very great.
Latin Vulgate	And Isaac sowed in that land, and he found that same year a hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him. And the man was enriched, and he went on prospering and increasing, till he became exceeding great.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year a hundredfold; and the LORD blessed him. And the man became great, and went forward and grew until he became very great.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Isaac sowed in that land, and he found <u>barley</u> in that year, and reaped one hundred fold, and the Lord blessed him. And the man prospered, and continued prospering, till he became very great.
Significant differences:	The word <i>barley</i> in the Greek is not found in the Hebrew (or in any of the ancient translations).

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Now Isaac, planting seed in that land, got in the same year fruit a hundred times as much, for the blessing of the Lord was on him. And his wealth became very great, increasing more and more;...
Easy English	Isaac sowed seed in that country. And he harvested a hundred times as much in the same year. The *Lord *blessed him. Isaac became rich. And he got richer and richer. He became very rich.
Easy-to-Read Version	Isaac planted fields in that place. And that year he gathered a great harvest. The Lord blessed him very much. Isaac became rich. He gathered more and more wealth until he became a very rich man.

<i>God's Word™</i>	Isaac planted crops in that land. In that same year he harvested a hundred times as much as he had planted because the LORD had blessed him. He continued to be successful, becoming very rich.
<i>The Message</i>	Isaac planted crops in that land and took in a huge harvest. GOD blessed him. The man got richer and richer by the day until he was very wealthy.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	<b>Isaac's treaty with the Philistines</b> Isaac planted grain in that land and reaped one hundred shearim[a] that year because the Lord had blessed him. Isaac grew richer and richer until he was extremely wealthy.
Contemporary English V.	Isaac planted grain and had a good harvest that same year. The LORD blessed him, and Isaac was so successful that he became very rich.
New Berkeley Version	Isaac sowed his crop in that land and that year he harvested a hundredfold; the LORD blessed him. He became a rich man and continued prospering until he grew so very wealthy,...
New Century Version	<b>Isaac Becomes Rich</b> Isaac planted seed in that land, and that year he gathered a great harvest. The Lord blessed him very much, and he became rich. He gathered more wealth until he became a very rich man.
New Living Translation	<b>Conflict over Water Rights</b> When Isaac planted his crops that year, he harvested a hundred times more grain than he planted, for the Lord blessed him. He became a very rich man, and his wealth continued to grow.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then IsaAc planted grain in the land, and that year the barley produced a hundred times [more than what he had planted]. So, Jehovah had blest him. This man was highly regarded and he continued to prosper, so he became very wealthy.
Beck's American Translation	Isaac sowed a crop in that country, and that year he reaped a hundredfold—the LORD was blessing him. He was more and more successful till he became a very rich man,...
International Standard V	<b>Isaac Grows Wealthy</b> Isaac received a 100-fold return on what he planted that year in the land he received [Lit. <i>found</i> ], because the LORD blessed him. He [Lit. <i>The man</i> ] became very wealthy and lived a life of wealth [Lit. <i>and walked</i> ], becoming more and more wealthy.
New Advent Bible	<sup>12</sup> In this country, Isaac began growing crops; and in that first year they yielded a hundredfold; such was the Lord's blessing on him. <sup>13</sup> Thus he became rich, and went on prospering more and more, until he rose to great influence; <sup>14</sup> flocks of sheep were his, and herds of cattle, and a great retinue. A portion of v. 14 was included for context.
Translation for Translators	<b>The Philistines argued with Abraham about wells</b> Isaac planted grain in that land that year, and he harvested a very large crop, because Yahweh blessed him. Isaac continued to acquire more and more possessions, until finally he became very wealthy.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Isaac sowed in that land, calculating to find that year a hundredfold blessing from Yahweh to him. The man grew, and went going and growing until he grew a hundredfold.
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Conservapedia	Isaac sowed barley in that land, and in that year he reaped a hundredfold harvest. And the LORD blessed him. The man grew great, and went forward, and grew in wealth until he was very great indeed.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	<del>Isaac Goes to Bashan and Elsewhere</del> Isaac, however, removed from that country, and went to Bashan, he and his possessions, and the EVER-LIVING prospered him. Thus the man traveled about and increased until he was very great. I do not have a clue where this Bashan stuff comes from.
Lexham English Bible	And Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in that [same] year a hundredfold, and Yahweh blessed him. And the man {became wealthier and wealthier} [Literally "became great and went, going and became great"] until he was exceedingly wealthy.

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	Then Isaac sowed in that land, and there came forth to him a hundredfold in the same year, and Jehovah knelt down with goodness to him. And the man became great, and walking, walked on growing greatly until he grew exceedingly great; And to him were livestock of flocks, and livestock of herds, and abundant servants, and the Palestinians envied him. V. 14 is included for context.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Isaac sowed a crop in that region and reaped a hundredfold the same year. Since the LORD blessed him, he [Jb 1:3.] became richer and richer all the time, until he was very wealthy. [26:12-33] The dispute is over water rights. In a sparsely watered land, wells were precious and claims on water could function as a kind of claim on the land. Scholars generally judge the account of the dispute over water rights and its settlement by a legal agreement between Isaac and Abimelech to be a Yahwist version of the similar story about Abraham in 21:22-34. Here, Abimelech realizes that Isaac has brought blessing to his people and thus desires a covenant with him. The feast in v. 30 is part of the covenant ceremony.
New Jerusalem Bible	Isaac sowed his crops in that country, and that year he reaped a hundredfold. Yahweh blessed him and the man became rich; he prospered more and more until he was very rich indeed.
New RSV	Isaac sowed seed in that land, and in the same year reaped a hundredfold. The Lord blessed him, and the man became rich; he prospered more and more until he became very wealthy.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Yitz'chak planted crops in that land and reaped that year a hundred times as much as he had sowed. ADONAI had blessed him. The man became rich and prospered more and more, until he had become very wealthy indeed.
exeGesés companion Bible	Then Yischaq seeds in that land and in the same year finds a hundredfold: and Yah Veh blesses him. And the man greatens and in walking, he walks; and in greatening, he greatens:...
Kaplan Translation	Isaac farmed in the area. That year, he reaped a hundred times [as much as he sowed], for God had blessed him. This was the beginning of his prosperity. He then continued to prosper until he became extremely wealthy.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Then Yitzchak sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundredfold; and Hashem blessed him. And the man became very prosperous, and went forward, and grew until he became gadol me'od:...

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Then Isaac sowed seed in that land and received in the same year a hundred times as much as he had planted, and the Lord favored him with blessings. And the man became great and gained more and more until he became very wealthy and distinguished;...
The Expanded Bible	<b>Isaac Becomes Rich</b> Isaac planted seed in that land, and that year he gathered a great harvest [a hundredfold]. The Lord blessed him very much, <sup>13</sup> and he [the man] became rich. He gathered more wealth [grew richer and richer] until he became a very rich man.
Kretzmann's Commentary	Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold; and the Lord blessed him. That was an extraordinary blessing of the Lord that Isaac literally found a hundred measures for every measure of grain sowed by him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great. There was no stop, no interruption in his progress in accumulating wealth.
NET Bible®	When Isaac planted in that land, he reaped in the same year a hundred times what he had sown [Heb "a hundredfold."], because the Lord blessed him [This final clause explains why Isaac had such a bountiful harvest.]. The man became wealthy [Heb "great." In this context the statement refers primarily to Isaac's material wealth, although reputation and influence are included.]. His influence continued to grow [Heb "and he went, going and becoming great." The construction stresses that his growth in possessions and power continued steadily.] until he became very prominent.
The Pulpit Commentary	And the man waxed great, like his father before him (cf. Genesis 24:1, Genesis 24:35) and went forward, literally, went going, the verb followed by the infinitive expressing constant growth or progressive increase (cf. Genesis 8:3 Genesis 12:9; Jude 1:4:24) and grew until he became very great any other farmer would who reaped such harvests" ("Land and Book").
The Voice	<sup>12</sup> Isaac settled in and made a place for himself in the land, sowing seeds and reaping one hundred times what he had planted that year. The Eternal One indeed put a blessing on him, <sup>13</sup> and Isaac became very rich. He prospered more and more until he became enormously wealthy.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	And sowing is Isaac in that land and is finding in that year a hundredfold of barley. And blessing him is Yahweh. And great is growing the man. And going is he to go on and grow greater, till he is great exceedingly.
English Standard V. – UK	And Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. The Lord blessed him, and the man became rich, and gained more and more until he became very wealthy.
H. C. Leupold	<b>(b) His Prosperity (v. 12-17)</b> And Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped that year a hundred fold; and so Yahweh blessed him. And the man prospered and kept right on and prospered until he was exceedingly prosperous.
New King James Version	<sup>12</sup> Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundredfold; and the Lord blessed him. <sup>13</sup> The man began to prosper, and continued prospering until he became very prosperous; <sup>14</sup> for he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and a great number of servants. A portion of v. 14 was included for context.
Third Millennium Bible	Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year a hundredfold; and the LORD blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great.

Young's Updated LT

And Isaac sows in that land, and finds in that year a hundredfold, and Jehovah blesses him; and the man is great, and goes on, going on and becoming great, till that he has been very great.

**The gist of this verse:**

God greatly blesses Isaac in the land.

Genesis 26:12a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
zâra' (זָרָא) [pronounced <i>zaw-RAH</i> ]	<i>to scatter, to disperse [seed], to sow, to produce [seed], to yield [seed]; metaphorically to sow [justice, injustice, good, evil]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2232 BDB #281
Yis <sup>e</sup> châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced <i>yihse-KHAWK</i> ]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i> ]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75
hîy' (הִיא) [pronounced <i>hee</i> ]	<i>she, it; also used as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>is</i> , is implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

**Translation:** Isaac sowed [seed] in that land...

Isaac either was a farmer or he became a farmer. You may recall that Abraham, his father, appeared to be more of a rancher; and that Ishmael, his older half brother, became a great hunter. Isaac probably began as a herdsman and rancher, and here he appears to be branching out into farming. Although there is no indication that he had a knack for farming, here, he appears to. Obviously, this is a result of God's blessing him.

Isaac is the only patriarch who is said to plant crops.

This appears to be the first time that farming is specifically spoken of in Scripture. I cannot think of a previous instance.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>107</sup> Coffman points this out, citing H. M. Morris.

Genesis 26:12b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mâtsâ' (מצא) [pronounced maw-TSAW]	<i>to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover; to meet (encounter)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
<i>To find, to discover is used to mean to receive, to obtain.</i> <sup>108</sup>			
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
shânâh (שנה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
Shânâh repeated with the bêyth preposition in between indicates a circle or a return; the idea is, this means <i>yearly</i> . See Deut. 15:20 1Samuel 7:16.			
Because of the demonstrative adjective that follows, this is not necessarily the case here.			
hîy' (היא) [pronounced hee]	<i>she, it; also used as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>is</i> , <i>is</i> implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
mê'âh (מאה) [pronounced may-AW]	<i>one hundred, a hundred, hundred</i>	feminine singular numeral	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
sha'ar (שאר) [pronounced SHAH-ghahr]	<i>[unit of] measure, 100 measures, -fold</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #8180 BDB #1045

**Translation:** ...and he discovered that year [that he reaped] a hundredfold.

His first year of farming that land was very successful. Isaac had a bountiful crop. Here it says he discovered or came upon, much to his surprise, a hundredfold. This simply suggests that his venture into farming was quite successful, beyond what even he expected.

A hundredfold appears to simply represent maximum crop production (Matthew 13:8). Even though in other ancient writings, Herodotus speaks of two-hundredfold and three-hundredfold<sup>109</sup>; the Bible speaks only of a hundredfold as the upper limit of production.

It is possible that a *hundredfold* is simply an ancient way of saying 100%; all the seed planted by Isaac produced plants.<sup>110</sup> Then *tenfold* and *fiftyfold* would refer to 10% and 50% respectfully. A hundredfold would be impressive

<sup>108</sup> *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; p. 630.

<sup>109</sup> See Ellicott for examples. From <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/genesis/26-12.htm> accessed August 1, 2015.

<sup>110</sup> I did not see this explanation anywhere else; but it makes the most sense.

for a new farmer, like Isaac. Understanding *hundredfold* in this way makes a great deal of sense. Perhaps Herodotus was exaggerating?

This would be quite impressive for a novice (we have no idea as to Isaac's background in farming). In v. 14, it will be clear that God has blessed his livestock as well.

Abraham was also very successful in his chosen field, which was being a rancher.

God does not guarantee that all believers will be rich; nor can we assume that all successful people are believers in Jesus Christ. God does work in our souls (through the filling of the Holy Spirit and Bible doctrine) to make us able to enjoy and be at peace with all circumstances.

**Application:** I know one woman who owns several expensive properties, and every time I have seen her, she appears angry, frustrated and unhappy. Houses which she owns as rentals, many people would regard as their dream home. But she does not seem the least bit happy. Having wealth, power, influence, and property is not the same as being happy.

Genesis 26:12c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bârak <sup>e</sup> (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced baw-RAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to invoke God, to praise, to celebrate, to adore, to bless [God]; to bless [men], to invoke blessings; to bless [as God, man and other created things], therefore to cause to prosper, to make happy; to salute anyone [with a blessing]; to curse</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperfect; with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1288 BDB #138
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

**Translation:** Therefore Y<sup>e</sup>howah is blessing him.

So that there is no misunderstanding, all of this is based upon grace. God graced Isaac out. He did not earn it; he did not deserve it. God just poured and poured blessing upon him.

*Matthew Henry: [Isaac] had no land of his own, but took land of the Philistines, and sowed it; and (be it observed for the encouragement of poor tenants, that occupy other people's lands, and are honest and industrious) God blessed him with a great increase. He reaped a hundred fold; and there seems to be an emphasis laid upon the time: it was that same year when there was a famine in the land; while others scarcely reaped at all, he reaped thus plentifully.<sup>111</sup>*

Genesis 26:12 Isaac sowed [seed] in that land and he discovered that year [that he reaped] a hundredfold. Therefore Y<sup>e</sup>howah is blessing him. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

<sup>111</sup> Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:12–25.

Isaac is not blessed because he lied to Abimelech. He is blessed because of his relationship with God, despite his shortcomings. Legalists have a very difficult time with this. They want to see when someone else has sinned for God to beat down on him.

After Isaac gets all of this straightened out, then God blesses him. Once the deception is done and over with, God multiplies Isaac's crops. Here is what God promises in times of national discipline (or geographic discipline): Psalm 37:18–20 **Jehovah knows the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be forever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of Jehovah shall be as prized lambs; they are consumed; like smoke they vanish.**

*Robert Dean: One of the problems that we have today is that we have been guilty of distorting the whole concept of blessing. It is such and overused terms today and we hear it all the time, even on the lips of unbelievers who have no idea of what it means. Blessing refers to the provision of inner happiness and stability for a believer or any individual, and it may be physical or financial, and it may be spiritual. We can be blessed because God gives us testing and adversity. That gives us a tremendous opportunity to trust Him, to apply doctrine and to grow spiritually. What we have today is a culture that is so material-oriented that we think of blessing only in terms of dollar signs, only in terms of what kind of car we drive, what kind of house we live in, what kind of furniture we have, and that is how people define blessing. We live in a world where people want to use Jesus just to further their own agenda. The reality is that God's blessing for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has nothing to do with who they are or what they have done. That is the point. It has everything to do with His promise in the Abrahamic covenant. And that is the same thing that is true for believers in the church age. God's promise of blessing to us is based on our position in Christ, so that Paul says in Ephesians 1:3 that we have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. It has already happened and it not something we have to learn how to tap into, to learn the secret code prayer in order to have God shower these blessings upon us. It has already happened; it all happened at the point of salvation when we were identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. All these things are given to us at the instant of our salvation. The issue is spiritual growth developing capacity for blessing so that we eventually experience these as we grow and advance. It has to do with the sovereign purpose of God and not what we do. It has to do with possession of the perfect righteousness of Christ. It is that righteousness that is the basis for blessing, not what we do.<sup>112</sup>*

There are a great many people who are jealous without reason. They don't work; or they work very little. Often, they spend their extra time chasing fun (drinking, drugs, women); and do little by way of looking ahead into their own future. Yet, when they see someone who is industrious, and that person is blessed, they become envious of his material wealth.

*The Pulpit Commentary: As there is no harvest without a seed–time, so there is no increase of wealth without the putting forth of personal labor in its acquisition (cf. Proverbs 10:4 13:4 28:19).<sup>113</sup> I will guarantee you that Isaac is not sitting in a hammock, watching the butterflies. Work is an integral part of a person's life. It is as necessary as air and water. Those who don't work end up with a great many problems.*

Interestingly enough, the only commandment which is strictly mental is, **You will not covet**. This should indicate just how important this commandment is (it is also the longest and most detailed commandment).

**Application:** People do not understand other people. For instance, it is in the DNA of the Koch brothers or of Donald Trump to take risks and to make money. It is what they do, and they make decisions which are compatible with increasing their own wealth. It has nothing to do with greed; it is simply what they do.

<sup>112</sup> From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen120.htm> accessed July 26, 2015 (slightly edited).

<sup>113</sup> *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, from e-sword, Genesis 26:12.

**Application:** I know that the Koch brothers give a great deal of their wealth away, and I would guess that the same thing is true of Donald Trump; but making large sums of money is partially in their DNA and it is partially the blessing of God. Being jealous of their wealth is a sin and a waste of time. Trying to take away their wealth by force is going to result in them figuring out a way to keep their wealth. This is going to be true of any large corporation or of any wealthy individual. In most cases, when these men give away money to charities, they will look for charities which are well run and compatible with their own norms and standards. None of them give money as charity to the government. Even rich liberals do not do that.

**Application:** When the government attempts to confiscate their money through excessive taxation, rich and successful men will react to that like they react to any business problem; and if it **requires them to move**, they will do that as well. They will make smart, business decisions. They weigh their options and act accordingly.

Anytime a political movement encourages mental attitude sins, you know you are in the wrong movement.

**Application:** Anytime a political movement encourages mental attitude sins, you know you are in the wrong movement. When the Democratic party encourages you to be envious of those with great wealth and for you (or your political representatives) to determine how much wealth they ought to have, you know you are in the wrong place. Obviously, wealthy people should be generous with the blessings which God has given them—but this is a free will choice that they make. You do not get any points from God if you vote for a higher tax rate for those in a higher tax bracket.

In this case, Isaac has grown up in this business of farming and livestock; and, on top of that, God blesses him tremendously. Being jealous of his prosperity does not help anyone or anything. This is why covetousness (*feeling or showing a very strong desire for something that you do not have and especially for something that belongs to someone else*) is a sin.

Genesis 26:13a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
gâdal (גָּדַל) [pronounced gaw-DAHL]	<i>to be [become] great; to grow; to be greatly valued [celebrated, praised]; to twist together, to bind together</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1431 BDB #152
'îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural) with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35

**Translation:** So the man became great...

Isaac is living in some land not far from Gerar, with the king's blessing, and he became a great man. That suggests that many of the people of this land saw him as very successful, which he was.

**Application:** Let me also suggest that, when someone is prosperous, there are also those who do not like this. They do not want someone to appear to be too successful. This is a violation of the 10<sup>th</sup> commandment.

## Genesis 26:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229

The infinitive absolute has four uses: ❶ when found alone, it sometimes acts as an English gerund, so that we may add *ing* to the end of the verb; ❷ When found directly before its verbal cognate, it serves to intensify or strengthen the action or the meaning of the verb which follows; ❸ When it follows its cognate verb, it emphasizes the duration or the continuation of the verbal idea; and, ❹ it is sometimes used as a substitute for a finite verb form.<sup>114</sup>

**Translation:** ...and advancing [in life] he advances.

Isaac advanced greatly in life. This does not mean that he did a lot of walking or that he departed from this land; it simply indicates that he continued advancing in life, as we see in the 3<sup>rd</sup> use of the infinitive absolute above.

This word hâlak<sup>e</sup> (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup>], which means, *to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance*; is found in several important verses in this chapter. Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229.

We don't really know much about Isaac and his spiritual growth. However, this passage suggests that he did grow spiritually.

## Genesis 26:13c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
gâdêl (גדל) [pronounced gaw-DAIL]	<i>to become great, to grow up</i>	masculine singular participle/verbal adjective	Strong's #1432 BDB #152
‘al (על) [pronounced ġahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

The difference between this and the masculine singular, Qal perfect verb is the vowel point, which should be a Pattach (ְ), but is, in the text, a Tsêrêy (ֶ), a difference which did not exist in the original manuscript (there were no vowel points in the original manuscript). Given how close these are, we might assume this was merely a slip of the pen—however, we find this same slip of the pen in at least 3 other passages (Genesis 26:13 2Chronicles 17:12 Ezekiel 16:26). Therefore, we must give some stock to the idea that we do have a different word here with the same consonants (making it indistinguishable in the original, Pre-Massoretic, Hebraic text). BDB also suggests that it is a masculine participle, which makes even more sense.

<sup>114</sup> *Biblical Hebrew*; Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, pp. 184–185.

## Genesis 26:13c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>when, that, for, because</i>	explanatory conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
I cannot find a proper meaning for the combination of these two particles; however, they are rendered <i>but for</i> (NASB); <i>surely, for</i> (Young); <i>yea, for</i> (KJV); <i>yet, for</i> (NKJV); <i>because</i> (ESV, HCSB, LTHB, KJV, MKJV, NASB, NRSV, WEB); <i>because that</i> (Young). Translations taken from Judges 3:12 Psalm 44:22.			
gâdal (גָּדַל) [pronounced <i>gaw-DAHL</i> ]	<i>to be [become] great; to grow; to be greatly valued [celebrated, praised]; to twist together, to bind together</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1431 BDB #152
m <sup>o</sup> ôd (מְאֹד) [pronounced <i>m<sup>e</sup>-ODE</i> ]	<i>exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very</i>	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547

**Translation:** *Becoming great he surely became very great* [or, *he became greatly celebrated and valued*].

We have a repetition that Isaac continued to become great; in fact, he became very great. Again, many would have seen him as a valued member of that community; many would praise him and value him.

You will note, *after* Isaac got things straight with Abimelech (that is, he was honest with Abimelech), then he began to experience great prosperity. Prior to this, he had been dishonest with Abimelech about his wife; but now that was dealt with.

At the same time, success breeds detractors, and whenever a person is successful, there is always the possibility that some will try to take him down.

Genesis 26:13 *So the man became great and advancing [in life] he advances. Becoming great he surely became very great* [or, *he became greatly celebrated and valued*]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:12–13 *Isaac sowed [seed] in that land and he discovered that year [that he reaped] a hundredfold. Therefore Y<sup>h</sup>owah is blessing him. So the man became great and advancing [in life] he advances. Becoming great he surely became very great* [or, *he became greatly celebrated and valued*]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:12–13 *Isaac sowed seed in that land and reaped a hundredfold, indicating that Jehovah was blessing him. So he became great in life, making progress and advancing further. As he became great, he was greatly celebrated and valued.* (Kukis paraphrase)

Vv. 26:13 read: *Isaac sowed [seed] in that land and he discovered that year [that he reaped] a hundredfold. Therefore Y<sup>h</sup>owah is blessing him. So the man became great and advancing [in life] he advances. Becoming great he surely became very great* [or, *he became greatly celebrated and valued*]. This fulfills God's promise to Isaac, from v. 3: "Sojourn in this land, and **I will be with you and will bless you**, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father." (ESV; emphasis mine) All of the *you's* in v. 3 as masculine singular suffixes; so God is speaking to Isaac specifically.

This general approach is found throughout the history of Israel. Moses told the people: "You shall walk in all the way that the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you shall possess." (Deut. 5:33; ESV) David charged his son Solomon: "I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong, and show yourself a man, and keep the charge of the LORD your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his rules, and his testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn, that the LORD may

establish his word that he spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons pay close attention to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.' (1Kings 2:2–4; ESV)

Take a look back at Genesis 24:34–35 "I am Abraham's servant," he said. "The LORD has greatly blessed my master, and he has become rich. He has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, male and female slaves, and camels and donkeys." God is not stingy with His blessings. Psalm 112:1–6 Hallelujah! Happy is the man who fears the LORD, taking great delight in His commandments. **His descendants will be powerful in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed. Wealth and riches are in his house, and his righteousness endures forever.** Light shines in the darkness for the upright. He is gracious, compassionate, and righteous. Good will come to a man who lends generously and conducts his business fairly. He will never be shaken. The righteous will be remembered forever. God blesses His Own. The examples given are material blessings, and there are all kinds of blessings in life besides material blessings.

This does not mean that God always blesses growing believers with material blessings. In this life, there are a myriad of categories of blessings. In the United States, although most people do not realize this, we have been greatly blessed materially. The lifestyle of the average person in the United States is the greatest lifestyle known to mankind, with our balance of material blessings and freedom.

Let's take a closer look at this situation:

### God Blesses Isaac (and the Growing Believer) During a Crisis

Obviously God deals with Isaac on the basis of his salvation, on the basis of grace and because of his father, Abraham. God does not severely punish Isaac. Some people have a hard time understanding that; however, there will be times when we deserve nothing from God; and then His blessings will overflow to us. He can deal with us in grace because Jesus Christ has died on our behalf on the cross. Even though the church age is sometimes called the age of grace, God has always dealt with His saved in grace.

I want you to notice one other thing: Isaac moved to Gerar while there was a famine in the Negev. Now, although it is not clearly during that same time period, it appears as though Isaac is enjoying great blessing while his general area is facing famine. God is able to bless us, no matter what is occurring all around us. However, do not misapply this. Do not think that, under national judgment or disaster that you will automatically not suffer any hardship. That is not what we are to glean from this passage. God can and He does bless His own in the midst of a judgment; however, we are not guaranteed to be free of this judgment.

One of the difficult concepts of Scripture is that of a corporate witness. A nation, a marriage and a family can all be corporate witnesses for Jesus Christ. This means that, as a corporation, sometimes the members will be judged and sometimes they will be blessed as a corporate unit. Now, this does not mean that, being part of a particular nation or city that you will face exactly what everyone else's faces within that corporate unit—in our example here, Isaac seems to be enjoying great blessing in the midst of a famine—but, quite often, we are treated as a part of a corporate unit.

Let me try to be a little more specific. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, but you have forsaken Bible class and spiritual growth, you might be emblematic of what is wrong with your corporate witness (as the member of a family, as the citizen of a particular city, state or nation); and you can expect to be judged in a manner consistent with the judgment laid upon the corporation that you are a part of. So, you may be a part of a community which suffers some natural disaster—fire, hurricane, tornadoes—and what you suffer will be typical of your community.

However, if you are a growing believer, consistent in your intake of doctrine, then one of two things will occur, when those in your periphery are judged (or blessed): (1) like Isaac, you may enjoy great blessing, despite what is going on around you; or, (2) you may enjoy suffering for blessing, as a part of this community. In the latter case, you are not under discipline, you have not done anything wrong, but you are either being tested to

## God Blesses Isaac (and the Growing Believer) During a Crisis

accelerate your growth or you are being placed under pressure as a witness to those around you. Let me continue with this tangent: during a national judgment (or a judgment on your community), you cannot always expect to emerge unscathed. In fact, those around you may resent you greatly if that is the case, thus rendering your witness ineffective. Sometimes, you have to witness to these people from their level of suffering. In either case, God will see to your needs and God will bless you. However, just recognize that this may or may not include being blessed a hundredfold, as Isaac is blessed here.

God obviously blesses Isaac; and it will be clear near the end of this chapter that He withdrew His blessing from the Philistines when Isaac moved away.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Clarke gives the very literal translation: **And the man was Great; and he went, going on, and was Great, until that he was exceeding Great.**<sup>115</sup>

Ballinger: *The Hebrew of this verse literally says: "and the man became great (rich), and he continued to grow rich until he became exceedingly wealthy."*<sup>116</sup>

For some people, this is the worst thing in the world for them to observe. They see someone enjoying great prosperity and it rankles them. It makes them angry.

Clarke later talks about the process of a man in the ancient world becoming great: *But the blessings which God promises are such as spring from the soil. Isaac sowed in the land, and had possessions of flocks and herds, and great store of servants (Genesis 26:12–14). Commerce, by which nations and individuals so suddenly rise and as suddenly fall, had not been then invented; every man was obliged to acquire property by honest and persevering labor, or be destitute. Lucky hits, fortunate speculations, and adventurous risks, could then have no place; the field must be tilled, the herds watched and fed, and the proper seasons for ploughing, sowing, reaping, and laying up, be carefully regarded and improved. No man, therefore, could grow rich by accident. **Isaac waxed great and went forward, and grew until he became very great** (Genesis 26:13). Speculation was of no use, for it could have no object; and consequently many incitements to knavery and to idleness, that bane of the physical and moral health of the body and soul of man, could not show themselves. Happy times! when every man wrought with his hands, and God particularly blessed his honest industry. As he had no luxuries, he had no unnatural and factitious wants, few diseases, and a long life.*<sup>117</sup>

Although Clarke makes some very good points, God has to cooperate. There needs to be rain upon the soil and that which was planted. Sometimes it is a matter of time and place. Remember that, prior to this, Isaac had come out of an area suffering from a drought (called a famine in the Bible). He did not move very far in order to come to a place where he was blessed and prospered. My point is, Clarke is generally correct here; but God's grace cannot be eliminated from the equation, even in the ancient world.

I have worked all of my life,<sup>118</sup> and, over time, have become quite successful. However, I also recognize that success could leave me in an instant. I do not have some magical powers or great brilliance so that I have insulated myself from tribulation—the are innumerable things which could have which could reverse my prosperity. I recognize that it is God's grace that I am where I am today.

<sup>115</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:13.

<sup>116</sup> From <http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/Gen26.htm> accessed July 23, 2015.

<sup>117</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:35.

<sup>118</sup> Which is what God expects of all people.

It is at this point in the narrative where we find out what will destroy the Philistine people:

**Genesis 26:14** And he had possession of flocks and possession of herds, and many servants. And the Philistines envied him.

So far, this is what we have studied:

Gen. 26:1–5 Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar to Abimelech king of the Philistines. And the LORD appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and I will bless you, for I will give all these lands to you and to your offspring, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father. I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and I will give to your offspring all these lands. And by your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."

Note that, although God is making these promises to Isaac, they are based upon what Abraham has done. God does not tell Isaac that *he obeyed His voice*. Abraham was a great believer; Isaac, not so much.

**Genesis 26:6–13** And Isaac lived in Gerar. And the men of the place asked about his wife. And he said, "She is my sister." For he feared to say, "She is my wife; lest the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah, because she was beautiful of form." And when he had been there a long time, it happened that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out through the window, and saw; and behold! Isaac was laughing with Rebekah his wife. And Abimelech called Isaac and said, "Listen! She surely is your wife. And why did you say, She is my sister?" And Isaac said to him, "Because I thought that I might die because of her." And Abimelech said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the people might have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us." And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, "He that touches this man or his wife will surely be put to death." Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year a hundredfold. And Jehovah blessed him. And the man [Isaac] became great. And he went forward and grew until he grew very great.

Isaac lied to his gracious host about Rebekah. She was not his sister but his wife; and he explained that he was worried that the Philistines would take her and kill him. However, once Isaac was there, and the truth was out, then God blessed Isaac greatly. Even though the text says that Isaac's wealth increased a hundredfold, that does not mean that his wealth increased exactly (or even approximately) by a factor of 100. The Bible does use hyperbole and the Bible uses a variety of figures of speech. However, he prospered to such a great degree that all of his Philistine neighbors notice it. Furthermore, we have already discussed this term and suggested that it means that 100% of the seed that Isaac planted grew into plants.

Notice that Isaac being blessed did not mean that God took away material benefits from the Philistines. There is not this big pie and Isaac found himself with most of it; the Philistines now having less of it. The pie grew larger; and Isaac reaped a hundredfold; and, because Isaac was among the Philistines, they received greater blessings as well. However, they were not prospered a hundredfold, so, even though their wealth increased, it did not increase as quickly or as dramatically as Isaac's wealth. By comparison, the Philistines believed that they got the short end of the stick.

It is as if you live in a nice house, and you could afford to re-do your bathroom and kitchen; but then, right next door, your neighbor adds a second story to his house—by comparison, you don't feel like you are doing very well. This is why God warns us not to covet that which our neighbor has. You can always find a neighbor who appears to be doing better than you are.

**And so is to him a herd of small livestock and a herd of cattle and a household great. And so envy him the Philistines.**

Genesis  
26:14

**Isaac [lit., he] had herds of (smaller) livestock and herds of cattle as well as a large household [staff]. Therefore, the Philistines envied him.**

**Isaac had great herds of cattle and smaller livestock, as well as a huge household staff. For this reason, the Philistines envied him.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so is to him a herd of small livestock and a herd of cattle and a household great. And so envy him the Philistines.
Targum of Onkelos	And he had flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle, and great <u>cultivation</u> ; and the Philistaeae envied him.
Latin Vulgate	And he had possessions of sheep and of herds, and a very great family. Wherefore the Palestines envying him.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and much <u>wealth</u> , so that the Philistines envied him.
Septuagint (Greek)	And he had herds of sheep, and herds of oxen, and many <u>tilled lands</u> , and the Philistines envied him.

Significant differences: The targum has *cultivation*, the Syriac has *wealth*, and the Greek has *tilled lands*; rather than *household*.

#### **Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

Bible in Basic English	For he had great wealth of flocks and herds and great numbers of servants; so that the Philistines were full of envy.
Easy English	Isaac owned *flocks and *herds. And he owned a large *household of servants. The *Philistines were jealous of him.
Easy-to-Read Version	He had many flocks and herds of animals. He also had many slaves. All the Philistine people were jealous of him.
<i>The Message</i>	He accumulated flocks and herds and many, many servants, so much so that the Philistines began to envy him.
NIRV	He had many flocks and herds and servants. Isaac had so much that the Philistines became jealous of him.

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Common English Bible	He had livestock, both flocks and cattle, and many servants. As a result, the Philistines envied him.
Contemporary English V.	In fact, the Philistines were jealous of the large number of sheep, goats, and slaves that Isaac owned,...
New Berkeley Version	...owning flocks and herd and a great body of servants, that the Philistines envied him.
New Life Bible	For he had flocks and many cattle and many people working in his house. The Philistines became jealous of him.
New Living Translation	He acquired so many flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, and servants that the Philistines became jealous of him.

#### **Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	He owned many sheep, cattle, and many tillable lands, and the Philistines [started to] envy him.
International Standard V	He owned so many sheep, cattle, and servants that the Philistines eventually became envious of him.

New Advent Bible	<sup>13</sup> Thus he became rich, and went on prospering more and more, until he rose to great influence; <sup>14</sup> flocks of sheep were his, and herds of cattle, and a great retinue. And now the Philistines, out of envy, <sup>15</sup> stopped up all the wells which the servants of his father Abraham had dug there, filling them in with earth. Vv. 13–15 are given for context.
Translation for Translators	He had large herds of sheep and goats and cattle, and many slaves. Because of that, the Philistine people envied him.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	He had sheep livestock, oxen livestock, and legions of servants. The Palestinians were-jealous of him.
Conservapedia	He acquired flocks, and herds, and a great many servants, and the Avvites were jealous of him.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	He also had flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, and many servants, and the Philistines were envious of him;...
Lexham English Bible	And he possessed sheep and cattle and many servants, so that the Philistines envied him.

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

New American Bible	He acquired such flocks and herds, and so many work animals, that the Philistines became envious of him.
New American Bible (R.E.)	He acquired flocks and herds, and a great work force, and so the Philistines became envious of him.
New Jerusalem Bible	He acquired flocks and herds and a large retinue. The Philistines began to envy him.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

ExeGeses companion Bible	...and he has chattel of flocks and chattel of oxen and great servantry: and the Peleshethiyim envy him.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And he had possessions of sheep and possessions of cattle and much production, and the Philistines envied him.
Kaplan Translation	He had flocks of sheep, herds of cattle, and a large retinue of slaves. The Philistines became jealous of him.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	For he had possession of tzon, and possession of herds, and many avadim; and the Pelishtim envied him.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	He owned flocks, herds, and a great supply of servants, and the Philistines envied him.
The Expanded Bible	He had so many slaves and flocks and herds that the Philistines envied him.
The Geneva Bible	For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him. The malicious always envy the graces of God in others.
Kretzmann's Commentary	For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants; and the Philistines envied him, jealous of the blessing which the Lord poured out upon him.
NET Bible®	He had [Heb "and there was to him."] so many sheep [Heb "possessions of sheep."] and cattle [Heb "possessions of cattle."] and such a great household of servants that the Philistines became jealous [The Hebrew verb translated "became jealous"

refers here to intense jealousy or envy that leads to hostile action (see v. 15).] of him.

The Pulpit Commentary

For he had (literally, there was to him) possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: gewrgia polla (LXX), i.e. much husbandry, the abstract being put for the concrete, "implying all manner of work and service belonging to a family, and so servants and tillage of all sorts" (Ainsworth); but the reference rather seems to be to the number of his household, or domestic slaves, plurimum familiae (Vulgate) and the Philistines envied him. The patriarch's possessions (mikneh, from kanah, to acquire) excited jealous feeling (from root kana, to burn) in the breasts of his neighbors (cf. Eccles. 4:4)

The Voice

He had so many flocks and herds and servants that the Philistines began to envy him.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version

And it is coming at his acquiring flocks and acquiring herds and many to serve, that jealous are the Philistines of him.

English Standard V. – UK

He had possessions of flocks and herds and many servants, so that the Philistines envied him.

Green's Literal Translation

And possessions of flocks and possessions of herds, and many slaves were his. And the Philistines envied him.

H. C. Leupold

And his property consisted of flocks and herds and many servants; and the Philistines were envious of him.

Third Millennium Bible

For he had possession of flocks and possession of herds, and great store of servants; and the Philistines envied him.

World English Bible

He had possessions of flocks, possessions of herds, and a great household. The Philistines envied him.

Young's Updated LT

And he has possession of a flock, and possession of a herd, and an abundant service; and the Philistines envy him.

**The gist of this verse:**

Isaac has so much cattle and so many servants that the Philistines are jealous of him.

Genesis 26:14a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	to, for, towards, in regards to	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
This means, and so he has...			
mîq <sup>e</sup> neh (מִקְנֵה) [pronounced mik-NEH]	cattle, livestock (specifically sheep, cows and goats); herds, flocks	masculine singular (collective) noun; construct form	Strong's #4735 BDB #889

## Genesis 26:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
tsô'n (צֹן) [pronounced tzohn]	<i>small cattle, sheep and goats, flock, flocks</i>	feminine singular collective noun	Strong's #6629 BDB #838
Also spelled ts <sup>o</sup> ôwn (צֹנַי) [pronounced tseh-OWN].			
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mîq <sup>e</sup> neh (מִקְנֵה) [pronounced mik-NEH]	<i>cattle, livestock (specifically sheep, cows and goats); herds, flocks</i>	masculine singular (collective) noun; construct form	Strong's #4735 BDB #889
bâqâr (בָּקָר) [pronounced baw-KAWR]	<i>bull, cow, ox, collectively: herd, cattle, oxen</i>	masculine singular collective noun	Strong's #1241 BDB #133

**Translation:** Isaac [lit., he] had herds of (smaller) livestock and herds of cattle...

Isaac was prospered in all ways. We have four nouns here which are often used for large and small livestock. Used together in this way suggests that Isaac had a great wealth of animals. In the ancient world, this was one sign of great wealth, and God has blessed Isaac greatly.

There are a great many rich people in the Bible, blessed by God (Abraham, Isaac, David, Solomon). At no time, do we have God speaking to any of these men and saying, "You know what you need to do in order to be perfect? You need to give all of your wealth away to the poor." Liberals—many of whom care little for Christianity—have taken one incident out of the Bible—the meeting of Jesus with the rich young ruler—and have tried to say that this is the gold standard for Christianity. The rich young ruler came to Jesus and asked, "What *good thing* must I do to be saved?" This is works. The rich young ruler wanted to know which works He needed to do in order to gain God's approval. Jesus dealt with him from the standpoint of legalism, and what God actually requires of *him*. So Jesus begins ticking off the Ten Commandments in what appears to be a random fashion, but it is not random. He starts with one particular commandment, then the next, then the next. Then, when the rich young ruler, is bobbing his head up and down saying, "Yes, good teacher, I obey that commandment as well;" and the next one to come was, "You will not covet." That was the grand finale, insofar as the rich young ruler was concerned—he did not have to covet anything, he could just go out and buy it. Donald Trump does not walk down the street, see something that someone else has and desires that thing—if he wants something, he simply buys it. This is how it was for the rich young ruler. But Jesus doubles back on the commandments, and suddenly goes to "You will honor your mother and father." This was a rather difficult commandment for the rich young ruler because he apparently was not taking care of his parents and they apparently needed to be taken care of. For all we know, his parents may have already died in poverty.

There was a legalistic gimmick in that day and age where you could declare your wealth corban (you would pass it along to the Jewish religious hierarchy after death), so that you would not be expected to use this wealth for your parents. Although the rich young ruler sort of nods his head to this commandment, he is not quite as enthusiastic about it. Then, Jesus tells him, "If you would be perfect, then go sell all that you have." Jesus knew, all of the while, that wealth was this man's Achilles heal. He used this man to illustrate that a person cannot be saved by the good things that he does and the bad things that he doesn't do.

The whole point of this was to refute the false propaganda out there that there is something inherently wrong with having wealth. Now, if you get wealth by breaking the law or through unsavory means, that is problematic; but if your profession ends up making you wealthy, then this is not wrong. The key in a person's life is focus not possessions.

## Genesis 26:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
I have added <i>as well as</i> to the meanings of the wâw conjunction just to give myself more flexibility in translating it.			
ʿăbûddâh (עֲבֻדָּה) [pronounced <i>ăvoo<sup>b</sup>-dâw</i> ]	<i>household, household servants; this could be rendered slave population, staff or servant and slave staff</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #5657 BDB #715
rabbâh (רַבָּה) [pronounced <i>rahb-BAW</i> ]	<i>many, much, great (in the sense of large or significant, not acclaimed)</i>	feminine singular adjective	Strong's #7227 BDB #912

**Translation:** ...[as well as a large household \[staff\]](#).

A large or a great household means that Isaac owned a great many slaves. Isaac had farmland which was producing a hundredfold; he probably owned vineyards; and he had a great volume of livestock, which needed to be moved about in order to be fed and watered. All of this would require a huge staff of servants (slaves).

Genesis 26:14a-b [Isaac \[lit., he\] had herds of \(smaller\) livestock and herds of cattle as well as a large household \[staff\]](#). (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Back in **Genesis 16** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)), we studied the **Doctrine of Slavery** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Because of our own history of slavery (which was illegitimate, even by Biblical standards), our society has concluded that all slavery is wrong, and we have sought to eliminate anything which is remotely similar to slavery. However, there are young people who come from very poor homes and countries who would become nannies or housekeepers for very low wages, in order to save and to take themselves out of poverty. There are people who go bankrupt who would be better served to take responsibility for their bankruptcy (let's say from abuse of credit cards rather than because of hospital bills) and to pay these bills off in a responsible way, by becoming a personal servant (which was provided for by the Mosaic Law as well as by customs of that time).

Isaac had a great many slaves, and this was not necessarily a lowly job in the ancient world. If you will recall from a previous chapter, Abraham took his most trusted and most senior servant and assigned him the responsibility of finding a wife for Isaac. As we are told, this man actually had control of Abraham's wealth, because he was a man who could be trusted.

Also in the ancient world, some slaves were advanced in this world by means of adoption. An elderly man of great wealth would look at his children and decide, "What a bunch of bozos." And he would adopt one of his young male slaves as his son (he might be 25 or 30 years old), thus making him his heir. He could see potential in this young slave far more than he could see in his own sons; and therefore, he adopted him to leave the bulk of his wealth to.

My point here is, there is nothing wrong with legitimate slavery. Illegitimate slavery is going into some primitive land and capturing men and making slaves of them. Legitimate slavery would be going into this same land and offering them the option of going to another land and living as a slave (which is essentially what many foreign services do, providing young people with the opportunity to be a housekeeper or a nanny in another country).

One of the popular issues of the day is providing a living wage. A slave/servant needed to have a living wage. That is, he needed a place to live and enough food to eat. Obviously, this would vary by household, but quite

obviously, a master did not want his slave to die from starvation or privation. A healthy and happy slave would often be a more productive slave. So, for the most part, slaves received a *living wage*. This would be a necessity.

So Isaac was very wealthy, which included a very large staff of servants (slaves).

Genesis 26:14c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qânâ' (קָנָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-NAW</i> ]	<i>to be jealous, to be envious, to become intensely red or black from dye</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Piel imperfect	Strong's #7065 BDB #888
This is the first occurrence of this word in Scripture.			
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	<i>him; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to, toward</i>	affixed to a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
P <sup>e</sup> lish <sup>e</sup> tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	<i>land of sojourners [wanderers, temporary residents]; transliterated Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun); with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** Therefore, the Philistines envied him.

It is at this point where we begin to see some additional chinks in the armor of the Philistines. You will recall that Abraham, under nearly the exact same circumstances, had come to live near Gerar, under the auspices of Abimelech (probably a different man but with the same title); and there were some disputes, but, in general, Abraham was given a fair shake. Here, we have those who envy wealth.

Genesis 26:14 Isaac [lit., *he*] had herds of (smaller) livestock and herds of cattle as well as a large household [staff]. Therefore, the Philistines envied him. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:14 Isaac had great herds of cattle and smaller livestock, as well as a huge household staff. For this reason, the Philistines envied him. (Kukis paraphrase)

Peter Pett: *Isaac was now settled in Gerar and the famine had long passed. Good relations had been established with the local king and he began to sow seed in expectation of a considerable stay. And the seed prospered. We know today that this was particularly fertile land and it produced `a hundredfold'. Moreover `Yahweh blessed him'. Everything he touched seemed to flourish. His flocks expanded, his herds grew, and he added more and more servants to his `household', his family tribe who were responsible for maintaining his wealth. But there is always one problem with wealth. It produces envy in the heart of others, and that is what happened here. And so he was asked to move on. His wealth, and the demands it made on local amenities, was causing a problem for the inhabitants.*<sup>119</sup>

Wenstrom: *To envy is to feel resentful, spiteful, and unhappy because someone else possesses or has achieved, what one wishes oneself to possess, or to have achieved. To be envious means to act*

<sup>119</sup> From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/pet/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015.

on one's jealousy since to "envy" someone is to desire to deprive another of what he has, whereas "jealousy" desires to have the same or the same sort of thing for itself.<sup>120</sup>

Isaac finds himself surrounded by liberals, by the 99-percenters who see Isaac as a member of the 1%, and they believe that there is something inherently wrong that Isaac is so prosperous and they are not as prosperous.

### The Politics of Envy:

God had prospered Isaac to such a point that the men of the land, the Philistines, became extremely jealous and began to act upon their jealousy. One of the very worst mental attitude sins for a person to harbor is jealousy. These Philistines acted upon their jealousy and, although unprovoked, began taking retaliatory measures. One of the most valuable assets in those days was a well. As we know, Palestine is not known for its abundant lakes and rivers, so that much of the area depends upon rain and upon wells for water. Herdsmen were absolutely dependent upon their knowledge of the location of the wells in their vicinity and the ability to use same. Sheep can't go but 3 or 4 days without water. There were different things which the Philistines could have done; here, by filling up the wells, they were indicating that those of Isaac's household should move to another area. They did not attack Isaac or his people (and possibly because they were in fear of his strength) but they did indicate by this that they wanted him out of this area. This is not unlike burning a cross on someone's lawn.

Barnes: *The amazing growth of the stranger's wealth in flocks and herds and servants awakens the envy of the inhabitants.*<sup>121</sup>

Here is the second place where problems with the Philistines are observed. The 99% were jealous of Isaac, who had become a member of the 1% (using the liberal vernacular of today). This was not necessarily all Philistines; but it was apparently a very large percentage of them.

Just like his father Abraham before him, God blessed Isaac with great material blessings. Now, note the mental attitude sin: some of the Philistines envied Isaac. This is one of the greatest things wrong with the liberals of today. They envy those who are successful and rich. They treat such people as though they have cheated others to become successful (except for sports stars and movie and television people and liberal politicians—most liberals do not mind that they are rich). However, if you are a liberal, and you both lust after material things and, at the same time, despise the rich, you need to confess those sins to God—possibly every minute that they pop up. That is a violation of the 10<sup>th</sup> commandment. Even though we are not under the Law, inordinate desire for what someone else has is a sin (Romans 7:7). If you think money ought to be taken from the rich so that, you can have free or less expensive welfare; or free food for your children, or whatever, that is envy.

There are always rich people and there are always people who are richer than you. In every society there are people who are poor and people who make a million times what you do. It is a fact of life. Legally taking their wealth and spreading it around does not necessarily improve your lot or the lot of those to whom the wealth is spread.

Why is Isaac wealthy? God prospered him. That is what the text actually says. And God doesn't even prosper him because he is great; God prospers Isaac because Abraham was great and because God is great.

I should add that, by virtue of living near to Isaac, the Philistines of that area were blessed as well. However, they were not blessed as much as Isaac was blessed, and that is what made them upset. Wealth is such a relative thing. The poor in the United States have a litany of possessions that only the rich could afford 100 years ago (along with many items which had not been invented yet). Yet, a march could be organized to protest the 1%, and many of those who are poor would attend. It does not matter to them that they are wealthy compared to people

<sup>120</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (pp. 399–400); accessed July 25, 2015.

<sup>121</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:12–16.

100 years ago; it does not matter to them that they are wealthy by the standards of other countries; all that matters to them is what they can see and/or what they have been told about the wealthy. “Charley Brown makes more money in a minute than I will make my entire life? Well, that just is not right!” The **politics of envy**.

As a believer, you can easily find those who are better off than you are. Most of the time, you can look down the street or at your place of business, and there are people there who you might perceive to be better off. This should *never* be an issue to you. With Bible doctrine, you can appreciate all that God has given you; you can understand your life to be a series of great blessings (there are trials and tribulations as well).

Robert Dean: *What happens when God begins to bless you? As a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ you already have blessings, so what is going to happen? You are going to be the object of attack. You are going to become the object of Satanic attack in the angelic conflict. If you are growing and advancing as a believer and it is obvious that God is blessing-through physical, financial or material means, or just soul blessing (being relaxed in adversity, etc.)—people don't like it. They begin to envy you and express jealousy, and you begin to come under attack. This happens to all of us. There are small-minded people out there who are jealous of the fact that God seems to be blessing us, and no matter what the circumstances are we remain relaxed and don't get ruffled because we are like the apostle Paul who said he had learned to abound or to do without, and could do all things through Christ who strengthened him. So here is a case where Isaac has become prosperous and the Philistines envy him.*<sup>122</sup>

This is taken from the **Doctrine of Envy** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

### The Abbreviated Doctrine of Envy

1. Envy is a mental attitude sin. Exodus 20:7 Galatians 5:21 1Peter 2:1
2. Envy is anti-God and anti-doctrine. Exodus 20:17 James 4:5
3. Those who have rejected God are filled with envy and other mental attitude sins. Romans 1:22–31
4. There will always be rich and there will always be poor. There is no political or economic system which will ever change this. Furthermore, there will always be those who are unjustly poor and those who are unjustly rich. We live in the devil's world.
5. Envy means that you are out of fellowship. 1Corinthians 3:3
6. The believer needs to set aside sins like envy when moving forward in the Christian life. This moving forward involves taking in more doctrine and **rebound** (naming one's sins to God). 1Peter 2:1–5
7. Envy is often associated with a number of other mental attitude sins, including hatred, malice, subservience to various lusts, and disobedience. Titus 3:3
8. Although hard work and being industrious is good, if you are motivated by envy—to keep up with the Jones's, as it were, that is a bad motivation. Eccles. 4:4
9. Good health is related to having a good mental attitude and not entertaining mental attitude sins like envy. Proverbs 14:30
10. David warns against being envious of those who do wrong and those who are violent. Psalm 3:31 37:1
11. Asaph warns against being envious of the arrogant when they might appear to be prosperous. This caused Asaph to stumble in his spiritual life. Psalm 73:3–13
12. We are warned in Proverbs not to be jealous of those who do evil—they are cursed before God and have no eternal future. Proverbs 23:17–18 24:1 –9, 19–20
13. Being envious of your neighbor is empty and striving after the wind. Eccles. 4:4
14. We do pass reasonable laws to deal with people who steal from others, whether it be a low-level thief or a dishonest stock broker. Such laws should be just, reasonably applied, and they will help the problem, but they will not eliminate inequity in this world. We should never pass laws which are a result of our own envy.
15. There are many narratives in the Bible about people who are envious.

<sup>122</sup> From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen120.htm> accessed July 27, 2015.

## The Abbreviated Doctrine of Envy

- 1) Cain is envious of Abel and his relationship with God, believing God to favor Abel too much. Genesis 4:4–8
- 2) Sarai was jealous of Hagar when Hagar gave birth to Abram’s son, and these motivated her to commit other sins. Genesis 16:5–6
- 3) Isaac’s problem with the Philistines is, many of them envied him because he was so successful. Therefore, they often made life difficult for him, even though they were certainly blessed themselves by being associated with him. Genesis 26:11–35
- 4) The sisters Rachel and Leah. Genesis 30:1, 15
- 5) Joseph’s brothers were jealous of him. Jealousy motivated Joseph’s brothers, who eventually trapped him with the intent of selling him into slavery. This was one of the many bad situations which God turned to good. Genesis 37:11, 18–28
- 6) Miriam and Aaron were both jealous of Moses, which was their undoing; and why they were not doing what Moses did. Num. 12:1–10
- 7) Jealousy motivated those who rebelled against Moses, which envy led to their deaths. Psalm 106:16–18
16. Jealousy is used of God as an anthropopathism. Deut. 32:20–22 Psalm 78:58
17. Jesus was delivered up because of envy. Matthew 27:18 Mark 15:10
18. 1Timothy 6:3–5 **If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain. (ESV)**

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Envy is often a part of the unbeliever’s life (Titus 3:1–5). This leads us to the following doctrine:

## Socialism and Envy

1. As an aside, envy helps to explain the socialist movement in the United States.
2. Socialists have a two-pronged approach to sell their ideology:
  - 1) Envy towards those who have wealth; and therefore, they are seen as those who are legitimate to plunder.
  - 2) False sympathy toward the poor. Whereas few would argue against taking care of the helpless; there is the problem with making it seem as if the rich have somehow plundered the poor, and therefore the poor have a right to the wealth of the rich. Again, this is related to envy. It has nothing to do with social justice (or any other kind of justice); it is related to the seizure of power.
  - 3) In reality, those who see socialism as some sort of a cause and are envious of the so-called 1% will not see their own personal wealth increased if socialism becomes more widespread. It is those who are in power who seize the wealth and seize more power. In socialism, the movement is always toward two classes of people: the political class who rule and control most of the businesses; and the workers, who get to split up whatever is leftover.
  - 4) Socialism is all about wanting power; and the ideology of socialism is sold in order to raise up some true believers. Socialists who want power cannot simply seize it; they need those who will help them seize it. So the concept of economic justice is sold; the concept of a fair distribution of wealth is sold—because a revolutionary movement, whether violent or within an existing system of government, must have adherents to help the leaders seize power. They must have true believers, whether they themselves believe in the movement or not.
3. Our own president, on many occasions, has encouraged people to be envious (I write this in 2015, speaking of President Obama). In every one of his state of the union speeches, and often on his college campus speeches, he calls for more taxation of the wealthy. “They can afford to give just a little bit more.” A political leader can always call for the wealthy to give just a little bit more, if those in his periphery are

## Socialism and Envy

- envious of the wealthy.
4. For the socialist and the liberal, there is often never a tax bracket that is too high. This does not put more money into the hands of the poor; this puts more money and power into the hands of the political class who convince you that the wealthy are just too wealthy.
  5. If at any time you find yourself thinking, “You know what; those Wall Street types really make too much money and they don’t work as hard as my gardener Pedro does. They need to be taxed a little more;” you are either filled with envy or you have simply been brainwashed to think that government is some sort of benevolent institution which collects money from the bad and gives it to the good. However, more taxes is all about money and power; it has nothing to do with Pedro your gardener. If Pedro is not making enough, then *you* need to pay him more.
  6. No matter what you do, what political system you impose, no matter what laws you pass, there will always be rich and there will always be poor.
  7. Socialism simply transfers wealth from those who earned it (legitimately or illegitimately) into the hands of the political class. This could be described as *legal* stealing.
  8. So that there is no confusion here; when the taxes of the wealthy are raised and then raised again and raised once more, this *will not* improve your lifestyle; you will not be better off. The political class will, however, be better off.
  9. Similarly, in a violent overthrow of the government, when those who are demonized are killed (teachers, doctors, businessmen, whomever), the lives of the poor does not improve one whit.

**Application:** Socialism encourages envy. People desire power and socialism gives rulers absolute power. Socialism in poor countries uses envy and the poverty of people in order to point them in the direction of socialism. However, in the United States, the biggest problem of the poor is, they are obese (unlike the poor anywhere else). So, socialists use pure envy to motivate their people. They point to the 1% who have so much money and so much wealth, and they just really don’t need it. Therefore, the government should just come and take it. Those in power want to do that because most of that wealth goes into their own pockets (or into pockets of donors, in a socialist democracy); and as they take wealth from the wealthy, the socialist leaders become more powerful and the wealthy become less powerful. Socialist leaders cannot do this on their own. They must have the jealousy of the people working for them.

**Application:** Rule of thumb—if the thrust of a political campaign is encouraging mental attitude sins (like envy of the rich), then you should realize that is a campaign of evil—no matter how attractive the candidates may seem.

This does not mean that there is no place for government in welfare. Some welfare is reasonable for a government to do, and at the local level whenever possible (in a theocracy, the Bible recommends 3.3% in taxes go to the poor. Furthermore, private charities ought to be encouraged by the government, not limited.

This is taken from the **Doctrine of Envy** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

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I need to merge this with my own doctrine above:

### Wenstrom’s Doctrine of Envy

1. Jealousy originated in eternity past with Satan since he was resentful and intolerant suspicious of the preincarnate Christ’s relationship with the angels and was vigilant in maintaining or guarding his influence over the angels, therefore, jealousy is demonic since it is Satanic viewpoint. The Philistines were under Satanic influence by being jealousy towards Isaac since jealousy is demonic in origin. James 3:13, 16 **Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is**

## Wenstrom's Doctrine of Envy

earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.

2. Envy is also included in the list of sins produced by the old sin nature in both the believer and unbeliever (Rom. 1:29; Gal. 5:21; Titus 3:3; 1 Pet. 2:1). Galatians 5:19–21 **Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality., idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.** Romans 13:13, 14 **Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.**
3. Jealousy produces rottenness to the bones. Proverbs 14:30 **A relaxed attitude lengthens a man's life; jealousy rots it away.**
4. Jealousy is not satisfied until it seeks its revenge. Proverbs 27:4 **Wrath is fierce and anger is a flood, but who can stand before jealousy?** Proverbs 6:34–5 **For jealousy enrages a man, and he will not spare in the day of vengeance. He will not accept any ransom, nor will he be satisfied though you give many gifts.**
5. Jealousy leads to murder (Rom. 1:29 Gal. 5:20) and to inordinate ambition and competition (Phil. 1:15 1Tim. 6:4).
6. The jealousy of the Philistines towards Isaac expressed itself when they stopped up the wells his father Abraham had dug. Eventually, this jealousy led them to deport Isaac from their land.

From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 400); accessed July 25, 2015. Edited.

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**And so all the wells that were dug [by] servants of his father in days of Abraham his father, stopped them up Philistines and so they fill them with earth.**

Genesis  
26:15

**But all the wells that his father's servants dug in the time of his father Abraham, the Philistines stopped them up and filled them with debris.**

**The Philistines stopped up all of the wells that the servants of his father Abraham had dug when Abraham lived on this land. They had filled them with dirt and debris.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so all the wells that were dug [by] servants of his father in days of Abraham his father, stopped them up Philistines and so they fill them with earth.
Targum of Onkelos	And all the wells which the servants of his father had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistaeae stopped up and filled with earth.
Latin Vulgate	Stopped up at that time all the wells, that the servants of his father, Abraham, had digged, filling them up with earth.
Peshitta (Syriac)	For all the wells which his fathers servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had <u>polluted</u> them and filled them with earth.
Septuagint (Greek)	And all the wells which the servants of his father had dug in the time of his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.

Significant differences: The Syriac has *polluted* rather than *stopped up*.

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

Bible in Basic English	Now all the water-holes, which his father's servants had made in the days of Abraham, had been stopped up with earth by the Philistines.
Easy English	(When Abraham lived in that country, Abraham's servants had dug wells there. But the *Philistines had now filled all those wells with earth again.)
Easy-to-Read Version	So the Philistine people destroyed all the wells that Isaac's father Abraham and his servants had dug many years before. The Philistines filled those wells with dirt.
Good News Bible (TEV)	So they filled in all the wells which the servants of his father Abraham had dug while Abraham was alive.
<i>The Message</i>	They got back at him by throwing dirt and debris into all the wells that his father's servants had dug back in the days of his father Abraham, clogging up all the wells.
NIRV	So they stopped up all of the wells the servants of his father Abraham had dug. They filled them with dirt.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Common English Bible	The Philistines closed up and filled with dirt all of the wells that his father's servants had dug during his father Abraham's lifetime.
Contemporary English V. New Century Version	...and they stopped up the wells that Abraham's servants had dug before his death. So they stopped up all the wells the servants of Isaac's father Abraham had dug. (They had dug them when Abraham was alive.) The Philistines filled those wells with dirt.
New Living Translation	So the Philistines filled up all of Isaac's wells with dirt. These were the wells that had been dug by the servants of his father, Abraham.
The Voice	(For spite, some of the Philistines filled with dirt all of the wells his father's servants had dug in the days when Abraham was living there.)

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	So the Philistines stopped up all the wells that his father's servants had dug in his father's time, and filled them with dirt.
Beck's American Translation	The Philistines envied him, and they stopped up all the wells dug by the servants of his father Abraham while he was alive, and they filled them with dirt. A portion of v. 14 was included for context.
International Standard V Translation for Translators	They [Lit. <i>The Philistines.</i> ] filled in with sand all of the wells that Isaac's [Lit. <i>his</i> ] father Abraham's servants had dug during his lifetime. So all the wells that the servants of his father Abraham had dug during the time when he was alive, the people filled up with dirt.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Conservapedia	All the wells that his father's servants had delved in the days of his father Abraham, the Avvites had stopped up and filled with soil.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...so the Philistines filled with earth all the wells that the servants of his father Abraham had dug in his days.
Lexham English Bible	And the Philistines stopped up all the wells that the servants of his father had dug in the days of Abraham his father. They filled them with earth.

**Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):**

The Heritage Bible	And all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham, his father, the Palestinians had stopped up, and filled them with dirt.
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New American Bible (R.E.)	The Philistines had stopped up and filled with dirt all the wells that his father's servants had dug back in the days of his father Abraham. Gn 21:25-31.
New Jerusalem Bible	The Philistines had blocked up all the wells dug by his father's servants -- in the days of his father Abraham -- filling them in with earth.

### **Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Complete Jewish Bible	Now the P'lishtim had stopped up and filled with dirt all the wells his father's servants had dug during the lifetime of Avraham his father.
exeGesés companion Bible	For all the wells the servants of his father dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Peleshethiym stopped them and filled them with dust.
Kaplan Translation	They plugged up all the wells that his father's servants had dug while Abraham was still alive, and they filled them with earth.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	For all the wells which avdei aviv had dug in the days of Avraham aviv, the Pelishtim had stopped them up, and filled them with dirt.

### **Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Now all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had closed and filled with earth.
The Expanded Bible	So they stopped up all the wells the servants of Isaac's father Abraham had dug. (They had dug them when Abraham was alive [in the days of Abraham his father].) The Philistines filled those wells with dirt [dust].
Kretzmann's Commentary	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. The hostilities which grew out of the envy in the hearts of the Philistines began with their filling up the wells at Gerar, to which Isaac held title, with earth.

### **Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	And all the wells which his father's servants had delved in the days of Abraham, his father, the Philistines stop them up, and are filling them with soil.
English Standard Version	(Now the Philistines had stopped and filled with earth all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father.)
Green's Literal Translation	And all the wells which the slaves of his father dug in the days of his father Abraham, the Philistines had stopped them and filled them with dirt.
H. C. Leupold	Now all the wells which the servants of his father had dug in the days of Abraham, his father, these the Philistines stopped and filled with dirt.
NASB	Now all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines stopped up by filling them [Lit and filled them] with earth.
World English Bible	Now all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped, and filled with earth.
Young's Updated LT	And all the wells which his father's servants dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines have stopped them, and fill them with dust.

**The gist of this verse:** Abraham's servants had dug a number of wells in that general area, and the Philistines filled them up with debris.

## Genesis 26:15a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
b <sup>e</sup> êr (בְּעַר) [pronounced <i>b<sup>e</sup>-AIR</i> ]	<i>well, pit; spring</i>	feminine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #875 BDB #91
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
châphar (חָפַר) [pronounced <i>chaw-FAHR</i> ]	<i>to dig [a well or pit]; to dig for, to search for, to search for that which is hidden, to search by digging; to explore</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #2658 BDB #343
'ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>ĠE<sup>B</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
'âb (אָב) [pronounced <i>aw<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; founder, civil leader, military leader</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced <i>yaw-MEEM</i> ]	<i>days, a set of days; time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
The construct phrase is literally <i>in days of</i> ; and this phrase is properly rendered <i>in the days of, during the time of, at the time of</i> . The concept here refers to a <i>particular</i> time.			
'Ab <sup>e</sup> râhâm (אֲבִרָאם) [pronounced <i>ahb<sup>ve</sup>-raw-HAWM</i> ]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
'âb (אָב) [pronounced <i>aw<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; founder, civil leader, military leader</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
çâtham (סָתַם) [pronounced <i>saw-THAHM</i> ]	<i>to stop up, to shut out; to keep closed; to obstruct; to hide</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Piel imperfect with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5640 BDB #979
P <sup>e</sup> lish <sup>e</sup> tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּים) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	<i>land of sojourners [wanderers, temporary residents]; transliterated Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** But all the wells that his father's servants dug in the time of his father Abraham, the Philistines stopped them up...

Isaac is not living on the land that his father had lived on. It is possible that he had a place in town and a ranch outside of town (for a man of his wealth, this is not out of the question). His father Abraham lived quite a distance away from the city, although he did travel to Gerar.

Digging a well was often the way a person laid claim to unoccupied territory in the East. Filling up a well was, for all intents and purposes, a declaration of war. When the Philistines did this to Isaac, the rightful heir to these wells, that meant that they were willing to back up this act of aggression with force. There is no indication at this time that God chose for Isaac to retaliate. A more common response to this hostile act can be observed in 2Kings 3:19, 25.

This is rather fascinating. There are those who believe that life is a zero-sum game. That is, if someone is prosperous and makes a lot of money, then he took it from someone else. The only thing an enemy of yours dislikes more than you is you being blessed by God. So, if you take these two things and put them together, the end result is a lot of animosity, which is what Isaac faced here.

Believing in a zero-sum game is an evil philosophy. It is based upon greed, feelings of entitlement, and, most of all, envy for what someone else has. These are people whose weakness is the 10<sup>th</sup> Commandment, *You will not covet*. Not only do they covet, but this consumes them. They always feel as though God has given them the short end of the stick (if they believe in God at all); they see themselves as victims, they seem themselves as someone who is taken advantage of. They have a job which often involves minimal skills, and it upsets them that their manager makes more than they do and that the corporation owner makes way more than they do. They seek to redress this evil (evil in their own eyes) through lawsuits and/or a *progressive tax system*. Both cases are poor ways to deal with the unequal distribution of goods, as the two entities involved here—the government and lawyers—are going to skim off the top a hefty percentage for themselves.

Let me be clear: you will always know someone who makes more than you do or has more than you do; and, in many cases, you will be aware of those who spend more money in a day or in a week than you will have run through your fingers in a lifetime. The monetary success of someone else is none of your concern. If it is a friend, loved one or relative, you should be happy for them; if it is someone whom you do not know, then it should mean nothing to you. You shouldn't feel upset about it; you should not feel jealous; it should be a non-issue in your life.

What we had here were Philistines who were quite upset over Isaac's success. This is wrong; this is evil. This is covetousness pure and simply (or, if you would rather, envy or jealousy).

When his father lived on the land guarded by the Philistines, the servants of Abraham had dug several wells. This had been done in the past, and these wells were spoken of in a previous chapter. Isaac is not living here, but he will move to this land.

Philistines had come and stopped up these wells. The context seems to indicate that not only were these wells dug back in the day of Abraham, but the Philistines had filled them in soon thereafter.

The reason that these wells are mentioned will be clear as we go a few more verses into this chapter.

### Genesis 26:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (l) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## Genesis 26:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
mâlê' (מָלֵא) [pronounced maw-LAY]	to fill, to make full, to fill up, to fulfill; to overflow	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Piel imperfect with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #4390 BDB #569
ʿâphâr (עָפָר) [pronounced ʿaw-FAWR]	dry earth, dust, powder, ashes, earth, ground, mortar, rubbish; dry or loose earth; debris; mortar; ore	masculine singular substantive	Strong's #6083 BDB #779

**Translation:** ...and filled them with debris.

The Philistines, perhaps jealous of Abraham as well, filled up his wells.

Genesis 26:15 But all the wells that his father's servants dug in the time of his father Abraham, the Philistines stopped them up and filled them with debris. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:15 The Philistines stopped up all of the wells that the servants of his father Abraham had dug when Abraham lived on this land. They had filled them with dirt and debris. (Kukis paraphrase)

We have already been told that the Philistines were jealous of Isaac and how God had prospered him. We will see how they will harass Isaac until he leaves that general area (taking with him, blessing by association). It is reasonable to assume that this was done to Abraham after he moved off of the land near to Gerar. You will recall that there were some disagreements about the wells which Abraham dug, and the king had to be called in to make a judgment. However, it appears as though Abraham had moved a long time ago (and subsequently died), and yet, the Philistines still came in, after he left, and filled in these wells.

This may seem a little irrational to you—why fill up good functioning water wells? That's just stupid, is it not? Not too far back, Palestinians were given control of greenhouses built by the Jews in the Gaza strip (this is pretty close to this same area where Abraham and Isaac live). Well, these are Jewish greenhouses, so even though they had been **legitimately purchased** and turned over to the Palestinians, the Palestinians **destroyed** several of them. You cannot underestimate jealousy and mental attitude anger.

Genesis 26:15 reads: But all the wells that his father's servants dug in the time of his father Abraham, the Philistines stopped them up and filled them with debris. This is a result of their mental attitude sins of envy and greed (which is often mated with envy).

### Various Commentators on Stopping Up the Wells (Genesis 26:15)

The Pulpit Commentary: *This act, commonly regarded as legitimate in ancient warfare, was practically to Isaac an act of expulsion, it being impossible for flocks and herds to exist without access to water supplies. It was probably, as the text indicates, the outcome of envy, rather than inspired by fear that Isaac in digging and possessing wells was tacitly claiming the ownership of the land.*<sup>123</sup>

<sup>123</sup> *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, from e-sword, Genesis 26:15.

## Various Commentators on Stopping Up the Wells (Genesis 26:15)

Barnes: *The digging of the well was an enterprise of great interest in rural affairs. It conferred a sort of ownership on the digger, especially in a country where water was precious. And in a primeval state of society the well was the scene of youthful maidens drawing water for domestic use, and of young men and sometimes maidens watering the bleating flocks and lowing herds, and therefore the gathering center of settled life. Hence, the envious Philistines were afraid that from a sojourner he would go on to be a settler, and acquire rights of property. They accordingly took the most effectual means of making his abiding place uncomfortable, when they stopped up the wells.*<sup>124</sup>

Clarke: *in predatory wars it was usual for either party to fill the wells with earth or sand, in order to distress the enemy. The filling up the wells in this case was a most unprincipled transaction, as they had pledged themselves to Abraham, by a solemn oath, not to injure each other in this or any other respect. See Genesis 21:25–31.*<sup>125</sup>

Matthew Henry: *They had already shown their ill-will to his family, by stopping up the wells which his father had digged (Genesis 26:15). This was spitefully done. Because they had not flocks of their own to water at these wells, they would not leave them for the use of others; so absurd a thing is malice. And it was perfidiously done, contrary to the covenant of friendship they had made with Abraham (Genesis 21:31–32).*<sup>126</sup>

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown: *The same base stratagem for annoying those against whom they have taken an umbrage is practiced still by choking the wells with sand or stones, or defiling them with putrid carcasses.*<sup>127</sup>

Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge: *In those countries, a well of water was a great acquisition; and hence, this mode of injuring new settlers, or revenging themselves on their enemies, is still resorted to among the inhabitants.*<sup>128</sup>

Peter Pett: *This very illuminating explanatory comment demonstrates both the attitude of these Philistine traders to relatively powerful semi-nomadic peoples and the reason why, when Abraham had prospered in this vicinity without it causing too much trouble, Isaac was unable to do so. The wells of Abraham had been filled in. And why? Because when Isaac moved to Beer-lahai-roi on the death of Abraham, the Philistines decided they did not want anyone else to move in and filled in the surplus wells, which would have attracted roving semi-nomads like flies. But this was now why Isaac, with his great expansion, was proving to be such a burden on the local economy. They did not have sufficient water for him and themselves.*<sup>129</sup>

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It is suggested that this verse be placed between vv. 17 and 18. I must admit that I do not quite understand why it is placed here, unless it is to indicate that, Philistines were jealous of Isaac; and apparently, there were Philistines in the time of Abraham who did not like Abraham either.

### Repositioning Genesis 26:15

V. 15 moved

No changes made

Gen 26:12–14 [And Isaac sowed in that land and](#) | Gen 26:12–15 [And Isaac sowed in that land and](#)

<sup>124</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:15.

<sup>125</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:15.

<sup>126</sup> Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:12–25.

<sup>127</sup> Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, Genesis 26:15.

<sup>128</sup> *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, Genesis 26:15.

<sup>129</sup> From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/pet/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015.

### Repositioning Genesis 26:15

V. 15 moved

No changes made

reaped in the same year a hundredfold. The LORD blessed him, and the man became rich, and gained more and more until he became very wealthy. He had possessions of flocks and herds and many servants, so that the Philistines envied him.

Gen 26:16 And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we."

Gen 26:17 So Isaac departed from there and encamped in the Valley of Gerar and settled there.

Gen 26:15 (Now the Philistines had stopped and filled with earth all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father.)

Gen 26:18 And Isaac dug again the wells of water that had been dug in the days of Abraham his father, which the Philistines had stopped after the death of Abraham. And he gave them the names that his father had given them.

reaped in the same year a hundredfold. The LORD blessed him, and the man became rich, and gained more and more until he became very wealthy. He had possessions of flocks and herds and many servants, so that the Philistines envied him. (Now the Philistines had stopped and filled with earth all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father.)

Gen 26:16 And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we."

Gen 26:17–18 So Isaac departed from there and encamped in the Valley of Gerar and settled there.

And Isaac dug again the wells of water that had been dug in the days of Abraham his father, which the Philistines had stopped after the death of Abraham. And he gave them the names that his father had given them.

When Isaac moves out from the city of Gerar, he needs to provide a water source for himself. The people had filled these wells that his father originally had dug. This approach has the Philistines stopping up the wells mentioned twice in quick succession.

The emphasis here is on the thinking of the Philistines. They fill up the wells is a result of their envy towards Isaac. This envy and latent anger began when Abraham was among them.

Or v. 15 could have been placed after v. 18. The ESV; capitalized was used above.

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#### Applications of Genesis 26 to life today; liberals, money and government regulations:

Some Philistines simply hated the rich. They were jealous of their success. Just like liberals today, they believed that if they gave the rich a hard time and even drove them away, that this would somehow make their own lives better. If they can take away from the rich in some way or another, they view that as a good thing; as if this were somehow a blow for the working people.

Many evil philosophies are based upon stirring up jealousy or hatred for certain groups of people. Communist revolutions are often against the successful professionals and intellectuals; liberalism has this hatred for the 1%, who, even if they are paying the lion's share of the taxes, it is still not enough (it will never be enough). Anytime a movement gins up hatred against successful people, you know that movement is evil.

Today, there are millions of liberals who believe that somehow, CEO's and business owners have cheated them and have ruined their lives, even though, most of the time, they have a job and are making a living because of these CEO's and other business moguls. So they fight to have them taxed more and to have their corporations taxed more, thinking that this will somehow make their own lives better. Taxing a rich man exorbitantly is not a valid method of making your life better. In fact, what happens in some countries is, these rich people just move away. This has happened in both [France](#) and [England](#). Often in the United States, rich people and corporations often park their money overseas, so that it is not taxed by the extraordinarily high tax rates in the United States. These kinds of men understand business and investment. They know it is more prudent to hold this money as cash elsewhere and, when a better business climate opens up in the United States, then they can use this money to make more money. Liberals do not understand that some people are very good at making money; they are very

good at knowing when and where to invest for the greatest income and for the greatest growth. Such businessmen also know when it is right to park their money, and wait for investment opportunities. When a country moves toward socialism, these businessmen will simply sit on their money, because you cannot make money in a socialist system (except through cronyism). The last thing a rich person wants to do is see the profits which he has legitimately earned get flushed down the government toilet (government is famous for its waste, fraud and abuse). It is completely against their nature to see the money they earned legitimately wasted away.

Oh, by the way, people who are bad with money? Politicians. People who cannot understand money? Liberals. It is laughable to hear a liberal speak so seriously and with conviction that food stamps are good for the economy. Over the past 6 years (actually, longer than that), food stamp usage has increased dramatically—but, for some reason, the economy has not been booming like liberal economists suggest that it should. You would think that, those who tout food stamps as an economic boon to society would, at some point in time, realize that they are not. For some reason, liberals cannot seem to put together their policies and resulting events.

When there are allowable ways to make money (the government chooses not to overly tax this or that business; or the government pours money into the stock market), the rich will take the cue to make money that way. The less the government tries to regulate the economy, the more business opportunities there are. This does not mean that we ought to operate without any laws—we need laws because people have sin natures. However, the government does not need to be involved in the minute details of the business world. The government should be regulating business just like it regulates human behavior. We as individuals are not assigned one each a government monitor to spend the day with us and tell us everything that we can and cannot do. The same thing ought to be true of business as well. If the laws and regulations passed by Congress and by our massive bureaucracy require a small army of lawyers to understand and interpret them, then there are too many laws and regulations.

For instance, my area of expertise for many years was selling real estate. Our state and local government, as well as the federal government should have standards, but they ought to work in this way. They set the standards—possibly in several areas—and a homebuilder can choose to conform to those standards or not. Private inspectors could confirm that these standards are being held to. I would prefer state and county standards, so that a builder could advertise, “My homes conform to Texas and Harris County standards” or “These homes meet or exceed all Texas and Harris County standards.” Private inspectors would confirm this and they would contact Texas and Harris County if such a home failed to meet these standards. We simply need the standards; we do not need an army of bureaucrats to make the standards and to enforce the standards.

About the only thing that we lack is the cognizance of the buying public that all houses should be inspected; including new ones. Many a new home owner has had to argue with his builder for months after moving into his house. A private inspector lessens the likelihood of that.

Furthermore, this is in conformity with the Mosaic Law; where one building code was given, and no specific punishment was given for violating that code.

4000 years ago, the Bible tells us that it is a bad idea to be jealous of those whom God has blessed. The Philistines, because of their envy, would drive Isaac and his prosperity away; and they, as a society, would be the worse for it.

**Application:** It is easy to tell if this or that organization is in line with the Bible. If they proclaim envy of the rich, they are anti-Biblical. In fact, any organization which promotes sin of any kind, is automatically anti-Biblical and anti-God.

**Genesis 26:14–15** And he had possession of flocks and possession of herds, and many servants. And the Philistines envied him. For all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them up and filled them with earth.

The Philistines would have enjoyed great blessings by association with Isaac; and he would have continued to be a boon for their economy. Instead, their envy and short-sightedness drives him away. Do you see how the Bible is relevant to today?

The United States is greatly blessed as a nation because of the believers and the believers with doctrine who live in the United States. However, some angry atheists and agnostics are looking to restrict

Isaac was wealthy because God prospered him. He probably did a lot of business with the Philistines, as having wealth requires maintenance. He may have hired some Philistines to work for him. But, what bothered the Philistines is, by comparison, Isaac appeared to be much wealthier; and he appeared to be getting wealthy at a much greater rate.

The Philistines do exactly the wrong things in dealing with Isaac's prosperity. Because he is prosperous, they attempt to fill up his wells with earth. All that is done is based upon envy and vindictiveness; and no good action proceeds from mental attitude sins.

This also informs us about the changing attitudes among the Philistines. Remember when Abraham did this, that things were all straightened out and he continued to live in that general area. However, this is no longer the case. With Isaac, those who are jealous of his wealth are giving him a hard time and trying to drive him away. They somehow believe that lessening Isaac's wealth is a good thing, that driving him away is a good thing, and that will somehow improve their own lives. Devising economic policies based upon jealousy is a foolish approach to life, and attitudes like that will **bring down the economy of any society**.

There is a radio personality who made millions of dollars and paid millions in taxes when he lived in New York. He got soaked for so much in taxes that he finally moved; and the governor commented, **"If I'd have known that Limbaugh would leave, I would have raised taxes even sooner."** This sort of thing is absolutely silly. The New York government enjoyed great revenues from his taxes, but kept raising them until he just moved away. New York did the same thing to **Sean Hannity**. Driving rich people away does not make your life better, which is one of the points being made in this narrative.

Similarly, driving away people who are believers is not a good thing for a nation either.

**And so says Abimelech unto Isaac, "Go from with us for you have become strong more than us greatly [so]."**

Genesis  
26:16

**Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you have become much stronger than us."**

**Abimelech said to Isaac, "Move away from the city, for you have become much stronger and more powerful than us."**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so says Abimelech unto Isaac, "Go from with us for you have become strong more than us greatly [so]."

Targum of Onkelos

And Abimelek said to Izhak, Go from us; for you are stronger than we in riches very much.

Latin Vulgate

Insomuch that Abimelech himself said to Isaac: Depare from us, for you have become much mightier than we.

Peshitta (Syriac)

And Abimeleck said to Isaac, Go away from among us; for you are much mightier than we.

Septuagint (Greek) And Abimelech said to Isaac, Depart from us, for you have become much greater than us.

Significant differences: None.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy-to-Read Version And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Leave our country. You have become much more powerful than we are."  
*The Message* Finally, Abimelech told Isaac: "Leave. You've become far too big for us."  
 NIRV Then Abimelech said to Isaac, "Move away from us. You have become too powerful for us."

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible Abimelech said to Isaac, "Move away from us because you have become too powerful among us."  
 Contemporary English V. Finally, Abimelech said, "Isaac, I want you to leave our country. You have become too powerful to stay here."  
 New Berkeley Version Abimelech told Isaac, "Move away from us, for you are much more powerful than we." Isaac with all his servants and their families was still fewer in numbers, but in movable property he outstripped all the Philistine sheiks. And his flocks and herds fed on what grew in the Philistine country so long as the Hebrew clan remained among them.  
 New Living Translation Finally, Abimelech ordered Isaac to leave the country. "Go somewhere else," he said, "for you have become too powerful for us."

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible Then Abimelech told Isaac: '[I want you to] leave us, because you've become much greater than us.'  
 Beck's American Translation "Leave us," Abimelech told Isaac, "because you're much too strong for us."  
 International Standard V Then Abimelech ordered Isaac, "Move away from us! You've become more powerful than we are."  
 New Advent Bible At last Abimelech himself said to Isaac, Separate from us; thou hast become altogether too powerful for us.  
 Translation for Translators Then Abimelech said to Isaac, "You have become more numerous than we are, so I want you to get out of our area."

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go from us: For you proliferated a hundredfold more than us."  
 Conservapedia Abimelech said to Isaac, "Leave us, because you are much mightier than we are."  
 Ferar-Fenton Bible Abimelech, also, said to Isaac, "Go from among us, for you are much stronger than we."  
 HCSB And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Leave us, for you are much too powerful for us."  
 Lexham English Bible And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go [away] from us, for you have become much too powerful for us."  
 NIV – UK Then Abimelech said to Isaac, 'Move away from us; you have become too powerful for us.'

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And Abimelech said to Isaac, Walk from us, because you are much stronger than we.
New American Bible (R.E.)	So Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us; you have become far too numerous for us."
New Jerusalem Bible	Then Abimelech said to Isaac, 'You must leave us, for you have become much more powerful than we are.'
New RSV	And Abimelech said to Isaac, 'Go away from us; you have become too powerful for us.'

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible	And Abi Melech says to Yischaq, Go from us; for you become mightily mightier than we.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you have become far too big for us."
Kaplan Translation	Abimelekh said to Isaac, 'Go away from us. You have become much more powerful than we are.'
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Avimelech said unto Yitzchak, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Leave our country [ <sup>L</sup> my people] because you have become much more powerful than we are."
NET Bible®	Then Abimelech said to Isaac, "Leave us and go elsewhere [Heb "Go away from us."], for you have become much more powerful [You have become much more powerful. This explanation for the expulsion of Isaac from Philistine territory foreshadows the words used later by the Egyptians to justify their oppression of Israel (see Exod 1:9).] than we are."
Kretzmann's Commentary	And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we. To the act of spite was added the direct expulsion by the Philistine king, the reason being that Isaac had become mightier in wealth and power than the Philistines cared to see. Thus the believers of all times are obliged to endure acts of jealousy and open enmity on account of the blessing which the Lord lays upon them; and they must learn to suffer cheerfully for His sake.
The updated Pulpit Com.	And Abimelech said unto Isaac (almost leading to the suspicion that the Philistine monarch had instigated the outbreak of hostilities amongst his people), Go from us (a royal command rather than a friendly advice); for you are much mightier than we. The same apprehension of the growing numbers and strength of Isaac's descendants in Egypt took possession of the heart of Pharaoh, and led to their enslavement. (vide Exodus 1:9)
The Voice	Even Abimelech was <i>threatened by his prosperity</i> . <b>Abimelech</b> (to Isaac): <i>It is best you leave our land. Your success has made you more powerful than we are. You can't live here any longer.</i>

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And saying is Abimelech to Isaac, "Go from our people, for you are very much stauncher than we.
Green's Literal Translation	And Abimelech said to Isaac, Go from us, for you are stronger than we.
H. C. Leupold	And Abimelech said to Isaac: Go away from us, for thou art altogether too powerful for us.
World English Bible	Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go from us, for you are much mightier than we."
Young's Updated LT	And Abimelech says unto Isaac, "Go from us; for you have become much mightier than we."

**The gist of this verse:** King Abimelech asks Isaac to leave that area.

Genesis 26:16a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'Ăbiymelek <sup>e</sup> (אבימלך) [pronounced <i>u<sup>p</sup>-vee-MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>my father is Melek, my father is king; transliterated Abimelech</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #40 BDB #4
'el (אל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i> ]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Yis <sup>e</sup> châq (ישחק) [pronounced <i>yih<sup>s</sup>-KHAWK</i> ]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הלך) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>go, come, depart, walk; advance</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
min (מן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'im (עם) [pronounced <i>geem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity; with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Together, these prepositions mean: *from with, beside, from being with, away from, far from, from among, from the possession of, from the custody of, from the house of, from the vicinity of, out of the power of, from the mind of.*

**Translation:** Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us,..."

What appears to be the case is, Isaac is living in town and he may have a large plot of ground on the outskirts as well (remember, he is producing crop a hundredfold and he had a lot of livestock). However, it is clear that there is some animosity building up between the Philistines and Isaac.

One must recall that a leader and his people are not one and the same. There is no indication whatsoever that Abimelech ordered the filling of the wells and what we know of his character indicates that he did not. Nor were all the Philistines involved in filling of the wells. However, there was a strong contingency that wanted to see Isaac gone. The attack upon Isaac's resources and likely meetings between various disgruntled Philistines and Abimelech likely initiated this meeting between Abimelech and Isaac. Every indication from this short passage is that he is a moral man with virtue who is above board in his dealings with others (as was his predecessor who we met several chapters ago). He was forthright, candid and honest. He did not have to attack Isaac behind his back or at night, but he realized that there was a problem. He offers his solution as the leader of the land.

In this chapter, it appears that Abimelech is a reasonable leader. However, here he appears to be pushed by the people into a course of action which is not right. It is likely that Abimelech personally did not want to get rid of Isaac, and there will be clues in this narrative which support that.

Even Abimelech, who was willing to forgive Isaac for his dishonesty, was pressured by the people, apparently, to take an anti-Isaac stance. So he asks Isaac to leave. Isaac went along with their request. Wherever Isaac goes, so goes all of this blessing by association. If God is blessing Isaac, then this blessing would overflow to those around him.

Genesis 26:16b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>when, that, for, because</i>	explanatory conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
‘âtsam (אַצַּם) [pronounced <i>gaw-ZAHM</i> ]	<i>to be strong [mighty, powerful] by virtue of numbers; to become numerous, to be great in size or in number</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6105 BDB #782
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i> ]	<i>from, off, away from, out from, out of, from off; on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
m <sup>o</sup> ôd (מְאֹד) [pronounced <i>m<sup>e</sup>-ODE</i> ]	<i>exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very</i>	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547

**Translation:** ...for you have become much stronger than us.”

This is quite interesting; Isaac is being perceived as stronger and more powerful than *us*; by which I would interpret this referring to the royal family. Isaac may have a larger enforcement arm (army); and that he may have more possessions than the royal palace. There is a good chance that Isaac made the royal family look kind of puny by comparison.

The verb found here is ‘âtsam (אַצַּם) [pronounced *gaw-ZAHM*], which means, *to be strong [mighty, powerful] by virtue of numbers; to become numerous, to be great in size or in number*. Strong's #6105 BDB #782. More than likely, Isaac's household continued to grow. He had to hire additional workers; he purchased additional slaves; the slaves under him began marry and to have children. It is likely that his compound continued to grow as well. Also, there would have been a loyalty factor. If Isaac was a good master—and I suspect that he was—then his slaves would have been very loyal to him and they would have worked hard as well. So he simply grew to a size greater than the household of Abimelech, even though he probably had many wives.

Genesis 26:16 **Abimelech said to Isaac, “Go away from us, for you have become much stronger than us.”** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:16 **Abimelech said to Isaac, “Move away from the city, for you have become much stronger and more powerful than us.”** (Kukis paraphrase)

So, Abimelech considered all of this, and became concerned that people would not think as highly of him, as he lived right next door to the richest man in his kingdom. It would be as if Donald Trump moved next door to the White House. Trump's house would be considerably larger with a great many more amenities. He would make whatever president we have feel rather puny by comparison.

Clarke: *This is the first instance on record of what was termed among the Greeks ostracism; i.e., the banishment of a person from the state, of whose power, influence, or riches, the people were jealous...The Philistines appear to have been jealous of Isaac's growing prosperity, and to have considered it, not as a due reward of his industry and holiness, but as their individual loss, as though his gain was at their expense; therefore they resolved to drive him out, and take his well-cultivated ground, etc., to themselves, and compelled Abimelech to dismiss him.*<sup>130</sup>

Do you see just how pertinent this is to contemporary life in the United States? Liberals so often disparage the rich and often try to remove the conservative rich from their periphery, as if they are some sort of evil. The end result is, the liberal destroys himself and his surroundings.

Peter Pett: *The water shortage was causing problems. So the Philistines no doubt held a council. The result was that they decided to ask Isaac to move on. They no doubt recognised that he was fairly amenable (would they have dared to ask the same of Abraham?) and it is possible that it was they who pointed out to him where the previous wells had been and suggested he reopened them. And fortunately Isaac recognised the truth of what they were saying.*<sup>131</sup>

**Application:** Here is the incredible irrationality of liberalism. When someone is greatly prosperous, they benefit society in a multitude of ways. The business or businesses which they originate or oversee provides work for dozens, hundreds and even thousands of people. In a free society, their business or businesses must provide needed or desired services—they have to produce something which people want, quite obviously, or the business will go broke. It is in their nature to make good business decisions; and good business decisions results in benefits all those with access to their business. Furthermore, even if these people live a lavish lifestyle, this employs many people as well, directly or indirectly. Let's say Charley Brown is a billionaire and he likes cars and he buys 20 cars. Now, these cars cannot just sit there and Charley Brown cannot simply use them enough to keep them all going. So he has to have at least one person on staff to take care of his cars. Indirectly, there will be businesses where these cars will be taken to be serviced. So, in these ways, a very rich man benefits those around him.

**Application:** However, what some in our society do is try to tax this person so much that he leaves or so much that he seeks to buy political influence in order to mitigate the taxes. One of the tax plans I liked was Herman Cain's 9-9-9 plan (I write this in 2013, long after that election has taken place<sup>132</sup>). When there is only a 9% corporate tax, then businesses are less concerned about their taxes. They do not hire dozens of attorneys and/or lobbyists to reduce their tax obligation, because it is not burdensome. There is no financial benefit to them by paying attorneys or lobbyists to reduce an already low tax rate.

V. 16: **Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you have become much stronger than us."** I take two approaches to this situation: (1) that this concern comes directly from Abimelech; or, (2) Abimelech is acting on behalf of his citizenry (which I believe is the likely situation).

Isaac here, because he has prospered, is a boon to the city of Gerar. However, the king is concerned that Isaac has too much influence, and he wants him gone. This appears to be a result of pressure from Abimelech's constituents.

**Application:** If Abimelech is acting on his own, then he is just like politicians today, who want to be high on the totem pole. It is disconcerting to some of them when there are people who have never been elected have greater influence because of their wealth and/or business (es). So many of them attack the wealthy, in order to bring them down and to show their own personal power. People, unfortunately, fall for this; and why? This comes from their own personal jealousy.

<sup>130</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:16.

<sup>131</sup> From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/pet/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015.

<sup>132</sup> The study of this chapter was begun in 2013 and completed in 2015. The writing occurred throughout those years.

V. 16 reads: Abimelech said to Isaac, “Go away from us, for you have become much stronger than us.” We know Abimelech’s heart and thinking. We already know from the previous paragraphs that Abimelech respected Isaac and had a good relationship with him. However, it is apparent that his people have become jealous of Isaac’s wealth. It is very likely that the arguments which Abimelech makes here, are arguments which he has heard in his own palace from disgruntled citizens regarding Isaac.

### The Relativity of Wealth:

One of the things that we do not grasp is, wealth is a very much a matter of what people around you have. In that era, Isaac was considered to be so wealthy that the people hated him and were jealous of him. Now, for the average American today, Isaac’s lifestyle would seem quite primitive and rugged. I don’t know if he lives here in a house or a tent, but he does oversee his own wealth; and he has a number of people who are his slaves or employees. But his actual lifestyle compared to the average poor American today, would be deplorable. Compared to the Philistines around him, his life seems incredible to them; compared to what we are used to and take for granted, his life is not enviable in the least.

My point is, wealth is very relative. Many of the people of Gerar are jealous of Isaac’s wealth—they believe that he is too wealthy—and they want him gone because of it. However, to the average American today, Isaac’s lifestyle would seem to be very rugged and difficult.

Much of this depends upon your mental attitude. You may drive vehicles which are 10 years old and live in a 2000 sq. ft. house. Now if all of your neighbors drive vehicles that are 15 years old and live in a 1500 sq. ft. house, you might feel materially blessed and successful; but if all your neighbors drive cars that are 3 years or newer and their houses are typically 3000 sq. ft., then you may feel as if God is holding out on you.

I know many liberals who feel as if they and others are messed over by the capitalist system and that they believe that their lives are crap compared to this or that executive; and that these business executives need to cut loose of more of their profits and salary to make things fair. However, throughout the world, the average salary is probably closer to \$1–5/day. What these same liberals would *never* agree to is to see their own lifestyle reduced in order to make things more equal worldwide. They don’t mind taking some CEO’s money and spreading that around; but they don’t want their money taken from them and spread around. They are very concerned about the wealth of those above them and they think that wealth should be reduced in order to equal things out, but reducing their own wealth? That’s not what they signed up for. If everyone in the world was suddenly made equal in wealth, using today’s resources, every liberal in America would be living on a tenth or even a fiftieth of the income they are used to having. All of a sudden, their love of internationalism and wealth equality would end.

The average liberal thinks that if he could snap his fingers and equal out the wealth in the world, that would be a good thing. Most of them have no idea what a reduction that would be in their own personal wealth and lifestyle. Just as quickly as they snapped their fingers, they would be kicking their heels together, wishing that they were back in Kansas.

Isaac complies with his host, Abimelech, and leaves the immediate area. I can guarantee you that many of the jealous liberal Philistines rejoiced on that day. But Isaac will take with him the overflowing blessings of God.

So far, this is what we have studied:

Genesis 26:12–16 And Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. The LORD blessed him, and the man became rich, and gained more and more until he became very wealthy. He had possessions of flocks and herds and many servants, so that the Philistines envied him. (Now the Philistines had stopped and filled with earth all the wells that his father’s servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father.) And Abimelech said to Isaac, “Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we.”

Keil and Delitzsch: *Being thus blessed of Jehovah, Isaac became increasingly...greater (i.e., stronger), until he was very powerful and his wealth very great; so that the Philistines envied him, and endeavoured to do him injury by stopping up and filling with rubbish all the wells that had been dug in his father's time; and even Abimelech requested him to depart, because he was afraid of his power.*<sup>133</sup> Again, I personally think this was more at the demand of his people rather than a personal problem that Abimelech had with Isaac.

Isaac was living in Gerar, which was a Philistine community. He moved there because of a drought. Furthermore, he had lied about his wife; however, that was now straightened out. Once Isaac came clean with his host-king, then God blessed him greatly.

However, his blessing concerned many of the Philistines. He had too much wealth, as far as they were concerned. He had too much power and influence. They continued to stop up his wells and ask for him to be sent out of their country.

Let's look at these 5 verses: *And Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. The LORD blessed him, and the man became rich, and gained more and more until he became very wealthy. He had possessions of flocks and herds and many servants, so that the Philistines envied him. (Now the Philistines had stopped and filled with earth all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father.) And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we."* (Gen 26:12–16; ESV)

### Snider Summarizes Genesis 26:12–16

1. Isaac appears to take some initiative here and begins a new pursuit, that of agriculture.
2. There has been no mention to this point that this was something that Abraham engaged in at all.
3. Isaac found an appropriate area and planted some crops and was blessed with a phenomenal return.
4. The yield in that very fertile region was generally not greater than 25 to 50%.
  - 1) I am assuming that what is meant here is, a 25% yield means, for every 4 seeds planted, one plant emerges and yields a crop.
  - 2) A 100% yield indicates that all that was planted grew and produced fruit.
5. This return is specifically attributed to the blessing of the Lord.
6. Isaac, like his father Abraham did not apply Bible doctrine perfectly in every situation.
7. In spite of the fact that he is less than perfect God still blesses Isaac to a great degree.
8. Financial prosperity marked the lives of both Abraham and Isaac. For each man, the Bible speaks of God blessing his financial situation.
9. Isaac had inherited a great deal from his father, and now coupled with this increase in wealth he was phenomenally wealthy.
10. His wealth was that of the typical nomad, things which could be moved, not settled possessions such as homes, land, etc.
11. God directed Isaac and Rebekah to Gerar; therefore, they are in the right place at the right time. The great blessing which they are enjoying also indicates this.
12. One would think that the Isaac would recognize this and avoid these people, knowing the history of his
13. Some question arises as to exactly when the Philistines had tampered with the wells which Abraham had
14. These people are motivated by The sinful trend of Adam jealousy, and resent those who may have prospered more than they have.
15. It is obviously God's plan to bless some believers with economic wealth and prosperity.
16. It is not God's plan for all believers to be rich, and many of the greatest believers in the Word of God were very poor.
17. There is nothing wrong with wealth, and the adjusted believer should be grace oriented and not envious of those who may possess more than they do.
18. Those who do possess an abundance of goods or wealth are under specific commands as to how to

<sup>133</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 26:13–17.

## Snider Summarizes Genesis 26:12–16

handle their wealth:

- 1) They are not to avoid association with those less fortunate, acting in an arrogant or conceited manner. Rom. 12:16; 1Tim. 6:17
  - 2) They are not to place their trust in their money. 1Tim. 6:17
  - 3) They are to recognize the grace of God as their source. v. 17
  - 4) They are to be busily engaged in divine good production. v. 18
  - 5) They are to be stingy with their prosperity, but generous with others. v. 18
  - 6) They should be alert for opportunities to convert their temporal wealth to ultra supergrace vv. 18-19
19. The believer who may not enjoy as much prosperity should not be arrogant toward those who do, treating them as if they are inferior.
  20. Believers should learn to live and let live, and recognize that God has His own plan for each of us and it is not up to us to judge others prosperity or lack thereof.
  21. The pursuit of prosperity is a perilous path, and the Word of God warns those who attempt to pursue money and wealth. 1Tim. 6:9-11a
  22. You cannot effectively pursue money and Bible doctrine. The key here is focus. You might make a lot of money. There is nothing wrong with that. However, if that is the focus of your life, that is problematic. Matt. 6:24,33
  23. The mention of the wells at this point seems to indicate that the Philistines had damaged the wells and continued to do so.
  24. This is the concept of undeserved suffering, which the believer is to absorb and move on.
  25. He is not to resort to similar The sinful trend of Adam activity and attempt to avenge himself, but leave them to God. Romans 12:17ff; 1Pet. 2:18-23
  26. Isaac is now more wealthy and perhaps more powerful than Abimelech, although he is no threat to the Philistines.
  27. The king commands Isaac to depart from their region, after his people had mistreated Isaac, and damaged that which belonged to his family.
  28. We do not know why Abimelech asks Isaac to leave. Snider writes, "No doubt the king expected Isaac to eventually retaliate for the injustices which had been and possibly were still being done to him." I would suggest, based upon the envy of the people, that Abimelech was pressured to ask Isaac to leave.
  29. Typical of the cosmos to assume that the adjusted believer will do to them what they know they would do under similar circumstances.
  30. What began as envy and jealousy, seems to have escalated to malicious behavior, now prompts fear in the king and his followers.

Ron Snider, [Genesis 26](#), accessed July 26, 2015 (edited and appended; one major change was made to what Snider wrote. Snider indicated that there were always problems with the Jews and the Philistines and that they ought not to interact so much; however, God sent Isaac to Gerar. For that reason, I removed two points from this doctrine which suggest that Isaac was in the wrong place.).

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### Even Though Isaac Moves Further from Gerar, Philistines Continue to Harass Him

**And so goes from there Isaac and so he bivouacs in a valley of Gerar and so he lives there.**

Genesis  
26:17

**Isaac went from there and encamped in the valley of Gerar and lived there.**

**Isaac went from there, camping out in the valley of Gerar and then deciding to live there.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so goes from there Isaac and so he bivouacs in a valley of Gerar and so he lives there.
Targum of Onkelos	And Izhak went thence, and sojourned in the vale of Gerar, and dwelt there.
Latin Vulgate	So he departed, and came to the torrent of Gerara, to dwell there.
Peshitta (Syriac)	So Isaac departed from thence, and encamped in the valley of Gadar, and dwelt there.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Isaac departed from there, and rested in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.
Significant differences:	None.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English	So Isaac went away from there. He camped in the valley that was round Gerar. And he lived there.
Easy-to-Read Version	So Isaac left that place and camped near the little river of Gerar. Isaac stayed there and lived.
God's Word™	So Isaac moved away. He set up his tents in the Gerar Valley and lived there.
Good News Bible (TEV)	So Isaac left and set up his camp in Gerar Valley, where he stayed for some time.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Isaac left and settled in Gerar Valley,...
New Living Translation	So Isaac moved away to the Gerar Valley, where he set up their tents and settled down.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So IsaAc left there, stopping to rest in the valley of GeraRa, where [he decided to] live.
International Standard V	So Isaac moved from there and encamped in the Gerar Valley, where he settled.
New Advent Bible	So he went to live in the valley of Gerara.
Translation for Translators	So Isaac and his family moved from there. They went and set up their tents in Gerar Valley and started to live there.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Isaac went from there, and camped by the riverbed of Gerar, and dwelled there.
Conservapedia	So Isaac departed from there, and encamped in the watershed of Gerar, and lived there.
Lexham English Bible	So Isaac departed from there and camped in the valley of Gerar, and settled there.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	So Isaac went from there, and encamped by the River Gherar, and remained there.
NIV – UK	So Isaac moved away from there and camped in the Valley of Gerar, where he settled.

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And Isaac walked, and pitched his tent by the stream of Gerar, and dwelt there.
New American Bible	Isaac left there and made the Wadi Gerar his regular campsite.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Isaac left there and camped in the Wadi Gerar where he stayed.
New Jerusalem Bible	So Isaac left; he pitched camp in the Valley of Gerar and there he stayed.

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Complete Jewish Bible exeGesese companion Bible	So Yitz'chak left, set up camp in Vadi G'rar and lived there. And Yischaq goes from there and encamps in the wadi of Gerar and settles there:...
JPS (Tanakh—1985) Kaplan Translation	So Isaac departed from there and encamped in the wadi of Gerar, where he settled. Isaac left the area and camped in the Gerar Valley [Or Gerar Wadi (Saadia). A wadi is a stream or river that flows primarily during the rainy season. There is such a wadi connecting Gerar and Beer-sheba, flowing to the south. See note on Genesis 20:1.], intending to settle there.

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

The Expanded Bible	So Isaac ·left that place [·went from there] and camped in the ·Valley [Wadi] of Gerar and ·lived [resided; settled] there.
The Geneva Bible	And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley [The Hebrew word signifies a flood, or valley, where water at any time runs. ] of Gerar, and dwelt there.
Kretzmann's Commentary	<b>Verses 17-25</b> The Enmity of the Philistines And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. He left the city of Gerar and the domain of the Philistines in the narrower sense, putting up his encampment farther to the west, in the undulating country toward the mountains.
NET Bible®	So Isaac left there and settled in the Gerar Valley [Heb "and he camped in the valley of Gerar and he lived there."]. This valley was actually a wadi (a dry river bed where the water would flow in the rainy season, but this would have been rare in the Negev). The water table under it would have been higher than in the desert because of water soaking in during the torrents, making it easier to find water when digging wells. However, this does not minimize the blessing of the Lord, for the men of the region knew this too, but did not have the same results.
Syndein/Thieme	And Isaac departed there, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and kept on dwelling in prosperity {yashab} there.
The Voice	Isaac left there, set up camp in the valley of Gerar, and decided to live there <i>for a while</i> .

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	And going is Isaac thence, and is camping in the watercourse of Gerar, and is dwelling there.
English Standard Version	So Isaac departed from there and encamped in the Valley of Gerar and settled there.
H. C. Leupold New King James Version	So Isaac went away and pitched tent in the valley of Gerar and settled down there. Then Isaac departed from there and pitched his tent in the Valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.
World English Bible Young's Updated LT	Isaac departed from there, encamped in the valley of Gerar, and lived there. And Isaac goes from there, and encamps in the valley of Gerar, and dwells there.

**The gist of this verse:** Isaac leaves and moves to the valley of Gerar, where he first camps and then sets up a semi-permanent residence.

Genesis 26:17a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
min (מן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, away from, out from, out of, from off; on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
shâm (שם) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
Yis <sup>e</sup> châq (ישחק) [pronounced yihs <sup>e</sup> -KHAWK]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850

**Translation:** Isaac went from there...

Isaac agreed to the demands of the king and left the city of Gerar. Isaac appears to be fairly easy going. Although he may have protested (we don't know if he did), there seems little purpose in doing so.

Robert Dean: *Here Isaac is going through people testing. He is being unjustly criticized, he is being attacked, he is being ridiculed, he is the victim of sins of the tongue, people are angry at him and abusing him verbally, so how does he handle it? He leaves. He shows grace orientation. He goes through a threefold stage of leaving. He leaves town and go to the valley of Gerar, and dwells there. And again he dug the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father. Why is he doing that? He is reasserting his right to these wells. And he is going to rename these wells with the same names that his father called them. He is indicating that he has the right of ownership here.*<sup>134</sup>

**Application:** There are times when God moves you along, and this may involve some unjust treatment. Just go with it; do not continue to be angry in your heart.

Genesis 26:17b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
chânah (חנה) [pronounced khaw-NAW]	<i>to bivouac, to camp, to encamp in [or, against], to set up camp; to lay siege to; to incline, to decline, to bend down</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2583 BDB #333

<sup>134</sup> From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen120.htm> accessed July 27, 2015.

## Genesis 26:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
nachal (נַחַל) [pronounced NAHKH-al]	<i>brook, torrent; valley</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5158 BDB #636
G <sup>e</sup> râr (גֵּרָר) [pronounced gher-AWR; possibly <sup>e</sup> rawr]	<i>a lodging place, dwelling; transliterated Gerar</i>	proper singular noun; location	Strong's #1642 BDB #176

**Translation:** ...and encamped in the valley of Gerar...

Apparently, somewhere outside of the city—we will find out that this is where his father once lived—there is a valley or a wadi and that is where Isaac set up camp. So he was in Gerar; he left and found a place to camp which was still associated with Gerar. This suggests that the king was more concerned about appearances, and was not against Isaac living in his territory; he just did not want Isaac living right next door to him, because of the contrast of wealth.

**Application:** It ought to be normal for men who have been blessed financially to have a superior lifestyle as compared to those in government. It is not wrong that wealthy men also have a fair amount of influence.

Keil and Delitzsch: *Isaac then encamped in the valley of Gerar, i.e., in the “undulating land of Gerar,” through which the torrent (Jurf) from Gerar flows from the south-east (Ritter, Erdk. 14, pp. 1084-5).*<sup>135</sup>

The Pulpit Commentary: *a valley (or nahal) is a low, flat region watered by a mountain stream. The Wady Gerar has been identified with the Joorf-el-Gerar, the rush or rapid of Gerar, three hours south-east of Gaza.*<sup>136</sup>

## Genesis 26:17c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâshab (יָשַׁב) [pronounced yaw- SHAH <sup>B</sup> V]	<i>to remain, to stay; to dwell, to live, to inhabit; to sit</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
shâm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027

**Translation:** ...and lived there.

<sup>135</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 26:13–17.

<sup>136</sup> *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, from e-sword, Genesis 26:17 (slightly edited).

This suggests that Isaac first went into the valley, intending that it is a temporary living situation, but that he decided that stay there. The verb used in the previous phrase is a verb of temporary encampment; the verb used here indicates a more long-term living arrangement.

Genesis 26:17 **Isaac went from there and encamped in the valley of Gerar and lived there.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:17 **Isaac went from there, camping out in the valley of Gerar and then deciding to live there.** (Kukis paraphrase)

Because of Abimelech's request, Isaac moved away to the nearest valley.

**And so returns Isaac and so he digs wells of the water which were dug in days of Abraham his father. And so stop them Philistines after a death of Abraham. And so he calls to them names as the names which called to them his father.**

Genesis  
26:18

**Isaac returned and dug water wells—[the same wells] which [the servants of Abraham] dug in the time of Abraham his father. The Philistines obstructed them after the death of Abraham. Isaac called the wells by the names his father called them [lit., *He named them the same names as the names which his father called them*].**

**Isaac returned and dug water wells—the same wells which have been dug during the time of his father's life (after Abraham had died, the Philistines filled in these wells). Isaac gave these wells the same names that his father used.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so returns Isaac and so he digs wells of the water which were dug in days of Abraham his father. And so stop them Philistines after a death of Abraham. And so he calls to them names as the names which called to them his father.
Targum of Onkelos	And Izhak digged again the wells of water which <u>the servants of his father</u> had digged in the days of Abraham his father, and which the Philistae had stopped after Abraham was dead; and he called them by the names his father had called them.
Latin Vulgate	And he digged again other wells, which the servants of his father, Abraham, had digged, and which, after his death, the Philistines had <u>of old</u> stopped up: and he called them by the same names, by which his father before had called them.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Isaac digged again the wells of water which had been dug by the servants of his father in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had <u>polluted</u> them after the death of Abraham; and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Isaac dug again the wells of water, which the servants of his father Abraham had dug, and the Philistines had stopped them up, after the death of his father Abraham; and he gave them names, according to the names by which his father named them.

Significant differences: The targum, Latin, Syriac and Greek identify *the servants of Abraham* as originally digging these wells. Although the Niphal is not used, it appears that the Hebrew uses the passive voice. I think that it is more like that *the servants of Abraham* dropped out of the text. This will be discussed further in the Hebrew exegesis.

The words *of old* are added to the Latin text. The Syriac has *polluted* rather than *stopped up*.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And he made again the water-holes which had been made in the days of Abraham his father, and which had been stopped up by the Philistines; and he gave them the names which his father had given them.
Easy English	Isaac dug out again the wells of water that his father Abraham had dug. The *Philistines had filled them with earth after Abraham died. Isaac gave names to the wells. They were the names that his father had given to the wells.
Easy-to-Read Version	Long before this time, Abraham had dug many wells. After Abraham died, the Philistines filled the wells with dirt. So Isaac went back and dug those wells again. Isaac gave them the same names his father had given them.
<i>The Message</i>	Isaac dug again the wells which were dug in the days of his father Abraham but had been clogged up by the Philistines after Abraham's death. And he renamed them, using the original names his father had given them.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	...where he cleaned out those wells that the Philistines had stopped up. Isaac also gave each of the wells the same name that Abraham had given to them.
New Berkeley Version	The water-wells that had been dug in his father Abraham's time, but which the Philistines had choked after Abraham's death, he reopened; he also gave them the same names his father had given them.
New Living Translation	He reopened the wells his father had dug, which the Philistines had filled in after Abraham's death. Isaac also restored the names Abraham had given them.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And once more, IsaAc dug the [same type of] wells that his father AbraHam's servants had dug, which the Philistines stopped up after his father AbraHam's death. And he gave them each names, using the names that his father had used.
International Standard V	Isaac re-excavated some wells that his father had first dug during his lifetime, because the Philistines had filled them with sand [The Heb. lacks <i>with sand</i> ] after Abraham's death. Isaac [Lit. <i>He</i> ] renamed those wells with the same names that his father had called them.
New Advent Bible	Here he opened afresh other wells, dug by his father Abraham's servants, and stopped up long since by the Philistines, when Abraham died; calling them by the old names his father had given them.
Translation for Translators	There were several wells in that area that had been dug when Isaac's father Abraham was living, but Philistine people had filled them up with dirt after Abraham died. Now Isaac and his servants took the dirt out, and Isaac gave the wells the same names that his father had given to them.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Isaac returned to dig the water wells dug in the days of Abraham his father. The Palestinians blocked them after the death of Abraham. He called them the names as the names his father called them.
Conservapedia	Then Isaac re-delved the water wells that they had delved in the days of his father Abraham (the Avvites had stopped them up after the death of Abraham), and he gave them the same names that his father had given them.

Ferar-Fenton Bible	Isaac, also, settled, and cleared out the wells of water which were dug in the time of his father Abraham, and he called them by the names they were called in the days of his father.
Lexham English Bible	And Isaac dug again the wells of water which they had dug in the days of his father Abraham, which the Philistines had stopped up after the death of Abraham. And he gave to them {the same names} which his father had given them.
NIV – UK	Isaac reopened the wells that had been dug in the time of his father Abraham, which the Philistines had stopped up after Abraham died, and he gave them the same names his father had given them.

#### **Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):**

The Heritage Bible	And Isaac turned back to dig the wells of water which they dug in the days of Abraham, his father, and the Palestinians had stopped them after the death of Abraham; and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.
Christian Community Bible	Isaac opened up again the wells that had been dug in the time of his father, Abraham, and that the Philistines had blocked up after Abraham's death. He gave these wells the names his father had given them.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Isaac reopened the wells which his father's servants had dug back in the days of his father Abraham and which the Philistines had stopped up after Abraham's death; he gave them names like those that his father had given them.

#### **Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Complete Jewish Bible	Yitz'chak reopened the wells which had been dug during the lifetime of Avraham his father, the ones the P'lishtim had stopped up after Avraham died, and called them by the names his father had used for them.
exeGesés companion Bible	...and Yischaq returns and digs the wells of water, which they dug in the days of Abraham his father; for the Peleshethiym stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he calls their names after the names his father called them.
Hebrew Names Version	Yitzchak dug again the wells of water, which they had dug in the days of Avraham his father. For the Pelishtim had stopped them after the death of Avraham. He called their names after the names by which his father had called them.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Isaac dug anew the wells which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham and which the Philistines had stopped up after Abraham's death; and he gave them the same names that his father had given them.
Kaplan Translation	He redug the wells that had been dug in the days of his father Abraham, which had been plugged up by the Philistines after Abraham's death. He gave them the same names that his father had given them.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Yitzchak dug again the be'erot hamayim (wells of water), which they had dug in the days of Avraham aviv; for the Pelishtim had stopped them up after the mot Avraham; and he called their shemot after the shemot by which his av had called them.

#### **Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

The Expanded Bible	Long before this time Abraham [ <sup>L</sup> In the days of Abraham his father they] had dug many wells, but after he died, the Philistines filled them with ·dirt [dust]. So Isaac dug those wells again and gave them the same names his father had given them.
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Kretzmann's Commentary	And Isaac dugged 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, thus disregarding the covenant which had been made between them and Abraham, Genesis 21:22-30. And he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. Having gone over the field often while his father was yet alive, Isaac was familiar with the entire country.
NET Bible®	Isaac reopened [ <i>Heb</i> "he returned and dug," meaning "he dug again" or "he reopened."] the wells that had been dug [ <i>Heb</i> "that they dug." Since the subject is indefinite, the verb is translated as passive.] back in the days of his father Abraham, for the Philistines had stopped them up [ <i>Heb</i> "and the Philistines had stopped them up." This clause explains why Isaac had to reopen them.] after Abraham died. Isaac [ <i>Heb</i> "and he"; the referent (Isaac) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] gave these wells [ <i>Heb</i> "them"; the referent (the wells) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] the same names his father had given them [ <i>Heb</i> "called names to them according to the names that his father called them."].
The Pulpit Commentary	And Isaac digged again literally, returned and digged, i.e. re-dug (cf. 2Kings 20:5) the wells of water, which they (the servants of Abraham) had digged in the days Of Abraham his father; from which it appears that Abraham had digged other wells besides that of Beersheba (Genesis 21:31) for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: which was a violation of the league into which Abimelech had entered with the patriarch (vide Genesis 21:23) and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them and with which Isaac was sufficiently acquainted.
The Voice	Isaac had to re-dig all of the water wells that his father had installed because the Philistines had filled them in after Abraham's death. He renamed them with the names his father had given them.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And returning is Isaac and delving the wells of water which were delved by servants of Abraham, his father, and the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham, his father. And calling is he them by names according to the names which Abraham, his father, called them.
Green's Literal Translation	And Isaac returned and dug the wells of water which they dug in the days of his father Abraham; and the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham. And he called names to them like the names which his father had called them.
H. C. Leupold	<b>(c) Strife over Wells (v. 18-22)</b>
	Then Isaac let the wells of water be reopened which had first been dug in the days of Abraham, his father, and which the Philistines had stopped after the death of Abraham, and he gave them the names which his father had already given them.
NASB	<b>Quarrel over the Wells</b> Then Isaac dug again the wells of water which had been dug [Lit they had dug] in the days of his father Abraham, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham; and he gave them [Lit called their names as the names] the same names which his father had given [Lit called] them.
A Voice in the Wilderness	And Isaac re-dug the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham. And he called them by the names which his father had called them.
World English Bible	Isaac dug again the wells of water, which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father. For the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham. He called their names after the names by which his father had called them.
Young's Updated LT	And Isaac turns back, and digs the wells of water which they dug in the days of Abraham his father, which the Philistines do stop after the death of Abraham, and he calls to them names according to the names which his father called them.

**The gist of this verse:** Isaac re-dug the wells which his father's servants had dug earlier, but the Philistine people had filled in.

Genesis 26:18a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
Yis <sup>e</sup> châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced <i>yih<sup>s</sup>-KHAWK</i> ]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850

**Translation:** [Isaac returned...](#)

Isaac had lived in this area as a young man. You will recall that Abraham moved his family there before Isaac had been born and that Isaac would have grown up in this area. So Isaac was returning to this area (an action coterminous with the actions in the previous verse).

It was not God's plan for Isaac to be outside of the land at this point in time. He left Gerar out of respect for Abimelech and did not travel all that far away, but it was far enough for the Philistines. However, for reasons that we are not privy to, after a time period which could have been years or even decades, Isaac returned to this area.

Or, Isaac's return to this area simply means that he previously lived on the outskirts of Gerar with his father, and leaving Gerar, *returned* to that area. That is, he left the city of Gerar, but returned to the place where he had lived before with his father.

Genesis 26:18b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châphar (חָפַר) [pronounced <i>chaw-FAHR</i> ]	<i>to dig [a well or pit]; to dig for, to search for, to search for that which is hidden, to search by digging; to explore</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2658 BDB #343
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
b <sup>e</sup> êr (בְּעַר) [pronounced <i>b<sup>e</sup>-AIR</i> ]	<i>well, pit; spring</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #875 BDB #91

**Genesis 26:18b**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
mayim (מַיִם) [pronounced mah-YIHM]	water (s)	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #4325 BDB #565

**Translation:** ...and dug water wells...

He looked around and he recalled where all of the wells had been during the time of his father; and he dug these wells out. Although this verse attributes the action to Isaac, this simply means that he would have given the orders. He may or may not have participated in the actual work (there is no reason to think that Isaac or his father did not work).

Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge: *The wells in Arabia are generally dug in the rock. their mouths are about six feet in diameter, and they are from nineteen to twenty feet in depth. But Niebuhr informs us, that many wells are from 160 to 170 feet deep.*<sup>137</sup> As I have suggested earlier, during the time of Abraham, the rain water was more abundant and the underground water was likely to be much closer to the surface, which is why the land of Canaan was often referred to as the land of milk and honey.



**Water well** (picture); from [Judah Trust.org](http://JudahTrust.org); accessed August 4, 2015. Few things were more important to an encampment than a well of water.

**Genesis 26:18c**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾāsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	that, which, when, who, whom	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
châphar (חָפַר) [pronounced chaw-FAHR]	to dig [a well or pit]; to dig for, to search for, to search for that which is hidden, to search by digging; to explore	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #2658 BDB #343
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced yaw-MEEM]	days, a set of days; time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year	masculine plural construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

The construct phrase is literally *in days of*; and this phrase is properly rendered *in the days of, during the time of, at the time of*. The concept here refers to a *particular* time.

<sup>137</sup> *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, Genesis 26:22.

## Genesis 26:18c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
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The Samaritan, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate all insert *the servants of Abraham* at this point instead of *in the days of*. *Servants* is probably the correct reading. Many translations have *were dug* without a specific subject. The problem with that approach is, *were dug* is a passive voice and would require a Niphal stem.

Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge: *Houbigant contends, that instead of bimey, "in the days," we should read, avdey, "servants;" agreeably to the Samaritan, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate: "And Isaac dugged again the wells of water which the servants of Abraham his father had digged."*<sup>138</sup>

Instead of ימיב, we would have:

עֲבָדִים (עִבְדֵי) [pronounced <i>ĕv<sup>b</sup>-vaw-DEEM</i> ]	<i>slaves, servants; underlings; subjects; slavery, bondage, servitude; this can mean military men, soldiers in the plural</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
אֲבִרָחָם (אֲבִרָא) [pronounced <i>ahb<sup>ve</sup>-raw-HAWM</i> ]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
אָב (אָבָא) [pronounced <i>aw<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; founder, civil leader, military leader</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

**Translation:** ...—[the same wells] which [the servants of Abraham] dug in the time of Abraham his father.

When Abraham lived on this land, he dug out several wells and Isaac recalled where each of these wells had been. You may recall that there was a dispute over these wells in a previous chapter.

To be consistent, I should have rendered this: ...—[the same wells] which the servants of Abraham (his father) dug.

## Genesis 26:18d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
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וַ (or וָ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
צָתַם (צָתַם) [pronounced <i>saw-THAHM</i> ]	<i>to stop up, to shut out; to keep closed; to obstruct; to hide</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Piel imperfect with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5640 BDB #979
פְּלִשְׁתִּי (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	<i>land of sojourners [wanderers, temporary residents]; transliterated Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

<sup>138</sup> *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, Genesis 26:18.

Genesis 26:18d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾachărêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced ah-kuh- RAY]	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29
mâveth (מָוֶת) [pronounced MAW-veth]	<i>death, death [as opposed to life], death by violence, a state of death, a place of death</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4194 BDB #560
ʾAb̄erâhâm (אַבְרָהָם) [pronounced ahb <sup>ve</sup> -raw- HAWM]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4

**Translation:** The Philistines obstructed them after the death of Abraham.

This alludes back to a v. 15, which seems oddly out-of-place. I still do not know exactly why it is placed where it is (its location has already been discussed). In any case, the Philistines filled in these wells that Abraham had dug after Abraham had left. This indicates a hard-heartedness which would have been quite strong.

Genesis 26:18a-d *Isaac returned and dug water wells—[the same wells] which [the servants of Abraham] dug in the time of Abraham his father. The Philistines obstructed them after the death of Abraham.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

*Life Application Bible Study Notes: The desolate Gerar area was located on the edge of a desert. Water was as precious as gold. A person who dug a well was staking a claim to the land. Some wells had locks to keep thieves from stealing the water. To fill in someone's well with dirt was an act of war; it was one of the most serious crimes in the land. Isaac had every right to fight back when the Philistines ruined his wells, yet he chose to keep the peace. In the end, the Philistines respected him for his patience.*<sup>139</sup>

*Gill: these [wells] were what Abraham's servants had dug, when he lived at Gerar, and which the Philistines did not stop during his life; but when he was dead and particularly out of envy to Isaac his son, whom they observed to prosper much, they stopped them up, that he might have no benefit by them.*<sup>140</sup>

*Peter Pett: This passage demonstrates how closely Isaac and his household had been living with the Philistines until they had become too large for the place. But now they move to a local valley and camp there. And they re-dig the wells first discovered by his father and call them by the previous names given by his father. This would not be quite as easy as it sounds for they had to be rediscovered. But local memory would no doubt assist in the matter. This serves to demonstrate how traditions tend to stick to places over considerable numbers of years, for it was obviously fairly clearly remembered what names had been attached to what places. This information would no doubt be gathered from locals and confirmed by reference to their own covenant records and memories.*<sup>141</sup>

One of the first things a people has to do when they choose a place to live is establish a well. Nothing can be done until there is a regular source of water. This is something that we in the United States simply take for granted. We can open up our taps and drink some of the freshest, purest water in the world. If we want to water our lawns or our plants, or take a shower; we think nothing of it. It is right there. But this would have been a luxury

<sup>139</sup> From <http://newsyoucanbelieve.com/bible/2010/01/09/day-009/> accessed July 31, 2015.

<sup>140</sup> Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:18 (slightly edited).

<sup>141</sup> From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/pet/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015.

to Isaac and his family beyond their imagination; and this is a luxury that a majority of people in the world lack. When visiting most countries, we are warned against drinking their water or even using their ice cubes. That is because in most countries, even where the water is available on tap, it is not clean enough to drink.

Again—wealth is a very relative concept. People in America, including those who complain that they have been shafted, that the rich have somehow stolen away their money and their future—they are far better off in the United States than Isaac ever was. And yet, the Philistines were jealous of Isaac's wealth. If anyone in the United States had to live like Isaac lives, they would wail and moan to anyone who would listen to them—but to the Philistines, Isaac was too wealthy and too successful.

The Philistines had become a very jealous people. Apparently, none of them were going to live out on that land, but they still took the time to stop up the wells that Abraham had dug. This is how irrational their jealousy made them. These Philistines live near this valley, but not near enough to use the wells. However, some of them are so angry and jealous, that they filled in these wells.

This may seem crazy to you, but it is not. That is the power mental attitude sins have over us. For example, present-day Palestinians took over some land in agreement with Israel, and on that land was a large hydroponic greenhouse—the **Palestinians destroyed it**, apparently because it had Jewish cooties. Hatred does not produce rational behavior. At the time that I am writing, people have been firing off missiles into Israel from the Gaza strip, and Israel finally got tired of it, and has mounted an offensive against them. This is the natural outgrowth of firing these missiles every day; but hatred does not produce rational behavior.

What is the plan of the Palestinians? To locate their missile launching close to schools, hospitals, residential areas, so that, when there is retaliation, innocent Palestinians will die in the retaliation; and then they can feign great outrage. As Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said, "The difference between us, we are using missile defense to protect our civilians, and they're using their civilians to protect their missiles." For the militant Palestinians, because of their hatred for Jews, a good outcome is for Israel to kill some innocent civilians, because that can be used as propaganda.

The Israeli offensive has destroyed dozens of homes and has killed hundreds of people; and what will happen as soon as there is a cease fire or the fighting comes to an end? Islamists will start firing rockets from the Gaza strip and begin the entire process all over again. Hatred does not produce rational behavior.

Experts often say, "Well, this animosity goes back hundreds of years; so there is little that can be done to stop it." That is 100% wrong. Here's why: every generation is a new generation.

People who pose as experts often say, "Well, this animosity goes back hundreds of years; so there is little that can be done to stop it." That is 100% wrong. Here's why: every generation is a new generation. If they are taught from a young age to hate, they will hate the Jews with the same irrational hatred of their parents. This is something which one generation teaches the next generation. Various incidents which span over a period of hundreds of years are *used* to justify hatred and barbaric behavior, but it is wrong to think that these incidents are the source of this animosity. The source of this behavior is mental attitude sins; and these mental attitude sins are taught by one generation to the next generation. Hatred for Jews is a learned; it is not just a natural outgrowth. One generation changes everything.

How do we know this? The change of racial prejudice in the United States. In the 1950's, there were segregated schools, lunch counters, and there were many public places that Blacks could not go to. All of that has changed. In fact, it has changed so much that, one of the worst things a person can be called today is a racist.

Another example: the holocaust. There are few things as evil as the holocaust, where principally German soldiers rounded up Jewish citizens and put them into concentration camps, and then brutalized them in unspeakable ways. If historic incidents cause unchangeable animosity, then there ought to be an ongoing feud between Jews

and Germans. There is not even the slightest question about the brutality of the concentration camps; furthermore, the reality of these camps is kept alive throughout the world with holocaust museums. So, it is not as if the Jews have simply forgotten that these incidents took place. But, the stark difference is, the Jews are not teaching their children hatred for Germans. They are not filling the souls of their children up with mental attitude sins.

Apropos to the topic that we are studying is the concept of mental attitude sins. This leads us to...

## The Abbreviated Doctrine of Mental Attitude Sins

1. Definition and description
  - 1) Most of the believer's sinning takes place in the mental attitude. These mental attitude sins include arrogance, pride, jealousy, implacability, bitterness, vindictiveness, inordinate ambition and inordinate competition, all motivational sins, and sinful thoughts such as fear, guilt, worry, anger, judging, and hatred.
  - 2) The Hebrew verb *shâga'* (שָׁגַע) [pronounced *shaw-GAHG*] means *to be insane, to be psychotic*. Strong's #7696 BDB #993. As Deuteronomy 28:34 says to those believers who are negative, **And you shall be driven mad by the sight of what you see**. The Hebrew noun *shiggâ'ôwn* (שִׁגְגָאוֹן) [pronounced *shig-gaw-GYONE*], which refers to *a deceived mental attitude*, was originally used by Moses to describe the Exodus generation. *Shiggâ'ôwn* (שִׁגְגָאוֹן) [pronounced *shig-gaw-GYONE*] took over the lives of these Jewish believers, the psychotic generation. Deuteronomy 28:28 uses *shiggâ'ôwn* (שִׁגְגָאוֹן) [pronounced *shig-gaw-GYONE*] when it says to those believers who are negative toward doctrine: **The Lord will afflict you with [shiggâ'ôwn] madness and with blindness [blackout of the soul] and with confusion of heart [split personality]**. The noun and verb are used to describe what happened to Israel when they went negative to doctrine. The inside pressure of stress in the soul combined with the functions of the sin nature to destroy the spiritual life of these believers in the face of the greatest Bible teaching ever to exist in the Old Testament. Moses observed this and warned future generations of Israel.
2. Arrogance
  - 1) Arrogance is the antithesis of grace; arrogance is total blindness to the grace of God. It is synonymous with vanity, which is empty pride in regard to one's person, attainments, or possessions coupled with an excessive desire to be noticed, a lust for attention, lust for approval or praise from others.
  - 2) Arrogance deceives its victim. Jeremiah 49:16 **As for the terror of you, the arrogance of your heart has deceived you**. Arrogance brings dishonor in your life. Proverbs 11:2 **When arrogance comes, then comes dishonor**. Arrogance causes self-destruction. Proverbs 16:18 **Arrogance precedes destruction, and before a fall there is a lifestyle of arrogance**.
3. Pride
  - 1) Pride involves inordinate self-esteem, conceit and a pre-occupation with self, as well as a rejection of authority. Arrogance, pride, and conceit are the original sins of the greatest genius creature of all time. We call him Satan or the devil but his original name was *Lucifer, son of the morning*. *Hêylêl* (הֵילֵל) [pronounced *hay-LAYL*], means *shining one; morning star; Lucifer*. Strong's #1966 BDB #237. He was the first creature to enter into this sin of pride, motivating him to rebel against God. Pride is the original sin found in the fallen angels in the pre-historic angelic conflict and pride motivated the fallen angels to rebel as well. Pride motivated the woman in the garden to sin.
  - 2) Proverbs 8:13 **The respect for the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way, and the perverted mouth, I hate**.
  - 3) Proverbs 16:5 **Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; assuredly, he will not be unpunished**.
4. Jealousy
  - 1) Jealousy is a very serious mental attitude sin, causing a self-destructive mental attitude which involves a system of thinking from the cosmic system (the cosmic system is how the world thinks). Jealousy, which includes pride and arrogance, is the strongest of all the mental attitude sins and is the other side of the coin from pride.

## The Abbreviated Doctrine of Mental Attitude Sins

- 2) James 3:14 **But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your right lobes, do not be arrogant and lie against the truth.**
  - 3) Jealousy is older than the human race, existing in eternity past when Lucifer, the son of the morning, became jealous of God. Jealousy surfaced in the human race when Cain became jealous of his brother, Abel. This motivated Cain to murder Abel.
  - 4) Scripture describes jealousy as:
    - (1) Cruel. Song of Solomon 8:6 **Jealousy is as severe as Sheol; its flashes are flashes of fire, the very flame of the LORD.**
    - (2) Filled with anger and revenge. Proverbs 6:34 **For jealousy enrages a man, and he will not spare in the day of vengeance.**
    - (3) Frustrating. Proverbs 27:34 **A stone is heavy and the sand weighty, but the provocation of a fool is heavier than both of them. Wrath is fierce and anger is a flood, but who can stand before jealousy?**
    - (4) A form of human viewpoint wisdom in James 3:15 **This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic.** We see that today in the propaganda of the 99% versus the 1%. This is seen as wise today by liberals to oppose the 1%.
    - (5) Jealousy is always creating instability and disorder in the life of the believer. James 3:16 **For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist there is disorder and every evil thing.**
    - (6) Jealousy is self-destructive. Job 5:2 **For anger slays the foolish man and jealousy kills the simple.**
    - (7) Jealousy will actually negatively impact your health. Proverbs 14:30 **A tranquil heart is life to the body, but jealousy is rotteness to the bones.**
  - 5) Jealousy is so strong that carrying a log across your shoulders while carrying a boulder under your arms is nothing compared to the burden of putting up with a fool as in Proverbs 27:3 **A stone is heavy and the sand weighty, but the provocation of a fool is heavier than both of them.** The "stone" in this passage is overt jealousy and anger; the "sand" is subtle jealousy. Proverbs 27:4 **Wrath is fierce; and anger is a flood; but who can stand before jealousy.** So great was the sin of jealousy in Israel that a special offering was made for it (Num. 5:11–31).
  - 6) It is very difficult for the believer to get over jealousy. Jealousy invariably is a symptom of neurotic insecurity. However, with rebound and application of doctrine and resumption in the pre-designed plan of God, the believer can be immediately back on the road to recovery. Only the believer himself can allow another person to make him jealous.
5. Implacability
- 1) Implacability is characterized by one who is impossible to please or satisfy. This takes root in the mental attitude of the soul where the person has no appreciation for life. Hell has an insatiable appetite, and lust just never quits. Proverbs 27:20 **Death and hell are never satisfied, Nor are the eyes of an implacable person ever satisfied.**
  - 2) The growing believer's life should be overflowing with appreciation, especially appreciation for all that God has done for him. Many Christians yearn for more "things" yet do not appreciate what they already possess. They are so caught up in their destination that they forget to enjoy the journey; and, above all, do not have gratitude for the graciousness and the love of people that they meet along the way. It is futile for the believer to crave more things in life if he cannot enjoy and appreciate what he has in the present. It would be better to appreciate things that one cannot have than to have things that one is not able to appreciate. The apostle Paul says one of the signs of the last days is the fact that people would be ungrateful. 2Timothy 3:2 **For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy.**
  - 3) Implacable people refuse to appreciate. Appreciation of life itself, becoming suddenly aware of the miracle of being alive, on this planet, can turn what we call ordinary life into a miracle.
6. Bitterness
- 1) Bitterness is manifested in every believer who does not have an ongoing, experiential personal relationship with God. They eventually become a walking bombshell ready to explode at any moment and the trigger or the button which is pushed is the sin of bitterness. The believer who

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allows bitterness to cause the explosion, either inwardly or overtly, hurts his own life. This is called self-induced misery. Harboring bitterness produces a very serious spiritual problem, a problem which is not correctable apart from personal love for God and impersonal unconditional love for all mankind.

- 2) Bitter people are caustic or sarcastic. They have shigaion—pain in the mind. Bitterness is severity of temper, biting sarcasm, a painful inward affliction, and a deep distress of mind that defiles others as well as self. Deuteronomy 28:34 says to those believers who are negative, You shall be driven mad [again shigaon] by the sight of what you see. Hebrews 12:15 **See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled.**
- 3) Being rejected is often the reason for bitterness in the lives of believers, especially in marriage according to Colossians 3:19 **Husbands, love your wives, and do not be embittered against them.**
- 4) Bitterness lives and resides in the mind. Proverbs 14:10 **The heart [mind, right lobe] knows its own bitterness, and a stranger does not share its joy.**
- 5) Bitterness in believers is so obvious that even strangers avoid them. Why? Because bitterness produces a complaining attitude. Complaining is simply an outward effect of an inward sin. The person who shuns the bitter moments of friends will be an outsider at their celebrations. Job 7:11 **"Therefore, I will not restrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit, I will complain in the bitterness of my soul."** Job 10:1 **"I loathe my own life; I will give full vent to my complaint; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul."**
- 6) Bitterness produces misery. Psalm 73:21-22, **When my heart was filled with bitterness, and I was pierced within, then I was senseless and ignorant; I was like an animal before you.** Hence the phrase, "those people are like animals."
- 7) Most of you have heard the phrase, "Hell hath no fury like a woman's scorn." David taught his son Solomon the same thing in Proverbs 5:3-4 **For the lips of an adulteress drip honey, and smoother than oil is her speech; but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.** Later on Solomon would write in Ecclesiastes 7:26 **And I discovered more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets, whose hands are chains. One who is pleasing to God will escape from her, but the sinner will be captured by her.**
7. Vindictiveness, which is often a desire for vengeance.
  - 1) Vindictiveness is the mental attitude that desires retaliation for wrongs, real or imagined. In this carnal state, the believer becomes obsessed with seeking revenge, resulting in the desire to hurt, to be spiteful, and to try to inflict suffering or punishment as retribution for this real or imagined evil or injury. This type of person is ugly to be around because even his countenance testifies against him. Cyril Connolly said: *In the sex war, thoughtlessness is the weapon of the male, vindictiveness of the female.*
  - 2) Vindictiveness is also accompanied by jealousy. Proverbs 6:34 **For jealousy enrages a man, and he will not spare in the day of vengeance.**
  - 3) In fellowship, the believer can leave the problem in the high court of heaven, as in Hebrews 10:30 **For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge His people."**
8. Inordinate ambition and inordinate competition
  - 1) Inordinate ambition and inordinate competition is also a mental attitude sin. Ambition and competition in life is legitimate. However, when the believer becomes obsessed with competing and comparing self with others it becomes sin. 2Corinthians 10:12 **For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.** The same verse in the Living Bible reads: **Their trouble is that they are only comparing themselves with each other and measuring themselves against their own little ideas. What stupidity!**
  - 2) This is the sin that the Lord weighs in Proverbs 16:2 **All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, But the Lord weighs the motives.** Mental attitude sins are very difficult for men to quantify;

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but God is able to do that. 1Corinthians 4:5 **Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, [but wait] until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of [men's] hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.**

- 3) The apostle Paul even tells us that if we do something great but with the wrong motives it is absolutely useless. 1Corinthians 15:32 **If from human motives I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, what does it profit me?**
  - 4) We are warned about pastors or men in the position of pastors who do not have the gift, but assume this position from the wrong motivation. Philippians 1:17 **The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, rather than from pure motives, thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment.** You can be a teacher of the Bible and have wrong motives.
9. Fear
- 1) A whole system of sins, fear includes worry, anxiety, insecurity, all incapacitate doctrinal application, and therefore cause us to be unable to use the problem solving devices. Fear is an emotional sin and it torments the lives of others. 1John 4:18 **There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.**
  - 2) For the believer who lives in a state of fear, the fear increases like a disease. As the cancer of fear increases, that individual becomes intimidated by life.
10. Worry
- 1) Worry is soulish torment or anxiety regarding anything in life. It is a disquieting and painful state of mind involving undue concern over something in life. Worried people anticipate the worst, and so worry becomes apprehension or anticipation of danger, misfortune, trouble, or uncertainty.
  - 2) Worry is a state of restlessness and agitation, producing mental disturbance, uneasiness, foreboding, anxiety, and painful uncertainty.
  - 3) Worry is a destroyer of the soul. If unchecked, it results in mental illness. Worry in the mind causes shock to the body. Proverbs 12:25 **Anxiety in the heart of a man weighs it down, but a good word makes it glad.**
  - 4) People worry about sin which causes guilt. Psalm 38:18 **For I confess my iniquity; I am full of anxiety because of my sin.**
  - 5) And worry is a sin, therefore, we are ordered to stop worrying. Romans 14:23 **Whatever is not from faith is sin.** Luke 12:29 **"And do not seek what you shall eat, and what you shall drink, and do not keep worrying."**
  - 6) These mental attitude sins are very subtle, because they blaspheme the character of God and say in effect that God is not capable of taking care of you.
11. Guilt
- 1) Guilt can be a devastating thing if it's not handled properly. Satan accuses God's people to try to make them feel guilty so that they hide from God and separate themselves from Him. Revelation 12:10 **Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.** Genesis 3:7-10 **Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself."**
  - 2) In the Christian life all have failed in some facet of life and must move on with the spiritual life through rebound (the naming of one's sins to God). The believer cannot be distracted by past failures, except to learn from them, not to blame others for them. The spiritual life instructs the believer to forget the past and move toward the high ground of spiritual maturity. Past failures must never become present handicaps.
  - 3) All believers must learn how to handle their past including that great villain called guilt. The essential element for living in freedom from guilt is understanding grace. If the believer does not

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realize that God's justice and righteousness are completely satisfied and that his relationship with Him is based upon the accomplishments of the cross, then guilt will torment him until it drives him from the presence of the Lord.

12. Anger
  - 1) Anger is expressed in antagonism, hatred, exasperation, resentment, and irrationality. It can be mental or emotional or both. Anger motivates jealousy and cruelty. Prov. 27:4 **Wrath is cruel, anger is overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy?** A person can't be angry without being cruel and unfair.
  - 2) Anger is related to stupidity. Ecclesiastes 7:9 **Do not be hasty to be angry in your right lobe; for anger resides in the bosom of fools.**
  - 3) Anger results in self-induced misery. Proverbs 22:8 **He who sows iniquity will reap vanity, And the rod of his fury will perish.**
13. Judging
  - 1) Judging is a mental attitude sin as well as a verbal sin. Matthew 7:1–3 is the practical application to the believer's life. **"Judge not, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others you will be judged. And with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you again."**
  - 2) Like almost everything from the Bible, this has been distorted by liberalism. This does not mean that you cannot recognize and, when necessary, shun some sins and behaviors. Homosexual acts are wrong, and believing this is *not* judging. Judging is assigning sin to someone who may or may not have committed that sin.
14. Hatred
  - 1) Hatred is self-punishment, the coward's revenge for being intimidated, madness of the heart, the anger of the weak. Hatred does more harm to the believer who harbors it than to the object of his hatred.
    - (1) Hatred paralyzes life; love releases it.
    - (2) Hatred confuses life; love harmonizes it.
    - (3) Hatred darkens life; love illuminates it.
  - 2) 1John 4:20 **If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar.**
  - 3) The believer who is operating in the pre-designed plan of God is humble and does not waste time hating anyone. True humility manifests itself by the avoidance of hatred. As in 1 John 4:20, the mental attitude sin of hatred indicates that the believer does not love God. Life is too short to hate anyone!
  - 4) Having murder in one's heart for someone else is a form of hatred. 1John 3:15 **Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.**

For a more complete **Doctrine of Mental Attitude Sins** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

From [http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page\\_id=358](http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=358) accessed July 16, 2014. This doctrine ultimately was developed by R. B. Thieme, Jr. and much of this is probably directly quoted from his teaching.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Isaac continues to move further and further away from Gerar.

### Genesis 26:18e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (I) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

Genesis 26:18e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
qârâ' (אָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
shêm (שָׁמ) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced k <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
shêm (שָׁמ) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
qârâ' (אָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âb (אָב) [pronounced aw <sup>b</sup> v]	<i>father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; founder, civil leader, military leader</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

**Translation:** Isaac called the wells by the names his father called them [lit., *He named them the same names as the names which his father called them*].

Isaac recalls all of these wells, their locations, and their names; and he gives them the same names which his father used. This furthers the theory that when the Bible says that Isaac returned to this area, it was because he lived here as a youth or as a young man.

Genesis 26:18 Isaac returned and dug water wells—[the same wells] which [the servants of Abraham] dug in the time of Abraham his father. The Philistines obstructed them after the death of Abraham. Isaac called the wells

by the names his father called them [lit., *He named them the same names as the names which his father called them*]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:18 Isaac returned and dug water wells—the same wells which have been dug during the time of his father’s life (after Abraham had died, the Philistines filled in these wells). Isaac gave these wells the same names that his father used. (Kukis paraphrase)

J. Ligon Duncan makes an interesting observation: *Isaac is coming back and he's reclaiming that title, that name, that Abraham had given it so long ago. And when we saw the walls come down in Berlin, and then as we saw the turmoil and the upheaval in the Soviet Union, you remember the moving sight of seeing those people playing the old imperial national anthem and raising the old imperial Russian flag for the first time in almost a century. They were reclaiming a heritage which had been repressed and suppressed and oppressed in the days of Soviet communism. And there's something like that going on here. When Isaac redigs this well and says, this well is again going to be called the well of Shibah. It's Beersheba. My father named this well and, by golly, the name of this well is going to be Beersheba.*<sup>142</sup>

You may recall that v. 15 seemed to be placed in an odd place. I think that it ought to have been placed here between vv. 17–18, so that they would go like this: Isaac went from there and encamped in the valley of Gerar and lived there. But all the wells that his father’s servants dug in the time of his father Abraham, the Philistines stopped them up and filled them with debris. Isaac returned and dug water wells—[the same wells] which [the servants of Abraham] dug in the time of Abraham his father. The Philistines obstructed them after the death of Abraham. Isaac called the wells by the names his father called them [lit., *He named them the same names as the names which his father called them*]. The REB placed v. 18 right after v. 15, which is only half-logical. This deals with the wells before Isaac has moved to the place where the wells are. In any case, I still do not know why v. 15 is placed where it is, other than to tie their actions with their mental attitude sins.

**And so they dig, servants of Isaac, in the valley and so they find there a well of waters life-sustaining.**

Genesis  
26:19

**The servants of Isaac dug [for water] in the valley and discovered there a life-sustaining water well.**

**The servants of Isaac dug a well in the valley and discovered there life-sustaining water.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so they dig, servants of Isaac, in the valley and so they find there a well of waters life-sustaining.
Targum of Onkelos	And the servants of Izhak digged in the border of the vale, and found there a well of flowing water.
Latin Vulgate	And they digged in the torrent, and found living water.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Isaacs servants dug in the valley, and found there a well of living water.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the servants of Isaac dug in the valley of Gerar, and they found there a well of living water.

Significant differences: The Latin leaves out *servants of Isaac*. The Latin also leaves out *there*.

#### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

<sup>142</sup> From [First Presbyterian Church](#); accessed July 30, 2015.

Easy English	Isaac's servants dug in the valley. And they found a well with water that was springing from the ground.
Easy-to-Read Version	Isaac's servants also dug a well near the little river. A spring of water flowed from that well.
<i>God's Word</i> <sup>TM</sup>	Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found a spring-fed well.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Isaac's servants dug a well in the valley and found water.
New Simplified Bible	Isaac's servants dug in the valley (wadi) (torrent-valley) and found a well of running water.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Isaac's servants dug wells in the valley and found a well there with fresh water.
Contemporary English V.	While his servants were digging in the valley, they found a spring-fed well.
New Century Version	Isaac's servants dug a well in the valley, from which a spring of water flowed.

#### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And when IsaAc's servants dug in the valley of GeraRa, they found a live well of water.
International Standard V	While Isaac's servants were digging in the valley, they discovered a well with flowing water.
New Advent Bible	While they were thus digging in the valley, they came upon running water;...
Translation for Translators	Isaac's servants dug in the valley and discovered a well of fresh water.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Isaac's servants dug in the riverbed, and found there a well of living water.
Conservapedia	As Isaac's servants delved in the watershed, they found there a copious wellspring.
Lexham English Bible	And when the servants of Isaac dug in the valley, they found a well of fresh water there.
NIV – UK	Isaac's servants dug in the valley and discovered a well of fresh water there.

#### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And Isaac's servants searched along the stream, and there was a well of living water.
New American Bible (R.E.)	But when Isaac's servants dug in the wadi and reached spring water in their well,...

#### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Yitz'chak's servants dug in the vadi and uncovered a spring of running water.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	But when Isaac's servants, digging in the wadi, found there a well of spring water, the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours." A portion of v. 20 was added for context.
Kaplan Translation	Isaac's servants then dug in the valley, and found a new well, brimming over with fresh water.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And avdei Yitzchak dug in the valley, and found there a well of mayim chayyim.

#### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	Isaac's servants dug a well in the ·valley [wadi], ·from which a spring of water flowed [·and discovered springing/living water].
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Kretzmann's Commentary	<a href="#">And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water, one which was filled with water from a living spring, not a mere cistern for rain water, as most of the wells were.</a>
NET Bible®	<a href="#">When Isaac's servants dug in the valley and discovered a well with fresh flowing [Heb "living." This expression refers to a well supplied by subterranean streams (see Song 4:15).] water there,...</a>
The Pulpit Commentary	<a href="#">And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water. Literally, living water (cf. Leviticus 14:5, Leviticus 14:6; Zec. 14:8; Revelation 21:6)</a>

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	<a href="#">And delving are the servants of Isaac in the watercourse of Gerar, and finding are they there a well of living water.</a>
English Standard Version	<a href="#">But when Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found there a well of spring water,...</a>
Green's Literal Translation	<a href="#">And Isaac's slaves dug in the torrent-bed, and they found there a well of flowing water.</a>
H. C. Leupold	<a href="#">Then Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found a well of running water.</a>
New King James Version	<a href="#">Also Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found a well of running water there.</a>
A Voice in the Wilderness	<a href="#">Isaac's servants also dug in the valley, and found a well of running water there.</a>
World English Bible	<a href="#">Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.</a>
Young's Literal Translation	<a href="#">And Isaac's servants dig in the valley, and find there a well of living water,...</a>

**The gist of this verse:** After moving, Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found there a well of running water.

**Genesis 26:19a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châphar (חָפַר) [pronounced <i>chaw-FAHR</i> ]	<i>to dig [a well or pit]; to dig for, to search for, to search for that which is hidden, to search by digging; to explore</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #2658 BDB #343
'ebed (עֲבָד) [pronounced <i>GE<sup>B</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
Yis <sup>e</sup> châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced <i>yih<sup>s</sup>-KHAWK</i> ]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
nachal (נַחַל) [pronounced <i>NAHKH-al</i> ]	<i>brook, torrent; valley</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article; pausal form	Strong's #5158 BDB #636

**Translation:** [The servants of Isaac dug \[for water\] in the valley...](#)

This appears to be a different well than those named above.

Leupold: *Apparently, because of the rapid increase of Isaac's wealth there was need of additional wells. But the Philistines kept close watch. What could not be claimed by right of possession from Abraham's time was contested, especially in this case where "running water" (Hebrew idiom: "living water," mayim chayyîm) was found.*<sup>143</sup>

Genesis 26:19b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mâtsâ' (מָצָא) [pronounced maw-TSAW]	<i>to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover; to meet (encounter)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
shâm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
b <sup>ê</sup> êr (בְּעַר) [pronounced b <sup>e</sup> -AIR]	<i>well, pit; spring</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #875 BDB #91
mayim (מַיִם) [pronounced mah-YIHM]	<i>water (s)</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #4325 BDB #565
chayyîm (חַיִּים) [pronounced khay-YEEM]	<i>life, lives, living, being alive, having life, immortality, a long life, sustenance, sustaining life; refreshment; being vigorous; prosperity, welfare, happiness, living prosperously</i>	masculine plural adjective	Strong's #2416 BDB #313

**Translation:** ...and discovered there a life-sustaining water well.

They discovered a well—here, found in the singular—suggesting that this is a different well from those which had been dug by Abraham. The adjective found here might simply refer to them having tapped into an underground river, which is much better than a huge amount of water underground. An underground river is going to be cleaner and better tasting.

Clarke: *A well of springing water* – מַיִם חַיִּים מֵעַר *beer mayim chiyim, A well of living waters. This is the oriental phrase for a spring, and this is its meaning both in the Old and New Testaments: Leviticus 14:5, Leviticus 14:50; Leviticus 15:30; Num. 19:17; Son. 4:15. See also John 4:10–14; John 7:38; Revelation 21:6; Revelation 22:1. And by these scriptures we find that an unfailing spring was an emblem of the graces and influences of the Spirit of God.*<sup>144</sup>

Scott Grant: *Once again, Isaac encounters success in a new place when his servants dig a well and find water. Literally, they find "living water," which hints that these were spiritual people who were*

<sup>143</sup> From <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/leupold/genesis.xxviii.html> accessed July 31, 2015.

<sup>144</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:19.

*looking for more than water for the body. The Lord calls himself “the fountain of living waters” (Jeremiah 2:13).<sup>145</sup>*

Genesis 26:19 The servants of Isaac dug [for water] in the valley and discovered there a life-sustaining water well. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:19 The servants of Isaac dug a well in the valley and discovered there life-sustaining water. (Kukis paraphrase)

What Isaac's servants did was the Qal imperfect of *mâtsâ'* (מָצָא) [pronounced *maw-TSAW*], which means *to find, acquire, attain*. Because *matsah* could mean *to attain*, it is possible that they dug this well and attained this gushing water. However, the use of the flowing water, the claim of the Philistines upon this well, and the more common understanding of *matsa* as *to find* indicates that they merely discovered this well. It is obvious to the Philistines that this well was not dug, therefore they laid claim to it. Had Abimelech come along and asserted that this was his well, we could believe him because he was a moral man. However, these others are the same kind who filled up Isaac's wells. They just recognized that they could lay claim to this well, although they probably had never seen it before. Because of the absolute necessity of having access to several wells, Isaac had to negotiate to use the wells from that area (including the ones which he had dug). We do not know just exactly how well-defined the boundaries were for Abimelech's sphere of influence, but Isaac was close enough to have to work with the Philistines and Abimelech with regards to the use of these wells. Other men would have done battle over this well. We will see Isaac move further south until he arrives at Beer-sheba (the southern portion of Palestine), which is outside of Abimelech's control.

Isaac parked himself over a great underground river and tapped into this river. In that era, based upon what the Bible record is, the water was much easier to tap and was much closer to the surface than it is today. All of this is in line with the idea of a recent flood and Canaan being a land flowing with milk and honey in this era.

*Bob Deffinbaugh: Digging a well was considered tantamount to a claim of ownership of the land on which it was located. It enabled a man to dwell there and to sustain herds. Rather than recognize this claim, the Philistines sought to wipe it out by filling up the wells dug by Abraham. Their desire to overthrow all claim on their land was so intense that they would rather fill in a well, an asset of great value in such an arid land, than to allow this claim to remain unchallenged.<sup>146</sup>*

*Bruce K. Waltke: Wells were given names to establish proprietary rights. By giving them the same names as his father had, Isaac aims to make his ownership incontestable. This underscores the injustice (see 21:23-33) but also commemorates God's provision and protection.<sup>147</sup>*

Given the entire arc of the narrative of Genesis and Exodus, it is clear that, at one time, the Palestine area was very well-watered, as was much of the Middle East. Now, that is obviously no longer the case. The reason for most of the Middle East being a desert is the character of the people and their choice to worship a false god (Allah). Enough people in the east persecuted Christians and Jews; and they are judged for doing this.

**And so quarrel herdsmen of Gerar with herdsmen of Isaac, so say, “To us the waters.” And so he calls a name of the well Esek, for they contended with him.**

Genesis  
26:20

**The herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, “The water [belongs] to us.” Therefore, Isaac called the name of the well Esek, for they quarreled with him [there].**

<sup>145</sup> From [http://www.pbc.org/system/message\\_files/99650/4866.pdf](http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99650/4866.pdf) accessed August 2, 2015.

<sup>146</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 402); accessed July 25, 2015. Wenstrom cites *The Book of Genesis*, page 190, Biblical Studies Press.

<sup>147</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 403); accessed July 25, 2015. Wenstrom cites *Genesis, A Commentary*, page 370, Zondervan.

**The herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac’s herdsmen, saying, “This water belongs to us.” Therefore, Isaac named this well Esek, because of the quarreling which took place there.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so quarrel herdsmen of Gerar with herdsmen of Isaac, so say, “To us the waters.” And so he calls a name of the well Esek, for they contended with him.
Targum of Onkelos	And the shepherds of Gerar contended with Izhak's shepherds, saying, The water is ours. <u>And it was the will of Heaven, and it dried. But when they returned to Izhak, it flowed.</u> And he called the name of the well (Esek) Contention, because (etheseku) they had quarrelled with him on account of it.
Latin Vulgate	But there also the herdsmen of Gerara strove against the herdsmen of Isaac, saying: It is our water. Wherefore he called the name of the well, on occasion of that which had happened, Calumny.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the herdsmen of Gadar quarreled with Isaacs herdsmen, saying, The water is ours; and he called the name of the well Aska (difficulty); because they disputed with him.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the shepherds of Gerar quarreled with the shepherds of Isaac, saying that the water was theirs; and they called the name of the well, <u>Injury</u> , for they <u>injured</u> him.
Significant differences:	The targum has additional text. The Greek has <i>injury</i> rather than <i>contention</i> .

#### **Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

Bible in Basic English	But the herdmen of Gerar had a fight with Isaac's herdmen, for they said, The spring is ours: so he gave the spring the name of Esek, because there was a fight about it.
Easy English	Then the *herdsmen from Gerar quarrelled with Isaac's *herdsmen. The *herdsmen from Gerar said that the well was theirs. So Isaac called the well Esek, because the *herdsmen quarrelled with him.
God's Word™	The herders from Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herders, claiming, "This water is ours!" So Isaac named the well Esek [Argument], because they had argued with him.
NIRV	But the people of Gerar who took care of their herds argued with the people who took care of Isaac's herds. "The water is ours!" the people of Gerar said. So Isaac named the well Esek. That's because they argued with him.

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Contemporary English V.	But the shepherds of Gerar Valley quarreled with Isaac's shepherds and claimed the water belonged to them. So the well was named "Quarrel," because they had quarreled with Isaac.
New Berkeley Version	But when Isaac’s servants dug in the valley and struck a spring of running water, the Gerar shepherds disputed with Isaac’s shepherds, saying, “The water is ours.” So he named the well Esek [Esek – Contentions] because they disputed with him.
New Century Version	But the herdsmen of Gerar argued with them and said, "This water is ours." So Isaac named that well Argue because they argued with him.
New Life Bible	The men who took care of the cattle of Gerar argued with the men who took care of Isaac's cattle. They said, "The water belongs to us!" So Isaac gave the well the name Esek, because they argued with him.

New Living Translation But then the shepherds from Gerar came and claimed the spring. "This is our water," they said, and they argued over it with Isaac's herdsmen. So Isaac named the well Esek (which means "argument").

#### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible However, the shepherds of GeraRa argued with IsaAc's shepherds, claiming that the water was theirs. So they named the well Injury, because [they claimed] injury over this matter.

International Standard V But the herdsmen who lived in Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen. "The water is ours," they said. As a result, Isaac named the well Esek [The Heb. name Esek means *disputed*], for they had fiercely disputed with him about it.

New Advent Bible ...but here, too, the herdsmen of Gerara disputed the rights of Isaac's herdsmen, and claimed the water as their own. So he called the well, in memory of what had happened, the False Claim.

Translation for Translators But the men who lived in Gerar Valley who took care of their animals argued/quarreled with the men who took care of Isaac's animals, and said, "The water in this well is ours!" So Isaac named the well Esek, which means 'dispute,' because they disputed about who owned it.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear The shepherds of Gerar argued with Isaac's shepherds, saying, "The water is ours!" He called the name of the well Esek (*oppressor*), for they oppressed him.

Conservapedia The shepherds of Gerar contended against the shepherds of Isaac, saying, "This water is ours!" Isaac called that wellspring Esek, because they behaved in an extortionate manner toward him. The name "Esek" is very close to the Hebrew word meaning "to extort."

Lexham English Bible Then the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with the herdsmen of Isaac, saying, "The water is ours." And he called the name of the well Esek, because they contended with him.

NIV – UK But the herdsmen of Gerar quarrelled with those of Isaac and said, 'The water is ours!' So he named the well Esek [Esek means dispute.], because they disputed with him.

#### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible The herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen saying, "The water is ours!" So he named the well Esek, because they *squabbled* about it.

The Heritage Bible And the herdsmen of Gerar contended with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, The water belongs to us, and he called the name of the well, Strife, because they oppressed him.

New American Bible But when Isaac's servants dug in the wadi and reached spring water in their well, the shepherds of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's servants, saying, "The water belongs to us!" So the well was called Esek [Esek: "challenge."], because they had challenged him there. V. 19 was included for context.

New American Bible (R.E.) ...the shepherds of Gerar argued with Isaac's shepherds, saying, "The water belongs to us!" So he named the well Esek,\* because they had quarreled there.

New RSV ...the herders of Gerar quarrelled with Isaac's herders, saying, 'The water is ours.' So he called the well Esek,\* because they contended with him.

Revised English Bible ...but the shepherds of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's shepherds, claiming the water as theirs. He called the well Esek, because they made difficulties for him.

#### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	But the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Yitz'chak's herdsmen, claiming, "That water is ours!" So he called the well 'Esek [quarrel], because they quarreled with him.
exeGesés companion Bible	...and the tenders of Gerar strive with the tenders of Yischaq, saying, The water is ours; and he calls the name of the well Eseq/Strife; because they contend with him:...
Kaplan Translation	The shepherds of Gerar disputed with Isaac's shepherds, claiming that the water was theirs. [Isaac] named the well Challenge (Esek), because they had challenged him.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And the herdmen of Gerar did quarrel with Yitzchak's herdmen, saying, The mayim is ours; and he called the shem of the well Esek (Contention); because they disputed with him.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	But when Yitshaq's servants dug in the wadi and found a well of running water there, the herdsmen of Gerar strove with Yitshaq's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours." And he called the name of the well Eseq, because they strove with him. V. 19 was included for context.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	But the herdsmen [shepherds] of Gerar argued [contended] with them [the shepherds of Isaac] and said, "This water is ours." So Isaac named that well Argue [Contention; <sup>c</sup> Hebrew: Esek] because they argued [contended] with him.
Kretzmann's Commentary	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 (contention), because they strove with him.
NET Bible®	...the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled [The Hebrew verb translated "quarreled" describes a conflict that often has legal ramifications.] with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water belongs to us!" So Isaac [Heb "and he"; the referent (Isaac) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] named the well [Heb "and he called the name of the well."] Esek [The name Esek means "argument" in Hebrew. The following causal clause explains that Isaac gave the well this name as a reminder of the conflict its discovery had created. In the Hebrew text there is a wordplay, for the name is derived from the verb translated "argued."] because they argued with him about it [The words "about it" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.].
The Pulpit Commentary	And the herdmen of Gerar i.e. Abimelech's servants (Genesis 21:25) did strive with Isaac's herdmen, as Lot's with those of Abraham (Genesis 13:7) saying, The water is ours: literally, to us (belong) the waters and he called the name of the well Esek ("Strife"); because they strove with him the verb being qc; to strive about anything.
The Voice	<sup>19</sup> But when Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found a new well of fresh water, <sup>20</sup> the herders of Gerar began quarreling with Isaac's herders. <b>Herders of Gerar:</b> This water is ours! V. 19 was included for context.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And contending are the graziers of Gerar with Isaac's graziers saying, "Ours is the water. And calling is he the name of the well Esek, for extortionate show they themselves with him.
Green's Literal Translation	And the shepherds of Gerar fought with the shepherds of Isaac, saying, The water is ours; and he called the name of the well, Contention, for they had contended with him.

H. C. Leupold	But the herdsmen of Gerar strove with Isaac's herdsmen, saying: Ours is this water. So he called the name of the well Esek (Contention), because they contended with him.
Third Millennium Bible	And the herdsmen of Gerar strove with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours." And he called the name of the well Esek [that is, Contention], because they strove with him.
World English Bible	The herdsmen of Gerar argued with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours." He called the name of the well Esek, because they contended with him.
Young's Updated LT	And shepherds of Gerar strive with shepherds of Isaac, saying, 'The water is ours;' and he calls the name of the well 'Strife,' because they have striven habitually with him.

**The gist of this verse:** The herdsmen of Gerar claimed water rights, so the well was named *Esek*, which means *strife, argument*.

### Genesis 26:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
rîyb (בִּיר) [pronounced <i>ree<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>to debate, to contend, to dispute; to conduct a case or suit [against someone], to make a complaint [against someone]; to find fault</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7378 BDB #936
According to the NET Bible, <i>The Hebrew verb translated "quarreled" describes a conflict that often has legal ramifications.</i> <sup>148</sup> I have not seen another source suggest this.			
râ'âh (רֹעֵה) [pronounced <i>raw-GAWH</i> ]	<i>shepherding, tending [a flock]; a shepherd, herdsman, one who tends sheep</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle; construct form	Strong's #7462 BDB #944
The masculine plural, Qal active participle is used to designate those who are habitually involved in the action of the verb; i.e., <i>shepherds, herdsmen</i> .			
G <sup>e</sup> râr (רֶגֶר) [pronounced <i>gher-AWR</i> ; possibly <sup>e</sup> <i>rawr</i> ]	<i>a lodging place, dwelling; transliterated Gerar</i>	proper singular noun; location	Strong's #1642 BDB #176
'îm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
râ'âh (רֹעֵה) [pronounced <i>raw-GAWH</i> ]	<i>shepherding, tending [a flock]; a shepherd, herdsman, one who tends sheep</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle; construct form	Strong's #7462 BDB #944
The masculine plural, Qal active participle is used to designate those who are habitually involved in the action of the verb; i.e., <i>shepherds, herdsmen</i> .			

<sup>148</sup> From <http://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen26.htm> (Footnote) The Net Bible®; © 1996-2006 by Biblical Studies Press (BSP); accessed March 9, 2013.

## Genesis 26:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Yis <sup>e</sup> châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced <i>yih</i> s <sup>e</sup> - KHAWK]	<i>he laughs; laughing;</i> transliterated <i>Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850

**Translation:** *The herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen,...*

We can see the beginnings of negative volition on the side of the men of Gerar. A few decades earlier, these men came along and filled in the wells that Abraham had dug. This indicates stupid hatred on their behalf. Here, there is a particular well which is dug—which appears to be a new well altogether. And here, they are going to strive about this particular well.

As it says in the Hebrew exegesis, the NET Bible contends that the word *quarrel, strive, argue* has legal implications. We are not specifically told that this matter went to court in Gerar. We do not know if all the arguing took place right out by the well, or whether this matter was taken to court. We do not even know the outcome of the argument, although the implication is, Isaac won out, as he does name the well (v. 20c).

It is worth noting that, Isaac probably had the stronger hand, as he probably had a more powerful military force with him—possibly even greater than Abimelech's.

## Genesis 26:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> °]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say</i> <i>[to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> °]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
mayim (מַיִם) [pronounced <i>mah-YIHM</i> ]	<i>water (s)</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article; pausal form	Strong's #4325 BDB #565

**Translation:** *...saying, "The water [belongs] to us."*

Here is the contention of the herdsmen of Gerar: this water is ours. Here is their case: they are citizens of Gerar, they travel over this area, so, therefore, the water is theirs. However, Isaac's herdsmen are in the right. Abimelech, the king of Gerar, gave this plot of land to Isaac to live on (that appears to be the case, although this is not clearly stated), and Isaac does what you do with any piece of land where you live—you make it liveable, which involves, in this era, digging wells for water.

Genesis 26:20a-b *The herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water [belongs] to us."* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Gill: *though the well was dug by Isaac's servants, yet they [the herdsmen of Gerar] laid claim to the water, pretending it was their ground, being on their borders.*<sup>149</sup>

This is an era where land ownership and ownership of the assets of a land was in flux. Today, a piece of land belongs to whatever country controls it and is willing and able to defend it. In this era, ISIS, an evil group of Muslim revolutionaries, has begun to claim land within Syria and Iraq, claiming it for—at least it appears to me—the Islamic caliphate. Syria, because they are in the midst of a civil war, and Iraq, because we suddenly deserted them, are both unable to control and defend the land which ISIS has taken from them. Meanwhile, in northern Iraq, there are the Kurds, who are more than willing to defend their own portion of Iraq (and who will probably establish their own independent state in the next decade or so).

Some of the citizens of Gerar have made life difficult for Isaac. His business obviously depends upon water. He must water his animals; if he is growing any crops (as he did in Gerar), they must be watered. We do not know how large his compound is, but he probably has anywhere from 300 to a 1000 people working for him (most of them slaves). Therefore, water is absolutely necessary to Isaac.

We know very little about the specifics of this confrontation—logically, this could have resulted in an all-out war. However, Isaac continued to move further away, apparently hoping to diffuse the situation. We might reasonably understand this as Isaac *turning the other cheek* (Matthew 5:39). Isaac certainly had the wherewithal to oppose a group of Philistines. However, it appears that he continually made the choice to be *at peace with all men* (Romans 12:18).

Leupold: *Numerically Isaac's household was so strong as to constitute a threat to the safety of the Philistines, had Isaac been minded to use his power selfishly. The king's summons is a combination of flattery ("you are altogether too powerful for us") and of an ungracious attitude ("go away from us"). Isaac is a pacifist in the best sense of the word. Power is safe in his hands. He shows no inclination to abuse it. Secure in his strength but mindful primarily of his responsibilities to his God, he yields to pressure and moves farther up the valley, i.e., southeast from Gerar, and there pitches his tent with the intent of staying there permanently (he "settled down" —yeshebh —"sat down").*<sup>150</sup>

Abraham has already made a covenant with Abimelech (probably Abimelech Sr.), which covenant (Genesis 21:22–32) Isaac could point to in order to remain where he was, but he chose not to.

Wenstrom: *Genesis 26:17-22 records the problems with the Philistines that Isaac was experiencing persisted as the Philistines block up the wells Abraham dug and dispute ownership of the new wells that Isaac's servant's dig. Isaac's problems were in reality, not with the Philistines but with Satan who is manipulating the Philistines to mistreat Isaac who is in a covenant relationship with God and in the line of Christ. The apostle Paul taught the Ephesian believers that their problems in life are in reality with Satan and his angels and not human beings. Ephesians 6:11–12 *I solemnly charge all of you to make it your top priority and clothe yourselves with the full armor of God so that all of you might be able to habitually stand your ground against the stratagems of the devil, because as far as all of you are concerned your combat is emphatically not against blood and flesh, i.e. humanity but rather against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world rulers, which produce this present darkness, against the wicked spiritual forces residing in the heavenlies.**<sup>151</sup>

Griffith-Thomas: *The digging of wells was a virtual claim to the possession of the land, and it was this in particular that the Philistines resented. They were not prepared to allow Isaac to regard himself as in any sense the owner of this property, and they therefore made it difficult and even impossible for*

<sup>149</sup> Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:20.

<sup>150</sup> From <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/leupold/genesis.xxviii.html> accessed July 31, 2015.

<sup>151</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 401); accessed July 25, 2015.

him to remain there. Water especially for such a household as his was an absolute necessity, and the stopping up of the wells compelled him to take action.<sup>152</sup>

Despite God's promises of the land, Isaac is clearly unable to take all of the land God has promised to his seed; nor does Isaac need all of the land promised to his seed. Furthermore, at no time has God told Isaac, "You need to stand your ground here, against the Philistines. Kick their butts!" Wherever Isaac goes, he is going to bring prosperity. This does not mean that people will understand and appreciate that (however, Abimelech does, as we will observe at the end of this chapter).

Genesis 26:20c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lamed]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
shêm (שָׁמָה) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
b <sup>e</sup> êr (בְּעַר) [pronounced b <sup>e</sup> -AIR]	<i>well, pit; spring</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #875 BDB #91
êseq (עֵשֶׂק) [pronounced ĠAY-sehk]	<i>strife, contention; transliterated Esek</i>	proper singular noun/location:	Strong's #6230 BDB #796
Wenstrom: "Esek" is the proper noun êseq (עֵשֶׂק) (ay-sek), which means, "dispute" and was a memorial to the pettiness of the Philistines. <sup>153</sup>			
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>when, that, for, because</i>	explanatory conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
âsaq (עָסַק) [pronounced ġaw-SAHK]	<i>to contend, to strive, to quarrel</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Hithpael perfect	Strong's #6229 BDB #796
îm (עִם) [pronounced ġeem]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity; with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

<sup>152</sup> From [http://preceptaustin.org/genesis\\_devotional\\_commentary.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/genesis_devotional_commentary.htm) (Genesis 26); accessed August 2, 2015.

<sup>153</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 403); accessed July 25, 2015.

**Translation:** Therefore, Isaac called the name of the well *Esek*, for they quarreled with him [there].

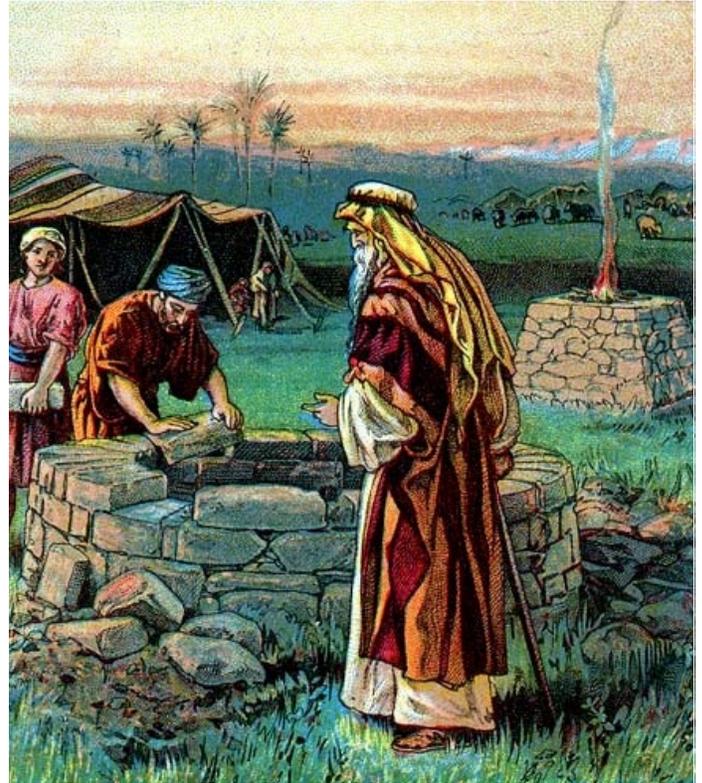
Since Isaac is in charge, the actual quarrel is between the herdsmen of Gerar (who are not there on the orders of the king) and Isaac himself. So Isaac names the well *quarreling*.

The word for *quarrel* in the Hebrew is *‘âsaq* (אָסַק) [pronounced *gaw-SAHK*] and the well was called *‘êseq* (עֵשֶׂק) [pronounced *ÇAY-sehk*]. It is almost unclear in this verse whether the servants of Isaac dug this particular well or whether it was a natural well of flowing water.

Genesis 26:20 The herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac’s herdsmen, saying, “The water [belongs] to us.” Therefore, Isaac called the name of the well *Esek*, for they quarreled with him [there]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:20 The herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac’s herdsmen, saying, “This water belongs to us.” Therefore, Isaac named this well *Esek*, because of the quarreling which took place there. (Kukis paraphrase)

**Isaac Overseeing the Construction of a Well** (graphic); from **Bible Study Outlines**; accessed August 4, 2015. The original is referenced in **Wikipedia**, Isaac digging for the wells, imagined in a Bible illustration (c. 1900)



Robert Dean: *This is typical of the small-minded, carnal-minded antagonism, because they are just going to continue to pursue the object of their blame. They have identified this person as the source of all their misery and are unhappy. So they go after Isaac and say that this water is theirs. He named the well Esek, which is a word play on the Hebrew word asak, which means a quarrel, a dispute, or contention. So he names it the well of quarreling.*<sup>154</sup>

Our verse reads: The herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac’s herdsmen, saying, “The water [belongs] to us.” Therefore, Isaac called the name of the well *Esek*, for they quarreled with him [there]. Again, we do not know if this was taken to court or whether the matter was settled there. It appears that Isaac took possession of the well, as he did name it.

Isaac will move eventually, so we need to keep in mind that, even though he apparently takes possession of this well and the next, that taking possession was apparently not the end of his conflict with the people of Gerar. If they filled in his father’s wells and fought with him over his wells, it seems likely that this is only a part of the harassment that Isaac and his compound endured.

They are in the valley of Gerar, after all; so the Philistines decided to argue with him about the ownership of the well, even though Isaac moved away from the city in accordance with the wishes of Abimelech and dug the well himself. Furthermore, any of these Philistines could have dug their own wells.

Do you see just how much the attitude of the Philistines has changed in just one generation? By the time we get to the era of David, the Philistines will be constantly at war with Israel. The modern-day Palestinians are probably

<sup>154</sup> From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen120.htm> accessed July 27, 2015.

not genetically related to the Philistines; but they are philosophically related to the Philistines of old. Their anger and hatred of the Jews is legendary.

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown: *The naming of wells by Abraham, and the hereditary right of his family to the property, the change of the names by the Philistines to obliterate the traces of their origin, the restoration of the names by Isaac, and the contests between the respective shepherds to the exclusive possession of the water, are circumstances that occur among the natives in those regions as frequently in the present day as in the time of Isaac.*<sup>155</sup>

**And so they dig a well another and so they quarrel again over her; and so he calls her name *Sitnah*.**

Genesis  
26:21

**Isaac's servants [lit., *they*] dug another well, but they also quarreled over it. Therefore, he calls its name *Sitnah*.**

**Isaac's servants dug another well, but they again quarreled over it with the herdsmen from Gerar. Therefore, Isaac named the well *Sitnah*.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so they dig a well another and so they quarrel again over her; and so he calls her name <i>Sitnah</i> .
Targum of Onkelos	And they digged another well; and they contended for it also; <u>and it dried, and did not flow again</u> . And he called the name of it (Sitnah) Accusation.
Latin Vulgate	And they digged also another; and for that they quarrelled likewise, and he called the name of it, Enmity.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And they dug another well, and they quarreled over that also; and he called the name of it Satana (the adversary).
Septuagint (Greek)	<u>And having departed from there</u> he dug another well, and they fought also for that; and he named the name of it, Enmity.

Significant differences: There is additional text in the targum and in the Greek.

#### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Then they made another water-hole, and there was a fight about that, so he gave it the name of Sitnah.
Easy English	Isaac's men dug another well. And the men from Gerar quarrelled about that one too. So Isaac called it Sitnah.
<i>The Message</i>	They dug another well and there was a difference over that one also, so he named it Sitnah (Accusation).
NIRV	Then Isaac's servants dug another well. They argued about that one too. So he named it Sitnah.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Isaac's servants dug another well, and the shepherds also quarreled about it. So that well was named "Jealous."
New Berkeley Version	They dug another well, over which there also was a dispute; so he named it Sitnah [Sitna – Enmity, or accusation, satanic].

<sup>155</sup> Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, Genesis 26:18–22.

New Century Version	Then his servants dug another well. When the people also argued about it, Isaac named that well Fight.
New Living Translation	Isaac's men then dug another well, but again there was a dispute over it. So Isaac named it Sitnah (which means "hostility").

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	As the result, he left that place and dug another well, and they started claiming [that it was theirs too]. So he named it Hatred.
International Standard V	When his workers started digging another well, those herdsmen [Lit. <i>well, they</i> ] quarreled about that one, too, so Isaac [Lit. <i>he</i> ] named it Sitnah [The Heb. name <i>Sitnah</i> means <i>strife</i> ].
New Advent Bible	Then they dug another, and this, too, was a cause of contention, so he called this well the Feud.
Translation for Translators	Then Isaac's servants dug another well, but they quarreled about who owned that one also. So Isaac named it Sitnah, which means 'opposition.'

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	They dug another well, and also argued over it. He called the name of it Sitnah ( <i>Satanic</i> ).
Conservapedia	They delved another well, and fought over that one also. They called that well Sitnah.
HCSB	Then they dug another well and quarreled over that one also, so he named it Hostility.
Lexham English Bible	And they dug another well, and they quarreled over it also. And he called its name Sitnah.

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And they searched out another well, and they contended for that also; and he called the name of it Opposition.
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### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible	...and they dig another well and strive for that also: and he calls the name thereof Sitnah/Opposition:...
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	And when they dug another well, they disputed over that one also; so he named it Sitnah [i.e., " <i>harassment</i> "].
Kaplan Translation	They dug another well, and it was also disputed. [Isaac] named it Accusation ( <i>Sitnah</i> ). <i>Shivah</i> in Hebrew. This is the masculine for seven, while Sheba (sheva) is the feminine. See note on Genesis 21:31. Some say that this was the well that Abraham dug in Beer-sheba (Genesis 21:25), which had been plugged up by the Philistines (Ramban), while others maintain that it was a new well (Rashbam).
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And they dug another be'er, and feuded over that also; and he called the shem of it Sitnah (Enmity).

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Then [his servants] dug another well, and they quarreled over that also; so he named it Sitnah [enmity].
The Expanded Bible	Then his servants [they] dug another well. When the people also argued about it [contended], Isaac named that well Fight [Hebrew: Sitnah].

Kretzmann's Commentary	And they digged an other well, and strove for that also; and he called the name of it Sitnah (hatred). Isaac suffered all this injustice and harm with the greatest patience and forbearance, preferring to endure rather than to inflict injury, as he probably might have done.
NET Bible®	His servants [Heb "they"; the referent (Isaac's servants) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] dug another well, but they quarreled over it too, so Isaac named it [Heb "and he called its name." The referent (Isaac) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] Sitnah [The name Sitnah (שִׁטְנָה, sitnah) is derived from a Hebrew verbal root meaning "to oppose; to be an adversary" (cf. Job 1:6). The name was a reminder that the digging of this well caused "opposition" from the Philistines.].
Syndein/Thieme	And they dug another well, and strove for that also . . . and he called the name of it Sitnah {name means 'strife'}.
The Pulpit Commentary	And they digged another well (Isaac having yielded up the first), and strove for that also: beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water" (Proverbs 17:14) and he called the name of it Sitnah (from fc to lie in wait as an adversary; whence Satan); probably in Wady-es-Shutein, near Rehoboth (vide infra).
The Voice	Isaac's men dug another well, and the water wars started again. So Isaac called it Sitnah, which means "enmity."

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And shifting is Isaac thence, and delving are they another well. Yet contending are they, moreover, over it. And calling is he its name Sitnah.
Green's Literal Translation	And they dug another well, and they also fought over it; and he called its name, Opposition.
H. C. Leupold	Then they digged another well and there was strife also over it. So he called its name Sitnah (Hostility). So he moved away and dug still another well, about which there was no strife.
New King James Version	Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that one also. So he called its name Sitnah [Literally Enmity].
Third Millennium Bible	And they dug another well, and strove for that also; and he called the name of it Sitnah [that is, Hatred].
World English Bible	They dug another well, and they argued over that, also. He called the name of it Sitnah.
Young's Updated LT	And they dig another well, and they strive also for it, and he calls its name "Hatred."

**The gist of this verse:** A second well is dug, and there is quarreling over it as well.

#### Genesis 26:21a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châphar (חָפַר) [pronounced chaw-FAHR]	to dig [a well or pit]; to dig for, to search for, to search for that which is hidden, to search by digging; to explore	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2658 BDB #343
b <sup>e</sup> êr (בְּעַר) [pronounced b <sup>e</sup> -AIR]	well, pit; spring	feminine singular noun	Strong's #875 BDB #91

## Genesis 26:21a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'achêr (אָחֵר) [pronounced ah-KHEHR]	<i>another, following, next; other as well as foreign, alien, strange</i>	adjective/substantive	Strong's #312 BDB #29

**Translation:** Isaac's servants [lit., they] dug another well,...

The context seems to indicate that Isaac gave up the well which his servants previously dug (although this is not outright stated). So they dig another well.

## Genesis 26:21b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
rîyb (רִיב) [pronounced ree <sup>b</sup> v]	<i>to debate, to contend, to dispute; to conduct a case or suit [against someone], to make a complaint [against someone]; to find fault</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7378 BDB #936
gam (גַּם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
'al (עַל) [pronounced gahʃ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

**Translation:** ...but they also quarreled over it.

This would mean that Isaac's servants quarreled with the herdsmen of Gerar over this well. Have you ever known a group of people who are always angry, and very easy to offend? The Jews have been dealing with people like that since the beginning of the Jews—right here. The Philistines were unhappy people, and they did what they could to make the family and servants of Isaac suffer.

Genesis 26:21a-b Isaac's servants [lit., they] dug another well, but they also quarreled over it. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

As we will see later on in this chapter, not every Philistine is like this. The king of Gerar and his two associates appear to be quite friendly to Isaac at the end of this chapter; and they appear to recognize blessing by association and how God blesses them by their association with Isaac.

The people of Gerar, based upon their envy of Isaac, continue to persecute him.

### Wenstrom on Isaac's Undeserved Suffering

1. In Genesis 26:17, the fact that Isaac patiently endures ill-treatment from the Philistines typifies the Lord Jesus Christ who did not insist upon His rights but rather silently and patiently suffered ill-treatment from sinners. 1Peter 2:23 *...and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously.*

## Wenstrom on Isaac's Undeserved Suffering

2. Isaac is undergoing “undeserved suffering,” which is designed by God to advance the believer to greater spiritual maturity and a deeper more intimate relationship with Himself.
3. “Undeserved suffering” is also designed by God to demonstrate God’s protection and provision to the believer and the sufficiency of God’s grace and His Word to deal with any and every adversity in life.
4. “Undeserved suffering” is designed by God to draw the believer closer to Himself and to test the believer as to whether or not they will trust Him in adversity.
5. There are three sources of suffering: (1) Satan: Cosmic system (2) Man: Old sin nature. (3) God: Divine integrity.
6. There are three general categories of suffering: (1) Self-induced misery (negative): The believer makes bad decisions from negative volition to the Word of God, either failing to hear the Word or failing to apply it. (2) Divine discipline (negative): God brings in suffering designed to get the believer back in fellowship with Him (Heb. 12:4-13). (3) Suffering for blessing: God brings in suffering that is designed to bless the believer with a more intimate walk with Himself and to glorify Himself.
7. The believer is to rejoice when he undergoes underserved suffering to test his faith because it produces endurance. James 1:2–3 *Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.*
8. It is through undeserved suffering that the believer is conformed to the image of Christ or attains faithful Christ-like character and identification with Christ experientially in His death and resurrection. Philippians 3:10–11 *...that I come to know Him experientially and the power from His resurrection and the participation in His sufferings by my becoming like Him with respect to His death. If somehow (by becoming like Him with respect to His death), I may attain to the exit resurrection, namely, the one out from the (spiritually) dead ones.*
9. God also permits His children to undergo undeserved suffering in order to glorify Himself and to demonstrate that His grace is sufficient in any and every circumstance by manifesting His life and power in our human impotence. 2Corinthians 12:9–10 *And He has said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.’ Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.*
10. The believer must persevere and endure undeserved suffering in order to receive the crown of life. James 1:12 *Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.* 2Corinthians 4:17–18 *For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*
11. Those who persevere and endure through undeserved suffering will receive their eternal inheritance, which is to reign with Christ. 2Timothy 2:12a *If we endure, we will also reign with Him.*

From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (Pp. 401–402); accessed July 25, 2015 (slightly edited).

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### Genesis 26:21c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (i) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## Genesis 26:21c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
qârâ' (אָרָה) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
siṭnâh (שִׁטְנָה) [pronounced siht-NAW]	hostility, animosity, adversarial; transliterated <i>Sitnah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #7856 BDB #966

Wenstrom: "Sitnah" is the proper noun *sitnah* (שִׁטְנָה) (*sit-naw*), which means, "opposition" and was a memorial to the hostility of the Philistines towards Isaac's servants.<sup>156</sup>

**Translation:** Therefore, he calls its name *Sitnah*.

Because of the animosity involved, Isaac calls this well *Sitnah*, which means *hostility, adversarial, animosity*. Siṭnâh (שִׁטְנָה) [pronounced *siht-NAW*] means *accusation (by letter)*.<sup>157</sup> Although, it is possible that the Philistines lodged a formal complaint with their leader, by letter, along the lines of a deed claim; it is more likely that they simply made trouble for Isaac. Isaac is compliant and moves on.

Genesis 26:21 Isaac's servants [lit., they] dug another well, but they also quarreled over it. Therefore, he calls its name *Sitnah*. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:21 Isaac's servants dug another well, but they again quarreled over it with the herdsmen from Gerar. Therefore, Isaac named the well *Sitnah*. (Kukis paraphrase)

**Names Had Meaning (graphic);** from [Bible Mountain.com](http://www.BibleMountain.com); accessed August 3, 2015.

Gill: *Sitnah...which signifies "hatred", it being out of hatred and malice to him that they gave him so much trouble; from this word Satan has his name, and these men were of a diabolical spirit, envious, spiteful, and malicious.*<sup>158</sup>

<sup>156</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 403); accessed July 25, 2015.

<sup>157</sup> Strong's Exhaustive Concordance by James Strong, S.T.D., LL.D., 1890; from e-Sword, H7855.

<sup>158</sup> Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:21.

## Names Had Meaning

- Gen. 26:20-21 the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with the herdsmen of Isaac, saying, "The water is ours!" So he named the well **Esek**, because they **contended** with him. Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over it too, so he named it **Sitnah**.
- Esek is the Hebrew word for contend.
- Sitnah is the Hebrew word for adversary.

[www.BibleMountain.com](http://www.BibleMountain.com)

Robert Dean: *[Isaac] moves on. He is not going to put up a fight, he just relaxes. It is not his problem, it is theirs; he moves to the next well. They follow him and they quarrel over that one, so he calls it Sitnah, which means accusation. So they are continuing to assault him verbally through the sins of the tongue.*<sup>159</sup>

Coffman: *One of the big things in the chapter is the friendly and peaceful nature of Isaac, who exhibited many of the graces and much of the meekness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Abimelech I had given Abraham the right to live in his whole domain, and the envious Philistines were acting illegally by trying to prevent Isaac's use of their country. When disputes arose, Isaac resolved them by yielding and moving to another place, trusting Jehovah, rather than taking things into his own hands and engaging in armed conflict.*<sup>160</sup>

What this is all about is, we have gone from the Philistines having a rather congenial relationship with Abraham to them having a relationship of personal animosity toward Isaac. It is not that Abraham was a nice guy and Isaac was not; it was a change of generations and their relationship with Abraham's God had changed. There were believers among the Philistines in Abraham's God before. There are fewer believers, apparently, in Isaac's God. This is the next generation of Philistines, so that we are observing their downward spiral.

This does not bode well for the Philistines in this area. Their attitude toward Isaac reveals their movement away from Isaac's God.

If they were smart, they would have done everything possible to make their relationship with Isaac a good one, because his blessings would overflow to them. Their hatred and jealousy overruled good sense.

What is happening today in the Palestinian occupied territories is simple: they are filled with mental attitude sins toward the Jews. Therefore, we should not expect their actions to be rational. They act on the basis of hatred; and the fact that what they do results in hundreds of their own people being killed—and yet, they will do exactly the same thing tomorrow.

**Application:** We have had a similar situation somewhat recently of our government forcing a cattle rancher off of their land. The rancher has been utilizing this land for decades. At some point in time, there was a dispute over the use of this land, and Bundy, the cattle rancher, began to dispute use of the land with the government. By 2014 or so, Bundy had accumulated \$1 million in fees and penalties. *The [Portland] Oregonian newspaper reported in May 2014 that the amount that Bundy owed stood in "stark contrast" to the situation in Oregon, where just 45 of the state's roughly 1,100 grazing permit holders collectively owed \$18,759 in past-due payments to the BLM. Excluding Bundy's unpaid fees, the total of all late grazing fees owed nationwide to the BLM was only \$237,000, the newspaper said.*<sup>161</sup> It certainly sounds as if our government is making an example of Bundy, so that no one else tries to dispute an edict from any the Bureau of Land Management.

**Application (con't):** All of this is unused land, much of it out in the middle of nowhere. It is not as if these cattle roaming about negatively impacts anyone in the United States.

**Application (con't):** Now, legally, the government is, at least by the decision of the courts, in the right, despite Bundy's fees and penalties bordering on the ridiculous. However, this is essentially desert country, and varying reasons have been given by the government for this standoff, including the need to remove all ranchers from this territory to protect the endangered Mojave Desert tortoise.<sup>162</sup> The other ranchers left; Bundy stayed. Later a BLM webpage *listed the impacts of Bundy's trespass cattle. Among these were risks to people driving on roadways, destruction of crops on private property, damage to community property in the city of Mesquite, negative impacts*

<sup>159</sup> From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen120.htm> accessed July 27, 2015.

<sup>160</sup> From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015.

<sup>161</sup> From [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bundy\\_standoff](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bundy_standoff) accessed July 25, 2015.

<sup>162</sup> From <http://time.com/63528/the-armed-rebellion-on-a-nevada-cattle-ranch-could-be-just-the-start/> accessed July 25, 2015.

on city facilities in Bunkerville, destruction of archaeological artifacts and unauthorized reservoir construction.<sup>163</sup> This page has since been removed. Our government appears to have a fairly strong anti-beef predisposition (also an anti-oil predisposition); so it is difficult to determine in reality if the problem is the tortoise, the past due fees, or if this is simply our government acting to reduce the amount of beef produced (at the beginning of Barack Obama's administration, hamburger was less than \$1.50/pound; and now it is approximately thrice that). My point in this is, there are similarities between this situation that Isaac faced, who was drilling a well on "federal" land (land which may or may not belong to Gerar); and Bundy, who used federal land to graze on.

**Application (con't):** Just in case you think the idea that our government does not like meat is off base, the government is actively trying to **reduce** the consumption of beef; and it has many times warned that cattle **contribute** to global warming. Some believe that cattle are **a greater threat** to the earth than cars.

**And so they remove from there and so they dig a well another and they have not quarreled over her. And so he calls her name Rehoboth. And so he says, "For now has made room Y<sup>e</sup>howah for us and we have been fruitful in the land."**

Genesis  
26:22

**So they were caused to move from there and they [lit., he] dug another well, but they did not quarrel over it. Therefore, Isaac [lit., he] called its name Rehoboth. He said, "For now, Y<sup>e</sup>howah has made room for us and we are [now] fruitful [and prospering] in the land."**

**Because of this, they were caused to move to another area, where they dug yet another well. However, they did not quarrel over this well; therefore, Isaac named it Rehoboth. He said, "At this time, Jehovah has made room for us, so that we are now fruitful and prospering in the land."**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so they remove from there and so they dig a well another and they have not quarreled over her. And so he calls her name Rehoboth. And so he says, "For now has made room Y <sup>e</sup> howah for us and we have been fruitful in the land."
Targum of Onkelos	And he removed from there and digged another well, and for that they did not contend <u>as formerly</u> , and he called the name of it (Ravchatha) Spaciousness; for he said, Now has the Lord given us space to spread us abroad in the land.
Latin Vulgate	Going forward from there, he digged another well, for which they contended not; therefore he called the name thereof, Latitude, saying: Now has the Lord given us room, and made us to increase upon the earth.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then he moved from there, and dug another well; but over that they did not quarrel; and he called the name of it Rehoboth (to enlarge); and he said, For now the LORD has made room for us, and we shall multiply in the land.
Septuagint (Greek)	And he departed from there and dug another well; and they did not quarrel about that one; and he named the name of it, Room, saying, Because now the Lord has made room for us, and has increased us upon the earth.
Significant differences:	The targum has some additional text. Some of these English translations from the ancient language includes the translation and transliteration of the name of the well.

#### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

<sup>163</sup> From [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bundy\\_standoff](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bundy_standoff) accessed July 25, 2015.

Bible in Basic English	Then he went away from there, and made another water-hole, about which there was no fighting: so he gave it the name of Rehoboth, for he said, Now the Lord has made room for us, and we will have fruit in this land.
Easy English	Isaac went from there to live in another place. And he dug another well. There was no quarrel about this well, so Isaac called it Rehoboth. He said, 'The *Lord has now given to us somewhere to live. We shall be *fruitful in this country.
Good News Bible (TEV)	He moved away from there and dug another well. There was no dispute about this one, so he named it "Freedom." He said, "Now the LORD has given us freedom to live in the land, and we will be prosperous here."
<i>The Message</i>	He went on from there and dug yet another well. But there was no fighting over this one so he named it Rehoboth (Wide-Open Spaces), saying, "Now GOD has given us plenty of space to spread out in the land."
NIRV	He moved on from there and dug another well. But no one argued about that one. So he named it Rehoboth. He said, "Now the Lord has given us room. Now we will do well in the land."

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	He left there and dug another well, but they didn't argue about it, so he named it Rehoboth [Or open spaces] and said, "Now the Lord has made an open space for us and has made us fertile in the land."
Contemporary English V.	Finally, they dug one more well. There was no quarreling this time, and the well was named "Lots of Room," because the LORD had given them room and would make them very successful.
New Century Version	He moved from there and dug another well. No one argued about this one, so he named it Room Enough. Isaac said, "Now the Lord has made room for us, and we will be successful in this land."
New Life Bible	He moved away from there and dug another well. And they did not argue about it. So he gave it the name Rehoboth. For he said, "Now the Lord has made a large place for us. We will grow much in this land."
New Living Translation	Abandoning that one, Isaac moved on and dug another well. This time there was no dispute over it, so Isaac named the place Rehoboth (which means "open space"), for he said, "At last the Lord has created enough space for us to prosper in this land."

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And he left that place and dug another well, which no one else claimed to be theirs; so he named it Space, saying, 'Because Jehovah has made space for us, and He has prospered us in the land.'
International Standard V	Then he left that area and dug still another well. Because they did not quarrel over that one, Isaac [Lit. <i>he</i> ] named it Rehoboth [The Heb. name <i>Rehoboth</i> means <i>wide places</i> ], because he used to say, "The LORD has enlarged the territory [The Heb. lacks <i>the territory</i> ] for us. We will prosper in the land."
Translation for Translators	They moved on from there and dug another well, but this time no one quarreled about who owned it. So he named it Rehoboth, which means 'empty place,' saying, "Yahweh has given us an empty place to live in, a place that is not wanted by other people, and we will become very prosperous here."

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	He originated there, and dug another well, but they never argued over it. He called its name 'Rehoboth' (enlarge). He said, "Now Yahweh will enlarge us, and we will be-fruitful in the land."
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Ferar-Fenton Bible	He then removed from there, and dug another well, and they did not fight over it, so he called its name "Room-enough," for he said, "Now, LORD, You have given us room, and have made us fruitful in the land."
Conservapedia	Isaac struck camp and left that place, and delved another well. They did not fight over that one, so Isaac called that well Rehoboth, saying, "Now the LORD has made room for us, and we will be fruitful in the land." "Rehoboth" is close in Hebrew spelling to the word for "widen" or "make room."
Lexham English Bible	Then he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. And he called its name Rehoboth, and said, "Now Yahweh has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."
New Advent Bible	And at last, when he had gone further on and dug another well, over which they did not dispute with him, he called it Freedom; Now at last, he said, the Lord has given us freedom to spread over the land.
NIV – UK	He moved on from there and dug another well, and no one quarrelled over it. He named it Rehoboth [Rehoboth means room.], saying, 'Now the Lord has given us room and we will flourish in the land.'

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	He moved away from there and dug another well and as no one quarreled over it, he called it Rehoboth saying, "Now the Lord has <i>made room</i> for us, we shall prosper in the land."
The Heritage Bible	And he removed from there, and searched out another well; and they did not contend for that; and he called the name of it Broad Place; and he said, Because now Jehovah has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.
New American Bible (R.E.)	So he moved on from there and dug still another well, but over this one they did not argue. He named it Rehoboth [Rehoboth: "wide spaces," i.e., ample room to live; site is probably SW of modern day Beer-sheba.], and said, "Because the LORD has now given us ample room, we shall flourish in the land."
Revised English Bible	He moved on from there and dug another well; over that there was no dispute, so he called it Rehoboth, saying, 'Now the LORD has given us room and our people will become more numerous in the land.'

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	He went away from there and dug another well, and over that one they didn't quarrel. So he called it Rechovot [wide open spaces] and said, "Because now ADONAI has made room for us, and we will be productive in the land."
exeGesés companion Bible	...and he removes from there and digs another well; and for that they strive not: and he calls the name thereof Rechovoth/Wideway; and he says, At this time Yah Veh widens for us and we bear fruit in the land.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	He moved from there and dug yet another well, and they did not quarrel over it; so he called it Rehoboth, saying, "Now at last the LORD has granted us ample space [Heb. hirhib, <i>connected with "Rehoboth."</i> ] to increase in the land."
Kaplan Translation	He then moved away from there and dug another well. This time it was not disputed, so he named it Wide Spaces (Rechovoth) [There is a well known as Rehueibeh 20 miles southwest of Beer-sheba, equidistant between Beer-sheba and the site of Gerar. We thus see that Isaac was following the wadi from Gerar to Beer-sheba.]. 'Now God will grant us wide open spaces,' he said. 'We can be fruitful in the land.'

Orthodox Jewish Bible      And he moved away from there, and dug another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the shem of it Rechovot (Broad Places); and he said, For now Hashem hath made rachav (room) for us, and we shall be fruitful in ha'aretz.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible      He moved from there and dug another well. No one argued about [contended] this one, so he named it Room Enough [<sup>C</sup>Hebrew: Rehoboth]. Isaac said, "Now the Lord has made room for us, and we will be successful [fruitful; 1:22] in this land."

Kretzmann's Commentary      And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth (widths, wide expanses) ; and he said, for now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land. This camp was located still farther to the west, and entirely outside of Philistine jurisdiction, on the extreme southern boundary of Canaan.

NET Bible®      Then he moved away from there and dug another well. They did not quarrel over it, so Isaac [Heb "and he"; the referent (Isaac) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] named it [Heb "and he called its name."] Rehoboth [The name Rehoboth (תּוֹבֹהַר, rehovot) is derived from a verbal root meaning "to make room." The name was a reminder that God had made room for them. The story shows Isaac's patience with the opposition; it also shows how God's blessing outdistanced the men of Gerar. They could not stop it or seize it any longer.], saying, "For now the Lord has made room for us, and we will prosper in the land."

The updated Pulpit Com.      And he removed from thence (yielding that too), and dug another well; and for that they did not strive (perhaps as being beyond the boundaries of Gerar): and he called the name of it Reheboth; i.e. "Wide spaces" (hence "streets,"; Genesis 19:2) from bjr to be or become broad; conjectured to have been situated in the Wady Ruhaibeh, about eight and a half hours to the south of Beersheba, where are still found a well named Bir-Rohebeh and ruins of a city of the same name (Robinson, vol. 1. p. 289; Thomson, "Land and Book," p. 558) and he said, For now the Lord has made room (literally, *has made a broad space*) for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

The Voice      Isaac didn't want any more trouble, so he moved on from there and dug yet another well. At last, they didn't quarrel over this one, so Isaac named this well Rehoboth, which means "wide spaces."  
**Isaac** (explaining): Now the Eternal One has provided this wide space for us. We will become numerous and prosperous in this land.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version      And shifting is he thence, and delving are they another well. And they do not contend over it. And calling is he its name Rehoboth. And saying is he, "For now Yahweh widens for us, and fruitful are we in the land.

Green's Literal Translation      And he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not fight over it; and he called its name, Broad Places. And he said, For now Jehovah has broadened for us and we shall be fruitful in the land.

H. C. Leupold      So he moved away and dug still another well, about which there was no strife. So he called its name Rehoboth (Plenty of room), saying: For now Yahweh has given us room and we shall be fruitful in the land.

NASB      He moved away from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it; so he named it Rehoboth [i.e. broad places], for he said, "At last [Lit Truly now] the Lord has made room [Or broad] for us, and we will be fruitful in the land."

Third Millennium Bible      And he removed from thence, and dug another well, and for that they strove not; and he called the name of it Rehoboth [that is, Room]. And he said, "For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."

World English Bible

He left that place, and dug another well. They didn't argue over that one. He called it Rehoboth. He said, "For now Yahweh has made room for us, and we will be fruitful in the land."

Young's Updated LT

And he removes from there, and digs another well, and they have not striven for it, and he calls its name Enlargements, and says, "For—now has Jehovah given enlargement to us, and we have been fruitful in the land."

**The gist of this verse:**

Isaac moved from there, which necessitated digging another well. Since there was no fighting over the rights to this well, he named it *Rehoboth*, and said that God had given them room on the land.

Genesis 26:22a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
‘âthaq (אֲתָק) [pronounced <i>gaw-THANK</i> ]	<i>to remove away, to take away; to move forward, proceed, move on; to remove; to transform, to transcribe</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #6275 BDB #801
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i> ]	<i>from, off, away from, out from, out of, from off; on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced <i>shawm</i> ]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027

**Translation:** So they were caused to move from there...

Because of the constant conflict that Isaac encountered with the people of Gerar, he finally moved from there. We have to be careful here: there are times when you are dealing with problems and conflict, and God expects you to stay there; and there are times when God expects you to move. Here, it will become clear that moving is what God expected Isaac to do—primarily because of the negative volition of the men of Gerar.

Isaac could not break through this negative volition of the people of Gerar. This is a progression that we have observed in this area. The Abimelech during the time of Abraham presided over a staff of godly men, men who, when faced with the possible repercussions of the actions of their king, became afraid. They acted immediately to solve this problem. However, in the next generation, there is the implication that Rebekah could have been simply taken by some random male citizen and raped; so that, in a time period of maybe 40 years, control over this area and over its citizenry had become diminished because of immorality. Therefore, we should not be surprised that Abraham enjoyed a great peace in the land outside of Gerar, but his son Isaac only experienced strife and animosity.

Clarke: *[Isaac] implicitly follows the Divine command, Resist not evil, than Isaac; whenever he found that his work was likely to be a subject of strife and contention, he gave place, and rather chose to suffer wrong than to have his own peace of mind disturbed. Thus he overcame evil with good.*<sup>164</sup>

<sup>164</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:21 (slightly edited).

Rev. Bruce Goettsche: *Some would say that Isaac was a wimp. He should have flexed his muscles and fought back. I don't think Isaac was weak . . . he was faithful. He trusted God to make a place for him. Isaac endured. He kept doing what was right. And in the end the King of Gerar came to him and asked him for a treaty of peace. Isaac's character and godliness was reaffirmed by the way he handled this difficult time. He turned a bad first impression around by the way he handled this situation. The same is true with us. There is nothing that reveals character like difficulty.*<sup>165</sup>

**Application:** God sometimes moves a person from point A to point B. What happened to Isaac previously was unjust. Abimelech had apparently given him the freedom to live on his land, and digging a well is part of living in any place at that time.

Genesis 26:22b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châphar (חָפַר) [pronounced chaw-FAHR]	<i>to dig [a well or pit]; to dig for, to search for, to search for that which is hidden, to search by digging; to explore</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2658 BDB #343
b <sup>ê</sup> r (בְּעַר) [pronounced b <sup>e</sup> -AIR]	<i>well, pit; spring</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #875 BDB #91
'achêr (אַחֵר) [pronounced ah-KHEHR]	<i>another, following, next; other as well as foreign, alien, strange</i>	adjective/substantive	Strong's #312 BDB #29

**Translation:** ...and they [lit., he] dug another well,...

In this new area—and we do not know exactly yet how far away they are from Gerar, Isaac's men dug another well.

J. Vernon McGee: *I feel that the water is a picture of the Word of God. We are to drink deeply of it. It is called the "water of the Word" and is for drinking purposes to slake our thirst, and it is also for washing. Jesus said that we are cleansed through the Word which He has spoken. Water is a very necessary item in life. You can't have life without water. You can fly over the deserts of Arizona, New Mexico, and California and see plenty of arid land. Then all of a sudden you see an area of lush green and wonder what has happened down there. Water is the only explanation. And, my friend, water is the explanation for the differences between God's children in any church - the water of the Word of God. There is a great difference in the lives of believers who study God's Word. And there will be a struggle. I think that you will always have to pay a price if you are really going to study the Word of God. The devil will permit you to do anything except get into the Word of God.*<sup>166</sup>

Genesis 26:22c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

<sup>165</sup> From [Union Church.com](http://UnionChurch.com); accessed August 1, 2015.

<sup>166</sup> From [https://archive.org/stream/01\\_Genesis/01-GENESIS\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt) (Genesis 26); accessed July 29, 2015.

Genesis 26:22c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
לֹא (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced low]	not, no	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
רִיב (בִּיר) [pronounced ree <sup>b</sup> v]	to debate, to contend, to dispute; to conduct a case or suit [against someone], to make a complaint [against someone]; to find fault	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #7378 BDB #936
עַל (עַל) [pronounced gah <sup>l</sup> ]	upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside	preposition of proximity with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

**Translation:** ...but they did not quarrel over it.

This time, there is a change—herdsmen from Gerar do now show up and start arguing over this well and who owns it.

Genesis 26:22a-c **So they were caused to move from there and they [lit., he] dug another well, but they did not quarrel over it.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Life Application Bible Study Notes: *Three times Isaac and his men dug new wells. When the first two disputes arose, Isaac moved on. Finally room was available for everyone. Rather than start a huge conflict, Isaac compromised for the sake of peace. Would you be willing to forsake an important position or valuable possession to keep peace? Ask God for the wisdom to know when to withdraw and when to stand and fight.*<sup>167</sup>

Griffith-Thomas: *This reluctance to go far away soon had its effect. Isaac was necessarily compelled to dig again the wells of water that had been stopped up, but this was at once met by a strife with the herdsmen of Gerar for the possession of the wells. Again Isaac's herdsmen dug a well, and the men of Gerar strove for that also. All this was evidently intended to make things uncomfortable for Isaac until he should be willing to return to his own home. Compelled by circumstances to make another move, a third attempt was made at well-digging, and at length the people of Gerar did not continue to strive. This was regarded by Isaac as a mark of Divine favor. "He called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the Lord has made room for us, and we will be fruitful in the land." The spirit of yielding is very noteworthy, more particularly as peacemakers are very rare in the East. A strife of this kind is scarcely ever likely to be met by such a spirit of willingness to yield. On the contrary, there is every likelihood of such action leading to further strife and insistence upon personal rights. God was at work gently but very definitely leading Isaac back again to his own home.*<sup>168</sup>

Scott Grant: *The herdsmen of Gerar claim ownership of the water and quarrel with Isaac's herdsmen. Isaac's people dig another well, and a quarrel ensues once again. It isn't until he moves away from the herdsmen and digs a third well that he encounters no opposition. He gives the first two wells names that commemorate the conflicts.*<sup>169</sup>

<sup>167</sup> From <http://newsyoucanbelieve.com/bible/2010/01/09/day-009/> accessed July 31, 2015.

<sup>168</sup> From [http://preceptaustin.org/genesis\\_devotional\\_commentary.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/genesis_devotional_commentary.htm) (Genesis 26); accessed August 2, 2015 (slightly edited).

<sup>169</sup> From [http://www.pbc.org/system/message\\_files/99650/4866.pdf](http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99650/4866.pdf) accessed August 2, 2015.

Genesis 26:22d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (אָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lamed]	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
R <sup>e</sup> chôbôwth (תּוֹבֵךְ) [pronounced rekh-oh-BOATH]	wide place, wid streets, broad open place; and is transliterated Rehoboth	proper singular noun location	Strong's #7344 BDB #932

**Translation:** Therefore, Isaac [lit., he] called its name *Rehoboth*.

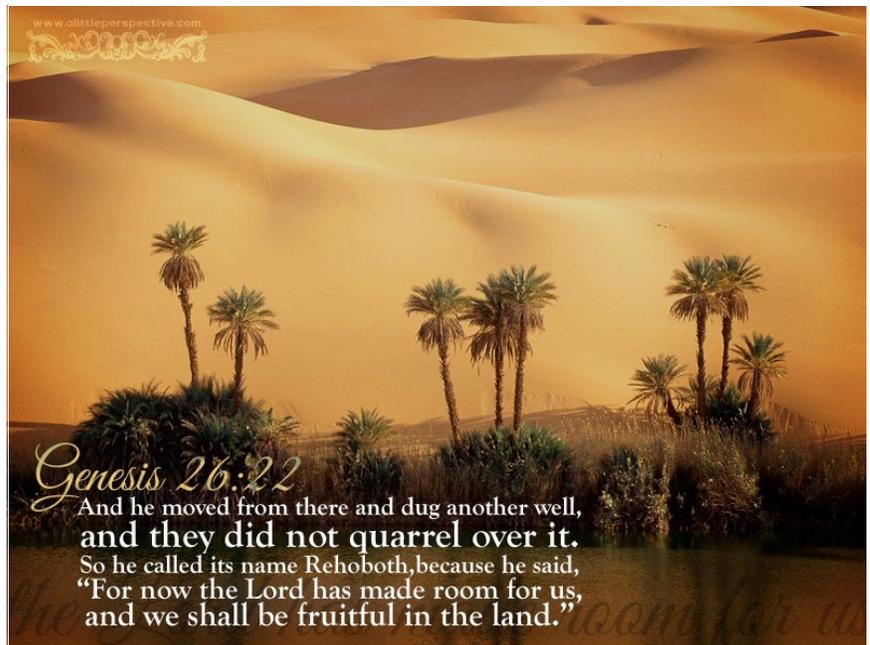
Isaac therefore names the well, *Rehoboth*, which means *wide open place*. The idea is, they are in an area where they can expand and grow, unhindered by others.

The next well was called R<sup>e</sup>chôbôwth (תּוֹבֵךְ) [pronounced rekh-oh-BOATH] and it means *broad open places or enlargement*. There is enough room for Isaac and company there; an area over which the Philistines did not contend.

**Genesis 26:22 (graphic);** from **Christian Bible Study**; accessed August 3, 2015.

Whedon: *The name of Rehoboth still lingers in the wady er-Ruhaibeh, some twenty-three miles south of Beer-sheba, where Robinson found extensive ruins. Later travellers claim to have found the well, but their reports are conflicting.*<sup>170</sup>

Coffman: *The names of the wells in this passage: Esek, Sitnah, and Rehoboth were so named because of the circumstances prevailing when Isaac's servants dugged them. Morris gave their meanings as, "The Quarrel Well," "The Hatred Well," and the "Well of Ample Room." [8] Aalders gave*



<sup>170</sup> From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/whe/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 31, 2015.

their meanings as: "Dispute," "Opposition," and "Room." [9] Unger defined their meanings as, "Contention," "Enmity," and "Room." [10] Perhaps the general idea would be that they meant "Strife, Animosity, and Peace!"<sup>171</sup>

The wells of Genesis have significant names, and are associated with significant events:

### Scofield on the Names of the Wells

- (1) Beer-lahai-roi, the well of him that liveth and seeth me Genesis 16:14; Genesis 24:62; Genesis 25:11.
- (2) Beer-sheba, the well of the oath or covenant Genesis 21:15-33; Genesis 22:19; Genesis 26:23-25; Genesis 46:1-5.
- (3) Esek, contention Genesis 26:20.
- (4) Sitnah, hatred Genesis 26:21. Esek and Sitnah were Isaac's own attempts at well-digging. Afterward, he dwelt by the old wells of his father.
- (5) Rehoboth, enlargement Genesis 26:22.

From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/srn/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed August 1, 2015.

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### Genesis 26:22e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
kîy (כי) [pronounced kee]	<i>when, that, for, because</i>	explanatory conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
'attâh (אתה) [pronounced gaht-TAWH]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
râchab (בחר) [pronounced raw-SHAH <sup>RV</sup> ]	<i>to make large, to enlarge, to cause to grow [to be wide]; to be expanded</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #7337 BDB #931
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

**Translation:** He said, "For now, Y<sup>e</sup>howah has made room for us..."

<sup>171</sup> From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015. Link leads to the other references.

Isaac recognizes that it is God who has provided this for him and his encampment. There are times when circumstances cause us to move. Rather than assert his rights and invoke Abraham's covenant with Abimelech, Isaac quietly moved on.

J. Ligon Duncan: *And then we're told in verses 19 and 21 that Isaac went on to dig new wells. But he meets resistance from the herdsmen in Gerar in verses 20 and 21. And again we see Isaac not pressing his rights. Isaac doesn't stand on what he could have -- He could have said look, you're in violation of the covenant with Abraham, and I'm going to bring my men over and we're going to attack you just like Abraham attacked the kings who kidnapped Lot. Isaac does not stand and press his rights here. Finally, we are told in verse 22 that he moves even further away from the herdsman of Gerar, and he finally finds peace. Very interestingly, Isaac credits his peace to the Lord's providence. This is a glimpse into the piety of Isaac. Isaac himself had taken steps to keep from being in a contentious relationship with his neighbors. And he could have said, well, finally, my plan worked. I was so kind to these people in not pressing my rights, and finally I got what I deserved, a little peace.*<sup>172</sup>

Now, this does not mean that every believer should find some cabin out in the woods, far away from civilization and live there. The people of Gerar made it impossible to live in the Gerar territory, so Isaac had to move from there. It just so turns out, in this instance, that he is living in a wide open space without outsiders troubling him.

**Application:** I have used the illustration many times of being moved to Houston. This was certainly God's plan and it was certainly a result of the pressure of having no job where I lived in California (and with nearly no prospects in the golden state).

God moved Isaac, and he recognizes here that he is in the right place.

Barnes summarizes these past few verses: *Isaac retires, and sets about the digging of wells. He retreats from Gerar and its suburbs, and takes up his abode in the valley, or wady of Gerar. These wadys are the hollows in which brooks flow, and therefore the well-watered and fertile parts of the country. He digs again the old wells, and calls them by the old names. He commences the digging of new ones. For the first the herdsmen of Gerar strive, claiming the water as their property. Isaac yields. He digs another; they strive, and he again yields. He now removes apparently into a distinct region, and digs a third well, for which there is no contest. This he calls Rehoboth, "room" - a name which appears to be preserved in Wady er-Ruhaibeh, near which is Wady esh-Shutein, corresponding to Sitnah. "For now the Lord has made room for us." Isaac's homely realizing faith in a present and presiding Lord here comes out.*<sup>173</sup>

J. Ligon Duncan<sup>174</sup> points out that Paul, at various times, invoked his Roman citizenship—but not every time. When it could further the gospel message, Paul would say, "I am a Roman citizen; I appeal to Cæsar!" At other times, he did not. Throughout this portion of Genesis, it becomes clear that there is no magic formula for action. That is, regarding Egypt, sometimes the patriarchs went there, under God's guidance and sometimes they did not—also under God's guidance. What we do ought to be to the furtherance of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

### Genesis 26:22f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

<sup>172</sup> From [First Presbyterian Church](#); accessed July 30, 2015.

<sup>173</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:17–22 (slightly edited).

<sup>174</sup> From [First Presbyterian Church](#); accessed July 30, 2015.

## Genesis 26:22f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
pârâh (פָּרָה) [pronounced paw-RAW]	to bear fruit, to be fruitful; to bear young, to have lots of children	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6509 (& #6500) BDB #826
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

**Translation:** ...and we are [now] fruitful [and prospering] in the land.”

It appears that this is written sometime after the move, and that, during this time, they have become prosperous.

Over and over again in this chapter, Isaac continues to become more prosperous. God does bless the believer.

Genesis 26:22 So they were caused to move from there and they [lit., he] dug another well, but they did not quarrel over it. Therefore, Isaac [lit., he] called its name *Rehoboth*. He said, “For now, Y<sup>ehowah</sup> has made room for us and we are [now] fruitful [and prospering] in the land.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:22 Because of this, they were caused to move to another area, where they dug yet another well. However, they did not quarrel over this well; therefore, Isaac named it *Rehoboth*. He said, “At this time, Jehovah has made room for us, so that we are now fruitful and prospering in the land.” (Kukis paraphrase)

Apparently, each time, Isaac moved further away, until he had gone far enough where the men of Gerar would no longer argue about ownership with him. He had room there to expand. However, as he moved further and further away from them, he took with him the blessings of God.

John Calvin: *In digging the third well, Isaac gives thanks to God...because, by the favor of God, a more copious supply [of room and blessing] is now afforded him, he furnishes an example of invincible patience. Therefore, however severely he may have been harassed, yet when, after he had been freed from these troubles, he so placidly returns thanks to God, and celebrates his goodness, he shows that in the midst of trials he has retained a composed and tranquil mind.*<sup>175</sup>

Keil and Delitzsch: *In this valley Isaac dug open the old wells which had existed from Abraham's time, and gave them the old names. His people also dug three new wells. But Abimelech's people raised a contest about two of these; and for this reason Isaac called them Esek and Sitnah (strife and opposition). The third there was no dispute about; and it received in consequence the name Rehoboth, “room, space,” for Isaac said, “Now...Jehovah has provided for us a broad space, that we may be fruitful (multiply) in the land.” This well was probably not in the land of Gerar, as Isaac had removed from there, but in the Wady Ruhaibeh, the name of which is suggestive of Rehoboth, which stands at the point where the two roads from Gaza and Hebron meet.*<sup>176</sup>

<sup>175</sup> John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentary on the Bible*; 2<sup>nd</sup> beta version from e-Sword, Genesis 28:18 (slightly edited).

<sup>176</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 26:18–22 (edited). There is more information about the modern location of this last place.

Let's look at these 6 verses: So Isaac departed from there and encamped in the Valley of Gerar and settled there. And Isaac dug again the wells of water that had been dug in the days of Abraham his father, which the Philistines had stopped after the death of Abraham. And he gave them the names that his father had given them. But when Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found there a well of spring water, the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours." So he called the name of the well Esek, because they contended with him. Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that also, so he called its name Sitnah. And he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he called its name Rehoboth, saying, "For now the LORD has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land." (Gen 26:17–22; ESV)

### Snider Summarizes Genesis 26:17–22

1. At the command of Abimelech to leave that region, Isaac departs willingly.
2. He leaves Gerar proper and moves southeast up the valley toward Beersheba and further away from Philistia proper.
3. It is evident that the Philistines claimed land in this region, as they had done during the time of Abraham.
4. Exactly when they began filling the wells is not stated, only that it began after the death of Abraham.
5. The fact that it is brought up here seems to indicate that this was something which was an ongoing problem with them.
6. These wells are not theirs, as they are not located in their territory.
7. The malicious nature of the Philistines is here evident, and this makes it obvious that the fears of Abraham and Isaac were not groundless.
8. The ruler of the Philistines has rebuked Isaac, and deservedly so, his people have tampered with Isaac's possessions, and he has summarily dismissed Isaac from their land.
9. Isaac does not seem to attempt retaliation for any of these actions, although it is evident that he possessed adequate strength to respond.
10. Some have raised the question that Isaac was passive to the point of fault, in allowing these people to abuse him.
11. Isaac did not retaliate, at least partially, due to fear, as is observed in vv. 7, 24.
12. His fear and the mistreatment by the Philistines were used by God to get him back in the land of Canaan,
13. Isaac returned to the disputed region, between Gerar and Beersheba and began to reopen the wells which his father's servants had dug.
14. Apparently the Philistines could not muster an effective argument against Isaac's work, since these wells belonged to his family.
15. He continues to use the names his father had assigned to these wells to avoid any confusion about ownership.
16. The Philistines were apparently familiar enough with the names to be assured that these belonged to the Isaac's father.
17. Isaac's large flocks and herds apparently required even more watering places than the ones his father had dug.
18. So his servants embark upon digging more wells of their own.
19. The Philistines balk at these new wells and contend verbally with the servants of Isaac.
20. Whether this escalated into anything more than verbal confrontation is doubtful.
21. Two wells are mentioned, and the Philistines hotly contested the fact that he was digging in territory which they claimed.
22. Isaac names both wells to reflect the contention and mental attitude hostility which the Philistines obviously possessed.
23. Rather than continue to engage in activity which could have likely escalated into warfare, Isaac moves
24. He relocates back into Canaan, out of the territory which was disputed.
25. There his servants dig another necessary well, and this time there is no argument.
26. He attributes this blessing to the Lord, and names the well Rehoboth, meaning spacious or broad places.
27. Some have suggested that Isaac should have withstood these men and stood up for his rights.
28. The believer certainly does have the right to protect and defend what is his.
29. Self defense is legitimate and sometimes necessary. Luke 22:36

## Snider Summarizes Genesis 26:17–22

30. On other occasions it is necessary to absorb an injustice rather than further escalating the conflict. Luke 22:49-51; Prov. 15:1,18
31. This is most often the wisest course of action. Matt. 5:38-48
32. Even though he recognizes that God's plan is for him to be in this land, circumstances and not God's direct command are leading him away from the land of the Philistines.

Ron Snider, [Genesis 26](#), accessed July 26, 2015 (edited and appended; I changed point #32 and eliminated #33).

[Chapter Outline](#)

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So far, this is what we have studied:

[Genesis 26:12–16](#) And Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. The LORD blessed him, and the man became rich, and gained more and more until he became very wealthy. He had possessions of flocks and herds and many servants, so that the Philistines envied him. (Now the Philistines had stopped and filled with earth all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father.) And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we."

The Philistines had mental attitude sins toward Isaac and his prosperity. This was the cause of the inability of the Philistines to get along with Isaac. We also studied how blaming Israel and Palestine on a centuries long conflict misses the mark. Palestinians right now have problems with the present-day Israel because their hearts are filled with mental attitude sins. Furthermore, they teach this to their children, when then teach it to their children. The problem is, what are these people thinking *today*. The problem is not, what happened 30 years ago, 100 years ago, or 1000 years ago.

If you do not think that a new generation can think differently, then you have been living with your eyes closed over the past however many years you have been alive. In the United States, for instance, previous generations understood that homosexuality is a sin and that it is not something which ought to be encouraged. Many of today's youth not only reject the idea that homosexuality is sin, but a large number of them are in favor of children experimenting if they have some same-sex attraction (which is not unusual in a child's life).

So, when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, some measure of peace will come about when the Palestinians stop teaching their children to hate Israelis.

[Genesis 26:17–22](#) And Isaac departed from there, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and he lived there. And Isaac dug again the wells of water which they had dug 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. And Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found there a well of flowing water. And the herdsmen of Gerar strove with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, The water is ours. And he called the name of the well Contention, because they strove with him. And they dug another well, and they strove for that also. And he called the name of it Opposition. And he moved from there, and dug another well, and they did not strive for that. And he called the name of it Broad Places. And he said, For now Jehovah has made room for us, and we will be fruitful in the land.

Isaac was looking for a little peace and quiet. Recall that he moved to Gerar because he was facing a drought where he was; Gerar, which was not very far away, was not. However, after Isaac came clean with his host, the king of Gerar, God blessed him; and the Philistines became quite envious of him. It is their mental attitude sins which drove Isaac away from them; and with him went blessing by association.

Matthew Henry ties together Isaac and Ishmael's personalities to what we know of these two men; as well as use this passage to provide a glimpse of heaven: *At length he removed to a quiet settlement, cleaving to his peaceable principle, rather to fly than fight, and unwilling to dwell with those that hated*

peace, Psalm 120:6. He preferred quietness to victory. He dug a well, and for this they strove not, Genesis 26:22. Note, Those that follow peace, sooner or later, shall find peace; those that study to be quiet seldom fail of being so. How unlike was Isaac to his brother Ishmael, who, right or wrong, would hold what he had, against all the world! Genesis 16:12. And which of these would we be found the followers of? This well they called Rehoboth, enlargements, room enough: in the two former wells we may see what the earth is, straitness and strife; men cannot thrive, for the throng of their neighbours. This well shows us what heaven is; it is enlargement and peace, room enough there, for there are many mansions.<sup>177</sup>

J. F. Montgomery takes a similar approach, associating Isaac's actions to the life of the believer: [Isaac] removed himself from there, and digged another well." Historically, an instance of a meek and quiet spirit in contact with the world. Wells precious. Often formed with much labor. Herdsmen of Gerar took what Isaac had digged. Twice he yielded for the sake of peace. Then he digged another, and for it they strove not. His example (cf. Matthew 5:39 1Corinthians 6:7) But we may also observe a typical significance. Wells, fountains, sources of "living water" (Isaiah 12:3 Zechariah 13:1) connected with spiritual blessings. (cf. 1Corinthians 10:4 with John 4:14 John 7:39)...Let none expect to possess wells of salvation without...the trial of faith (1Peter 1:7) from those who love not God. A Christian member of a worldly family, or cast among careless associates, meets many hindrances. They may be open or veiled.<sup>178</sup>

- Psalm 4:1b O God of my righteousness! You have given me relief when I was in distress.  
 Psalm 18:17–19 He rescued me from my strong enemy and from those who hated me, for they were too mighty for me.  
 They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the LORD was my support.  
 He brought me out into a broad place; He rescued me, because he delighted in me.  
 Psalm 118:5 Out of my distress I called on the LORD; the LORD answered me and set me free. (ESV; capitalized)

Matthew Henry: Isaac does not insist upon the bargain he had made with them for the lands he held, nor upon his occupying and improving them, nor does he offer to contest with them by force, though he had become very great, but very peaceably departs thence further from the royal city, and perhaps to a part of the country less fruitful. Note, We should deny ourselves both in our rights and in our conveniences, rather than quarrel: a wise and a good man will rather retire into obscurity, like Isaac here into a valley, than sit high to be the butt of envy and ill-will.<sup>179</sup>

Leupold: Isaac goes as far as possible in the interest of peace: he even "moved away." By this time his generous example seems to have shamed the opposition. No doubt, too, the site of the latest, well is still farther removed from territory which Gerar may rightfully claim. The resultant peace Isaac in true gratitude ascribes to Yahweh, tokens of whose favour he has been meeting with continually. The name "Rehoboth" is to convey this reminder. Rechobhōth means "wide places" and signifies in reference to the well more than "room" (Meek), rather "plenty of room."<sup>180</sup>

**Application:** Do not misunderstand this. Isaac passively moving along is the right thing for him to do. Many times when it comes to you asserting your rights, it is best for you to simply keep your mouth shut. However, this does not mean that you back down in every situation and circumstance; and that, when things are difficult, you pile all your things into the back of a U-Haul and move elsewhere. There are many times when God expects you to stick it out where He places you.

<sup>177</sup> Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:12–25.

<sup>178</sup> *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, from e-sword, Genesis 26:22 (slightly edited).

<sup>179</sup> Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:12–25.

<sup>180</sup> From <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/leupold/genesis.xxviii.html> accessed July 31, 2015.

**Application:** You make such determinations based upon the circumstances and the doctrine in your soul.

Wenstrom: Notice, that Isaac never defends his rights to these wells, nor does he fight for them even though he had ample manpower at his command to destroy the Philistines. Isaac is not a coward for not fighting but rather he is “magnanimous” and which behavior parallels Abraham’s towards his nephew Lot (See Genesis 13:1-12). A believer who is “magnanimous” is generous in forgiving insults and injuries without being vindictive and becoming involved in petty resentfulness. In Genesis 26:12-22, we see that Isaac is generous in forgiving the insult heaped upon him by the Philistines who did not have a right to these wells and yet Isaac is not pettily resentful or vindictive towards them but simply moves away. Rather, Isaac insists upon maintaining a good relationship with the Philistines and is tolerant, patient and generous towards them. A believer who is “magnanimous” is noble in character, loving justice but not insisting upon the letter of the law in order to preserve the spirit of the law and does not insist upon his own rights to the fullest but rectifies and redresses the injustices of justice. Isaac does not insist upon his own rights to the land in order to preserve unity between himself and the Philistines. The apostle Paul commanded the Philippian believers to be magnanimous. *Philippians 4:5 Permit your magnanimity to become manifest to everyone. The Lord’s return is immanent.*<sup>181</sup>

Isaac could have initiated a conflict with the Philistines which could have continued for generations. Instead, he backed off, and, as a result, King Abimelech will come to Isaac, asking for a nonaggression pact. Instead of returning evil for evil, Isaac allowed the Lord to deal with the people of Gerar<sup>182</sup> (see Romans 12:17–21 *Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*—ESV).

Gen 26:17–22 So Isaac departed from there and encamped in the Valley of Gerar and settled there. And Isaac dug again the wells of water that had been dug in the days of Abraham his father, which the Philistines had stopped after the death of Abraham. And he gave them the names that his father had given them. But when Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found there a well of spring water, the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours." So he called the name of the well Esek, because they contended with him. Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that also, so he called its name Sitnah. And he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he called its name Rehoboth, saying, "For now the LORD has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land." (ESV) A reasonable question would be:

### Why Didn't God Simply Tell Isaac, "Go to Beersheba"?

1. Because of the famine, Isaac was ready to move to Egypt, and God said, "Don't go down to Egypt."
2. When it is time for Jacob to return the Land of Promise, God comes to him and says, "Return to the land of your fathers."
3. So, it is apparent that God wants Isaac to return to Beersheba—so why doesn't God simply tell him this?
4. God interacts with us in a variety of ways. Since Isaac is an example for us, we look at Isaac's life (the small portion of which is recorded), and we are to learn from that. What would we learn if, every 5 minutes, God was whispering in Isaac's ear, "I need for you to take a left up ahead"?
5. We would learn nothing except, *don't do a thing until God tells you to*. Isaac is engaged in hard work (which is a part of God's plan); Isaac is exercising patience and forgiveness (also a part of God's plan); we are learning about the mental attitude of the Philistines (how they will eventually go from being allies to enemies of the Jews); and we are learning about God's guidance.
6. We do not learn any of this unless Isaac is nudged back to Beersheba.

<sup>181</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 403); accessed July 25, 2015.

<sup>182</sup> Paraphrased from [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 403); accessed July 25, 2015.

One of the great chapters of the Bible is Genesis 22, where Abraham offers up Isaac to God. This foreshadows God the Father offering up God the Son. It is one of the most amazing types in Scripture, a type which reaches back 2000 years before our Lord's incarnation. This was not an easy experience for Abraham to experience. For 3 days, he is hiking with Isaac, the son whom he loves, and his two servants, and all the time, he is thinking, "God wants me to offer up my son to Him. I have to trust God on this. God has given me a number of promises, so I must cling to those promises and do what God tells me to do."

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## God Speaks to Isaac in Beersheba

**And so he goes up from there [to] Bathsheba.**      Genesis 26:23      **He went up from there [to] Bathsheba.**  
**He went up from there [to] Bathsheba.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so he goes up from there [to] Bathsheba.
Targum of Onkelos	And he went up from thence unto Beersheba.
Latin Vulgate	And he went up from that place to Bersabee,...
Peshitta (Syriac)	And he went up from thence to Beer-sheba.
Septuagint (Greek)	And he went up from there to the Well of the Oath.

Significant differences:      None.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy-to-Read Version	From that place Isaac went to Beersheba.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Isaac left and went to Beersheba.
NIRV	From there Isaac went up to Beersheba.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Then he went up from Gerar to Beer-sheba.
Contemporary English V.	Isaac went on to Beersheba,...
New Berkeley Version	From there he went up to Beer-sheba, where that night the LORD appeared to him and said: I am the God of your father Abraham. A portion of v. 24 was included for context.
New Living Translation	From there Isaac moved to Beersheba,...

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then he traveled to the Well of the Oath.
International Standard V	<b>God Renews His Promise to Isaac</b> Later on, he left there and went to Beer-sheba, where one night the LORD appeared to him. "I am the God of your father Abraham," he told him. "Don't be

afraid, because I'm with you. I'm going to bless you and multiply your descendants on account of my servant Abraham." V. 24 is included for context.

New Advent Bible From there he went to Bersabee;...  
Translation for Translators From there Isaac went up to Beersheba.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear He ascended from there to Beersheba.  
Conservapedia He went up from there to Beer-sheba. "House of Seven"; see Chapter 21.  
Ferar-Fenton Bible Afterwards he arose from there and went to the Well of the Oath.

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible And he ascended from there to Beer Sheba.  
Revised English Bible From there Isaac went up country to Beersheba;...

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible From there Yitz'chak went up to Be'er-Sheva.  
exeGeses companion Bible And he ascends from there to Beer Sheba:...  
Kaplan Translation From there, [Isaac] went up to Beer-sheba.  
Orthodox Jewish Bible And he went up from there to Beer-Sheva.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

*The Amplified Bible* Now he went up from there to Beersheba.  
The Expanded Bible From there Isaac went [<sup>up</sup>] to Beersheba [21:14].  
Kretzmann's Commentary And he went up from thence to Beersheba, a matter of some twenty miles to the north.  
NET Bible® From there Isaac [Heb "and he went up from there"; the referent (Isaac) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] went up to Beer Sheba.  
The Pulpit Commentary And he (viz., Isaac) went up from thence (Rehoboth, where latterly he had been encamped) to Beer-sheba a former residence of Abraham, (Genesis 21:33) situated "near the water-shed between the Mediterranean and the Salt Sea" (Murphy), hence approached from the low-lying wady by an ascent.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Darby Translation And he went up thence to Beer-sheba.  
English Standard Version From there he went up to Beersheba.  
H. C. Leupold **(d) The Appearance of Yahweh (v. 23-25)**  
From there he went up to Beersheba, and Yahweh appeared to him that night, saying: I am the God of Abraham, thy father; be not afraid, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and make thy descendants numerous for the sake of Abraham, my servant.  
New King James Version Then he went up from there to Beersheba.  
Young's Updated LT And he goes up from there to Beer-Sheba.

**The gist of this verse:** Isaac moves from there to Beersheba.

Genesis 26:23			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
‘âlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced gaw-LAWH]	to go up, to ascend, to come up, to rise, to climb	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	from, off, away from, out from, out of, from off; on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than, greater than	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
shâm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced shawm]	there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
B <sup>e</sup> ’êr Shâba’ (בְּעֵר שֶׁבַע) [pronounced b <sup>e</sup> ayr SHAW <sup>B</sup> -vahg]	well of the oath [seven] and is transliterated Beersheba, Beer-sheba	proper noun; location	Strong's #884 BDB #92

**Translation:** He went up from there [to] Beersheba.

*Going up* simply means that Isaac went up in elevation, in going from the far outskirts of Gerar to Beersheba.

Barnes: “Went up.” *It was an ascent from Wady er-Ruhaibeh to Beer-sheba; which was near the watershed between the Mediterranean and the Salt Sea.*<sup>183</sup>

*There* refers to Rehoboth, according to Wenstrom, which was *approximately 19 miles southwest of Beersheba. This location places the well a good thirty to thirty-five miles from Gerar, which would be sufficiently far from the Philistines’ economic or political interests.*<sup>184</sup>

Genesis 26:23 He went up from there [to] Bathsheba. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:23 He went up from there [to] Bathsheba. (Kukis paraphrase)

Beersheba is about 30 miles southeast of Gerar, so Isaac apparently moved further and further southeast until he got to Beersheba.

Wenstrom: “Beersheba” was located in the flat southern part of the Negev, which extends roughly from a line drawn from Gaza through the modern political boundary of the southern West Bank, extending south to the mountain ranges of the Sinai and through the Arabah to the Red Sea.<sup>185</sup>

<sup>183</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes’ Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:23–25.

<sup>184</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 404); accessed July 25, 2015.

<sup>185</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 404); accessed July 25, 2015.

This map of **Isaac's Journeys** gives us an idea. Gerar was in the Philistia area and he moved a little southeast to get to Beersheba, in the Negev. Map is from: the [Berean Bible study group.com](http://www.bereanbiblestudygroup.com) accessed March 1, 2013.



The natural question is, *did God want Isaac and Rebekah to live in Beersheba?* The follow-up question is, *why didn't God simply contact Isaac directly and say, "Go down to Beersheba?"* Although God sometimes told various believers *where* to go (Genesis 26:2 31:3), this was not always the case (Genesis 26:23 29:1 37:28). In fact, there are far more times where God does not *come down* and tell a believer where to go or what to do.

Even though many of us know our spiritual gift and we like our place in the plan of God; and we enjoy doing the will of God (when we do it), God has chosen not to continually intercede in all of our affairs, sitting next to us in the car and saying, "Okay, at the next stoplight, I want you to make a left turn." In fact, if God ever does directly tell you to go here or there, you need to go to your yellow pages and make an immediate appointment with a therapist.

When we get to v. 33, we will find out how this place got its name, which indicates that Isaac moved there first, made the oath with Abimelech and his staff, and then named the well. So, when Isaac moves here, it does not have the name Beersheba. However, this is probably not a gloss, but a passage which is written after the fact, after v. 33 took place. It suggests further that this particular city was well-known by this name at the time that this information was recorded. It certainly could have been recorded in Isaac's time by Isaac himself, which is what I would think happened.

Gill: *[Isaac returned to] Beersheba; the famine being over, he returns to the place where he and his rather formerly lived (Genesis 21:33).*<sup>186</sup>

Beersheba is found 34 times in the KJV: Genesis 21:14, 31–33 22:19 26:23, 33 28:10 46:1, 46:5 Joshua 15:28 19:2 Judges 20:1 1Samuel 3:20 8:2 2Samuel 17:10–11 24:2, 7, 15 1Kings 4:25 19:3 2Kings 12:1 23:8 1Chronicles 4:28 21:2 2Chronicles 19:4 24:1 30:5 Nehemiah 11:27, 30 Amos 5:5 8:14

### Smith on Beersheba

Be–er'–sheba or Be–er–she'ba (well of the oath). The name of one of the old places in Palestine, which formed the southern limit of the country. There are two accounts of the origin of the name. According to the first, the well was dug by Abraham, and the name given to Judah, Joshua 15:28, and then to Simeon, Joshua 19:2 1Chronicles 4:28.

In the often–quoted, "from Dan even unto Beersheba," Judges 20:1, it represents the southern boundary of Canaan, as Dan, the northern. In the time of Jerome, it was still a considerable place, and still retains its ancient name — Bir es–Seba.

There are at present on the spot, two principal wells and five smaller ones. The two principal wells are on, or close to, the northern bank of the Wady es-Seba. The larger of the two, which lies to the east, is, according to Dr. Robinson, 12 ½ feet in diameter, and at the time of his visit, (April 12), was 44 ½ feet to the surface of the water. The masonry which encloses the well extends downward 28 ½ feet. The other well is 5 feet in diameter, and was 42 feet to the water.

<sup>186</sup> Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:23.

## Smith on Beersheba

The curb-stones around the mouth of both wells are worn into deep grooves by the action of the ropes of so many centuries. These wells are in constant use today. The five lesser wells are in a group in the bed of the wady. On some low hills, north of the large wells, are scattered the foundations and ruins of a town of moderate size.

From Dr. William Smith, *Smith's Bible Dictionary*; 1894; from e-Sword, topic: Beersheba.

Fausset goes into much greater detail, and that is found in **2Samuel 24** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

[Chapter Outline](#)

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There is no time frame placed upon this. Where Isaac dug his previous well, he is greatly blessed by God. The Bible does not tell us for how long a period of time this is. However, it is likely that some period of time has passed and that this is in chronological order. There are reasons for this to be discussed later.

**And so appears unto him Y<sup>e</sup>howah in the night the that. And so He says, "I [am] an Elohim of Abraham your father. Do not fear for with you I [am] and I have blessed you and I have multiplied your seed because of Abraham My servant."**

Genesis  
26:24

**Y<sup>e</sup>howah appeared to Isaac [lit., *him*] in that [same] night and said, "I [am] the Elohim of Abraham your father. Do not fear for I [am] with you; and I have blessed you. I have multiplied your descendants for the sake of My servant Abraham."**

**Jehovah appeared to Isaac that very same night and He told him, "I am the God of Abraham your father. Cease fearing what may happen to you because I am with you and I have blessed you. I will multiply your descendants on this earth for the sake of My servant Abraham."**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so appears unto him Y <sup>e</sup> howah in the night the that. And so He says, "I [am] an Elohim of Abraham your father. Do not fear for with you I [am] and I have blessed you and I have multiplied your seed because of Abraham My servant."
Targum of Onkelos	And the Lord appeared to him that night, and said, I am the God of Abraham your father: fear not; for <u>My Word is for your help</u> , and I will bless you, and multiply your sons for <u>the righteousness'</u> sake of Abraham My servant.
Latin Vulgate	Where the Lord appeared to him that same night, saying: I am the God of Abraham your father, do not fear, for I am with you: I will bless you, and multiply your seed for my servant Abraham's sake.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the LORD appeared to him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham your father; fear not, for I am with you, and I will bless you, and multiply your descendants for my servant Abrahams sake.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the Lord appeared to him in that night and said, I am the God of Abraham your father; fear not, for I am with you, and I will bless you, and multiply your seed for the sake of Abraham your father.
Significant differences:	One phrase in the targum (underlined) is different. The targum also has an additional phrase.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy-to-Read Version	The Lord spoke to Isaac that night. The Lord said, "I am the God of your father Abraham. Don't be afraid. I am with you, and I will bless you. I will make your family great. I will do this because of my servant Abraham."
<i>The Message</i>	That very night GOD appeared to him and said, I am the God of Abraham your father; don't fear a thing because I'm with you. I'll bless you and make your children flourish because of Abraham my servant.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The Lord appeared to him that night and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham. Don't be afraid because I am with you. I will bless you, and I will give you many children for my servant Abraham's sake."
Contemporary English V.	...where the LORD appeared to him that night and told him, "Don't be afraid! I am the God who was worshiped by your father Abraham, my servant. I will be with you and bless you, and because of Abraham I will give you many descendants."

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And Jehovah appeared to him [there] that night and said, 'I am the God of your father AbrahAm. Don't be afraid, for I am with you! And because of your father AbrahAm, I will bless you, and your seed will increase.'
Beck's American Translation	That night the LORD appeared to him, saying, "I am the God of your father Abraham. Don't be afraid; I am with you and will bless you and give you many descendants on account of My servant Abraham."
New Advent Bible	...and here, the same night, he had a vision of the Lord, who said to him, I am the God of thy father Abraham; fear nothing, I am with thee. I mean to bless thee, and give increase to thy posterity, in reward of Abraham's true service.
Translation for Translators	The first night that he was there, Yahweh appeared to him and said, "I am God, whom your father Abraham worshiped. Do not be afraid of anything. I will help you and bless you, and because of what I promised my servant Abraham, I will greatly increase the number of your descendants."

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Yahweh saw him that night, and said, "I <i>am</i> the God of Abraham your father: Fear not, for I <i>am</i> with you. I <i>will</i> bless you and multiplied your seed because of my servant Abraham."
Conservapedia	The LORD appeared to him that very night, and said, "I am the God of Abraham your father. Do not be afraid. I am with you, and will bless you, and will increase your descendants for the sake of my servant Abraham."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	And the EVER-LIVING appeared to him that night, and said; "I am the GOD of your father Abraham; fear not; I am with you, and I will bless you and increase your race, because of my servant Abraham."
Lexham English Bible	And Yahweh appeared to him that night and said, "I [am] the God of your father Abraham. Do not be afraid, for I [am] with you, and I will bless you and make your descendants numerous for the sake of my servant Abraham."

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And Jehovah appeared to him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham, your father; do not fear, because I am with you, and I will bow down with goodness to you, and multiply your seed for my servant Abraham's sake.
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New American Bible	The same night the LORD appeared to him and said: "I am the God of your father Abraham. You have no need to fear, since I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for the sake of my servant Abraham."
New RSV	And that very night the Lord appeared to him and said, 'I am the God of your father Abraham; do not be afraid, for I am with you and will bless you and make your offspring numerous for my servant Abraham's sake.'

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible	...and Yah Veh appears to him the same night and says, I - Elohim of Abraham your father: awe not, for I am with you and bless you and abound your seed for sake of my servant Abraham.
Kaplan Translation	God appeared to him that night and said, 'I am God of your father Abraham. Do not be afraid, for I am with you. I will bless you and grant you very many descendants because of My servant Abraham.'
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Hashem appeared unto him balailah hahu, and said, I am Elohei Avraham avichah; fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy zera for the sake of Avdi Avraham (My Servant Abraham).

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	The Lord appeared to him that night and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham. Don't be afraid, because I am with you [ <sup>c</sup> indicating that the covenant with Abraham would be continued with Isaac]. I will bless you and ·give you many descendants [multiply your seed] because of my servant Abraham."
The updated Geneva Bible	And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I [am] the God i of Abraham your father: fear not, for I [am] with you, and will bless you, and multiply your seed for my servant Abrahams sake. God assures Isaac against all fear by rehearsing the promise made to Abraham.
Kretzmann's Commentary	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. In the midst of the persecution which Isaac was then enduring this encouragement came with all its uplifting strength. The believers are strangers and pilgrims on earth and as such are subjected to many indignities, but the Lord's assurance of His everlasting presence is always the one certain prop for their faith.
The Pulpit Commentary	And the Lord appeared unto him the same night (i.e. the night of his arrival at Beersheba), and said (in a dream or vision), I (the pronoun is emphatic) am the God (the Elohim) of Abraham thy father (the language is expressive not alone of the covenant relationship which subsisted between Jehovah and the patriarch while the latter lived, but also of the present continuance of that relationship, since Abraham, though dead, had not ceased to he): fear not (cf., Genesis 15:1, in which the same encouraging admonition is addressed to Abraham after his battle with the kings) for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed a repetition of promises already given to himself (vide vers. 3, 4) for my servant Abraham's sake a reason declaring God"s gracious covenant, and not personal merit, to be the true source of blessing for Isaac.
The Voice	The night they arrived, the Eternal One appeared to him. <b>Eternal One:</b> I am the God of your father, Abraham. Don't be afraid because I am there with you. I will bless you with many descendants according to the promise I made to My servant, Abraham.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	And appearing to him is Yahweh in that night, and saying, "I am the Elohim of Abraham your father. You must not fear, for with you am I. And bless you will I, and increase will I your seed for the sake of Abraham your father, My servant.
Context Group Version	And YHWH appeared to him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham your father. Don't be afraid, for I am with you, and will esteem you, and multiply your seed for my slave Abraham's sake.
Green's Literal Translation	And Jehovah appeared to him in the same night, and said, I <i>am</i> the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I <i>am</i> with you; and I will bless you and increase your seed, because of My servant Abraham.
NASB	The Lord appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; Do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you, and multiply your descendants [Lit seed], For the sake of My servant Abraham."
World English Bible	Yahweh appeared to him the same night, and said, "I am the God of Abraham your father. Don't be afraid, for I am with you, and will bless you, and multiply your seed for my servant Abraham's sake."
Young's Updated LT	And Jehovah appears unto him during that night, and says, "I am the God of Abraham your father, fear not, for I am with you, and have blessed you, and have multiplied your seed, because of Abraham My servant;"

**The gist of this verse:** God appears to Isaac and tells him not to fear and that He is with Isaac and is blessing him.

<b>Genesis 26:24a</b>			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i> ]	<i>to be seen, to be visible; to let oneself be seen, to appear; to present oneself; to be provided [cared] for (i.e., looked after)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
'el (אֵל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i> ]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
lay <sup>e</sup> lâh (הַלַּיְלָה) [pronounced <i>LAY-law</i> ]	<i>night; that night, this night, the night</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3915 BDB #538

## Genesis 26:24a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
hûw' (אוה) [pronounced hoo]	he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one); same	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>is</i> , is implied; with the definite article	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

**Translation:** Y<sup>e</sup>howah appeared to Isaac [lit., *him*] in that [same] night...

It is somewhat unclear as to what night is being referred to here. The night that he completed the digging of the well that was not attacked (v. 22). Or was it the night that Isaac and company arrived in Beersheba? Both of these would have been processes. What makes sense is, he arrives in Beersheba and that very night, God appears to Isaac in some way.

This appearance (a visual and/or auditory manifestation) by the Revealed God is known as a theophany.

Possibly because of Isaac's actions, God appears to him to encourage him and to make promises to him.

## Genesis 26:24b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'ânôkîy (אני) [pronounced awn-oh-KEE]	I, me; (sometimes a verb is implied)	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular personal pronoun	Strong's #595 BDB #59
'Ēlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim	masculine plural construct	Strong's #430 BDB #43
'Ab <sup>e</sup> râhâm (אברהם) [pronounced ahb <sup>ve</sup> -raw-HAWM]	father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
'âb (אב) [pronounced aw <sup>bv</sup> ]	father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; founder, civil leader, military leader	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

**Translation:** ...and said, "I [am] the Elohim of Abraham your father.

This is the second time that God appears to Isaac. The first was at the beginning of this chapter when God guided Isaac not to go to Egypt.

Matt. 22:31–32 And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living.' (ESV; capitalized)

Logically, if someone was going to record a few miscellaneous incidents from their life, you would think every time that they spoke directly with God would be an event worth recording. Therefore, we would assume that these are the two instances that God speaks to Isaac.

Here, God identifies Himself, further suggesting that Isaac had no reason to recognize Him, if this is only his second meeting. Furthermore, Isaac knows from his father that God was with his father and faithful to his father for all of those many years (Isaac will be age 75 at his father's passing). This should give Isaac some additional confidence.

I find it fascinating that, throughout the Old Testament, despite the number of believers who speak with God, they never give a description of Him—not Adam, not Enoch, not Noah, not Abraham or Isaac or Jacob. The content of His message is recalled with great clarity, but not God's physical features.

The same is true of Jesus, with the exception of the glorified Jesus, which is described. But we don't know if Jesus is tall, short, or what. We can guess that He had darker features by virtue of being a Jew; but that He did not really stand out from His disciples, as the pharisees required Judas to point Him out from among the disciples (remember that these pharisees challenged Jesus on many occasions). About the only physical feature we can be assured of, apart from His darker features, is that He had a beard because it is described as being pulled out in one of the prophecies of Him (Isaiah 50:6–7).

However, Jesus will be described in His glorified state in the book of Revelation (Revelation 1:13–18 2:18 19:12; see also Ezekiel 1:7 40:3 Daniel 7:9 10:6 Matthew 28:3).

Genesis 26:24c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'al (אֵל) [pronounced a]	<i>no, not; nothing; none; neither, nor; do not, let not [with a verb]; let there not be [with an understood verb];</i>	adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done	Strong's #408 BDB #39
yârê' (יָרֵא) [pronounced yaw-RAY]	<i>to fear, to be afraid; to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>when, that, for, because</i>	explanatory conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85
'ânôkîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced awn-oh-KEE]	<i>I, me; (sometimes a verb is implied)</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular personal pronoun	Strong's #595 BDB #59

**Translation:** Do not fear for I [am] with you;...

If God came and spoke to any of us directly, that ought to strike with at least some modicum of apprehension, particularly if you do not see your life as a sterling example for others to follow. God reassures Isaac and He is with him and that he need not fear.

When God tells a person not to fear, there are usually two possibilities: (1) they are suffering a brain freeze right at that moment, because they are interacting with God, and God needs for them to thaw out their brains and listen; or, (2) they have been living a lifestyle of fear, and that is hampering their day-to-day existence. I think that in this situation, given that Isaac was dishonest about who Rebekah was, it is #2. Furthermore, God adds, “...for I am with you.” That indicates that, no matter what the circumstances, Isaac does not have to worry, he does not need to fear, because God is there with him. So, his bout with fear at entering into Gerar was unnecessary.

Although we are told to fear/respect God; God also tells us not to fear when He is with us.

Genesis 26:24d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bârak <sup>e</sup> (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced <i>baw-RAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to invoke God, to praise, to celebrate, to adore, to bless [God]; to bless [men], to invoke blessings; to bless [as God, man and other created things], therefore to cause to prosper, to make happy; to salute anyone [with a blessing]; to curse</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Piel perfect; with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1288 BDB #138

**Translation:** ...and I have blessed you.

It should be quite clear that God has blessed Isaac. He was blessed so much that a king came to him and asked him to move out, because he out-shined the king with his wealth and prosperity. On at least two previous passages, the blessings given to Isaac were enumerated.

Wenstrom: “Bless” is the verb *barakh* (בָּרַךְ), which means that the Lord promised to endue Isaac with power for success, prosperity, fecundity (offspring in great numbers) and longevity.<sup>187</sup>

Genesis 26:24e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
râbâh (רָבַח) [pronounced <i>raw<sup>b</sup>-VAWH</i> ]	<i>to make [do] much; to multiply, to increase; to give much; to lay much; to have much; to make great; many [as a Hiphil infinitive construct]</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #7235 BDB #915

<sup>187</sup> From [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 405); accessed July 25, 2015.

Genesis 26:24e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
zera' (עֶרְוָה) [pronounced <i>ZEH-rahg'</i> ]	<i>a seed, a sowing; an offspring, progeny, descendant; posterity</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2233 BDB #282
ba'ăbûwr (בְּעִבְרָה) [pronounced <i>bah-gûb'-VOOR</i> ]	<i>because of, for, that, for the sake of, on account of, in order that; while</i>	preposition/conjunction; substantive always found combined with the bêyth preposition	Strong's #5668 BDB #721
Actually a combination of the bêyth preposition ( <i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before</i> ) and 'ăbûwr (עִבְרָה) [pronounced <i>gawv'-BOOR</i> ] which means <i>a passing over, a transition; the cause of a crossing over; the price [of transferring ownership of something]; purpose, objective</i> . Properly, it is the passive participle of Strong's #5674 BDB #720. Strong's #5668 BDB #721.			
'Ab'êrâhâm (אֲבִרְהָא) [pronounced <i>ahb<sup>ve</sup>-raw-HAWM</i> ]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
'ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>GE<sup>B</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine plural noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

**Translation:** [I have multiplied your descendants for the sake of My servant Abraham.](#)"

And just as God has already blessed Isaac, He has already multiplied Isaac's descendants, even though Isaac has only had a pair of sons. God blesses Isaac because of Abraham; this it is blessing by association. You can be related to a believer who is involved in doing a lot of divine good; and you will be blessed simply by being related to that believer.

Again, early on in the Bible, we are exposed to blessing by association. Isaac has not distinguished himself spiritually so far. He is obviously a believer in Jesus Christ but we do not know much else about him in the area of spiritual growth. There is no indication that he is any sort of a great believer at this time. In fact, because of his favoritism of Esau over a superficiality, because he has left the area without consulting God first and because of his deception of Abimelech, we can safely ascertain that Isaac needs to grow somewhat spiritually. God is exceedingly gracious to him, but that is primarily because of Abraham (this verse and vv. 3–5 make this fact abundantly clear).

Genesis 26:24 [Y<sup>e</sup>howah appeared to Isaac \[lit., \*him\*\] in that \[same\] night and said, "I \[am\] the Elohim of Abraham your father. Do not fear for I \[am\] with you; and I have blessed you. I have multiplied your descendants for the sake of My servant Abraham."](#) (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:24 [Jehovah appeared to Isaac that very same night and He told him, "I am the God of Abraham your father. Cease fearing what may happen to you because I am with you and I have blessed you. I will multiply your descendants on this earth for the sake of My servant Abraham."](#) (Kukis paraphrase)

Although God appeared to Abraham on many occasions (perhaps a half-dozen times), this is only the second recorded instance of where God appears to Isaac. He does not tell Isaac very much, apart from promising that

He is with Isaac (God is active in the life of Isaac) and that He would bless Isaac just as He had promised Abraham.

Isaac would know about the Abrahamic covenant. From what we have studied, Isaac apparently knows these promises made by God to Abraham. He is probably carrying the Scriptures with him, as they existed at the time (the first few chapters of Genesis, appended by Abraham; and perhaps the book of Job). Whether these are written or memorized, we do not know—I would think the latter. Furthermore, there is reason to think that Rebekah, his wife, knows the Scriptures and these promises of God as well. In later chapters, it is Rebekah who will encourage her favorite son, Jacob, to pursue the firstborn blessings, which she assumed included the promises and blessings of God.

The basis of Isaac's blessings is Abraham. God is blessing Isaac based upon who Abraham was. This tells us that God's overflowing blessings can extend for several generations. By application, overflowing blessings can be familial—when one person in a family is growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, the rest of the family is often blessed in a variety of ways.

**And so he builds there an altar. And so he calls in a name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah. And so pitches there his tent. And so dig there servants of Isaac a well.**

Genesis  
26:25

**He builds there an altar and he proclaims the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah. He also pitches his tent there and Isaac's servants dig a well there.**

**Isaac built an altar there and he called upon the name of Jehovah. He also pitched his tent there and his servants dug him a well there as well.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so he builds there an altar. And so he calls in a name of Y <sup>e</sup> howah. And so pitches there his tent. And so dig there servants of Isaac a well.
Targum of Onkelos	And he built there an altar, and prayed in the name of the Lord. And he spread his tabernacle there, and the servants of Izhak digged there a well. <u>And when Izhak went forth from Gerar the wells dried up, and the trees made no fruit; and they felt that it was because they had driven him away, all these things had befallen them.</u>
Latin Vulgate	And he built there an altar: and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent; and <u>commanded</u> his servants to dig a well.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And he built an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaacs servants dug a well.
Septuagint (Greek)	And he built an altar there, and called on the name of the Lord, and there he pitched his tent, and there the servants of Isaac dug a well in the valley of Gerar.

Significant differences: The targum has a lot of additional text. The Latin adds the word *commanded*.

#### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Then he made an altar there, and gave worship to the name of the Lord, and he put up his tents there, and there his servants made a water-hole.
Easy-to-Read Version	So Isaac built an altar and worshiped the Lord in that place. Isaac set up camp there and his servants dug a well.
NIRV	Isaac built an altar there and worshiped the Lord. There he set up his tent. And there his servants dug a well.

New Simplified Bible Isaac built an altar there and worshiped Jehovah. Then he set up his camp. His servants dug another well.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible So Isaac built an altar there and worshipped in the Lord's name. Isaac pitched his tent there, and his servants dug a well.

Contemporary English V. Isaac built an altar there and worshiped the LORD. Then he set up camp, and his servants started digging a well.

New Century Version So Isaac built an altar and worshiped the Lord there. He also made a camp there, and his servants dug a well.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible So he built an altar there, and named it Jehovah. Then he pitched his tent, and Isaac's servants dug a well there in the valley of Gerar.

International Standard V In response, Isaac built an altar there and called on the name of the LORD. He also pitched his tents there and his servants dug a well.

Translation for Translators So Isaac built a stone altar there and offered a sacrifice to worship Yahweh. He set up their tents there, and his servants started to dig a well.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear He built an altar there, and called on the name of Yahweh, and fixed his tent there. There Isaac's servants burrowed a well.

Conservapedia He built an altar there, and called in the name of the LORD and pitched his tent there. There Isaac's servants dug another well.

Lexham English Bible And he built an altar there and called on the name of Yahweh. And he pitched his tent there, and the servants of Isaac dug a well there.

New Advent Bible So he built an altar, and invoked the Lord's name, and pitched his tent there, and bade his servants dig a well.

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible And he built an altar there, and called upon the name of Jehovah, and stretched out his tent there; and Isaac's servants dug a well there.

New American Bible (R.E.) So Isaac built an altar there and invoked the LORD by name. After he had pitched his tent there, Isaac's servants began to dig a well nearby.

New Jerusalem Bible There he built an altar and invoked the name of Yahweh. There he pitched his tent, and there Isaac's servants sank a well.

Revised English Bible Isaac built an altar there and invoked the LORD by name. He pitched his tent, and there also his slaves dug a well.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible There he built an altar and called on the name of ADONAI. He pitched his tent there, and there Yitz'chak's servants dug a well.

exeGeses companion Bible And he builds a sacrifice altar there and calls on the name of Yah Veh and spreads his tent there: and there the servants of Yischaq dig a well.

Kaplan Translation [Isaac] built an altar there and called in God's name. He set up his tents there, and his servants dug a well in the area.

Orthodox Jewish Bible And he built a Mizbe'ach there, and called upon the Shem of Hashem, and pitched his ohel there: and there avdei Yitzchak dug a well.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	So Isaac built an altar [ <sup>C</sup> a place of sacrifice] and ·worshipped [ <sup>L</sup> called on the name of] the Lord there. He also ·made a camp [ <sup>L</sup> pitched his tent] there, and his servants dug a well.
The updated Geneva Bible	And he builds an altar there [To signify that he would serve no other God, but the God of his father Abraham. ], and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaacs servants dug a well.
Kretzmann's Commentary	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. Isaac here followed the custom of his father Abraham in building an altar and proclaiming the name of Jehovah, in establishing the worship of the true God, not only for his own household, but also for all with whom he came in contact. Every time when believers experience the blessing, protection, and help of the Lord, they turn to Him with all the greater zeal and love and praise His holy name.
NET Bible®	Then Isaac built an altar there and worshiped [Heb "called in the name of." The expression refers to worshiping the Lord through prayer and sacrifice (see Gen 4:26; 12:8; 13:4; 21:33). See G. J. Wenham, Genesis (WBC), 1:116.] the Lord. He pitched his tent there, and his servants dug a well [Heb "and they dug there, the servants of Isaac, a well."].
The Voice	<i>Inspired by this vision, Isaac built an altar at that place. He invoked the name of the Eternal and sacrificed to Him there, pitched his tent, and directed his servants to dig a well.</i>

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And building is he an altar there. And calling is he on the name of Yahweh. And stretching out is he his tent there. And digging are the servants of Isaac a well.
Green's Literal Translation	And he built an altar there and called on the name of Jehovah. And he pitched his tent there. And the slaves of Isaac dug a well there.
H. C. Leupold	And he built an altar there and called upon the name of Yahweh and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants digged a well.
World English Bible	He built an altar there, and called on the name of Yahweh, and pitched his tent there. There Isaac's servants dug a well.
Young's Updated LT	And he builds there an altar, and preaches in the name of Jehovah, and stretches out there his tent, and there Isaac's servants dig a well.

**The gist of this verse:** Isaac built an altar where he met God and he proclaims the Person of Y<sup>e</sup>howah there. He also puts his own tent right there and his servants dig a well.

### Genesis 26:25a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bânâh (בָּנָה) [pronounced <i>baw-NAWH</i> ]	<i>to build, to construct; to erect; to rebuild, to restore</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1129 BDB #124

## Genesis 26:25a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
miz <sup>e</sup> bêach (מִזְבֵּחַ) [pronounced miz-BAY-ahkh]	<i>altar; possibly monument</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4196 BDB #258

**Translation:** He builds there an altar...

Isaac knows without a doubt that he is in the geographical will of God because God has appeared to him. Logically, what he would do next is to establish an altar there for offering up sacrifices to God.

This altar worship<sup>188</sup> was found among the ancient line leading to Abraham and those who followed him.

The adverb *there* is found 3 times in this verse alone. It seems to be emphasizing that Isaac is in the right place at the right time.

## Genesis 26:25b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (אָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

**Translation:** ...and he proclaims the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.

This phrase does not mean that Isaac is out there calling for God, asking Him to come back. He is *proclaiming the name of God*, which could be understood in that era as publically worshiping God (see also Genesis 4:26 12:8 13:4).

<sup>188</sup> They did not worship the altars; but they used the altar in their worship service.

I think that the NET Bible gives the most reasonable explanation: *Heb "called in the name of." The expression refers to worshiping the Lord through prayer and sacrifice (see Gen 4:26; 12:8; 13:4; 21:33). See G. J. Wenham, Genesis (WBC), 1:116.<sup>189</sup>*

Isaac was making a more permanent encampment there. He had no quarrels with the Philistines for awhile; they did not lay claim to this well.

Therefore, Isaac built an altar to God and his calling upon our Lord's name indicates that he was experiencing some spiritual growth. Calling upon God's name indicates some sort of religious service. It does not necessarily mean that Isaac is requesting God to come and talk to him but it would certainly involve prayer and animal sacrifice.

We have had this phrase, "He called upon the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah" and this suggests to me some sort of a worship service, possibly where the Scriptures were read and God was petitioned in prayer. We often have this phrase occur after God has appeared, so what makes no sense is for Isaac, right after talking to God, to start calling for God. The verb is the Qal imperfect of *qârâ'* (קָרָא) [pronounced *kaw-RAW*], which means *to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name* [when followed by a lamed]. Strong's #7121 BDB #894. What makes more sense is for him to become involved in worship activities, which are not well-defined for us. We know that worship involved an altar and animal sacrifice, but we do not know much beyond that. Perhaps Isaac would read aloud the history of man on earth (i.e., the Scriptures as they existed in that time); and then sacrifices were offered.

Genesis 26:25a-b *He builds there an altar and he proclaims the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

What this verse does not mean is, Isaac is out there calling on God to show Himself to him, as it sounds in many translations. Isaac is not there yelling to the sky, "God, where did you go? Come back!" Instead, he is proclaiming God's Person and character and offering up animal sacrifices (which is why he built an altar). The animal sacrifices are a picture of Jesus Christ dying for our sins.

God has just spoken to Isaac, and so he is proclaiming God's Person and character, perhaps reading (from memory) the Scriptures handed down to him from Abraham. He may be reciting the promises which God has made to him and to his father.

You will notice that Isaac is not trying to get something out of God; Isaac is not building an altar so that God would bless him. Isaac has already been greatly blessed. This altar is a response to what God has done in his life.

**Application:** I am one of those people who has been significantly blessed. I recognize it. There are people who have more than I do, and that does not concern me in the least. I am very blessed with all that God has done for me and I recognize that; and have been allowed by God to enjoy a wonderful life. Part of that blessing is being able to return to my computer day after day and to spend a few hours exegeting the Word of God. Because that is my spiritual gift, this is a great blessing to me. I don't build a physical altar because I do not live in the same dispensation as does Isaac; but the altar is in my soul.

Isaac oversaw a very large group of people, and it would be reasonable that many of them would have also believed in Isaac's God.

*Leupold: A place marked by a divine appearance is a sacred spot where Yahweh is to be worshipped in a particular sense. So, following the good example of his father, Isaac builds an altar, where, of course, he offers sacrifice—a thing so obvious that it is not even mentioned—and engages in public worship in the course of which God's character and His works are extolled, for this is involved in "calling upon the name of Yahweh" (see notes on 4:26). Because of Yahweh's manifestation such a*

<sup>189</sup> From <http://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen26.htm> (Footnote) The Net Bible®; © 1996-2006 by Biblical Studies Press (BSP); accessed March 10, 2013.

*spot becomes dear to Isaac, and he pitches his tent there, and since a relatively permanent residence is involved.*<sup>190</sup>

We have listed the similar passages back in **Genesis 16** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) for **Calling on the Name of the Lord**; but that doctrine has not yet been constructed.

As has been discussed on previous occasions (particularly in Genesis 13:4), Isaac does set up this altar, sacrifice animals on it—but, what he is not doing is calling out to God to come to him. “I’m here, God; where are You?” It particularly makes little sense if Isaac enjoyed communion with God, but 30 minutes later, or a half a day later, he calls for God to return. Isaac does not speak to God on a regular basis. No one in Scripture, up to this point in time, have called out to God and have had God come to them in response to that. It makes much more sense that, after enjoying fellowship with God, that Isaac establishes this place and proclaims what God has said to him. He might even be reading the Word of God that he knows (from memory); and he might be explaining it.

Look at it this way: if you spoke to God (and I am speaking as a reality as opposed to just some hallucination which you have had), then what you are going to want to do is tell others about it. Therefore, what would be logical is to set up a place and tell people about the God of Glory, the Revealed Lord.

J. Ligon Duncan: *When you look at pagan religion wherever you find it, in the near east or anywhere around the world, what is normally happening in the worship practices of pagan religion? The rituals of pagan worship are designed to manipulate the god of the pagan worshiper into blessing you. You will not find that pattern in Genesis. In Genesis God comes to His people, God speaks to His people, God blesses His people, and then His people set up an altar. Not to manipulate Him into blessing them, but to praise Him and thank Him and express their gratitude for the blessing that He's already given to them by grace. Totally different from the pagan religion. And that's exactly what we see here. God comes graciously to Isaac in his time of need. And then Isaac sets up an altar, not to try and manipulate God into blessing him, but to thank Him for the blessings that he's already received.*<sup>191</sup>

Genesis 26:25c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâtâh (נָתַח) [pronounced naw-TAWH]	<i>to stretch out, to spread out, to pitch [a tent]; to bow, to extend, to incline, to turn</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5186 BDB #639
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
'ohel (אֹהֶל) [pronounced OH-hel]	<i>tent, tabernacle, house, temporary dwelling</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #168 BDB #13

**Translation:** He also pitches his tent there...

Since Isaac knows that he is in the right place, he pitches a tent right there. Isaac is therefore going to live there. Now, he has lived in at least 3 or 4 other locations prior to this. When he was young, he lived with his father Abraham on the outskirts of Gerar. He later lived near the well where Ishmael (Isaac's half-brother) and his

<sup>190</sup> From <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/leupold/genesis.xxviii.html> accessed July 31, 2015.

<sup>191</sup> From [First Presbyterian Church](#); accessed July 30, 2015.

mother saw God. He then moved into Gerar, possibly keeping a ranch outside of the city. And then, when driven away, the Philistines kept driving Isaac further and further away until he is here at Beersheba.

Genesis 26:25d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
kârâh (כָּרָה) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to bore, to dig; to hew [this word is a homonym]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3738 BDB #500
This is a different word than used previously for digging a well.			
shâm (שָׁמ) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
'ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ĞE <sup>B</sup> -ved]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
Yis <sup>e</sup> châq (יִשְׁחָק) [pronounced yih <sup>s</sup> -KHAWK]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
b <sup>e</sup> êr (בְּעַר) [pronounced b <sup>e</sup> -AIR]	<i>well, pit; spring</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #875 BDB #91

**Translation:** ...and Isaac's servants dig a well there.

Digging wells was an important thing that needed to be done; every habitation needed access to water. This is the second well dug in this general area. Water is absolutely necessary to life; and anywhere that life is established, there must be fresh water somehow there are a part of this. Many Arabic nations, on the ocean, living in deserts, **desalinize the ocean's water** in huge quantities in order to provide water for themselves (one might call this the modern middle eastern well).

Genesis 26:25 He builds there an altar and he proclaims the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah. He also pitches his tent there and Isaac's servants dig a well there. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:25 Isaac built an altar there and he called upon the name of Jehovah. He also pitched his tent there and his servants dug him a well there as well. (Kukis paraphrase)

Preacher's Complete Homiletical Commentary: *The virtue of patience. The Philistines carried their envy into action. They stopped up the wells which he had inherited from his father. (Gen .) But he met all this envy by patience. When persecuted in one place he fled to another. He removed from well to well. (Gen 26:18-22.) (a.) His patience was victorious. It won upon his enemies. The Philistines were, at length wearied out. They came round, and asked for a treaty. (Gen 26:28-30.) (b.) His patience won the Divine approval. The Lord appeared to him and renewed the old promises. He was assured of perpetual protection and guidance.*<sup>192</sup>

Abraham had enjoyed very similar circumstances there perhaps 80–100 years previous to this. Genesis 21:31–34 Therefore that place was called Beersheba, because there both of them swore an oath. So they made a covenant at Beersheba. Then Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his army rose up and returned to the land of the

<sup>192</sup> From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/phc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 29, 2015.

Philistines. Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba and called there on the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God. And Abraham sojourned many days in the land of the Philistines. (ESV) The similarity of the circumstances will become more apparent as we move further along in this passage. Most of the time Abraham is said to build an altar here or there; but that is not mentioned in this passage from Genesis 21. By the language here, it appears that Beersheba (the *well of seven*) may have been a place where Abraham offered up sacrifices, as he is said to call on the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah there (which is what Isaac does). The similarities and differences will be examined more in detail once we complete the next section.

Let's look at these 3 verses: From there he went up to Beersheba. And the LORD appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the God of Abraham your father. Fear not, for I am with you and will bless you and multiply your offspring for my servant Abraham's sake." So he built an altar there and called upon the name of the LORD and pitched his tent there. And there Isaac's servants dug a well. (Gen 26:23–25; ESV)

**Snider Summarizes Genesis 26:23–25**

1. We don't know exactly how long Isaac was in the land of the Philistines, but we do know that it was a long
2. The two firm chronological notes allow for a period of 40 years to cover the events of 25:27-26:33. [I don't see where Snider is getting this from?]
3. There is no evidence that God spoke to Isaac during the time of his stay in Philistia, which could have been some 20 years.
4. Isaac, with the present problems, may have begun to wonder if God had lost him in the shuffle.
5. He had not, and was well aware of his situation.
6. He reiterates the promise to bless Isaac, and to provide him innumerable descendants.
7. He also points out that this is due to the existence of the Abrahamic covenant and the application of
8. Once again, Isaac is reminded that he is going to prosper based on grace and not his own merit.
9. Isaac takes the Bible class to heart and responds with worship of the God of his father.
10. At some point, God will be pleased to become the God of Isaac, as well.
11. The building of an altar was the prerogative of the family priest, which Isaac was.
12. The altar or place of sacrifice in the OT points to the coming Messiah.
13. The altar symbolizes occupation with Christ, and grace orientation, which Isaac had lost sight of
14. Calling on the name of the Lord indicated his public worship, and included rebound for his mental attitude sins and violation of the geographic will of God.
15. He recognizes that this is the region in which he is to stay, a problem all three patriarchs wrestled with from time to time.
16. Just because they were out of the geographic will did not mean that they did not come under certain blessings, but that the Plan of God for their lives was temporarily put on hold.

Ron Snider, [Genesis 26](#), accessed July 26, 2015 (slightly edited).

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**Abimelech and Phicol, of Gerar, Make a Pact with Isaac**

I did not find too many obvious chiasmi in this chapter. This was one of the few which was obvious.

**Hajime Murai's Chiasm of Genesis 26:26-33**

A	(26:26)	Abimelech came to Isaac
B	(26:27)	you hate me and have driven me away from you (26:27)

## Hajime Murai's Chiasm of Genesis 26:26-33

C (26:28-30)	Let us make a pact with you (26:28)
B' (26:31)	Isaac bade them farewell, and they departed from him in peace (26:31)
A' (26:32-33)	Isaac's servants returned to Isaac

Although some people devised chiasmi for this chapter, none of them really seemed to fit.

From [http://www.valdes.titech.ac.jp/~h\\_murai/bible/01\\_Genesis\\_pericope\\_e.html](http://www.valdes.titech.ac.jp/~h_murai/bible/01_Genesis_pericope_e.html) (Genesis 26); accessed August 4, 2015.

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Abimelech and Phicol had also come to Abraham 90<sup>193</sup> or 100<sup>194</sup> years before in order to make a covenant with Abraham. Therefore, these names are either the titles of these men or they represents fathers and sons. Similarities and differences between these two covenants will also be noted.

**And Abimelech had come unto him from Gerar and Ahuzzath from his friend and Phicol commander of his army.**

Genesis  
26:26

**Abimelech came to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath from his advisory staff [lit., friend] and Phicol, the commander of his army.**

**Abimelech came to him from Gerar accompanied by Ahuzzath, a special advisor and Phicol, the commander of his army.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And Abimelech had come unto him from Gerar and Ahuzzath from his friend and Phicol commander of his army.
Targum of Onkelos	And Abimelek went to him from Gerar, and took his friends to go with him, and Phikol the chief of his host.
Latin Vulgate	To which place when Abimelech, and Ochozath his friend, and Phicol chief captain of his soldiers, came from Gerara.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then Abimeleck went to him from Gadar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the general of his army.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Abimelech came to him from Gerar, and so did Ahuzzath his friend, and Phichol the commander of his army.
Significant differences:	The targum seems to leave out the name of Abimelech's friend (see the Hebrew exegesis).

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English	Then Abimelech went from Gerar to visit Isaac. Abimelech took Ahuzzath his adviser with him. And Abimelech also took Phicol, the leader of his army.
Easy-to-Read Version	Abimelech came from Gerar to see Isaac. Abimelech brought with him Ahuzzath, his adviser, and Phicol, the commander of his army.
<i>The Message</i>	Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath his advisor and Phicol the head of his troops.

<sup>193</sup> Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, Genesis 26:26.

<sup>194</sup> Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:26.

NIRV During that time, Abimelech had come to him from Gerar. Ahuzzath had come with him. So had Phicol, Abimelech's army commander. Ahuzzath was Abimelech's personal adviser.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible But Abimelech set out toward him from Gerar, with Ahuzzath his ally and Phicol the commander of his forces.

Contemporary English V. Meanwhile, Abimelech had left Gerar and was taking his advisor Ahuzzath and his army commander Phicol to see Isaac.

New Century Version Abimelech came from Gerar to see Isaac. He brought with him Ahuzzath, who advised him, and Phicol, the commander of his army.

New Living Translation **Isaac's Covenant with Abimelech**  
One day King Abimelech came from Gerar with his adviser, Ahuzzath, and also Phicol, his army commander.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible Later, Abimelech came to him from [the City of] GeraRa, with his trusted friend OchoZath, and with Phichol, the commander of his army.

International Standard V **Abimelech Requests a Covenant**  
Later, Abimelech traveled from Gerar to visit Isaac [Lit. *him*]. He arrived with Ahuzzath, his staff advisor, and Phicol, the commanding officer of his army.

Today's NIV Meanwhile, Abimelech had come to him from Gerar, with Ahuzzath his personal adviser and Phicol the commander of his forces.

Translation for Translators **Abraham made a peace treaty with King Abimelech**  
While they were digging the well, King Abimelech came to Isaac from Gerar, along with Ahuzzath, his advisor, and Phicol, the commander of his army.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Abimelech went to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath his companion, and Phicol the leader of his host.

Conservapedia Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, with Ahuzzath his associate and Phicol his chief of staff.

Ferar-Fenton Bible But Abimelech went to him from Gherar, with his chief herdsman, and Phicol, the general of his army.

Lexham English Bible Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath his friend and Phicol his army commander.

NIV – UK Meanwhile, Abimelech had come to him from Gerar, with Ahuzzath his personal adviser and Phicol the commander of his forces.

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible And Abimelech walked to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath, his aide, and Phicol, the chief ruler of his host.

New American Bible Abimelech had meanwhile come to him from Gerar, accompanied by Ahuzzath, his councilor, and Phicol, the general of his army.

New American Bible (R.E.) Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar, with Ahuzzath, his councilor, and Phicol, the general of his army. Gn 21:22-31; Prv 16:7.

New RSV Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, with Ahuzzath his adviser and Phicol the commander of his army.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Then Avimelekh went to him from G'rar with his friend Achuzat and Pikhoh the commander of his army.
exeGeses companion Bible	<b><u>THE COVENANT OF YISCHAQ WITH ABI MELECH.</u></b> Then Abimelech goes to him from Gerar with Achuz Zath one of his companions and Pichol the governor of his host.
Kaplan Translation	Abimelech came to [Isaac] from Gerar, along with a group of friends and his general Pikhoh [Probably a title, see note on Genesis 21:22. This was some 75 years after Abimelech and Pikhoh had made a similar treaty with Abraham, Genesis 21:22-32.].
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Then Avimelech went to him from Gerar, and Achuzzat his adviser, and Phichol the sar tz'va of his.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar with Ahuzzah, one of his friends, and Phicol, his army's commander.
The Expanded Bible	Abimelech came from Gerar to see Isaac. He brought with him Ahuzzath, who advised him [his advisor/friend], and Phicol, the commander of his army.
Kretzmann's Commentary	<b>Verses 26-33</b> The Covenant Between Isaac and Abimelech Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzaath, one of his friends, and Phichol, the chief captain of his army. In this case the Philistine king brought not only the general of his army, but also his prime minister, or private counselor.
NET Bible®	Now Abimelech had come [The disjunctive clause supplies pertinent supplemental information. The past perfect is used because the following narrative records the treaty at Beer Sheba. Prior to this we are told that Isaac settled in Beer Sheba; presumably this treaty would have allowed him to do that. However, it may be that he settled there and then made the treaty by which he renamed the place Beer Sheba. In this case one may translate "Now Abimelech came to him." to him from Gerar along with [Heb "and."] Ahuzzah his friend [Many modern translations render the Hebrew term עֲרַם (merea') as "councillor" or "adviser," but the term may not designate an official position but simply a close personal friend.] and Phicol the commander of his army.
The Pulpit Commentary	Then (literally, and) Abimelech went to him from Gerar, the object of this visit was to resuscitate the alliance which had formerly existed between the predecessor of Abimelech and Abraham; (Genesis 21:22–32) yet the dissimilarity between the two accounts is so great as to discredit the hypothesis that the present is only another version of the earlier transaction and Ahuzzath one of his friends, neither ...a suite or number of his friends (Onkelos), nor one of his friends (A.V); but his friend, and probably his privy councilor (Keil, Kalisch, Murphy), whose presence along with the monarch and his general marks the first point of difference between the present and the former incident and Phichol (vide Genesis 21:22) the chief captain of his army.
The Voice	One day Abimelech came from Gerar to see him along with Ahuzzath, his advisor, and Phicol, the commander of his army.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Context Group Version	Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath his confidant, and Phicol the captain of his army.
English Standard Version	When Abimelech went to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath his adviser and Phicol the commander of his army,...
Green's Literal Translation	And Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and his aide Ahuzzath, and Phicol the general of his army.

H. C. Leupold

**(e) Covenant with the Philistines (v. 26-33)**

This passage presents a close parallel to Gen. 21:22 ff. which covers a similar case in Abraham's day. But why should the thought be so repulsive that in Isaac's day the situations that had previously prevailed in Abraham's time were duplicated? Have the critics never noticed from their study of history how certain problems and situations are perennial in certain regions?

And Abimelech came to him from Gerar together with Ahuzzath, his friend, and Phicol, the captain of his army.

NASB

**Covenant with Abimelech**

Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with his adviser [Lit and his confidential friend] Ahuzzath and Phicol the commander of his army.

World English Bible

Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath his friend, and Phicol the captain of his host.

Young's Updated LT

And Abimelech has gone unto him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath his friend, and Phicol head of his host [army].

**The gist of this verse:**

Abimelech with his staff come from Gerar to speak to Isaac.

Genesis 26:26a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾĀbiymelek <sup>e</sup> (אָבִימֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>u<sup>b</sup>-vee-MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>my father is Melek, my father is king; transliterated Abimelech</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #40 BDB #4
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i> ]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
G <sup>e</sup> râr (גֵּרָר) [pronounced <i>gher-AWR; possibly <sup>e</sup>rawr</i> ]	<i>a lodging place, dwelling; transliterated Gerar</i>	proper singular noun; location	Strong's #1642 BDB #176

**Translation:** Abimelech came to him from Gerar...

Since we have several Abimelech's from the Philistines, including one who will befriend King David, this could certainly be the name of a ruling family. So this Abimelech may or may not have been the ruler who was a friend of Abraham's. However, the Abimelech who knew Abraham appeared to be a very sensible man; and this Abimelech appears to be a very sensible man.

Although we can certainly classify this under *beating a dead horse*, Coffman comes up with a number of excellent parallels in history.

## James Burton Coffman on Abimelech and Phicol

There are many scholarly opinions relative to the names of Abimelech and Phicol, as to whether or not these were the same individuals mentioned nearly a century earlier in the history of Abraham, some supposing them to be dynastic names or titular names, and some asserting that they are the same individuals, making this a variant of the same "folk tale," etc., etc. We shall pass all such opinions by, for it makes no difference at all. Two kings named Abimelech, separated by eighty or a hundred years poses no problem. How about two kings named George in British history, or two presidents of the U.S.A. named Adams? And as for General Phicol he could quite easily have been General Phicol III, for all we know. This writer was once a guest chaplain in the U.S.A.F. in Japan, quartered for awhile in Nagoya. This was in October of 1952, some 92 years after the Civil War. One can only imagine the shocking surprise, therefore, when over the hotel sound system came the booming announcement: "General Ulysses S. Grant, General Ulysses S. Grant, line one, please, line one, please!" He was Ulysses S. Grant III, commandant of the great military unit where we were located. If scholars are looking for "problems" in Genesis, they should look elsewhere. For sake of identification, we shall refer to this Abimelech as Abimelech II.

From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015.

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Let me offer two suppositions, and then back them up:

### Genesis 26 and Chronology

1. Although we lack specifics regarding the time and order of these events, we can make two reasonable assumptions: (1) this chapter has to take place over a period of years rather than months; (2) the events of this chapter are in chronological order.
2. If this chapter were in order by topic, we might expect to see Jacob enter into Gerar, be forced out; and then have Abimelech come to him to establish a covenant (treaty, contract). This would have centered on the topic of Isaac and Abimelech. However, in between these two incidents, Isaac moves, he digs wells, he disputes with Philistines, he finds a place to live for awhile, and then he moves to Beersheba. *After that*, Abimelech tracks down Isaac.
3. That appears to describe a period of years in between these two meetings (involvements, interactions).
4. With the 3<sup>rd</sup> well, we might expect that Isaac would reside there for a time (possibly even a few years), as he is not subject to harassment from the Philistines. We do not know that to be a fact; that just seems to be a reasonable assumption.
5. However, for unstated reasons, Isaac then moves to Beersheba.
6. At this point, Abimelech returns to the narrative.
7. Interestingly enough, we have a generally chronological book which does not always approach everything chronologically: the book of Numbers. In Num. 33, we have all the different places where Moses led the Israelites. This would be separated out from previous and later narratives, gathering up all these places into one chapter with one primary focus.
8. Genesis 26 is just the opposite. We follow Isaac around; and it appears that this is punctuated with incidents from his life.

The reason for establishing that time passed, is so that we understand that Abimelech, having separated himself and his Philistine citizens from Isaac, that things got worse, not better. He knew that this was because of the way that he and Isaac separated.

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## Genesis 26:26b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and; even; in particular, namely; when, since, seeing, though; so, then, therefore; or, but yet; who, which; or; that, in that; with; also, in addition to, at the same time</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾĀchuzzâth (אחוזת) [pronounced <i>uhkh-ooz-ZAWTH</i> ]	<i>possessor; transliterated Ahuzzath</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #275 BDB #28
Clarke: <i>The Targum translates this word a company, not considering it as a proper name: "Abimelech and Phicol came with a company of their friends." The Septuagint calls him Οχοζαθ ο' νυμφαγωγος, Ochozath, the paranymp, he who conducts the bride to the bridegroom's house.</i> <sup>195</sup>			
min (מ) [pronounced <i>mihn</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
mêrêa' (עֵרֵא) [pronounced <i>may-RAY-ahg</i> ]	<i>friend, companion, confidential friend</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4828 BDB #946

**Translation:** ...with Ahuzzath from his advisory staff [lit., friend]...

The word here which is uncertain is mêrêa' (עֵרֵא) [pronounced *may-RAY-ahg*], which means, *friend, companion, confidential friend*. Strong's #4828 BDB #946. If this meant *from his friends*, then we would expect it to be a plural noun here. However, since it is used in the singular and preceded by the min preposition, this suggests that there is some kind of an organization from which Ahuzzath comes. This might be a citizen's advisory group, known as *friends of the king*; or something along these lines.

My guess would be that, Abimelech allowed for Isaac to be pushed out of his territory, but there were those of his kingdom who realized that Isaac was a blessing to them, not a curse. These people probably appealed to Abimelech. Their spokesman was likely Ahuzzath (or, perhaps Ahuzzath is from the same organization but he speaks the language of the Philistines and of Isaac). Although this citizen's group or advisory staff is conjecture, it is based upon the Hebrew language and how it is used here.

Clarke notes<sup>196</sup> that the targum translates *Ahuzzath from his advisory staff as a company of friends*; and the LXX renders this as something related to the caretaker of one's bride. Isaac has moved far enough away from Gerar to no longer be hassled by the envious men of Gerar—not even those who live on the outskirts of Gerar. So, for this reason (and also, because *friend, companion* is in the singular), I would say that the targum has missed the mark here. Because this would have been a bit of a trip, it seems odd that Abimelech would haul around with him his wife's caretaker with him; so here, the LXX would have missed the mark as well.

It could be that Abimelech reevaluated his treatment of Isaac, and Ahuzzath and Phicol both spoke up saying, "Here, here; I believe you are right."

What has no doubt happened is, the citizenry of Gerar forced Isaac far away from their land. When Isaac was there, blessing was the norm. They might not be as blessed as Isaac, but the people of Gerar were all blessed,

<sup>195</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:26.

<sup>196</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:26.

simply because of God pouring overflowing blessing upon Isaac; but also because Isaac, as a great businessman of that era, brought a spark to their economy.

**Application:** Economically, there is nothing better for a depressed area than one or two large businesses which can employ the townsfolk. Now, this might mean that there will be a lot of income inequality (the new CEO will make a lot more money than the average folk there); and he might even make more money than you think he should—but his presence there with the large business is what will bring that city or town back into prosperity.

**Application:** All over the United States, cities and states compete for businesses. When Toyota is going to open a plant in the United States, they will get all kinds of offers from the government. It might be a low initial tax rate; it might be some added perks or benefit; it might be some good deal for the land—but many cities will vie for that plant. No matter what sort of rhetoric these various politicians spout, what they are looking to do is get Toyota to choose their location. Even for a socialist Democrat, getting that plant into his area means more jobs and more prosperity.

So, Isaac being in Gerar was a benefit to their economy; Isaac leaving Gerar caused a halt to their economy. No doubt, some people figured this out. He was driven away from there out of envy; but when he left, he took much of Gerar's economy with him.

It is reasonable to suppose that much of this has been debated—maybe or maybe not among the people—but certainly within the walls of Abimelech's palace. The 3 (plus their staff) who show up are not arguing their positions amongst each other. It is reasonable to suppose that, at the very least, these 3 men of the entourage, are in mutual agreement as to the importance of Isaac to the plan of God. They look at all that is going on and it makes sense to them that Abraham and Isaac were both good for Gerar and the economy of Gerar. They seem to be aware of the mediatory function of Isaac—which is the same mediatory relationship that Abraham had between Abimelech and God.

**Application:** There is nothing stupider than to try to destroy the wealthy or to drive them away. With them you lose prosperity, jobs, and innovation. All of this is common sense during a time in America when common sense is in short supply.

You may recall that, when Abraham has misrepresented his wife as his sister to Abimelech the elder, still God warned Abimelech to have Abraham, who is a prophet, pray for him. So, Abraham revealed God's Word to Abimelech and, at the same time, Abraham made intercession to God on behalf of Abimelech.

Genesis 26:26c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Pîykôl (פִּיכּוֹל) [pronounced <i>pee-KOLE</i> ]	<i>strong; the mouth of all; ruling all; and is transliteration Phichol, Phicol</i>	proper masculine singular noun	Strong's #6369 BDB #810
sar (שַׂר) [pronounced <i>sar</i> ]	<i>chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978
tsâbâ' (צָבָא) [pronounced <i>tsaw<sup>b</sup>-VAW</i> ]	<i>army, war, or warfare</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6635 BDB #838

**Translation:** ...and Phicol, the commander of his army.

You may recall that there was a Phicol who was the commander of Abimelech's army before. Like Abimelech, this could be the same man that we met in Genesis 21:22, 32; or this could be his son or nephew. Given that perhaps 40 years have transpired since Genesis 21, he is more likely to be a son or nephew of the man we met before.

Phicol, also a title rather than a personal name, is the Philistine equivalent to our Head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.<sup>197</sup>

Genesis 26:26 Abimelech came to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath from his advisory staff [lit., *friend*] and Phicol, the commander of his army. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:26 Abimelech came to him from Gerar accompanied by Ahuzzath, a special advisor and Phicol, the commander of his army. (Kukis paraphrase)

This is fascinating. Now that Isaac has moved out of their periphery, the Philistines come and search out Isaac, not to dispute some well with him, but for other reasons. And this is not just a random group of Philistines, but the king of the Philistines as well as the commander of his army. It would be today as if the President of the United States and the Secretary of State came over to your house for a visit.

Now, bear in mind, on the human scale, Abimelech is way, way up there, being the king of Gerar. Phicol is way, way up there, as the secretary of state. But on the divine scale of values, it is Isaac that God is blessing. Isaac is the VIP of these 4 men.

**Application:** All believers in this dispensation have 1 or more spiritual gifts. Your gift may or may not be all that impressive or demonstrative. God may have you and your spouse on 10 hour a day prayer duty, and nobody knows about this except for you two and perhaps your children. But these words that you two speak in prayer, are a thousand times more important than anything President Obama has uttered in his entire life. When all is said and done, and we enter into eternity, many of us are going to be saluting you two and saying, "Yes, sir;" and "yes, ma'am." This includes many of those on "Christian" television. You might be far closer to fulfilling God's plan for you life than 95% of the rest of the believers in this world.

**Application:** You start out the Christian life by growing spiritually, and, at some point, you will figure out your spiritual gift. Then, using the doctrine in your soul, you begin exercising this spiritual gift. The closer you align yourself with God's plan, the greater your life will be, and the greater your eternity will be. And all of these other people on earth, no matter what their position or wealth, will not hold a candle to you. And that will continue on for eternity.

**Application:** And, just in case you don't get it, learning to become one with the plan of God glorifies God. Furthermore, it is the greatest life you can live in time.

For many years, Billy Graham had the ear of a succession of presidents; and, as a result, our nation has been greatly blessed. He has spoken to good, bad and mediocre presidents, but his input was guidance to the president, and blessing to our nation. He has spoken to every president from President Truman to President Obama. God put Billy Graham that close to all the presidents, for our benefit as citizens of the United States, and for their benefit as well.

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**And so says unto them Isaac, "Why have you come unto me and you [even] you have hated me? And so you sent me away from with you."**

Genesis  
26:27

**Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, [seeing] that you hate me and you sent me away from you?"**

<sup>197</sup> From Wenstrom, [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 406); accessed July 25, 2015.

## Isaac asked them, “Why have you come to me, seeing that you were angry with me and sent me out of your jurisdiction?”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says unto them Isaac, “Why have you come unto me and you [even] you have hated me? And so you sent me away from with you.”
Targum of Onkelos	And Izhak said to them, Why come you to me <u>that I should pray for you</u> , when you have hated me, and driven me from you?
Latin Vulgate	Isaac said to them: Why are you [all] come to me, a man whom you hate, and have thrust out from you?
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Isaac said to them, Why have you come to me, <u>seeing</u> that you hate me, and have sent me away from you?
Septuagint (Greek)	And Isaac said to them, Why have you come to me? <u>Seeing</u> that you hated me, and sent me away from you.

Significant differences: There is additional text in the targum. There is no word for *seeing* in the Hebrew (compare the Greek and the Syriac).

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English	Isaac said to them, ‘Why have you come to me? You hate me and you have sent me away from you.’
Easy-to-Read Version	Isaac asked, “Why have you come to see me? You were not friendly with me before. You even forced me to leave your country.”
Good News Bible (TEV)	So Isaac asked, “Why have you now come to see me, when you were so unfriendly to me before and made me leave your country?”
<i>The Message</i>	Isaac asked them, “Why did you come to me? You hate me; you threw me out of your country.”

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Isaac said to him, “Why have you come after me? You resented me and sent me away from you.”
Contemporary English V.	When they arrived, Isaac asked, “Why are you here? Didn’t you send me away because you hated me?”
New Berkeley Version	Isaac asked him, “Why do you call on me when you hate me and sent me away from you?”
New Century Version	Isaac asked them, “Why have you come to see me? You were my enemy and forced me to leave your country.”
New Living Translation	“Why have you come here?” Isaac asked. “You obviously hate me, since you kicked me off your land.”

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

Beck’s American Translation	“Why do you come to me,” Isaac asked them, “when you hate me and drove me away from you?”
International Standard V	“Why have you come to see me,” Isaac asked them, “since you hate me so much that you sent me away from you?”
New Advent Bible	Isaac asked them, What means your visit? Here is a man you have treated as an enemy, and driven him away from you.

Translation for Translators	Isaac asked them, "You acted in a hostile way toward me/treated me like an enemy before, and sent me away. So why have you come to me now?"
Today's NIV	Isaac asked them, "Why have you come to me, since you were hostile to me and sent me away?"

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Conservapedia	Isaac said to them, "Why come to me? You hated me and sent me from you!" Isaac said to him, "Why are you coming to me? I thought you hated me and sent me away from you."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Isaac, therefore, asked them; "Why have you come to me? When you are my enemies, and have driven me from among you?"
Lexham English Bible	And Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me? You hate me and sent me away from you."
NIV, ©2011	Isaac asked them, "Why have you come to me, since you were hostile to me and sent me away?"

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	Isaac said to him, "Why have you come after me seeing that you hate me and have sent me away?"
The Heritage Bible	And Isaac said to them, Why have you come to me, since you hate me, and sent me away from you?
New American Bible	Isaac asked them, "Why have you come to me, seeing that you hate me and have driven me away from you?"
Revised English Bible	Isaac said to them, 'Why have you come here to me? You will ill-disposed towards me and sent me away from your midst.'

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Yitz'chak said to them, "Why have you come to me, even though you were unfriendly to me and sent me away?"
Kaplan Translation	'Why have you come to me?' asked Isaac. 'You hate me; you drove me away from you!'
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Yitzchak said unto them, Why come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	Isaac asked them, "Why have you come to see me? You were my enemy [hate me] and forced me to leave your country [-sent me away from you]."
NET Bible®	Isaac asked them, "Why have you come to me? You hate me [The disjunctive clause is circumstantial, expressing the reason for his question.] and sent me away from you."
The Pulpit Commentary	And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore - וְעוֹדִי הֵמָּנָה, contr. from וְעוֹדִי הֵמָּנָה; what is taught? for what reason (cf. τί μαθών) come ye to me, seeing (literally, and) ye hate me, and have sent me away from you? While animadverting to the personal hostility to which he had been subjected, Isaac says nothing about the wells of which he had been deprived: a second point of difference between this and the preceding narrative of Abraham's covenant with the Philistine king.
The Voice	<b>Isaac:</b> <sup>27</sup> Why are you coming to see me? You made it clear that you hate me and want me banished from your kingdom.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And saying to them is Isaac, "For what reason do you come to me, when you hate me and you are sending me away from you?"
Context Group Version	And Isaac said to them, Why have you {pl} come to me, seeing you {pl} spurn me, and have sent me away from you {pl}?
H. C. Leupold	And Isaac said unto them: Why have ye come to me, seeing that ye on your part hate me and have driven me away from you?
World English Bible	Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, since you hate me, and have sent me away from you?"
Young's Updated LT	And Isaac says unto them, "Why have you come unto me, and you have hated me, and you send me away from you?"

**The gist of this verse:** Isaac, seeming to chide his guests, asks them why they have come, seeing as how they threw him out of their country because they hated him.

Genesis 26:27a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'el (אל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i> ]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Yis'châq (ישחק) [pronounced <i>yih'se-KHAWK</i> ]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
maddu'a (מדוע) [pronounced <i>mah-DOO-ahg</i> ]	<i>why, wherefore, on what account, and it is probably a contraction of a word which means what being known</i>	adverb	Strong's #4069 BDB #396
This is the first occurrence of this word in Scripture.			
bôw' (באו) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'el (אל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i> ]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39

**Translation:** Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me,..."

Isaac asks them exactly the question we would expect. "Why have you come to me?" Isaac was harangued by some of the locals and Abimelech never stepped in to calm them down and to get them to behave like law-abiding citizens. Yet, suddenly, here he is, on Isaac's doorstep, so to speak.

## Genesis 26:27b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or וַ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and; even; in particular, namely; when, since, seeing, though; so, then, therefore; or, but yet; who, which; or; that, in that; with; also, in addition to, at the same time</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'attem (אַתֶּם) [pronounced <i>ah-TEM</i> ]	<i>you all, you guys, you (often, the verb to be is implied)</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
sânê' (שָׂנֵא) [pronounced <i>saw-NAY</i> ]	<i>to hate, loath; to be hateful, to be filled with animosity</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #8130 BDB #971
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	<i>me; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to, toward</i>	affixed to a 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84

**Translation:**...[seeing] that you hate me...

This might be seen as somewhat exaggerated language. Abimelech simply did not stand up for law and order and for the rights of Isaac, even though he knew that Isaac was a decent person (with the exception of lying about his wife).

Isaac, when living in Gerar, broke no laws. He did not take advantage of the people there. His chief offense was, God blessed him and the people were envious of him.

*Wenstrom: "Hate" is the verb sane (שָׂנֵא) (saw-nay), which expresses an emotional attitude toward someone or something, which is abhorred, disdained or opposed and which desires to have no relationship or amiable reconciliation. Therefore, Isaac is saying to Abimelech that he and his people have expressed an emotional attitude toward him, in which they abhorred, disdained or opposed him and desired to have no relationship with him or amiable reconciliation with him.<sup>198</sup>*

The sudden appearance of these men could have been seen as possibly threatening to Isaac; however, that does not appear to be the case.

At first, seeing the additional men in authority, Isaac is uncertain as to the nature of this visit. His intention was to live far enough away from Abimelech and the Philistines that they could survive peacefully. Isaac had not been ordered by God to take the land forcefully nor was he to necessarily raise his hand against the Philistines. Just like Abraham, he was to live in the land which God would give his ancestors as an inheritance. Isaac claiming that Abimelech hates him is not accurate. As we have seen, Abimelech has treated Isaac with deference and respect and honesty. He has always been up front with Isaac. When Abimelech sent Isaac away, it was as the leader of the Philistines, a man with authority and responsibility to his own people. He was attempting to establish a peace and to end the strife between his people and Isaac. Was this the best solution to the problem? Isaac would probably think that it wasn't.

V. 27 reads: **Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, [seeing] that you hate me and you sent me away from you?"** My impression here is, Isaac has been storing this up for awhile. He lived at peace with the Philistines; he did nothing wrong to them (other than misrepresenting who his wife was); and he has been pushed further and further away. His ally in all of this, Abimelech, did not stand up for what is just, but allowed this to happen. So, initially, Isaac blows off a little steam, saying, "Obviously you hate me, because you sent me away. Now, what are you doing here?" Perhaps the implication is, "Have you not pushed me far enough away?"

<sup>198</sup> From Wenstrom, [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 406); accessed July 25, 2015.

God sometimes moves His people around by direct order (Genesis 26:1–3). However, here, God simply allows circumstances to dictate Isaac's location in the land. One of the few guarantees that I can give you is, God is not going to come to you in a dream or vision and tell you to move to Centerville. If you move there, there will be a variety of circumstances moving you in that direction.

### Relocating to Attend a Doctrinal Church:

It is not wrong to relocate in a place where there is a doctrinal church. I began learning on my own, listening to tapes of R. B. Thieme, Jr.; but I have personally witnessed a number of believers who have gone astray, even when listening to Bob's teaching. It is wonderful that R. B. Thieme, Jr. Ministries exists and sends CD's all over the world; and that there are dozens of doctrinal churches throughout the United States, many of which provide teaching via MP3 files posted on the internet. However, there is nothing better than a doctrinal church fellowship, where your interaction with other believers is often helpful.

It is not my job to run the lives of other believers. However, I know some wonderful believers who have become confused and disillusioned with the United States government, primarily because of this current president (Barack Obama). Interaction among fellow believers can sometimes keep this disillusionment in check. Believers who might otherwise even turn against our government are kept in check by other believers that they regularly rub shoulders with.

Going with this tangent: the problem with our nation is not Barack Obama or even any of his policies. He is a man who was elected by the majority of the American people. Therefore, whatever changes which occur in our government and in our lives is related to our society and its degeneracy in general. Consequently, rebelling against the government, no matter how oppressive it becomes, is not the answer. My point in all of this is, interaction with fellow believers who are in fellowship and who have doctrine, help those around them to make the proper application of Bible doctrine.

I recently interacted with a student of mine on the internet, and he began spouting all of this revolutionary rhetoric—despite the fact that he is apparently a believer in Jesus Christ. I know that Barack Obama is a terrible, anti-Christian president, and that his vision for America is not about encouraging a vibrant Christian community. This does not give us the right to rebel against him in any way, other than by means of those things which are lawfully allowed to us. If he decided to come for our guns, we do not have the right to an armed revolt against our government.

We need other believers with doctrine to sometimes help us properly apply doctrine. Our great struggle in life is against Satan; it is not against the powers that be in Washington D.C. In fact, we ought to be mindful even of what we spend our time on. There is nothing wrong with marching on Washington to protest this or that godless policy; but if this takes from your testimony or if this takes from your spiritual growth and the function of your spiritual gift (s), then you need to set that activity aside. **For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.** (Ephesians 6:12; NIV) Therefore, we must be mindful of our focus and make the best use of our time; and having other believers around you is helpful in that regard.

This takes into account our limited time on earth and improving society.

### The Best Use of our Time

1. How we use our limited time on earth is one of the most important concepts for the believer to grasp, as this is related directly to our function in the plan of God.
2. One of the key passages to this concept is Ephesians 5:15–17 **Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is...**

## The Best Use of our Time

3. Our lives on earth are limited—by the number of years that we live, by our responsibilities to our families, by the number of hours that we sleep, and by the normal day-to-day life that we must lead.
4. R. B. Thieme, Jr. was a very unusual man, who often spent 10–12 hours a day in study. For most believers, this will not be our life. Personally, I can put in 2–5 hours, but after hour 2 or 3, it is not nearly as easy to continue with the focus and concentration necessary.
5. Therefore, what we all need as believers is Bible doctrine studied regularly, almost always from the teaching of a doctrinal pastor-teacher. His teaching, plus the filling of the Holy Spirit, plus the interaction with other believers at church, help to guide us in the use of our time.
6. One of the great mistakes of the civil rights movement was, the movement became the church. The Christian church was fundamental to many African-American believers at that time (and had been for decades) and it became the political movement known as civil rights. The church put Jesus Christ and the gospel and the teaching of the Word of God in the back seat, and put civil rights in charge.
  - 1) Should Blacks have been given equal rights? Of course! There is no question about that. Was slavery a bad thing? As we practiced it, for the most part, it was.
  - 2) Is prejudice an evil thing? There is no doubt. But, the problem was, churches that taught the oppressed Black peoples sound doctrine was the standard up until the late 1940's and early 1950's.
  - 3) But, many churches began, at that point, to teach social change, to teach racial equality. Now, as a result, we have much greater equality for African-Americans; but we have a much lower percentage of Blacks who know Jesus Christ and know what life should be.
  - 4) Which is to be preferred? A more just nation or Bible doctrine in the souls of Black believers? The latter, of course.
  - 5) There are a huge number of African-Americans upset today with society as there were in the 1950's. Socially, we advanced greatly in the realm of race relations in the United States. However, because there is very little doctrine being taught in the Black churches today, Black culture is thoroughly debased, destroyed by drugs and the disillusion of the Black family.
  - 6) Today, Blacks look to the Democratic party for justice; they do not look to Jesus Christ. This is a great mistake which has ruined Black culture.
  - 7) The Blacks in America have been easily manipulated over the past 30 years to where they now vote en masse for the same political party—primarily because they are promised more welfare benefits (as this is all that they get).
  - 8) I use the civil rights movement by way of illustration. No one can disagree that race relations were bad back in the 1940's and 1950's and have improved greatly since then. However, because African-Americans changed their focus from Jesus to government, their culture and lives have gone downhill since the civil rights movement began.
  - 9) Few people know this, but long before the civil rights movement, the Black unemployment was actually lower than white unemployment. I do not recall the exact time—it was in the 1920's, if memory serves—but the Black unemployment rate was 3.1% and for whites it was 3.2%. In this era, Black families were intact and church attendance was regular and enthusiastic.
  - 10) My point is, their time and focus should have been on Bible doctrine and on the Lord Jesus Christ; not upon making social strides in the United States.
  - 11) All of the strides that we have made in civil rights would have probably come about naturally.
  - 12) Instead, we now have a people who are angry, prejudiced, uneducated, and who feel entitled. Obviously, this does not describe the entire Black people in the United States; but this is a significant portion of them.
7. Let's apply this to today. President Obama is a terrible president—the worst in my lifetime; but how should I conduct my life. Should I spend time and money going to Washington D.C. and march around the White House with a sign saying, “Barack Obama—not a very good president”? Or should I spend my time in the Word? I can guarantee you that the time I spend in the exercise of my spiritual gift is far, far more important than the time I spend talking about politics or marching over this or that social issue.
8. I used a personal illustration; so let's leave politics out of this, and take a different approach: what if you, as the father of the house, are spending 70 hours a week working. You might provide really well for your family, and you may have a lot of money, but are you your family's spiritual leader? Are you guiding your

## The Best Use of our Time

children in the realm of Bible doctrine and in the realm of understanding the laws of divine establishment? You must **redeem the time, for the days are evil.**

9. Your time:
- 1) At the top of your list should be the intake of Bible doctrine. I believe that daily is the best approach, and for no less than 30 minutes. For most people 45–75 min. a day is even better. Attending a doctrinal church every time the doors are open, is also important.
  - 2) You need to log as much time in the Spirit as is possible. That means with rebound, you keep short accounts. You name your sins to God and return to fellowship as soon as possible.
  - 3) A man needs to see to the needs of his family—he needs to make sure that they are fed, clothed, housed, and given Bible doctrine. As the authority figure in your family (assuming that you are the head of the household), that is your job—the take care of your family.
  - 4) Associate with daily life is work, meals and sleep. Exercise profits a little.
  - 5) The key is keeping everything in balance. There are a lot of things which threaten to come and take up your time and it requires wisdom and self-control to allocate your time wisely.
10. Anytime you are moved toward politics and away from the Word of God, you will be worse off. This does not mean that you cannot have divine establishment political opinions and this does not mean that you cannot express those opinions; but far, far more important, is your intake of the Word of God.

See also **Redeeming the Time** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) from [Grace Notes](#).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Isaac said to them, “Why have you come to me, [seeing] that you hate me... Isaac states his own position clearly, and without pulling any punches. Here, we can anticipate that Abimelech will approach Isaac with the same respect and candor as he always has.

### Genesis 26:27c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAKH</i> ]	<i>to send, to send off, to send away, to dismiss, to give over, to cast out, to let go, to set free, to shoot forth [branches], to shoot [an arrow]</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Piel perfect with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i> ]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'êth (אִתּוֹ) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object) with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85

Together, min 'êth mean *from proximity with, from with, from close proximity to, to proceed from someone*. A good up-to-date rendering might be *directly from*. The idea is, the person that these prepositions refer to is supposed to directly be involved in the action or in whatever is being requested.

**Translation:** ...and you sent me away from you?"

Isaac asks the logical question, *you sent me away, so why did you track me down?* Essentially, the people of Gerar got what they wanted—Isaac gone.

Abimelech first sent Isaac out of town. However, even when on the outskirts of Abimelech's territory, Isaac continued to have problems with the locals. Abimelech could have stepped in, but he did not. Isaac was forced to leave this area altogether.

Gill: *...seeing that you [all] hate me, and have sent me away from you? The latter, Isaac mentions as a proof of the former; they envied his prosperity, and hated him on that account, and therefore expelled him their country, or at least would not suffer him to dwell among them; and still more glaring proofs were given of the hatred of the men of Gerar to him, not only by stopping up his father's wells, but by striving and contending with him about those he dug in the valley after he was gone from them; one of which he called "Sitnah", from their hatred of him.*<sup>199</sup>

Genesis 26:27 Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, [seeing] that you hate me and you sent me away from you?" (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:27 Isaac asked them, "Why have you come to me, seeing that you were angry with me and sent me out of your jurisdiction?" (Kukis paraphrase)

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown: *By whatever motive the proposal was dictated--whether fear of his growing power, or regret for the bad usage they had given him, the king and two of his courtiers paid a visit to the tent of Isaac.*<sup>200</sup>

From Leupold's Exposition of Genesis: *As "Abimelech" is the standing title of the Philistine kings (see on v. 1), so "Phicol" seems to have been the standing title for the captain of the army. The additional personage involved in this instance is the king's friend "Ahuzzath" (on the Philistine ending of the name cf. Goliath). The agreement to be entered into is to be more than a private diplomatic arrangement. Isaac discerns the purpose of their coming 2.731 before they speak and points out a certain inconsistency manifest in their attitude: first they drive him out, then they follow after him to make a treaty of amity and good will.*<sup>201</sup>

Actually, we do not know what role Abimelech played in the disputes over the wells. Did he never step in? Did he rule in court in favor of his own citizens, even though they were in the wrong? We do not know this. However, what is being assumed here is, Abimelech could have done something about the injustices against Isaac, but he did nothing.

We should consider Isaac's power as an army. Recall that he was thought to be getting too large for Gerar, where his strength and power seemed to rival that of the king's. This suggests that Isaac could have kept his wells by means of force. He could have crushed those who were giving him a hard time. However, he did not do this. Isaac apparently chose to not go where he was not wanted.

Something else must be considered here as well. Isaac had a very large organization, as did his father Abraham. He would have been involved in a great deal of commerce with the locals. There would have been bartering and buying and selling which would have gone on. When Isaac left, the economy of Gerar would have taken a noticeable hit. Isaac, apart from everything else, was an economic engine which drove Gerar's economy. At the same time, God blessed Isaac and, by association, God blessed Gerar and its citizenry because of their

<sup>199</sup> Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:27 (slightly edited).

<sup>200</sup> Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, Genesis 26:26–33.

<sup>201</sup> From <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/leupold/genesis.xxviii.html> accessed July 31, 2015.

association with Isaac. So Isaac leaving the town of Gerar would have been a blow to the Gerar economy; and when Isaac finally left the area of Gerar, that would have devastated their economy.

How was Isaac driven away? The Philistines were envious of him and they petitioned the government (Abimelech) to expel him. The end result was the devastation of Gerar's economy.

Genesis 26:27 Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, [seeing] that you hate me and you sent me away from you?" Isaac reasonably questions them on this. "Why do you search me out since you sent me away?" Isaac moved away from the Philistines, dug a well; and then found himself being at odds with Philistines who would come in and dispute ownership of the well with him. Then he would move further away, dig a well, and the same thing would happen again. Now, Isaac has finally moved far enough away where he is not being hassled by the Philistines; and so Abimelech comes to him, hat in hand, as it were.

We happen to have a nearly exact parallel today. In a previous conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, the Palestinians asserted that they did not have full control of the Gaza strip (which is in, past time, the area occupied by the Philistines), so Israel gave them the Gaza strip. There are no Jews living there at all. This ought to be a veritable Palestinian paradise, as they control that land exclusively, and there are no evil Jews here and there to mess things up. Just as Isaac voluntarily left Gerar and moved his family away from the Philistines; so modern-day Israel moved its people out of the Gaza strip.

Did Gerar become a much happier and blessed place? Of course not! Is the modern-day Gaza a place of blessing for the Palestinians? Of course not! In the time of Isaac, there were at least 3 men who recognized that Isaac was a blessing to them; and that is what is going on in this chapter. They have come to Isaac to make amends. Today's conflict between Israel and the Palestinians (I write this in July of 2014), the Palestinians have no such notion. They do not know that, if they chose to interact peacefully with the Israelites, that God would bless them. And what is sad is, Islam recognizes the Old Testament as Scripture (although many of their adherents do not know this). Genesis 12:1–3, written 4000 years ago, reads: **Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."** (ESV)

Nearly everyone in the United States recognizes that there is something seriously wrong with America. Now, we may have a great divide when it comes to defining what it is and how do we solve it, but very few people today would say, "We are doing well; America is on the right track." And yet, we are blessed by God and we continue to be blessed, unlike any other nation that has ever been established on this earth. Our poor, no matter how some of them might bitch and moan about income inequality, live better today than kings of a century ago. Part of the reason for our blessing is Israel. Nearly all Republicans and a large majority of Democrats recognize that Israel is our greatest ally in the world, and our prayers and sentiment in these various conflicts between Israel and the Palestinians is correctly on the side of Israel.

Senator Chuck Schumer, a Democrat with whom I disagree on nearly everything, **understands the problem** in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He understands that Hamas, which is a hate-filled Islamic organization, must be completely neutralized in Palestine. There will be no peace as long as Hamas has any power in Palestine. What gives them power in Palestine? Hatred; hatred for the Jews. If the Palestinians would put aside their hatred for a generation, they would survive and thrive, just as Gerar enjoyed great prosperity when they allowed Isaac peaceful-coexistence.

With Isaac comes blessing. God blesses Isaac and that blessing overflows to those associated with him. Since the Philistines chose not to be associated with him, the overflowing blessings from God ceased; their prosperity ended.

**Application:** We have a similar thing occurring today in many societies. The political class see the rich and the wealthy and they want as much of that as they can take, so they "legally" steal from the rich and redistribute it to buy votes—but most of it goes into their own pockets and into the pockets of their donors and supporters. Once

the amount the politicians take is high enough, the rich leave, and they take with them their wealth and their ability to make wealth. And the societies which drive the wealthy away are always the worse for it. There is a point at which, when you tax the wealthy too much, enough of them leave (for another city, another state or another country) to where the government revenues are less, even though the taxes are higher.

Abimelech and Phicol here recognize that God is with Isaac.

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Several Bible combine vv. 28 and 29 into one sentence. V. 28 proposes that a covenant be made between them all; and v. 29 contains the content of that covenant.

**And so they say, “Seeing we have seen that is Y<sup>e</sup>howah with you. And so we say, let be, please, an oath between us, between us, and between you. And let us cut a covenant with you:...**

Genesis  
26:28

**They said, “We clearly see that Y<sup>e</sup>howah is with you—therefore, we say, let there now be an oath between you and us. Let us make a covenant with you;...**

**They answered, “We clearly see that Jehovah is with you—therefore, we now ask, let there be an oath, between all of us; allow us to make a covenant with you.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so they say, “Seeing we have seen that is Y <sup>e</sup> howah with you. And so we say, let be, please, an oath between us, between us, and between you. And let us cut a covenant with you.
Targum of Onkelos	And they answered, Seeing, we have seen, that the <u>Word of the Lord</u> is for your <u>help, and for your righteousness</u> ” <u>sake all good has been to us; but when you went forth from our land the wells dried up, and our trees made no fruit; then we said, We will cause him to return to us.</u> And now let there be an oath established between us, and <u>kindness</u> between us and you, and we will enter into a covenant with you, <u>lest you do us evil.</u> You will notice a lot of extra stuff here.
Latin Vulgate	And they answered: We saw that the Lord is with you, and therefore we said: Let there be an oath between us, and let us make a covenant.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And they said, We saw certainly that the LORD is with you; so we said, Let there be now an oath between us and you, and let us make a covenant with you,...
Septuagint (Greek)	And they said, We have surely seen that the Lord was with you, and we said, Let there be an oath between us and you, and we will make a covenant with you,...
Significant differences:	The targum has a lot of extra text. The Latin does not appear to take cognizance of the doubling of the verb <i>seeing</i> . The Latin also leaves out <i>between us and you</i> .

#### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And they said, We saw clearly that the Lord was with you: so we said, Let there be an oath between us and you, and let us make an agreement with you;...
Easy English	The men said to Isaac, `We see clearly that the *Lord is with you. So please let us make a very serious promise to each other.
Easy-to-Read Version	They answered, “Now we know that the Lord is with you. We think that we should make an agreement. We want you to make a promise to us.

God's Word™	They answered, "We have seen that the LORD is with you. So we thought, 'There should be a solemn agreement between us.' We'd like to make an agreement with you...
Good News Bible (TEV)	They answered, "Now we know that the LORD is with you, and we think that there should be a solemn agreement between us. We want you to promise...
The Message	They said, "We've realized that GOD is on your side. We'd like to make a deal between us--a covenant...
NIRV	They answered, "We saw clearly that the Lord was with you. So we said, 'We should make an agreement by taking an oath.' The agreement should be between us and you. We want to make a peace treaty with you.
New Simplified Bible	They answered: »Now we know that Jehovah is with you. We think that there should be a solemn agreement between us. We want you to promise...

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	They said, "We now see that the Lord was with you. We propose that there be a formal agreement between us and that we draw up a treaty[e] with you:...
Contemporary English V.	They answered, "We now know for certain that the LORD is with you, and we have decided there needs to be a peace treaty between you and us. So let's make a solemn agreement...
New Century Version	<sup>28</sup> They answered, "Now we know that the Lord is with you. Let us swear an oath to each other. Let us make an agreement with you <sup>29</sup> that since we did not hurt you, you will not hurt us. We were good to you and sent you away in peace. Now the Lord has blessed you." Vv. 28–29 are offered here for context.
New Living Translation	They replied, "We can plainly see that the Lord is with you. So we want to enter into a sworn treaty with you. Let's make a covenant.

#### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	<sup>28</sup> And they replied, 'We have surely seen that Jehovah is with you. So we said, <i>Let there be an oath between you and us. we [wish to] make a treaty with you,</i> <sup>29</sup> <i>that you won't do any wrong to us, and we won't hate you. And because we have treated you well by sending you away peacefully, you are now blest by Jehovah.'</i> Vv. 28–29 are put together here for context.
Beck's American Translation	"We see clearly," they said, "that the LORD is with you. So we thought, let us swear to one another, and we will make a treaty with you..."
New Advent Bible	<sup>28</sup> But they answered, We have seen how all this while the Lord is with thee; and our thought was, It is time there was an oath between us. Let us make a covenant <sup>29</sup> that thou wilt do us no wrong; we never laid hands on thee, never did thee anything but good; we parted from thee peaceably, and the Lord's blessing was thine. V. 29 was included for context.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	They said, "We   see   Yahweh is with you! We say, please have a promise between us, to cut a covenant with you, between us and you.
Conservapedia	They said, "We could readily see that the LORD was with you, and we said, "Let us please have a pact between us, between us and you. Let us cut a covenant with you."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	And they replied;— "We are terribly afraid, because GOD is with you: so we would say, let there now be an understanding between us and you, and let a treaty be made with you so that you will not do wrong to us... A portion of v. 29 was included for context.

HCSB	They replied, "We have clearly seen how the LORD has been with you. We think there should be an oath between two parties--between us and you. Let us make a covenant with you:...
NIV – UK	<sup>28</sup> They answered, "We saw clearly that the Lord was with you; so we said, "There ought to be a sworn agreement between us"- between us and you. Let us make a treaty with you <sup>29</sup> that you will do us no harm, just as we did not harm you but always treated you well and sent you away peacefully. And now you are blessed by the Lord.' V. 29 was included for context.

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	They answered, "We have clearly seen that Yahweh is with you, so we said: Let peace be sworn between us and you, and let us make a treaty:...
New American Bible (R.E.)	They answered: "We clearly see that the LORD has been with you, so we thought: let there be a sworn agreement between our two sides-between you and us. Let us make a covenant with you:...
New Jerusalem Bible	'It became clear to us that Yahweh was with you,' they replied, 'and so we thought, "It is time to have a treaty sworn between us, between us and you." So let us make a covenant with you:...
Revised English Bible	They answered, 'We have realized that the LORD is with you, and we propose that the two of us should bind each other by oath and make a pact.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible	And they say, In seeing, we see Yah Veh is with you: and we say, Let there become, I beseech, an oath between us - between us and you and that we cut a covenant with you...
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	And they said, "We now see plainly that the LORD has been with you, and we thought: Let there be a sworn treaty between our two parties, between you and us. Let us make a pact with you that you will not do us harm, just as we have not molested you but have always dealt kindly with you and sent you away in peace. Most of v. 29 was added in for context.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And they said, We saw certainly that Hashem was with thee; and we said, Let there be now an oath between us, even between us and thee, and let us cut a brit (covenant) with thee;...

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	They said, We saw that the Lord was certainly with you; so we said, Let there be now an oath between us [carrying a curse with it to befall the one who breaks it], even between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you....
The Expanded Bible	They answered, "Now we know [ <sup>L</sup> clearly see] that the Lord is with you. Let us swear an oath to each other. Let us make [ <sup>L</sup> cut] an agreement [covenant; treaty] with you...
NET Bible®	They replied, "We could plainly see [The infinitive absolute before the verb emphasizes the clarity of their perception.] that the Lord is with you. So we decided there should be [Heb "And we said, 'Let there be.'" The direct discourse in the Hebrew text has been rendered as indirect discourse in the translation for stylistic reasons.] a pact between us [The pronoun "us" here is inclusive - it refers to the Philistine contingent on the one hand and Isaac on the other.] - between us [The pronoun "us" here is exclusive - it refers to just the Philistine contingent (the following "you" refers to Isaac).] and you. Allow us to make [The translation

assumes that the cohortative expresses their request. Another option is to understand the cohortative as indicating resolve: "We want to make.""] **a treaty with you...**

The updated Pulpit Com.

**And they said, We saw certainly** literally, seeing we saw, i.e. we assuredly perceived, or, we have indeed discovered (vide Ewald's "Hebrews Synt.," Abimelech and his ministers first explain the motive which has impelled them to solicit a renewal of the old alliance **that the Lord was with you:** the use of Jehovah instead of Elohim, as Genesis 21:22, does not prove that this is a Jehovistic elaboration of the earlier legend. Neither is it necessary to suppose that the term Jehovah is a Mosaic translation of the epithet employed by Abimelech (Rosenm The long-continued residence of Abraham in Gemr and Beersheba afforded ample opportunity for Abimelech becoming acquainted with the patriarch's God. The introduction of Jehovah into the narrative may be noted as a third point of dissimilarity between this and the previous account **and we said, Let there be now an oath** i.e. a treaty secured by an oath or self-imprecation on the transgressor (cf. Deut. 29:11, Deut. 29:13) **betwixt us, even betwixt us and you,** a farther particularization of the parties to the covenant for the sake of emphasis **and let us make a covenant with you.** The phrase "to cut a covenant," here used in a so-called Jehovistic portion of the history, occurs in Genesis 21:27, Genesis 21:32, which confessedly belongs to the fundamental document.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	<b>And saying are they, "We see, yea, see that Yahweh has come to be with you, and we are saying, `Let there come, pray, an oath of imprecation between us, between us and you, and contract will we a covenant with you.</b>
Darby's updated Translation	<b>And they said, We saw certainly that Jehovah is with you; and we said, Let there be then an oath between us -- between us and you, and let us make a covenant with you,...</b>
English Standard Version	<b>They said, "We see plainly that the LORD has been with you. So we said, let there be a sworn pact between us, between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you,...</b>
H. C. Leupold	<b>And they said: We plainly see that Yahweh is with thee, so we said: Let, we pray, an oath be between us-between us and you, and let us make a covenant with thee, that thou wilt do us no hurt, even as we have not touched thee, and even as we have done only good to thee, and have let thee go in peace-thee, now the blessed of Yahweh.</b>
World English Bible	<b>They said, "We saw plainly that Yahweh was with you. We said, 'Let there now be an oath between us, even between us and you, and let us make a covenant with you,...</b>
Young's Updated LT	<b>And they say, "We have certainly seen that Jehovah has been with you, and we say, "Let there be, we pray you, an oath between us, between us and you, and let us make a covenant with you.</b>

**The gist of this verse:** It is clear to these men from Gerar that God is with Isaac, so they would therefore like to make a covenant with him.

<b>Genesis 26:28a</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's #</b>
wa (or va) (I) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## Genesis 26:28a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'amar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
râ'ah (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
A Qal infinitive absolute is a verb which can act like noun, a verb or an adverb. Generally it takes the place of a noun and serves to intensify meanings. When it is found before the finite verb of the same root, it emphasizes the certainty or the decisiveness of the verbal idea of the root. <sup>202</sup> When used as a complement of affirmation, it may be rendered <i>surely, indeed, definitely</i> ; and when it is a complement of improbability and condition, we render it <i>at all, freely, indeed</i> . The Qal infinitive absolute can also serve as an adverbial complement; or, as a verb, it can replace finite verbs, imperatives, participles, and the infinitive constructs. <sup>203</sup>			
râ'ah (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	when, that, for, because	explanatory conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'im (עִם) [pronounced geem]	with, at, by, near	preposition of nearness and vicinity; with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

**Translation:** They said, "We clearly see that Y<sup>e</sup>howah is with you—...

The verb *to see* is used twice. As a Qal infinitive absolute, it emphasizes the certainty of the verb, so they can see, without any doubt whatsoever, that Y<sup>e</sup>howah is with Isaac (some translators insert the words *surely, certainly*). They clearly understand that fact. That is the basis upon which all else that follows is made.

What has happened is, since Isaac left Gerar, prosperity went with him. God was blessing Isaac, which concerned the Philistines enough to drive him away. However, when they drove him away, the blessing of God went with him. There are people in Philistia who understand that. In fact, those who have come to Isaac understand that being isolated from Isaac means being isolated from the blessings of Isaac's God.

Leupold: *Through their whole speech this one idea shines forth: we are impressed with Yahweh's blessings which continually go with you. The Philistines refer to this at the beginning and at the close*

<sup>202</sup> Choon-Leong Seow, *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew (Revised Edition)*; Abingdon Press, Nashville; ©1995, p. 250.

<sup>203</sup> Taken from *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; ©1994 AMG Publishers; p. 2277.

of their plea. They do not think it safe to be on bad terms with one who so manifestly stands in Yahweh's favour. That the name "Yahweh" should be used by Philistines need not surprise us. They...have heard that Isaac serves Yahweh; it must be Yahweh who has blessed His faithful follower.<sup>204</sup>

Abimelech and his cabinet had begun to reassess their relationship with Isaac after Isaac left. They looked at the pros and cons. Sending him away was a bad mistake, and there were no more blessings by association heaped upon the Philistines because of the dissolution of their relationship to Isaac. No relationship with Isaac meant no overflow blessings from God.

Isaac is not a perfect person. He clearly made mistakes in his life (lying to Abimelech would be one of those mistakes). Nevertheless, Abimelech and Phicol recognize that God is with him. They recognize how God has blessed Isaac. They understand that they ought to be associated with Isaac.

So far, this reads: **They said, "We clearly see that Y<sup>e</sup>howah is with you—...** You will notice that Abimelech and his two men made reference to the proper name of God. This means that they understood Who He is and Isaac's relationship to Him.

### That Goofy Notation G–d

1. It is going to be difficult for me to discuss this without strongly attacking people who, when writing about God, write G–d.
2. The idea is, somehow, some people have the notion that there are references to God without vowels, and somehow, that is more intellectual, more respectful, more something; and so they do that. What it is, is more goofy.
3. I actually know one person who, when making reference to God, wrote G–d, but then also used God's name when speaking profanity—so I don't know how to explain his concept of respect.
4. In our passage, these Philistines use the proper name of God; and Isaac does not upbraid them for doing so. That is because they are not using God's proper name in a trifling way.
5. At some point in time, the Jews stopped pronouncing the name of God; instead, they said *Adonai* (that is a so-so transliteration from the Hebrew), and it means *Lord, my Lord, Master*. It is not a word exclusively used for Deity.
6. Also, the Hebrew written language did not use vowels. They saw the consonants, they knew how to pronounce the words, so those who read the Bible aloud (or read anything aloud that was written down) simply knew how to pronounce the words. If you are so eager to do what the ancient Jews did, th-n y-sh–ld wr-t- l-k- th-s -ll th- t—.
7. Not only did the Jews not use vowels when writing Scripture (or anything), they also decided to use the word *LORD* rather than Y<sup>e</sup>howah.
8. After a long period of time, not having vowels and not pronouncing the proper name for God, the Jewish people actually forgot the pronunciation of this proper name for God.
9. By the time it came for the Hebrews to record the Scriptures with vowels (actually, with vowel points), they did not know what vowels to use with *YHWH*.
10. Not pronouncing God's name was a tradition, supposedly something done out of reverence for God. But, as a result, they forgot how to pronounce His name.
11. I personally have reconstructed what I believe to be the correct pronunciation of Y<sup>e</sup>howah; but it is an educated guess (but a better guess than *Yaweh*).
12. So, referencing God's name as *YHWH* (without any vowels) is not some super holy thing to do today; it just means that we do not know for certain how to pronounce His name.
13. Even when Y<sup>e</sup>howah was not pronounced when the Bible was read, the Jews still pronounced all other names referring to Deity, including their word for *God*. That is, the ancient words for *God* and *Lord* (whether from the Hebrew or the Greek) eventually were given vowels and were always pronounced.
14. Therefore, writing G–d is stupid and lacks intellectual understanding. It is an attempt to sound reverent

<sup>204</sup> From <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/leupold/genesis.xxviii.html> accessed July 31, 2015.

## That Goofy Notation G–d

- and intellectual, when in truth, it is neither.
15. So, if you want to record Y<sup>e</sup>howah's proper name as YHWH, this is legitimate. But if you write G–d instead of *God*, then you just make yourself look foolish.

When you come across someone who uses this notation, you know immediately that they know very little about God and very little about history and very little about the language of the Old Testament.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

You may recall when Abraham and Lot split up, Abraham continued to be blessed, and Lot clearly ended up far worse off. At best, Lot parlayed his cattle business into a house in Sodom and a position as a judge; which gave him far less influence than we might think. He was out of Abraham's periphery, and outside of the blessing that God heaped upon Abraham (so much so that, they had too many possessions to keep separate). Lot, when outside of the periphery of Abraham, saw his fortune diminish to nothing. He eventually ended up living in a cave because God judged the people with whom he chose to associate. At the same time, not but a few miles away, Abraham continued to be prospered, becoming one of the richest men in Canaan (if not the richest).

Now, there is nothing magical about geography. A believer who is growing and functioning in the plan of God will be blessed by God, along with those in his periphery. This does not mean, necessarily, that he has a specific radius about him that blessed those who fell into that radius (although this is not far from right). Such a believer is a blessing to his family, even if they are separated by thousands of miles; he is a blessing to his school, his military unit, his business, his corporation, or whatever. The illustration that R. B. Thieme, Jr. often gave is, there is this great corporation and it is the end of the year, and they have just had the most prosperous year that they have ever had, and they are celebrating this year, and patting one another on the back for their brilliant and strategic business moves. However, wandering about from bathroom stall to bathroom stall, up and down lonely hallways after business hours, is their janitor, a believer who is spiritually mature and greatly blessed by God. In fact, this blessing overflows, and blesses the very business and building in which he works. He might not know 99% of the employees there; he may never see them; but God's blessing to this janitor extends to the building in which he works and to the business that employs him.

**Application:** Just so we are clear on this—just because you are a growing believer and you know that your school, unit or business is being blessed because of your spiritual growth, this does not mean that you have God's permission to read your Bible on the job (except on break) or that you can do a sloppy job as an employee. As a believer, whatever your responsibilities are, they should always be done to the best of your ability. Furthermore, if you are a growing believer, then you have enough sense not to be a lousy employee.

**Application:** In fact, in all your dealings with others, your behavior should be exemplary. You should not steal from stores, from the IRS or from your employer. You should pay your rent on time. You should pay all of your bills on time. You should not overextend yourself in the realm of your finances. It is not wrong or evil to have a credit card; but it is wrong if you charge your credit cards to the max to a point where you cannot pay your bills every month.

Abimelech and the couple men with him realize that they screwed up. They cut off Isaac out of envy, and that was wrong. Now, if you will recall, Abimelech<sup>205</sup> (Sr.) treated Abraham well, and there were no problems between the two men. However, Abimelech (Jr.) allowed himself to be told what to do from his people, and they were the ones to develop this hatred for Isaac.

As has been noted, we in the United States live in the greatest nation in world history. People come here from all over the world, have nothing in their pockets, and they make for themselves a great life here. We take it for

<sup>205</sup> Abimelech is probably a title and not a proper name.

granted—and liberals and atheists in particular take it for granted—but God has blessed the United States because there are a great many believers here and because there is a pivot of mature and growing believers.

If atheists, agnostics and liberals had any sense, they would be begging for more and more expressions of the Christian faith to be made manifest in their periphery; because with this often comes the great blessing of God. I can give a good illustration of this—when I was young and in school, Christmas pageants were the norm. Every year, there would be a Christmas pageant, and Christmas songs would be sung by us children (real Christmas songs which celebrate the birth of our Lord); and our schools were safe and well-behaved and we all received an excellent education there. Today, in the exact same geographical areas, we do not have the Christmas pageants anymore; and education, despite huge increases in additional spending, is in the toilet. This is true all over the United States. We spend a much higher percentage of our monies on education today, and our schools suck. The key to good education is not more money; the key is our relationship with God.

**Application:** In the school where I taught, we had Christmas pageants and, when the faculty gathered for a faculty luncheon, someone offered up a prayer of thanksgiving before we ate was the norm. And at that time, this was an outstanding school. The discipline was great, learning occurred, and there were great teachers and students there of all types (liberals, conservatives, Christians, atheists). We even had an evangelist who would come to our school on occasion (Gary Horton). But as we moved away from this sort of celebration of Christmas and moved away from the public acknowledgment of God in prayer, the schools suffered. This particular school went from being one of the greatest schools which benefitted all the students, to a school where discipline is far worse, and academic standards are far lower (even though the *requirements* are now much higher, the teachers are much better paid and there are many more administrators). By human viewpoint, the school should be much better now; but it is far, far worse than when I taught there, despite having so much more money and staff.

This is what Abimelech has discovered. When Isaac was there, in their midst, God blessed him, and God, by association, blessed those around him. Now that Isaac has been gone for awhile, Abimelech has noticed that the blessing of God is gone as well.

*J. Ligon Duncan: God, in this chapter, is confirming the fact that Isaac is now the covenant head. And in this story, He does it even by showing us that a pagan king understands God's covenant headship in Isaac. Isaac is now the head of the covenant line. R.S. Candlish, the great Scottish theologian, said it was important that Isaac be recognized and acknowledged by the nations and kings with whom Abraham had been called to mingle. And so God, in His mysterious and wise providence, often uses unbelievers to confirm His special favor on His people. And that in turn enables us to be loving in the midst of an unjust world.<sup>206</sup>*

There is one more part to this puzzle. We are probably dealing with Abimelech the son; and Abimelech the father made a similar agreement with Abraham. It is reasonable that Abimelech the father told his son about this agreement, about his relationship with Abraham; and that he likely encouraged his son to have a similar agreement with Abraham's son.

Abimelech the son probably did not come to Isaac for that reason alone—but what his father said no doubt coincided with his own experiences. Isaac left, and Gerar's economy tanked. Now, I realize that there is no verse in the Bible that says, "And Isaac left Gerar and moved back to Beersheba, and Gerar's economy went downhill from there." We do not need to have that verse. Why? Because Abimelech and Phicol have searched out Isaac; they have gone to great trouble to find a man to make a treaty with who is too far away for their own citizens to bother with. Isaac is not just living on the outskirts of Gerar and Abimelech traveled there to smooth things out. Isaac is so far away that no one from Gerar bothers him anymore. Yet Abimelech understands that it is necessary to have an agreement with Isaac and to officially establish their friendship and alliance. That suggests that things in Gerar went from good to lousy. If things got better there, then Abimelech has no motivation to ally himself with Isaac.

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<sup>206</sup> From [First Presbyterian Church](#); accessed July 30, 2015.

Genesis 26:28b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect; apocopated	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
<p>The cohortative expresses volition. In the English, we often render this with <i>let</i> or <i>may</i>; in the plural, this can be <i>let us</i>. The cohortative is designed for the 1<sup>st</sup> person, it can express a wish or a desire or purpose or an intent. It is found in conditional statements. Generally there is the hê suffix to indicate this. This might be called <i>apocopated</i> in Owen's <i>Analytical Keys to the Old Testament</i>.</p>			
nâ' (אָנֹכִי) [pronounced <i>naw</i> ]	<i>now; please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you</i>	a primitive particle of incitement and entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609
'âlâh (אָלָה) [pronounced <i>aw-LAW</i> ]	<i>an oath, a solemn oath, a statement given under oath, a vow, a guarantee, a pledge, a judicial oath, solemn promise, a solemn declaration, a pact, an agreement or obligation, a verbal commitment or contract a curse, an execration</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #423 BDB #46
bêyn (בֵּינֵם) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between</i>	preposition with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #996 BDB #107
bêyn (בֵּינֵם) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between</i>	preposition with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #996 BDB #107
<p>This preposition and the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural suffix is repeated; but the first occurrence has the word being a lot longer. I will be interested to see how some explain this. The repetition could simply be for emphasis.</p>			
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bêyn (בֵּינֵם) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between</i>	preposition with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #996 BDB #107

**Translation:** ...therefore, we say, let there now be an oath between you and us.

We have this odd repetition of *between us*, which could simply emphasize just how much they recognize that this would be a gracious act to them; that they realize that what they are proposing will benefit them personally.

This is the concept of God's grace. When we make an oath with God, we are the beneficiaries. We receive all of the benefit. God is not up there saying, "Oh, gosh, I get to be friends with Charley Brown—a dream come true." We are the recipients of all God's grace, and these men seem to fully understand this fact.

They are requesting that an oath be made—which means that they will agree to something verbally.

John Calvin: *By this argument they prove that they desired a compact with Isaac, not insidiously, but in good faith, because they acknowledge the favor of God towards him... This confession of theirs, however, contains very useful instruction. Profane men in calling one, whose affairs all succeed well and prosperously, the blessed of the Lord, bear testimony that God is the author of all good things, and that from him alone flows all prosperity... profane men regard the friendship of one whom God favors, as desirable for themselves.*<sup>207</sup> However, let me correct one thing—these men are not profane; they do believe in the God of Abraham (so they are not profane).

Genesis 26:28c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kârath (כָּרַת) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAHTH</i> ]	<i>to cut off, to cut down; to kill, to destroy; to make a covenant</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect with the voluntative hê	Strong's #3772 BDB #503
The hê at the end is called a voluntative hê and the verb itself is known as a cohortative and is often translated with the additional word <i>let, may, might, ought, should</i> .			
b <sup>e</sup> rîyth (בְּרִית) [pronounced <i>b<sup>e</sup>reeth</i> ]	<i>covenant; pact, alliance, treaty, alliance, contract</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #1285 BDB #136
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity; with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

**Translation:** *Let us make a covenant with you.*

Further, they ask for a covenant to be made between themselves and Isaac. The covenant seems to be somewhat more formal than the oath spoken of in the previous phrase.

Genesis 26:28 *They said, "We clearly see that Y<sup>e</sup>howah is with you—therefore, we say, let there now be an oath between you and us. Let us make a covenant with you;... (Kukis mostly literal translation)*

Genesis 26:28 *They answered, "We clearly see that Jehovah is with you—therefore, we now ask, let there be an oath, between all of us; allow us to make a covenant with you. (Kukis paraphrase)*

Realize that these men have come all the way from Gerar, and simply to receive a blessing by means of their alliance with Isaac. Is there anything in it for Isaac? Does there need to be something in this for Isaac?

There is very little that these men can give to Isaac; there is a great deal that he can give to them. Simply an official recognition of their friendship will bring great blessing to Gerar.

<sup>207</sup> John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentary on the Bible*; 2<sup>nd</sup> beta version from e-Sword, Genesis 26:28.

Wenstrom: *The Lord has brought this peace to Isaac as a result of Isaac's obedience and magnanimous behavior, which was a result of his faith in the Lord's promises to be with him and bless him, thus, fulfilling the principle taught in Proverbs 16:7. When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.*<sup>208</sup>

Griffith-Thomas: *He accepted the rebuke of Abimelech with meekness, he and his servants yielded to the Philistines about the well, and in his later life we can see the same spirit of passive yielding in his relations with Rebekah and his two sons. And yet in spite of all this meekness the Philistines testified to him as a man of power and might, and begged that he would not do them any harm. What a testimony this is to the spirit of true gentleness and meekness. The world thinks very little of meekness, but it is one of the prime graces of Christianity. "Let your sweet reasonableness be known unto all men" is the apostolic word echoing the Master's beatitude, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." Not only so, but this meekness is an echo of God's own life, for does not the Psalmist say "Thy gentleness hath made me great"? (Ps 18:35-note) As the French aphorism truly says,...Meekness means the self-sacrifice of our own desires and interests, and in this spirit of gentleness is the secret of truest character and finest victory over self and others. Egoism is always a cause of weakness, for a constant consideration of ourselves is so absorbing that it tends to rob us of the very finest powers of our character. On the other hand, as we cease to regard self and concentrate attention upon others we find our own character becoming stronger as it becomes more unselfish, and with that is quickly added influence over others, and a beautiful recommendation of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.*<sup>209</sup>

It is our relationship to God that makes all the difference in the world. When we defeated the Japanese and the Germans, what did General MacArthur do? He called for missionaries and Bibles. Even though we fought the Korean war to a draw, apparently there was a lot of **positive volition** in South Korea. They latched onto the gospel of Jesus Christ and approximately a third of South Koreans today believe in Jesus Christ.

At the same time, there appears to be a lot less positive volition in Vietnam and in Cambodia—at least during the Vietnam War. It appears that the **LDS church** seems to be quite prevalent in Vietnam (and their teaching is suspect, to say the least); and in neighboring Cambodia, **there does not appear to be a strong response** to the teaching of Jesus Christ. However, since the end of that war, the number of Christians has grown from **60,000 to a million**. With that growth, there appears to be some **growth of freedom** in Vietnam as well (although not a lot).

So far, this is what we have studied:

Genesis 26:12–16 *And Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. The LORD blessed him, and the man became rich, and gained more and more until he became very wealthy. He had possessions of flocks and herds and many servants, so that the Philistines envied him. (Now the Philistines had stopped and filled with earth all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father.) And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we."*

So God blesses Isaac so markedly, that those around him are envious, and ask for him to leave their territory.

Genesis 26:17–22 *So Isaac departed from there and encamped in the Valley of Gerar and settled there. And Isaac dug again the wells of water that had been dug in the days of Abraham his father, which the Philistines had stopped after the death of Abraham. And he gave them the names that his father had given them. But when Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found there a well of spring water, the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours." So he called the name of the well Esek, because they contended with him. Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that also, so he called its name Sitnah. And he*

<sup>208</sup> From Wenstrom, [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 406); accessed July 25, 2015.

<sup>209</sup> From [http://preceptaustin.org/genesis\\_devotional\\_commentary.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/genesis_devotional_commentary.htm) (Genesis 26); accessed August 2, 2015.

moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he called its name Rehoboth, saying, "For now the LORD has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."

Isaac moved a ways away, and dug a well, but herdsmen from Gerar would contend with him over the water rights; so he would move further away. He moved far enough away to where he could dig a well without having to defend it; and he moved far enough away so that the blessing by association no longer applied to the people of Gerar.

Genesis 26:23–25 From there he went up to Beersheba. And the LORD appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the God of Abraham your father. Fear not, for I am with you and will bless you and multiply your offspring for my servant Abraham's sake." So he built an altar there and called upon the name of the LORD and pitched his tent there. And there Isaac's servants dug a well.

God, from His grace, blesses Isaac; and this is one of the few times that Isaac interacts directly with God. Note that his blessing is based upon Abraham, his father.

Genesis 26:26–27 When Abimelech went to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath his adviser and Phicol the commander of his army, Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, seeing that you hate me and have sent me away from you?"

There are also some simple economics at work here. God blessed Isaac and those in his periphery. However, because God blessed Isaac, he would have a large contingent of peoples working for him, and he would need to purchase a great many supplies, as well as a lot of food for his people and livestock. This was great for the economy of the Philistines in Gerar. The more that God prospered Isaac, the more that these blessings spilled over into the lives of citizens of Gerar. However, when they drove Isaac away, he left with his possessions and his prosperity, and the Philistines lost the great economic boom that was Isaac.

**Application:** France recently increased taxes on their very rich to 75%, and **these rich people began to leave France**, thus reducing the money coming into the government. Taxing the rich excessively was a stupid idea, which **they did eventually realize**.

Whereas, Isaac was not taxed excessively, the people of Gerar drove him away out of envy (which sin is often used to sell socialistic programs). The people of Gerar apparently figured that, Isaac was using up all of the resources (as he was getting so rich). How is this solved? By getting rid of the evil prosperous CEO. Do you see how up to date the Bible is? Things which are written 4000 years ago are pertinent to today's world. The key is simply understanding what is written and interpreting it in that era, and then applying these lessons to today's world. The sin is the same—envy. The object of envy is the rich. Those with envy are people with less money (who are not necessarily even poor). And once the evil rich are gotten rid of, those who are envious of them are actually worse off than before.

...If you do with us evil—as which we have not touched you and as which we did with you only good—and so we sent you away in peace, you now being blessed of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.”

Genesis  
26:29

...that you do [not] do evil against us, as we have not violated you and as we have only done good toward you. We sent you away in peace, you who are now being blessed by Y<sup>e</sup>howah.”

**We ask that you do not do evil against us, as we did not violate you and we did only good to you. We sent you away in peace, and we recognize that you are greatly blessed by Jehovah.”**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	If you do with us evil—as which we have not touched you and as which we did with you only good—and so we sent you away in peace, you now being blessed of Y <sup>e</sup> howah.”
Targum of Onkelos	Forasmuch as we have not come near you for evil, and as we have acted with you only for good, and have indeed sent you away in peace; you are now blessed of the Lord.
Latin Vulgate	That you do us no harm, as we on our pare have touched nothing of your, nor have done any thing to hurt you; but with peace have sent you away, increased with the blessing of the Lord.
Peshitta (Syriac)	...That you will do us no evil, just as we have not hurt you, and as we have done nothing but good to you, and have sent you away in peace; you are now the blessed of the LORD.
Septuagint (Greek)	...that you shall do us no harm, as we have not <u>abhorred</u> you, and since we have treated you well, and have sent you forth peaceably; and now you are blessed of the Lord.
Significant differences:	The first phrase is somewhat difficult; so there are several differences with it. The targum applies this first phrase to Abimelech and Phicol, rather than to Isaac. The Greek has <i>abhorred</i> rather than <i>touched</i> . The final phrase of the Latin is similar to the Hebrew in meaning, but the individual words are different.

#### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	That you will do us no damage, even as we put no hand on you, and did you nothing but good, and sent you away in peace: and now the blessing of the Lord is on you.
Easy English	Let us make a *covenant that you will not hurt us. We have not touched you. We have only done good things to you, and we have sent you away in peace.'
Easy-to-Read Version	We did not hurt you, now you should promise not to hurt us. We sent you away, but we sent you away in peace. Now it is clear that the Lord has blessed you.”
Good News Bible (TEV)	...that you will not harm us, just as we did not harm you. We were kind to you and let you go peacefully. Now it is clear that the LORD has blessed you.”
<i>The Message</i>	...that we maintain friendly relations. We haven't bothered you in the past; we treated you kindly and let you leave us in peace. So--GOD's blessing be with you!"
NIRV	Promise that you won't harm us. We didn't harm you. We always treated you well. We sent you away in peace. Now the Lord has blessed you."

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	...you must not treat us badly since we haven't harmed you and since we have treated you well at all times. Then we will send you away peacefully, for you are now blessed by the Lord."
Contemporary English V.	...not to harm each other. Remember, we have never hurt you, and when we sent you away, we let you go in peace. The LORD has truly blessed you."
New Life Bible	...that you will not hurt us in any way. For we have not touched you, and have done nothing to you but good. We sent you away in peace. And you now have the Lord's favor.' "
New Living Translation	Swear that you will not harm us, just as we have never troubled you. We have always treated you well, and we sent you away from us in peace. And now look how the Lord has blessed you!"

#### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

International Standard V	"We've seen that the LORD is with you," they responded, "so we're proposing an agreement [Lit. <i>oath</i> ] between us--between us and you. Allow us to make a treaty with you by which you'll agree not to do us any harm, just as we haven't harmed [Lit. <i>touched</i> ] you, since we've done nothing but good for you after we sent you away in peace. As a result, you've been tremendously blessed by the LORD." V. 28 is included for context.
Today's NIV	<sup>28</sup> They answered, "We saw clearly that the LORD was with you; so we said, 'There ought to be a sworn agreement between us'--between us and you. Let us make a treaty with you <sup>29</sup> that you will do us no harm, just as we did not harm you but always treated you well and sent you away peacefully. And now you are blessed by the LORD." Vv. 28--29 are combined here for context.
Translation for Translators	One of them answered, "We have seen that Yahweh helps you. So we said to each other, 'We should have an agreement between us and you. We should make a peace treaty with you, stating that you will not harm us, in the same way that we did not molest [EUP] you.' We always treated you well and sent you away peacefully. And now Yahweh is blessing you." V. 28 is included for context.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	If we never touch you, and we do only good to you, never do evil with us. We send you peace, for Yahweh blesses you now."
Conservapedia	"You will not harm us, as we have not touched you, and we have done nothing but good for you, and sent you away in peace. You are the blessed one of the LORD."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...so that you will not do wrong to us, if we do not touch you, and as we have certainly done good to you and sent you away in peace. You are now The Blessed of the EVER-LIVING."
Lexham English Bible	And they said, "We see clearly that Yahweh has been with you, so we thought let there be an oath between us--between us and you--and let us {make} a covenant with you that you may not do us harm just as we have not touched you, but have only done good to you and sent you away in peace. You [are] now blessed by Yahweh." Vv. 28--29 are placed together for context.
NIV, ©2011	...that you will do us no harm, just as we did not harm you but always treated you well and sent you away peacefully. And now you are blessed by the Lord."

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And they said, We have certainly seen that Jehovah has been with you, and we said, Let there be now an oath between us, even between us and you, and let us cut a covenant with you, So that you will not do us evil, as we have not touched you, and that we have done to you nothing but good, and have sent you away in peace; you are now the blessed of Jehovah. Vv. 28--29 are placed together for context.
New American Bible	...you shall not act unkindly toward us, just as we have not molested you, but have always acted kindly toward you and have let you depart in peace. Henceforth, 'The LORD'S blessing be upon you!'"
New American Bible (R.E.)	...you shall do no harm to us, just as we have not maltreated you, but have always acted kindly toward you and have let you depart in peace. So now, may you be blessed by the LORD!"
New Jerusalem Bible	...that you will not do us any harm, since we never molested you but were unfailingly kind to you and let you go away in peace. Henceforth, Yahweh's blessing on you!"
New RSV	<sup>28</sup> They said, 'We see plainly that the Lord has been with you; so we say, let there be an oath between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you <sup>29</sup> so that you will do us no harm, just as we have not touched you and have done to you nothing

but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the Lord.'  
V. 28 was included for context.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	...that you will not harm us, just as we have not caused you offense but have done you nothing but good and sent you on your way in peace. Now you are blessed by ADONAI."
exeGeses companion Bible	...that you work us no evil: as we touched you not and as we worked only good to you and sent you away in shalom: you are at this time the blessed of Yah Veh.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	You are to do us no harm, just as we have in no way molested you. We were always ready to do you a good turn and we let you go away peaceably. Now the LORD has prospered you."
Kaplan Translation	'We have indeed seen that God is with you,' they replied. 'We propose that there now be a dread oath between you and us. Let us make a treaty with you, that just as we did not touch you, you will do no harm to us. We did only good to you and let you leave in peace. Now you are the one who is blessed by God.' Vv. 28–29 are placed together for context.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	That thou wilt do us no ra'ah, just as we have not touched thee, and just as we have done unto thee nothing but tov, and have sent thee away in shalom; thou art now the Beruch Hashem (the blessed of Hashem).

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	...that since we did not ·hurt [touch] you, you will not ·hurt [harm] us. We were good to you and sent you away in peace. Now the Lord has blessed you."
The updated Geneva Bible	That you wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched you, and as we have done unto you nothing but good, and have sent you away in peace: you [art] now the blessed of the LORD. The Hebrews in swearing begin commonly with "If" and understand the rest, that is, that God will punish him who breaks the oath: here the wicked show that they are afraid lest that happen to them which they would do to others.
Kretzmann's Commentary	...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. Though there were evidently selfish motives behind their proposal, since their chief concern was to gain the friendship of Isaac and obtain security for themselves, yet the Lord made use of these motives to shield and protect His servant.
NET Bible®	...so that [The oath formula is used: "if you do us harm" means "so that you will not do."] you will not do us any harm, just as we have not harmed [Heb "touched."] you, but have always treated you well [Heb "and just as we have done only good with you."] before sending you away [Heb "and we sent you away."] in peace. Now you are blessed by the Lord [The Philistine leaders are making an observation, not pronouncing a blessing, so the translation reads "you are blessed" rather than "may you be blessed" (cf. NAB)]."
The updated Pulpit Com.	That you will do us no hurt, - literally, if you will do us evil (sc. your curse come upon you!); the force being to negative in the strongest way possible any intention of injury (cf. <b>Genesis 21:23</b> ) - as we have not touched you, - i.e. injured you; which was not true, as they, through their servants, had robbed Isaac of at least two wells - and as we have done unto you nothing but good, - Abimelech's estimate of his own behavior, if exceedingly favorable to himself, is at least natural (vide <b>Proverbs 16:2</b> ) - and have sent you away in peace (without open violence certainly,

because of Isaac’s yielding, but scarcely without hostility): **you are now the blessed of the Lord**. Regarded by some as an instance of adroit and pious flattery, these words are perhaps better understood as explaining either why Isaac should overlook the injuries which they had done to him (Calvin, Bush), or why he should grant them the oath which they desired (Ainsworth), - he requiring no guarantee of safety from them, since Jehovah was on his side (Murphy), - or why they had been stirred up to seek his favor and alliance (Rosenmüller).

The Voice

**Abimelech and his Advisors:** <sup>28</sup> It is not hard to see that the Eternal One is with you. So we agreed among ourselves that it is in our best interests for us to enter into a binding treaty with you. Let us make a covenant <sup>29</sup> that you would pledge to do us no harm, just as we have not harmed you. We have behaved honorably toward you and sent you away in peace. You clearly have the hand of the Eternal resting on you.

*Isaac agreed to take the oath.* Vv. 28–29 are included for context.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	That you will do us no harm, inasmuch as we have not touched you and have done to you nothing but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed or favored of the Lord!
Concordant Literal Version	Should you do to us evil, when we do not touch you, and when we do to you but good, and send you away in peace?' You are now the blessed of Yahweh.
Green’s Literal Translation	...whether you will do with us evil, as we did not touch you, and as we did only good with you, and we sent you away in peace you now <i>being</i> blessed of Jehovah
New King James Version	<sup>28</sup> But they said, "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 with you, <sup>29</sup> that you will do us no harm, since we have not touched you, and since we have done nothing to you but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the Lord.'" v. 28 was included for context.
World English Bible	...that you will do us no harm, as we have not touched you, and as we have done to you nothing but good, and have sent you away in peace.' You are now the blessed of Yahweh."
Young’s Updated LT	Do not evil with us, as we have not touched you, and as we have only done good with you, and send you away in peace; you are now blessed of Jehovah."

**The gist of this verse:**

The content of the oath is given: that Isaac not do evil against them, as they have not violated him and they sent him away in peace, and they recognize that he is blessed by Y<sup>e</sup>howah.

<b>Genesis 26:29a</b>			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
ʾim (אִם) [pronounced eem]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when</i> (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
The particle ʾim (אִם) can be used as a demonstrative ( <i>lo, behold</i> ), an interrogative (usually expecting a negative response and often used with other particles and rhetorically), and as a conditional particle ( <i>if, though</i> ); an indication of a wish or desire ( <i>oh that, if only</i> ; this is a rare usage).			

## Genesis 26:29a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
When following an oath, either stated or implied, 'îm, by itself, functions as an emphatic negative. According to the Geneva Bible: <i>The Hebrews in swearing begin commonly with "If" and understand the rest, that is, that God will punish him who breaks the oath: here the wicked show that they are afraid lest that happen to them which they would do to others.</i> <sup>210</sup>			
Or, as the NET Bible tells us: <i>The oath formula is used: "if you do us harm" means "so that you will not do."</i> <sup>211</sup>			
'âsâh (אָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
'îm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from; against; toward; as long as; beside, except; in spite of</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
râ'âh (רָעָה) [pronounced <i>raw-GAW</i> ]	<i>evil, misery, distress, disaster, injury, iniquity, aberration, that which is morally reprehensible</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #7451 BDB #949

**Translation:** ...that you do [not] do evil against us,...

They make a request that Isaac not plot evil against them. Now, recall that Isaac had become stronger than Abimelech, and, for that reason, Abimelech asked him to choose a place to live outside of town and not so close to him. Perhaps the optics were wrong for Isaac to be right there next to Abimelech (so close that Abimelech could see into their home). This would be as if Donald Trump purchased a few square blocks adjacent to the White House and build a fabulous mansion there to live in. I can guarantee that some sort of zoning laws would kick in or something would be done to prevent that.

It is unclear what Abimelech thought that Isaac might do. Although he could possibly even invade Gerar and take over, Abimelech probably understood that this was not in Isaac's nature to do this. So, we are probably looking at a request for Isaac not to go to God and to ask evil be done to Abimelech or to his people.

On several occasions, Isaac has agreed to whatever the people of Gerar asked of him. He gave up two wells and a home near the king's.

## Genesis 26:29b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81

Together, ka'âsher (כְּאֲשֶׁר) [pronounced *kah-uh-SHER*] means *as which, as one who, as, like as, just as; because; according to what manner, in a manner as*. Back in 1Samuel 12:8, I rendered this *for example*.

<sup>210</sup> From <http://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/geneva-study-bible/genesis/genesis-26.html> accessed March 10, 2013

<sup>211</sup> From <http://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen26.htm> accessed March 10, 2013.

## Genesis 26:29b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
lō' (לא or לוּא) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
nāga' (נגַא') [pronounced naw-GAHḠ]	<i>to touch, to reach into; to violate, to injure; to come to a person; to strike</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5060 BDB #619

**Translation:** ...as we have not violated you...

Here, Abimelech is essentially saying the truth, although it is a close call. Abimelech and those under his direct command did not do anything against Isaac personally. He did not send men to dispute the wells which Isaac dug. We do not know if he was aware of that occurring; it does not appear that Isaac appealed to him as his father Abraham had done previously. So, strictly speaking, Abimelech and his staff had not violated Isaac.

## Genesis 26:29c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced k <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
'āsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, ka'āsher (כִּאֲשֶׁר) [pronounced kah-uh-SHER] means <i>as which, as one who, as, like as, just as; because; according to what manner, in a manner as</i> . Back in 1Samuel 12:8, I rendered this <i>for example</i> .			
'āsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ḡaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
'îm (עִם) [pronounced ḡeem]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from; against; toward; as long as; beside, except; in spite of</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
raq (רַק) [pronounced rahk]	<i>only, provided, altogether, surely—this adverb carries with it restrictive force</i>	adverb	Strong's #7534 & #7535 BDB #956
ṭōwb (טוֹב) [pronounced toh <sup>b</sup> v]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i>	masculine feminine singular adjective which can act like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373

**Translation:** ...and as we have only done good toward you.

Again, this was strictly speaking. Did Abimelech know about the problems with the wells and the people who disputed the ownership of the wells? I suspect that he did. I suspect that he typically had eyes and ears out, and that this information was relayed to him. I suspect that he took a neutral position here, not interfering unless called to do so by either some of his own people or by Isaac. Neither apparently did, so Abimelech stayed out of it. This is conjecture, but it is reasonable to suppose that Abimelech knew some of what occurred in his kingdom.

*Matthew Henry: Those whom God blesses and favours have reason enough to forgive those who hate them, since the worst enemy they have cannot do them any real hurt.<sup>212</sup>*

So, let's assume the worst. Let's assume that Abimelech knew that Isaac was being harassed or even assume that Abimelech sent men out to harass Isaac; even then, Isaac should forgive him and be willing to enter into this covenant with him. So there is no misunderstanding here, I don't believe that Abimelech had anything to do with Isaac being chased even from the outskirts of Gerar. He did ask Isaac to leave Gerar, and apparently because his people insisted on it, but there was no force or anger involved.

And since Abimelech is speaking to Isaac, and since they know each other and their association, I think that it is reasonable and honest what is said. Isaac does not question what Abimelech says. "...we have not touched you and have done to you nothing but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the LORD." (Genesis 26:29b) Isaac does not dispute this statement. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that it is true. Furthermore, we have this testimony: *So Abimelech warned all the people, saying, "Whoever touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death."* (Genesis 26:11; ESV) So, Abimelech, if anything, was looking to protect Isaac from his own people, the Philistines. So, Abimelech did the right thing.

Should Abimelech have sent Isaac away in the first place? That is a more difficult question; but hopefully you can understand how this would have been the expedient thing to do (it would have protected Isaac) and it may have been the right thing to do. The Philistines continued to harass Isaac even after he left the town of Gerar.

My point in all of this is, Abimelech very possibly did the right thing. Sending Isaac away may have been his best option.

Isaac was clearly harassed by other Philistines. Ideally speaking, he forgave them (from a distance).

Genesis 26:29d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced shaw-LAKH]	<i>to send, to send off, to send away, to dismiss, to give over, to cast out, to let go, to set free, to shoot forth [branches], to shoot [an arrow]</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Piel perfect with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88

<sup>212</sup> Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:26–33.

Genesis 26:29d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
shâlôwm (שָׁלוֹם) or shâlôm (שְׁלוֹם) [pronounced shaw-LOHM]	<i>completeness, soundness, health and welfare, peace, prosperity, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022
'attâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced aht-TAW]	<i>you (often, the verb to be is implied)</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
This may read the sign of the direct object with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix.			
'attâh (אַתָּע) [pronounced ġaht-TAWH]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
bârak <sup>e</sup> (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced baw-RAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>one who is blessing [praising, celebrating, adoring], one being blessed [praised, celebrated]; prospering; being prospered; happy</i>	masculine singular, Piel participle; construct form	Strong's #1288 BDB #138
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

**Translation:** We sent you away in peace, you who are now being blessed by Y<sup>e</sup>howah."

Abimelech did send Isaac away in peace. This occurred when Isaac became so prosperous that he seemed to overshadow the king in goods and prosperity. Abimelech decided that did not look too good and simply asked Isaac to move (he told Isaac that he had become too powerful). He was not throwing Isaac out of his kingdom; but asking him to move from the city. This was all done peacefully.

Abimelech recognizes clearly that Isaac is blessed by God. Although the narrative that we have about Isaac is sparse, we have seen on two occasions where Isaac is said to be blessed greatly by God. This indicates that Abimelech is a believer in the Revealed God and that he recognizes the importance of the relationship between Isaac and God (and therefore, he recognizes the importance of his relationship to Isaac).

Genesis 26:29 ...that you do [not] do evil against us, as we have not violated you and as we have only done good toward you. We sent you away in peace, you who are now being blessed by Y<sup>e</sup>howah." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:29 We ask that you do not do evil against us, as we did not violate you and we did only good to you. We sent you away in peace, and we recognize that you are greatly blessed by Jehovah." (Kukis paraphrase)

So, Abimelech proposes this: They said, "We see plainly that the LORD has been with you. So we said, let there be a sworn pact between us, between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you, that you will do us no harm, just as we have not touched you and have done to you nothing but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the LORD." (Gen 26:28–29; ESV) Essentially they are renewing the covenant that their fathers made with Abraham. Gen 21:22–23 At that time Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his army said to Abraham, "God is with you in all that you do. Now therefore swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me or with my descendants or with my posterity, but as I have dealt kindly with you, so you will deal

with me and with the land where you have sojourned." (ESV) In both cases, the blessing of God was recognized (twice it is said to Isaac); and in both cases, a friendly, non-aggression pact was agreed to.

As an aside, both of these incidents will be **compared** side-by-side later on in this chapter.

Although some might suggest that Abimelech is asking for this covenant out of fear; the tenor of this passage seems to indicate that this is common sense; Abimelech recognizes that Isaac, like Abraham, is blessed of God; and he himself would be blessed by God simply by being associated with Isaac.

This is also a very simple type. As people who are lost, we associate ourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ and we are saved and blessed by God. It is our association with Jesus Christ that changes everything. It is Abimelech's association with Isaac which changes everything. In requesting this pact, Abimelech is recognizing the reality and power of Isaac's God. Therefore, by this, Abimelech is exercising faith in the Revealed God.<sup>213</sup>

From what we have seen, there is every indication that these are believers and God's blessing Isaac made him a testimony to these Philistines. They recognize God's power and recognize that God has blessed Isaac in a phenomenal way. Furthermore, even though Isaac has made one glaring error, apparently his life and his behavior toward them has compensated for that mistake and that his life; his honorable intentions toward them has been recognized. That is, when Abimelech requested that Isaac leave or when their was a disputation over a well, Isaac complied. He was never aggressive toward them nor was he beligerant (insofar as we know from Scripture). They also recognize that the decisions made concerning these wells were possibly not righteous as Abimelech obviously if he was going to err in judgement, it would be on the side of his own people. So it is obvious that Abimelech has thought about this a great deal and has discussed that with his chiefs of staff. They all believe in Yahweh and in His power and strength and blessing of Isaac. It is because of this that they are concerned about their relationship to Isaac.

Isaac here is a type of Jesus Christ, acting as an intermediary between them and God. They desire a covenant of peace between themselves and Isaac because they know that if they got into an altercation with Isaac, God would intervene and cause him to triumph. So their covenant with Isaac is in a sense a covenant with God. They cannot go directly to God; they know that Isaac can, so they go directly to Isaac. They remind Isaac that their relationship has always been one of peace, despite the disagreements (although they have emphasized the peace and have downplayed the disagreements).

It is clear that Abimelech is a believer in the Revealed Lord (Jesus Christ) and that he recognizes Isaac special relationship to the Revealed Lord. He would like to be blessed by Isaac. In all respects, he seems to be a honorable man. However, we have observed that there is a problem with his people. They were jealous of Isaac and they harassed Isaac. They were unable to just let him live in peace. They eventually drove Isaac away, which also drove away their blessing by association.

**Application:** We see this in American society today. There are various agnostic and atheist groups who want to keep Christian items from being displayed. They have managed to remove all vestiges of Christianity from the schools (until most recently when it has been determined that teaching the Bible is acceptable). Most of the schools in American were founded upon the idea that it is of utmost importance for people to be able to read and understand the Bible. That was the impetus of early education in America. However, for most of my lifetime and prior to, I have seen those who are against our Lord to try to push it away.

Vv. 28–29 read: They said, "We clearly see that Y<sup>e</sup>howah is with you—therefore, we say, let there now be an oath between you and us. Let us make a covenant with you. Oh that you do [not] do evil against us, as we have not violated you and as we have only done good toward you. We sent you away in peace, you who are now being blessed by Y<sup>e</sup>howah."

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<sup>213</sup> He appears to have already believed in Isaac's God; but he is trusting Isaac's God even more.

Abimelech isn't quite sure how to present his case, so he tells Isaac that he treated Isaac fairly and did not harm him, and did not do anything but good to him, even though this is not exactly what occurred. It is true that, when Abimelech found out that Rebekah was Isaac's wife, he did issue an edict for the men of that city to not violate her. There is every indication that Abimelech and Isaac had a cordial relationship.

On the negative side, the people of Gerar convinced Abimelech to drive Isaac away; and they continued to harass Isaac until he had moved 30 miles away (which was a great distance in those days).

Abimelech and those with him do recognize that Isaac is blessed by God, and this is key; they understand. That is a breakthrough. Look, you can live in the same house with a maturing believer and never recognize how much God has blessed that believer. However, these men could see that is what had happened, which suggests that they do believe in Y<sup>e</sup>howah Elohim; and recognize that, they need to make their peace with Isaac.

What Abimelech is doing right here is extremely important for his people.

### Abimelech Preserves the Philistine Countries

1. What Abimelech and Phicol are doing here is preserving the Philistines for many generations to come.
2. They recognize Isaac's relationship to God; they recognize the reality of Isaac's God; and they want to have a bit of that for themselves and their country.
3. I am reminded of the Canaanite woman who came to Jesus Christ: **And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon." But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying out after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." And he answered, "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly.** (Matthew 15:22–28; ESV) Abimelech and company are the dogs eating from the crumbs from the master's table.
4. Abimelech's wisdom here brings blessing to the Philistines. These continue as a powerful people, living side-by-side the Israelites for many generations.

Certainly, you may ask, *but these Philistines spend centuries at war with the Israelites; why not let them all die out here?* God preserves, protects and prospers these Philistine leaders and their people. Even though God knows the evil that the Philistines will be guilty of in the future, He still allows for them to be prospered as a people. We cannot control the volition of those people who arise after us. We live in the greatest nation in human history in the United States (so far; Israel will be greater in the future), and yet, right now, the people of this nation are out of control, pursuing every lust and praising those who do the same. God blesses this nation because (1) there are many believers in the United States right now; and (2) the United States was founded by men with a deep and abiding faith in the Word of God.

God blesses these Philistines because of their leaders and because there must be believers within this nation. Further, God uses the Philistines to discipline Israel whenever necessary (see Judges 2:10–23).

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We studied this topic sometime ago, but if you have forgotten it, it is worth reviewing: **Blessing by Association** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

**Application:** How many of us have become so disenchanted with our political systems and the leaders of ours who are supposed to have our interests before them? We think *if only we could elect another Ronald Reagan, with the Republican Congress that served under Clinton*. However, it should be clear in this passage that these leaders from Philistia were good men. They recognized the importance of a good relationship with Isaac (just as a smart president would recognize the importance of a good relationship with Israel today). However, the people are out of control. The people were filled with jealousy toward Isaac. Isaac was too rich; he was too prosperous;

and the people drove Isaac from their midst—one of the stupidest things a people could do. God blessing one man does not mean that God withholds blessing from others.

The Democratic party has always had philosophical problems. However, John F. Kennedy was strongly anti-communist, strongly anti-crime, and he believed that lowering taxes on businesses would spur business. This is much different than the Democratic party today.

### Problems with the Current Democratic Party

1. With the election of Barack Obama, the Democratic party has moved far, far to the left. Not only are they not anti-communist, but in 2016, the second strongest candidate for president is an avowed socialist.
2. The Democrats have closely aligned themselves with the 99% anti-Wall Street movement, which indulged in drugs, property destruction, resisted authorities of all kinds, and preached jealousy of the rich.
3. Several candidates for the Democratic presidency (I write this is 2015) have suggested that we are living in a rigged game and that, because of the rich, we cannot individually advance. So both jealousy of the rich and antagonism toward the rich is encouraged.
4. The Democratic party is the repository for anti-Christian philosophy. Atheists and agnostics feels most at ease in the Democratic party (for the most part); and many voting Democrats call for the taxing of churches and church property (and it ought to be obvious that this would drive many churches out of business and certainly away from the areas that have high taxes—however, I have no idea how much economics the typical democrat understands).
5. The Democratic party is the *pro-choice* party, meaning that they support the abortion of millions of potential human beings. Bear in mind that, even though ensoulment may occur after a child is born, God has never granted carte blanc to treat what is in the womb with callous cruelty. The timing of ensoulment is a theological position and should not influence how our laws are written. Biologically speaking, there is no appreciable difference between a person in the womb or outside of the womb. Our laws should not reject science, and destruction of a potential human being simply because its birth is inconvenient is a barbaric position to take.
6. Democrats favor gay marriage and people choosing, at any point in their lives, their gender.
7. A dishonest platform—even though these are things which most Democrats adhere to, they will not be found in their **party platform**.

So that there is no misunderstanding here—even though this represents half of the electorate and it reveals the thinking of Satan, it may never change for the better.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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**And so he made for them a feast and so they ate and so they drank.**      Genesis 26:30      **Isaac [lit., he] prepared a feast for them and they ate and they drank.**

**Isaac prepared a feast for them and they ate and they drank.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so he made for them a feast and so they ate and so they drank.
Latin Vulgate	And he made them a feast, and after they had eaten and drunk.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink.
Septuagint (Greek)	And he made a feast for them, and they ate and drank.

Significant differences:      None.

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

Bible in Basic English	Then he made a feast for them, and they all had food and drink.
Easy English	Isaac made a *feast for the men. And they all ate together and they drank together.
Easy-to-Read Version	So Isaac gave a party for them. They all ate and drank.
God's Word™	Isaac prepared a special dinner for them, and they ate and drank.
The Message	Isaac laid out a feast and they ate and drank together.
NIRV	Then Isaac had a big dinner prepared for them. They ate and drank.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Contemporary English V.	Isaac gave a big feast for them, and everyone ate and drank.
New Life Bible	So Isaac made a special supper for them, and they ate and drank.
New Living Translation	So Isaac prepared a covenant feast to celebrate the treaty, and they ate and drank together.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	So [Isaac] prepared a feast for them, and they ate and drank.
Beck's American Translation	Isaac made a dinner for them, and they ate and drank.
International Standard V	So Isaac [Lit. <i>he</i> ] held a festival for them, and they ate and drank.
New Advent Bible	So he made them a feast, and they ate and drank with him;...
Translation for Translators	So Isaac made a feast for them, and they all ate and drank.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Conservapedia	He made a feast for them, and they ate and drank, They rose up early in the morning, and swore to one another as brothers. Isaac sent them away, and they left him in peace. V. 31 is included for context.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	He therefore made them a feast, and they ate and drank,...
Lexham English Bible	So he made a meal for them, and they ate and drank.

**Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):**

The Heritage Bible	And he made them a feast, and they ate and drank.
Revised English Bible	Isaac then gave a feast for them, and they ate and drank.

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Complete Jewish Bible	Yitz'chak prepared a banquet for them, and they ate and drank.
Kaplan Translation	[Isaac] prepared a feast for them, and they ate and drank.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And he made them a mishteh (feast), and they did eat and drink.

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And he made them a [formal] dinner, and they ate and drank.
The Expanded Bible	So Isaac prepared food [made a banquet/feast] for them, and they all ate and drank [customary to celebrate the signing of the treaty].
Kretzmann's Commentary	And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink. Isaac was fully aware of his power and importance as a wealthy nomad prince, and made use of the situation to his advantage, without letting it appear that he was granting a favor.
NET Bible®	So Isaac [Heb "and he"; the referent (Isaac) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] held a feast for them and they celebrated [Heb "and they ate and drank."].

The Pulpit Commentary *And he made them a feast*, - so Lot did to the angels (Genesis 19:3). There is no mention of any banquet in the case of Abraham's covenant, which may be noted as another point of difference between the two transactions. A similar entertainment accompanied Jacob's covenant with Laban (Genesis 31:54); while in the Mosaic system the sacrificial meal formed an integral part of the regularly-appointed sacrificial worship (Leviticus 7:15, 31; Deuteronomy 12:7, 17; vide Kurtz, 'Sacrificial Worship,' § 79) - *and they did eat and drink*.  
 The Voice *He prepared them a feast, and they all ate and drank*.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version *And making is he for them a feast, and eating are they and drinking.*  
 Green's Literal Translation *And he made a feast for them, and they ate and drank.*  
 NASB *Then he made them a feast, and they ate and drank.*  
 World English Bible *He made them a feast, and they ate and drink.*  
 Young's Updated LT *And he makes for them a banquet, and they eat and drink.*

**The gist of this verse:** Isaac prepares a feast for them, and they eat and drink together.

Genesis 26:30a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
mishteh (מִשְׁתֵּה) [pronounced mish-TEH]	<i>a feast, a drink, a drinking bout, a party, a banquet</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4960 BDB #1059

**Translation:** Isaac [lit., he] prepared a feast for them...

Isaac is a gracious host. He wanted to live in Gerar and then near Gerar, and that was not to be. Abimelech could have kept Isaac there, and could have dealt with his problems; he did not (depending upon the envy of his fellow Philistines, protecting Isaac might have become a full-time job).

However, Isaac, in grace, shows kindness to Abimelech and his advisors.

This appears to be customary that, after coming to an agreement, to have a feast afterwards. This would also be indicative of fellowship among these men. It is also reasonable to assume that an animal was sacrificed prior to this feast.

Life Application Bible Study Notes: *With his enemies wanting to make a peace treaty, Isaac was quick to respond, turning the occasion into a celebration. We should be just as receptive to those who want*

*to make peace with us. When God's influence in our lives attracts people—even enemies—we must take the opportunity to reach out to them with God's love.*<sup>214</sup>

Genesis 26:30b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âkal (אָכַל) [pronounced <i>aw-KAHL</i> ]	<i>to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #398 BDB #37
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâthâh (שָׁתוּ) [pronounced <i>shaw-THAW</i> ]	<i>to drink [actually or metaphorically]; to drink together [at a banquet]; to feast; to sit</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8354 BDB #1059

**Translation:** ...and they ate and they drank.

Abimelech and his friends enjoyed Isaac's graciousness, which is a picture of us enjoying the graciousness of God toward us.

Isaac has agreed to this nonaggression pact, and being that they are all honorable men, this is a pact which we can be assured that it will stand as long as they are all alive. Their recognition of Isaac's relationship to Yahweh indicates that they are believers in Yahweh and will spend eternity with God. God promised that in Abraham all the nations would be blessed and this is an example of that.

Genesis 26:30 Isaac [lit., *he*] prepared a feast for them and they ate and they drank. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:30 Isaac prepared a feast for them and they ate and they drank. (Kukis paraphrase)

Just as we are individually witnesses for Jesus Christ, Israel was a witness to the Gentile nations on behalf of Jesus Christ, Yahweh of the Old Testament. Since there was no nation Israel at this time, Isaac was a witness of Yahweh, God of the universe. Such a feast was common once a covenant had been made and is attested to by many other classical writers. In fact, it was most common for parsimonious herdsmen to subsist on a meatless diet (because the killing of a sheep or any other beast reduced their flock) and only during a celebration, the signing of a covenant or the greeting of strangers was the only time that they would indulge in the eating of meat.

This feast indicates that these men fellowshiped together. Isaac was willing to be gracious to them. He doesn't send them off saying, "What about those wells? I think you need to compensate me for those wells that your men stole from me. Also the ones that they destroyed. When you are ready to do that, then we will talk." But Isaac did not do that. Isaac treats them in grace. He is willing to accept things as they were; and he was willing to be at peace with all men.

<sup>214</sup> From <http://newsyoucanbelieve.com/bible/2010/01/09/day-009/> accessed July 31, 2015.

Gill: *both having spoken their minds, they agreed to bury all former things oblivion, and live in peace and friendship...this feast was...an hospitable act, and a token of good will.*<sup>215</sup>

Griffith-Thomas: *How true it is that "when a man's ways please the Lord He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him." It is scarcely possible to doubt in view of all these verses record that Isaac ought never to have left his home, but should have trusted God to keep him in spite of the famine in the land. But at last he was right with God, and both Divine favor and human acceptance wait upon him. He responded with alacrity to the desire of Abimelech for a covenant of peace, and after a feast of fellowship his visitors departed from him in peace. When God is honored by man, man is always honored by God.*<sup>216</sup>

Isaac is not a perfect man, and this will become clear in the next chapter. However, at this point, he is doing the right thing.

**And so they arise early in the morning and so they swear [an oath] a man to his brother. And so sends them away, Isaac; and so they depart from with him in peace.**

Genesis  
26:31

**They rose up early in the morning and each man swore [an oath] to his brother. Then Isaac sent them away and they departed from him in peace.**

**They rose up early in the morning and each man swore an oath to his brother. Then Isaac sent them away and they departed from him in peace.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so they arise early in the morning and so they swear [an oath] a man to his brother. And so sends them away, Isaac; and so they depart from with him in peace.

Targum of Onkelos

And they arose in the morning, each man with his brother; and he broke off from the bridle of his ass, and gave one part to them for a testimony. And Izhak prayed for them, and they were enlarged. And Izhak accompanied them, and they went from him in peace.

Latin Vulgate

Arising in the morning, they swore one to another: and Isaac sent them away peaceably to their own home.

Peshitta (Syriac)

And they rose up in the early morning, and took oaths one with another; and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

Septuagint (Greek)

And they arose in the morning, and swore each to his neighbor; and Isaac sent them forth, and they departed from him in safety.

Significant differences:

The targum has additional text, and it leaves off that they swear oaths to one another and that Isaac sent them away. The Latin adds that Isaac sends them to *their own home*. *Safety* in the Greek is a reasonable translation of *peace* from the Hebrew.

#### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

<sup>215</sup> Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:30. Gill distinguishes between a feast of hospitality and a feast as the result of a covenant. He does that because the men all take oaths upon their parting (so that he sees as the covenant between them).

<sup>216</sup> From [http://preceptaustin.org/genesis\\_devotional\\_commentary.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/genesis_devotional_commentary.htm) (Genesis 26); accessed August 2, 2015.

Easy English	In the morning, Isaac and the men got up early and they made a very serious promise to each other. Isaac sent the men off on their journey and they went away in peace.
Easy-to-Read Version	Early the next morning, each man made a promise and a vow [A special promise to God.]. Then the men left in peace.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Early next morning each man made his promise and sealed it with a vow. Isaac said good-bye to them, and they parted as friends.
NIRV	Early the next morning the men made an agreement with an oath. Then Isaac sent the men of Gerar on their way. And they left in peace.
New Simplified Bible	Early the next morning each man made his promise and sealed it with a vow. Isaac said good-bye to them. They parted as friends.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	They got up early in the morning, and they gave each other their word. Isaac sent them off, and they left peacefully.
Contemporary English V.	Early the next morning Isaac and the others made a solemn agreement, then he let them go in peace.
New Berkeley Version	He then prepared a banquet for them; they ate and drank and, rising early in the morning, they swore each to the other. Then Isaac bade them farewell, and they took their leave from him in peace. The previous verse was included for context.
New Life Bible	They got up early in the morning and made promises to each other. Then Isaac sent them away, and they left him in peace.
New Living Translation	Early the next morning, they each took a solemn oath not to interfere with each other. Then Isaac sent them home again, and they left him in peace.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And when they got up the next morning, they each swore [an oath] to his neighbor. Then Isaac sent them away, and they left him in safety.
Beck's American Translation	Early in the morning they swore to one another. Then Isaac let them go, and they parted as friends.
International Standard V	They woke up early the next morning and made the treaty [Lit. <i>and swore an oath one to another.</i> ]. After this, Isaac sent them off and they left on peaceful terms.
New Advent Bible	...then, when they rose up in the morning, they bound themselves by oath each to the other, and so Isaac took leave of them, and they went home in peace.
Translation for Translators	Early the next morning they all <swore/solemnly promised> to each other that they would do what they had promised. Then Isaac sent them home peacefully.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	They arose in the morning, and swore as a man to his brother. Isaac sent them, and they went from him in peace.
Conservapedia	They rose up early in the morning, and swore to one another as brothers. Isaac sent them away, and they left him in peace.
Lexham English Bible	And they arose early in the morning and each one swore to the other [Or "to his brother"], and Isaac sent them away. And they left him in peace.

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	Next morning they rose early and swore an oath to each other. Isaac then set them on their way and they left him in peace.
The Heritage Bible	And they rose early in the dawn, and they swore, each to his brother; and Isaac sent them away, and they walked from him in peace.

New American Bible	Early the next morning they exchanged oaths. Then Isaac bade them farewell, and they departed from him in peace.
New Jerusalem Bible	Early next morning, they exchanged oaths. Then Isaac bade them farewell and they left him as friends.
Revised English Bible	Early next morning they exchanged oaths, and after Isaac bade them farewell, they parted from him in peace.

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Complete Jewish Bible	The next morning, they got up early and swore to each other. Then Yitz'chak sent them on their way, and they left him peacefully.
exeGesés companion Bible	...and in the morning they rise and oath man to brother: and Yischaq sends them away and they go from him in shalom.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And they arose early in the morning, and they swore one to the other, and Isaac escorted them, and they went away from him in peace.
Kaplan Translation	They got up early in the morning, and made a mutual oath. Isaac then bid them farewell, and they left in peace.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And they rose up early in the boker, and swore one to another: and Yitzchak sent them away, and they departed from him in shalom.

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And they rose up early in the morning and took oaths [with a curse] with one another; and Isaac sent them on their way and they departed from him in peace.
Kretzmann's Commentary	And they rose up betimes in the morning, and swore one to another, the oath, in this case, including an imprecation; and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace. Thus was a new covenant established which safeguarded the interests of Isaac.
NET Bible®	Early in the morning the men made a treaty with each other [Heb "and they got up early and they swore an oath, a man to his brother."]. Isaac sent them off; they separated on good terms [Heb "and they went from him in peace."].
The Pulpit Commentary	And they rose up betimes in the morning, and swore one to another - literally, a man to his brother. On the derivation of the verb to swear from the word for seven, see Genesis 21:23 - and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.
The Voice	In the morning, they got up early and exchanged oaths. Then Isaac sent them on their way, and they left in peace.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

American KJV	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.
Concordant Literal Version	And rising early are they in the morning, and swearing are they, a man to his brother. And sending them away is Isaac. And they are going from him in peace.
A Conservative Version	And they rose up promptly in the morning, and swore one to another. And Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.
English Standard Version	In the morning they rose early and exchanged oaths. And Isaac sent them on their way, and they departed from him in peace.
Green's Literal Translation	And they started up early at dawn, and each swore to his brother. And Isaac sent them away, and they left him in peace.
H. C. Leupold	And they arose early in the morning and gave the oath one to another, and Isaac let them go, and they went from him in peace.

World English Bible

They rose up some time in the morning, and swore one to another. Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

Young's Updated LT

And rise early in the morning, and swear one to another, and Isaac sends them away, and they go from him in peace.

**The gist of this verse:**

The men got up early in the morning, made vows to one another, and Isaac sent them away in peace.

**Genesis 26:31a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâkam (שָׁכַם) [pronounced <i>shaw-KAHM</i> ]	<i>to start, to rise, to rise early, to make an early start; morning (in the Hiphil infinitive absolute)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #7925 BDB #1014
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
bôqer (בֹּקֶר) [pronounced <i>BOH-ker</i> ]	<i>morning, daybreak, dawn; the next morning</i>	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #1242 BDB #133

**Translation:** They rose up early in the morning...

They refers to Isaac and to his visitors, Abimelech and his associates. This would have been decided on in the evening; and they would take vows and swear oaths the next day, after sleeping and thinking on it.

As mentioned before, they clearly came to an understanding that night, which made the feast possible. If their agreements with one another was not really clear, they could not have enjoyed a mealtime fellowship with one another. The meal signifies fellowship.

**Genesis 26:31b**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâba <sup>c</sup> (שָׁבַע) [pronounced <i>shaw<sup>b</sup>-VAHG</i> ]	<i>to swear, to imprecate, to curse, to swear an oath, to take a solemn oath, to swear allegiance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #7650 BDB #989
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural) with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

## Genesis 26:31b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'âch (אָח) [pronounced awhk]	<i>brother, half-brother; kinsman or close relative; one who resembles</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26

**Translation:** ...and each man swore [an oath] to his brother.

The verb here is in the plural because all of these men take part in swearing this oath of mutual allegiance. The words used here are generally reserved for family members—*each man to his brother*. So there was a genuine allegiance here; it was not an agreement out of simple mutual benefit. In fact, Isaac had no reason to make this oath, because he was far away from Gerar, but he does so graciously.

Again, there is a parallel with God the Father, Who has no benefit by accepting us into the kingdom. I mean, I know that I am pretty neat and you probably think the same about yourself, but we do not appear to be very impressive to God. Yet, God graciously has provided for us.

Genesis 26:31a-b *They rose up early in the morning and each man swore [an oath] to his brother.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

In the book of Job, we know that men of this era could be pretty long-winded, so it is possible that these men stated their relationship with one another, as well as an allegiance to one another.

There are a lot of oaths sworn in the Bible. *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*<sup>217</sup> gives a partial listing of them: Genesis 14:22 21:23, 31, 32 25:33 31:44 1Samuel 14:24 20:3, 16, 17 30:15 Hebrews 6:16.

## Genesis 26:31c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced shaw-LAKH]	<i>to send, to send off, to send away, to dismiss, to give over, to cast out, to let go, to set free, to shoot forth [branches], to shoot [an arrow]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel perfect with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
Yis <sup>e</sup> châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced yihse-KHAWK]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850

**Translation:** *Then Isaac sent them away...* The text, at this point, sort of plays on the words of Abimelech. He sent Isaac away; here, Isaac sends him away.

<sup>217</sup> *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, Genesis 26:31.

Genesis 26:31d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הלך) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
min (מן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i> ]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object) with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85
Together, min 'êth mean <i>from proximity with, from with, from close proximity to, to proceed from someone</i> . A good up-to-date rendering might be <i>directly from</i> . The idea is, the person that these prepositions refer to is supposed to directly be involved in the action or in whatever is being requested.			
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
shâlôwm (שׁוֹלֵם) or shâlôm (שָׁלוֹם) [pronounced <i>shaw-LOHM</i> ]	<i>completeness, soundness, health and welfare, peace, prosperity, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022

**Translation:** ...and they departed from him in peace.

Again, there appears to be a play on the words here; they sent away Isaac in peace; and he does the same for them. He sends them away in peace (v. 29).

Genesis 26:31 They rose up early in the morning and each man swore [an oath] to his brother. Then Isaac sent them away and they departed from him in peace. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:31 They rose up early in the morning and each man swore an oath to his brother. Then Isaac sent them away and they departed from him in peace. (Kukis paraphrase)

The swearing is likely a non-aggression pact, and a pact of friendship. Departing in peace meant that everything between them was now fine. Was Isaac compensated for the wells? Probably not. However, we do know that God greatly blessed him; so, he was compensated in that way.

**Application:** In your life, you will be cheated. People will take advantage of you; and many times, you will not be reimbursed—not by them, anyway. As believers, it is not our responsibility to settle every score. It is not up to us to find the people who have wronged us, and try to harm them back. This does not mean that you should be dishonest. You don't give a good review to a lousy employee or to a lousy tenant; but, at the same time, you do not chase after every person who has done you wrong and sue them. God has a lot more for us to do than to try

to deal with all the injustices in our lives. There are many times when it is better to just let someone flow away from the periphery of your life, and to let God deal with them. God is very good at dealing with those who have wronged believers.

Gill, who is a good commentator, somewhat confuses this issue.

### The Series of Events for Genesis 26:26–31

1. A covenant between the men is established first.
2. Then they enjoy a meal, which represents their fellowship and Isaac's graciousness. The meal was probably the result of a sacrifice, although that is conjecture and not specifically named in the text.
3. When the men parted the next morning, they swore oaths to one another—which oaths are not specifically given.
4. Gill mistakenly suggests<sup>1</sup> that these oaths are the covenant; and that the meal was not related to the covenant but it was just a meal. The problem with Gill's approach is, these men show up, there is some bad blood between them, but, somehow, Isaac invites them to stay and he provides a meal for them. That is simply incongruous with the circumstances. Coming to an agreement, establishing a non-aggression pact would logically precede the meal. The oaths may have reaffirmed the covenant; but the oaths upon their leaving was not the covenant.
5. It is illogical for these men to enjoy fellowship with one another, and yet not have their pact already worked out. This parallels the concept of our fellowship with God and with one another. We have to have remove all sin from our lives in order to enjoy this fellowship (*rebound*). Hebrews 12:1 *Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,...*
- 6.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:30.

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It is curious that both Abraham and Isaac made an oath with Abimelech and Phicol (and their sons) at the same place. I do not know if that signifies anything.

Ballinger: *Parallels between his father's involvement with Abimelech include: (a) a sister-wife deception (20:2-18 cp. 26:1-16) ; (b) disputation over water wells (21:25-26 cp. 26:15-22), and (c) a non-aggression or friendship treaty (21:27-34 cp. 26:28-31).*<sup>218</sup>

For the most part, this ends the very short narrative of the life of Isaac. Although he will play a prominent part in Genesis 27, the thrust of Genesis is about his son, Jacob.

B. H. Carroll: *There is an old saying, "Blessed is the nation which has no history." History is devoted to extraordinary events. A thousand years of quiet and peace find no description in the pages of history. A few years of wars, pestilences, and earthquakes receive much attention. Isaac may be called the patriarch without a history.*<sup>219</sup> I don't know that I buy this exactly, as Isaac will reveal some confusion in Genesis 27 about properly raising his twin sons.

### B. H. Carroll on Isaac

In contrasting Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we find Isaac unlike his father and son in the following particulars: He was unlike them in age. He lived to be 180 years old; neither of them lived that long. In the matter of travel: Isaac never got out of the sight of the smoke that went up from the tent where he was born. With a compass

<sup>218</sup> From <http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/Gen26.htm> accessed July 23, 2015.

<sup>219</sup> B. H. Carroll, *An interpretation of the English Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 27:19–28:9.

## B. H. Carroll on Isaac

you might draw a circle with a radius of 100 miles around his birthplace as a center, and he was never beyond that circle. He was never north of the city of Jerusalem; east of the river Jordan; south of the South country where Beersheba was; never west of the Mediterranean Sea. No man of his age and with his wealth traveled so little. Again, he was unlike both father and son in his marriage relations. He had but one wife, and she bore him only two children, both at one birth. He was as pure a man in the marriage relation as ever lived in the world. He was unlike both father and son in his passiveness, i.e., he had no spirit of aggression or self-assertion. He was never in a battle. There were very few stirring events in his history. But when you read the lives of Abraham and Jacob many mighty and thrilling events come up. Unlike father and son, he became blind in his old age and nearly helpless. You might say that Jacob's life commenced with a struggle, and was under the clouds the early years, but about the middle of his life the sun shines out, and the sunset is unclouded. Isaac commenced life with laughter and ended with sorrow. The record tells of his building only one altar, though he may have built others. He offered only one prayer, the prayer for his wife. God appeared to him only twice, but to Jacob and Abraham many times. He was like Abraham in one fault, duplicity concerning his wife to the king of the Philistines. He was like both father and son in being a prophet of God.

The record passes over the happy years of his life, most of the 120 years. If you have read Thomson's *Land and the Book*, or any modern book about the South country, you have a vivid description of the kind of land where he lived. No perennial streams, scarcely any trees, bleak mountains and plains, in the spring a beautiful country of flowers, but they last only a short time. I have seen at least forty varieties of them gathered from the fields where Isaac lived. The water question was a great question in his life, as of all the patriarchs, there being little rain and the streams entirely dry the greater part of the year. So they had to dig for water. And one may imagine the growing up of this boy under favorable and happy circumstances, loved by his father and mother, scarcely any troubles, quietly living his life in a tent, amid flowers and flocks and herds.

The record does tell about his trials. I give you a list. They commenced when he was weaned, at three years old. At that time he was very much persecuted by his big brother, Ishmael, who was fourteen years older. That strong wild boy, superseded by the coming of Isaac, persecuted the little fellow, and if I had to say under what sense of wrong my soul was most indignant in my youth, it would be in observing rude, big boys, being cruel to timid little fellows at school. Nobody can tell through what horrors a timid soul passes in going out in public life and coming in contact with rougher beings. Especially is this true in schools, and where hazing is permitted, it is perfectly awful. The next sorrow was when he was offered up. He was then about twenty and had lived in perfect peace about seventeen years. Next when his mother died. He could not be consoled for several years, because she was everything to him. He was the child of his mother. There is a legend – I do not call it history – that when Abraham took Isaac to offer him up he told Sarah and broke her heart and caused her death. You don't get that out of the Bible, however. The next trial is one that a good many children come in touch with, the introducing of a stepmother into the family, but the record does not indicate that there was any trouble between Isaac and his wife and Keturah, the second wife of Abraham. The next, a very great sorrow, was that his wife bore no children. He had been married twenty years, and it troubled him much, knowing the promise of God. But instead of seeking to fulfill the prophecy as Abraham and Sarah had done, he carried the case to God in prayer. The Lord heard him and promised that children should be born to him. The next trial was the death of his father. His twin boys, Jacob and Esau, were about fifteen years old. So the grandfather lived long enough to know the boys thoroughly. The next trouble was when the famine came, and he had to go into the land of the Philistines, and he was afraid that Abimelech or some other ungodly man would kill him in order to get his wife. It does not always follow, however, that other people are as anxious to capture our wives as we think they are. But it nearly happened in this case.

We now come to the culminating period of Isaac's life, Genesis 26:12–28. He is now in the country of Abimelech: "And Isaac sowed in that land . . . and there Isaac's servants digged a well."

From B. H. Carroll, *An interpretation of the English Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:19–28:9.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

## The New Well

You may recall that, when Isaac came clean with Abimelech, God blessed him a hundredfold. Here, Isaac has come to a point of friendship and fellowship with Abimelech, and note what happens:

**And so he is in the day the that and so come servants of Isaac and so they make known to him upon the cause of the well which they had dug. And so they say to him, "We have found waters."**

Genesis  
26:32

**And it was on that [very] day that the servants of Isaac came and told him of the occasion of the well which they had dug. They said to him, "We have found water."**

**And on that very day, the servants of Isaac came to him and told him about the well that they had just dug, telling him, "We have found water."**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so he is in the day the that and so come servants of Isaac and so they make known to him upon the cause of the well which they had dug. And so they say to him, "We have found waters."
Targum of Onkelos	And on that day the servants of Izhak came and told him concerning the well they had digged, and said to him, We have found water;...
Latin Vulgate	And behold, the same day the servants of Isaac came, telling him of a well which they had digged, and saying: We have found water.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And it came to pass the same day that Isaacs servants came, and spoke to him concerning the well which they had dug, and said to him, We have found water.
Septuagint (Greek)	And it came to pass in that day, that the servants of Isaac came and told him of the well which they had dug; and they said, We have <u>not</u> found water.

Significant differences: The biggest problem is, the Greek has a negative in the final phrase. That negative is actually *to him*, which is very similar in the Hebrew. The Latin leaves out *to him*.

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

Bible in Basic English	And that day Isaac's servants came to him and gave him word of the water-hole which they had made, and said to him, We have come to water.
<i>The Message</i>	Later that same day, Isaac's servants came to him with news about the well they had been digging, "We've struck water!"
NIRV	That day Isaac's servants came to him. They told him about the well they had dug. They said, "We've found water!"

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Contemporary English V. New Berkeley Version	Later that same day Isaac's servants came and said, "We've struck water!" That same day Isaac's servants came to tell him about a well they had dug; they reported to him, "We have found water."
New Living Translation	That very day Isaac's servants came and told him about a new well they had dug. "We've found water!" they exclaimed.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	However, that very same day, Isaac's servants came and [gave him news about] the well that they were digging. They said, 'We've found water!'
International Standard V	That very same day, Isaac's servants arrived and reported to him about a well that they had just completed digging. "We've found water!" they said.
New Advent Bible	It was on that very day that Isaac's servants came to him and brought word of the latest well they had been digging; We have found water, they told him.
Translation for Translators	That day Isaac's servants came to him and told him about the well that they had finished digging. They said, "We found water in the well!"

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Ancient Roots Translinear	It was that day, as Isaac's servants came and told him the cause over the well which they dug, and said to him, "We found water!"
Conservapedia	That very day, Isaac's servants came, and told him about the well they had delved, and told him, "We have found water."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	In the same day also the servants of Isaac came and informed him about the well they had just dug; and they said, "We have found water."
Lexham English Bible	And it happened [that] on that same day the servants of Isaac came and told him about the well that they had dug. And they said, "We have found water!"
NIV, ©2011	That day Isaac's servants came and told him about the well they had dug. They said, "We've found water!"

**Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):**

The Heritage Bible	And it was on that day that Isaac's servants came, and caused to stand out boldly to him concerning the well which they had dug, and said to him, There is water to us.
New American Bible	That same day Isaac's servants came and brought him news about the well they had been digging; they told him, "We have reached water!"
New American Bible (R.E.)	That same day Isaac's servants came and informed him about the well they had been digging; they told him, "We have reached water!"

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Complete Jewish Bible	That very day Yitz'chak's servants came and told him about the well they had dug, "We have found water."
exeGesés companion Bible	And so be it, the same day, the servants of Yischaq come and tell him concerning the well they dug and say to him, We found water.
Kaplan Translation	On that very day, Isaac's servants came and told him about the well they had been digging. 'We have found water!' they announced.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And it came to pass the same day, that the avdei Yitzchak came, and told him concerning the be'er which they had dug, and said unto him, We have found mayim.

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	That same day Isaac's servants came and told him about the well they had dug, saying, We have found water!
The Expanded Bible	That day Isaac's servants came and told him about the well they had dug, saying, "We found water in that well."

Kretzmann's Commentary	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. Apparently the one well which Abraham's servants had dug, Genesis 21:30, was no longer sufficient for the needs of Isaac's immense herds, and therefore the report of the servants was highly welcome.
NET Bible®	That day Isaac's servants came and told him about the well they had dug. "We've found water," they reported [Heb "and they said to him, `We have found water.'" The order of the introductory clause and the direct discourse has been rearranged in the translation for stylistic reasons.].
The Pulpit Commentary	And it came to pass the same day (i.e. the day of the treaty), that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, - the operation of sinking this well had probably commenced on the day of Abimelech's arrival at Beersheba (vide ver. 25). Almost immediately on the king's departure the well-diggers returned to the patriarch's encampment to report the success of their operations - and said unto him, We have found water. The LXX., mistaking וַי, to him, for לֹא, not, read, "We have not found water;" the incorrectness of which is sufficiently declared by what follows.
The Voice	That very same day, Isaac's servants came and excitedly told him about a new well they had dug. <b>Servants:</b> We found water!

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And coming is it on that day, coming also are servants of Isaac. And telling are they him concerning the case of the well which they delve, and are saying to him, "We found water.
Green's Literal Translation	And it happened on that day Isaac's slaves came and told him about the well which they had dug, and said to him, We found water.
H. C. Leupold	And it happened that day that Isaac's servants came and told him concerning the well that they had dug, and they said to him: We have found water.
NASB	Now it came about on the same day, that Isaac's servants came in and told him about the well which they had dug, and said to him, "We have found water."
World English Bible	It happened the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had dug, and said to him, "We have found water."
Young's Updated LT	And it comes to pass during that day that Isaac's servants come and declare to him concerning the circumstances of the well which they have digged, and say to him, "We have found water;"

**The gist of this verse:** That very same day, Isaac servants were digging a well and they struck water. They came to Isaac to tell him.

#### Genesis 26:32a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224

## Genesis 26:32a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article); possibly immediately</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
hûw' (אוּ) [pronounced hoo]	<i>he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one); same</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>is</i> , is implied; with the definite article	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'ebed (עֲבָד) [pronounced ĠE <sup>B</sup> -ved]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
Yis <sup>e</sup> châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced yih <sup>s</sup> -KHAWK]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850

**Translation:** And it was on that [very] day that the servants of Isaac came...

What had happened was certainly on Isaac's mind. He had left the outskirts of Gerar over some well disputes, brought upon him by some jealous Philistines. However, Isaac still made an agreement with the king of Gerar and his men who were with him.

So, on that same day, after the king has left with his staff, servants of Isaac come to him.

*Wenstrom: The prepositional phrase "on the same day" is very significant since it indicates a casual relationship between the name "Beersheba" and the oath taking ceremony just completed between Isaac and Abimelech. The name "Beersheba" means, "well of seven" or "well of oath" and memorializes the seven ewe lambs that were used to ratify the non-aggression pact between Abraham and the predecessor of the present Abimelech, which is recorded in Genesis 21:22-34. The discovery of water expresses the feeling of security that Isaac's servants felt since it demonstrates a pledge from the Lord of future security in the land.<sup>220</sup>*

## Genesis 26:32b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

<sup>220</sup> From Wenstrom, [http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE\\_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf](http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf) (p. 408); accessed July 25, 2015.

Genesis 26:32b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced naw-GAHD]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
‘al (עַל) [pronounced ġahʃ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
’ôwdôth (אוֹדוֹת) [pronounced oh-DOTH]	<i>cause, reason for; the occasion of; causes, circumstances; properly turnings</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #182 BDB #15
Together, ‘al ’ôwdôth (אוֹדוֹת עַל) [pronounced ġahl-oh-DOTH] mean <i>on account of the causes, on account of; because of; concerning; on the occasion of; concerning the circumstances of; about.</i>			
b <sup>e</sup> êr (בְּעַר) [pronounced b <sup>e</sup> -AIR]	<i>well, pit; spring</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #875 BDB #91
’ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
châphar (חָפַר) [pronounced chaw-FAHR]	<i>to dig [a well or pit]; to dig for, to search for, to search for that which is hidden, to search by digging; to explore</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #2658 BDB #343

**Translation:** ...and told him of the occasion of the well which they had dug.

They had come to tell him about the well which they had just dug. Whenever Isaac was going to set up a semi-permanent camp anywhere, he has to have water. So his servants were busy digging wells on this property. Isaac was aware of what they were doing, that they were digging a well; but there was no way to know in advance how deep they would have to dig and whether or not water would be found.

Genesis 26:32c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
’âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

Genesis 26:32c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>ə</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâtsâ' (מצא) [pronounced maw-TSAW]	<i>to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover; to meet (encounter)</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
mayim (מים) [pronounced mah-YIHM]	<i>water (s)</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #4325 BDB #565

**Translation:** They said to him, “We have found water.”

This is the good news. They have dug down deep enough to discover water. Isaac considers it along side the treaty which he had just agreed to.

It is possible that God is blessing Isaac for his interaction with these men. He could have bitched and complained; he could have talked about his wells that were filled up; but, instead, he was gracious and he worked things out.

Genesis 26:32 *And it was on that [very] day that the servants of Isaac came and told him of the occasion of the well which they had dug. They said to him, “We have found water.”* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:32 *And on that very day, the servants of Isaac came to him and told him about the well that they had just dug, telling him, “We have found water.”* (Kukis paraphrase)

There is a little social issue that is somewhat hidden here, but ought to be pointed out. Isaac has several servants involved in digging this well. Although I do not know what sorts of tools they had, I can guarantee that this was a backbreaking, difficult job. These are several servants, and they are doing their work quite a ways away from Isaac. My point is, if slavery were a terrible institution, as practiced in that day, then these slaves would have certainly made a break for it. However, they are working together, they discover water, and they tell their master Isaac about it. This indicates that they were treated well, that they had some morality concerning their own position in life, and that they were loyal to Isaac.

This is important. Isaac showed some signs of spiritual maturity. He was able to resolve the difficulties with these men without being self-righteous about it. As a result, God blessed him greatly. **Pursue peace with all men** (Hebrews 12:14a; NASB). **If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men** (Romans 12:18; NASB).

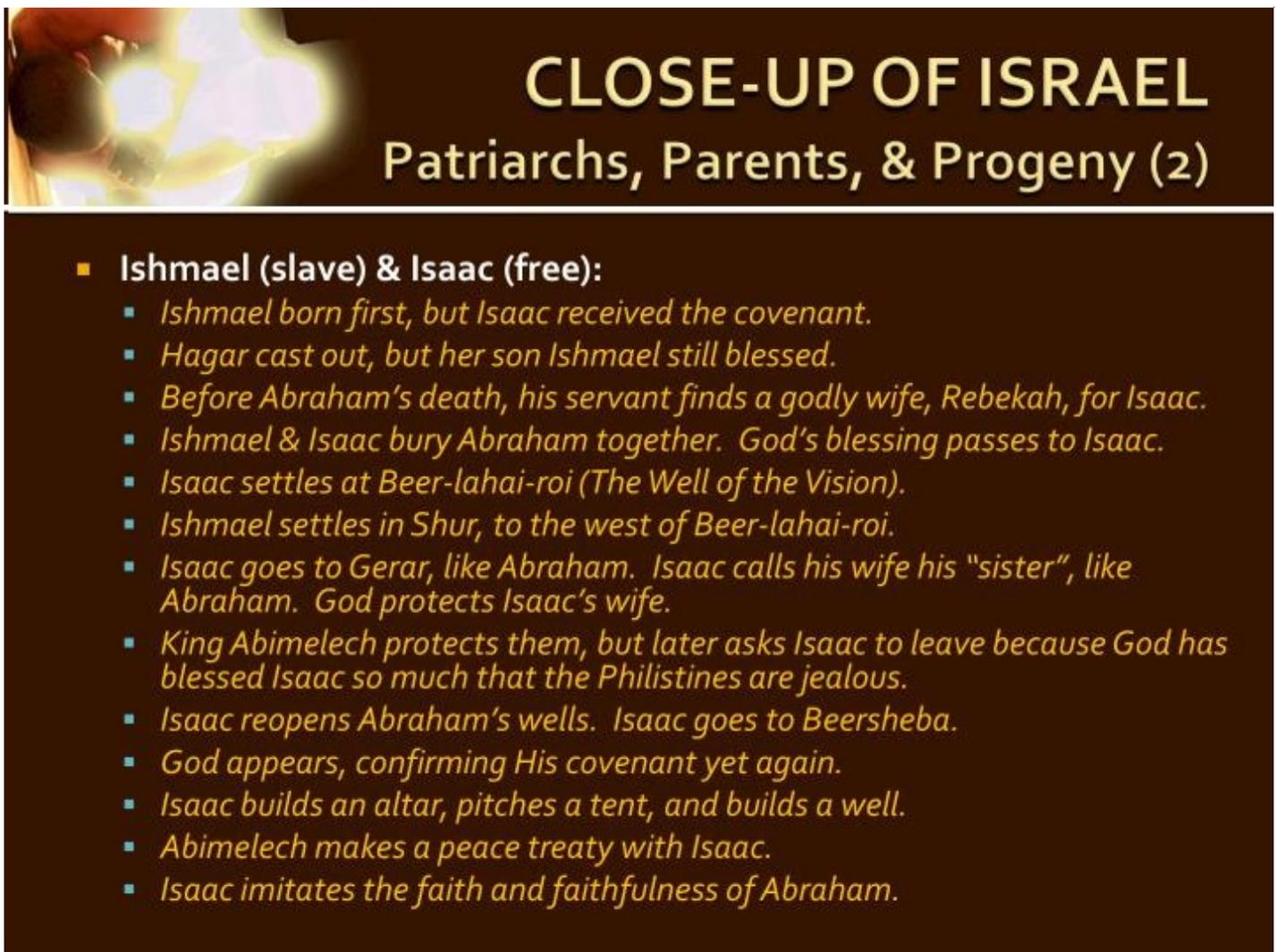
*Scott Grant: How do we view the people of our land--our neighbors, our co-workers, our classmates? God has brought us to this place, and we live among them. Are they a threat to us? Or are they people in need of a blessing? The only way in which they could truly threaten us is if they were able to take from us something eternal. God has taken us to the heavenly land. We have tasted the living water from that place. No one can take that land from us. No one can deny us living water. No one can take Christ from us (Romans 8:38-39). Jesus told his disciples, who would be martyred for their faith, “Yet not a hair of your head will perish” (Luke 21:18). In the end, not even death poses a threat. The people of our land, therefore, pose no threat. On the other hand, they long for something from beyond this land, just as we do. They thirst for living water, just as we do. They need a blessing.<sup>221</sup>*

<sup>221</sup> From [http://www.pbc.org/system/message\\_files/99650/4866.pdf](http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99650/4866.pdf) accessed August 2, 2015.

Gen. 26:26–32 When Abimelech went to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath his adviser and Phicol the commander of his army, Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, seeing that you hate me and have sent me away from you?" They said, "We see plainly that the LORD has been with you. So we said, let there be a sworn pact between us, between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you, that you will do us no harm, just as we have not touched you and have done to you nothing but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the LORD." So he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. In the morning they rose early and exchanged oaths. And Isaac sent them on their way, and they departed from him in peace. That same day Isaac's servants came and told him about the well that they had dug and said to him, "We have found water." (ESV)

Scott Grant makes some summary points: *three questions: 1) Can God provide water for our parched souls? Emphatically, yes. He gives us living water in Christ. The best place is the heavenly place, and we have already tasted of it. 2) Where on earth should we live? For now, we should live here. Don't underestimate what God can do in this place. 3) How should we view the people we live near? We should view them as people we can invite to a feast.*<sup>222</sup>

**Close-Up of Israel—Patriarchs, Parents, & Progeny** (a summary on a slide); from [Slide Serve](#) (Slide 4); accessed March 9, 2019.



## CLOSE-UP OF ISRAEL

### Patriarchs, Parents, & Progeny (2)

- **Ishmael (slave) & Isaac (free):**
  - *Ishmael born first, but Isaac received the covenant.*
  - *Hagar cast out, but her son Ishmael still blessed.*
  - *Before Abraham's death, his servant finds a godly wife, Rebekah, for Isaac.*
  - *Ishmael & Isaac bury Abraham together. God's blessing passes to Isaac.*
  - *Isaac settles at Beer-lahai-roi (The Well of the Vision).*
  - *Ishmael settles in Shur, to the west of Beer-lahai-roi.*
  - *Isaac goes to Gerar, like Abraham. Isaac calls his wife his "sister", like Abraham. God protects Isaac's wife.*
  - *King Abimelech protects them, but later asks Isaac to leave because God has blessed Isaac so much that the Philistines are jealous.*
  - *Isaac reopens Abraham's wells. Isaac goes to Beersheba.*
  - *God appears, confirming His covenant yet again.*
  - *Isaac builds an altar, pitches a tent, and builds a well.*
  - *Abimelech makes a peace treaty with Isaac.*
  - *Isaac imitates the faith and faithfulness of Abraham.*

<sup>222</sup> From [http://www.pbc.org/system/message\\_files/99650/4866.pdf](http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99650/4866.pdf) accessed August 2, 2015.

And so he calls her Shibah upon therefore a name of the city [is] Beer-sheba as far as the day the this.

Genesis  
26:33

Therefore, he called the well [lit., *her*] Shiba; for this reason, the name of this [lit., *the*] city [is] Beer-sheba even to this day.

Therefore, Isaac named the well *Shiba*; and, for this reason, this city even today carries the name Beer-sheba.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so he calls her Shibah upon therefore a name of the city [is] Beer-sheba as far as the day the this.
Targum of Onkelos	...and he called it Sheba (the Swearing); therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day.
Latin Vulgate	Whereupon he called it Abundance: and the name of the city was called Bersabee, even to this day.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And he called it Sheba; therefore the name of the town is called Beer-sheba to this day.
Septuagint (Greek)	And he called it, Oath: therefore he called the name of that city, the Well of Oath, until this day.

Significant differences: None.

#### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English	Isaac called the well Shebah. Therefore the city is called Beersheba until this time.
Good News Bible (TEV)	He named the well "Vow." That is how the city of Beersheba got its name.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V. New Living Translation	So Isaac named the well Shibah, and the town is still called Beersheba. So Isaac named the well Shibah (which means "oath"). And to this day the town that grew up there is called Beersheba (which means "well of the oath").
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#### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So, he named it and the city, The Oath. This is why that city is called the Well of the Oath to this day.
Beck's American Translation	He called it Sheba; this is why the town is called Beer-sheba ["Well-of-Oath"] to this day.
International Standard V	So Isaac [Lit. <i>he</i> ] named the well Shebah [The Heb. name <i>Shebah</i> means <i>oath</i> ], which is why the city is named Beer-sheba [The Heb. name <i>Beer-sheba</i> means <i>Well of the Oath</i> ] to this day.
New Advent Bible	So he called it Abundance [‘Abundance’; the Hebrew text has, ‘the Oath’, which is more consonant with the derivation given in 21.31 above.]; that is how the city came to be called Bersabee, as it is to this day.
Translation for Translators	Isaac named the well Shibah, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'oath.' To the present time the town there has the name Beersheba which means 'peace treaty well.'

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Ancient Roots Translinear	He called it Sheba ( <i>Seven</i> ), so the name over the city is Beersheba ( <i>Well of Seven</i> ) unto this day.
Conservapedia	He called it Sheba [or literally, "seven"]. That is why the city is named Beer-sheba to this day.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	He therefore called it "Satisfaction." Consequently the name of the village by that well is called Satisfaction [Shebeh, in Hebrew—F.F.] to this day.
Lexham English Bible NIV – UK	And he called it Sheba. Therefore the name of the city [is] Beersheba unto this day. He called it Shibah [Shibah can mean oath or seven.], and to this day the name of the town has been Beersheba [Beersheba can mean well of the oath and well of seven.].

**Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):**

Christian Community Bible	He called the well Shibeah and that is why the name of the town has been Beersheba to this day.
The Heritage Bible	And he called it Shebah; therefore the name of the city is Beer Sheba to this day.
New American Bible (R.E.)	He called it Shibah [Shibah: the place name Shibah is a play on two Hebrew words, shebu`ah, "oath," and shwebaa`, "seven." In v. 31, they exchanged oaths]; hence the name of the city is Beer-sheba to this day.

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Complete Jewish Bible	So he called it Shiv'ah [oath, seven], and for this reason the name of the city is Be'er-Sheva [well of seven, well of an oath] to this day.
exeGesés companion Bible	And he called it Shibah/Seven: so the name of the city is Beer Sheba/Well Seven* to this day. *Seven, as in an oath.
Judaica Press Complete T. Kaplan Translation	And he named it Shibah; therefore, the city is named Beer sheba until this very day. [Isaac] named the well Shibah [ <i>Shivah</i> in Hebrew. This is the masculine for seven, while Sheba (sheva) is the feminine. See note on Genesis 21:31. Some say that this was the well that Abraham dug in Beer-sheba (Genesis 21:25), which had been plugged up by the Philistines (Ramban), while others maintain that it was a new well (Rashbam).]. The city is therefore called Beer-sheba [Abraham had given the name only to the well or the district (see Genesis 21:14), while Isaac gave it to the city that subsequently sprung up in the area (Radak). Moreover, Isaac's designation became the place's permanent name (Rabbi Menasheh ben Yisroel, Conciliator 48).] to this very day.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And he called it Shevah (Seven, Oath): therefore the shem of the Ir is Beer-Sheva unto this day.

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And he named [the well] Shibah; therefore the name of the city is Beersheba [well of the oath] to this day.
The Expanded Bible	So Isaac named it Shibah [sounds like Hebrew for "seven" or "promise"] and that city is called Beersheba [21:14] even now.
Kretzmann's Commentary	And he called it Shebah (an oath) ; therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day. History here repeated itself, and the name of the city was given for the double reason, just as the two wells at Bir-es-Saba to this day vouch for the correctness of this account.

NET Bible®

So he named it Shibah [The name Shibah (שִׁבַּח, shiv'ah) means (or at least sounds like) the word meaning "oath." The name was a reminder of the oath sworn by Isaac and the Philistines to solidify their treaty.]; that is why the name of the city has been Beer Sheba to this day. The name Beer Sheba (בְּרַשְׁבָּע, by'er shava') means "well of an oath" or "well of seven." According to Gen 21:31 Abraham gave Beer Sheba its name when he made a treaty with the Philistines. Because of the parallels between this earlier story and the account in 26:26-33, some scholars see chaps. 21 and 26 as two versions (or doublets) of one original story. However, if one takes the text as it stands, it appears that Isaac made a later treaty agreement with the people of the land that was similar to his father's. Abraham dug a well at the site and named the place Beer Sheba; Isaac dug another well there and named the well Shibah. Later generations then associated the name Beer Sheba with Isaac, even though Abraham gave the place its name at an earlier time.

The Pulpit Commentary

And he (i.e. Isaac, in grateful response to the Divine Promiser who had appeared to him) builded an altar there, the first instance of altar building ascribed to Isaac; "those erected by his father no doubt still remaining in the other places where he sojourned" (Inglis) and called upon the name of the Lord, i.e. publicly celebrated his worship in the midst of his household (vide on Genesis 12:7-8) and pitched his tent there (the place being now to him doubly hallowed by the appearance of the Lord to himself as well as to his father): and there Isaac's servants digged a well a necessary appendage to a flockmaster's settlement.

Syndein/Thieme

And he called it Shebah {name means 'an oath'}. Therefore the name of the city is Beer-Sheba unto this day {name means well of the 'seven-fold oath'}.

The Voice

Isaac named this well Shibah, which means "oath," and that's why the name of the city there is called Beersheba to this day.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version  
Green's Literal Translation  
H. C. Leupold

And calling is he it Sheba. Therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba till this day. And he called it Shebah; so the name of the city is The Well of Sheba until this day. And he called it Shibah (oath); therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day.

Third Millennium Bible

And he called it Shebah [that is, An oath]; therefore the name of the city is Beersheba [that is, The well of the oath] unto this day.

World English Bible  
Young's Updated LT

He called it Shibah. Therefore the name of the city is Beersheba to this day. And he calls it Shebah, oath, therefore the name of the city is Beer-Sheba, well of the oath, unto this day.

**The gist of this verse:**

The circumstances in this chapter tell us how the city of Beersheba got its name.

Genesis 26:33a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (אָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894

## Genesis 26:33a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	<i>her, it</i> ; untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Shib <sup>ê</sup> âh (שִׁבְעָה) [pronounced <i>shihb-GAW</i> ]	<i>an oath; seven</i> ; transliterated <i>Sheba, Shebah, Shiba, Shibah</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #7656 BDB #988

**Translation:** Therefore, he called the well [lit., *her*] Shiba;...

As was the custom of the day, this well was named. The 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular refers to Isaac. He had just made an oath with Abimelech and his associates, so this well was related to that oath.

Clarke: *He called it Shebah* - This was probably the same well which was called Beersheba in the time of Abraham, which the Philistines had filled up, and which the servants of Isaac had reopened. The same name is therefore given to it which it had before, with the addition of the emphatic letter *h* he, by which its signification became extended, so that now it signified not merely an oath or full, but satisfaction and abundance.<sup>223</sup>

## Genesis 26:33b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'al (אֲלֵ) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced <i>kane</i> ]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485

Together, 'al kên (אֲלֵ כֵּן) mean *so, upon the ground of such conditions, therefore, on this account, on account, for this reason*.

shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced <i>shame</i> ]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
'îyr (רֵיעַ) [pronounced <i>geer</i> ]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
B <sup>ê</sup> êr Shâba <sup>´</sup> (רְאֵב עֵבֶשׁ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>ê</sup>ayr SHAW<sup>ê</sup>-vahg</i> ]	<i>well of the oath [seven] and is transliterated Beersheba, Beer-sheba</i>	proper noun; location	Strong's #884 BDB #92
'ad (אֲדַ) [pronounced <i>gahd</i> ]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723

<sup>223</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:33.

## Genesis 26:33b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day; time; today</i> (with a definite article); possibly <i>immediately</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i> ]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260

**Translation:** ...for this reason, the name of this [lit., *the*] city [is] Beer-sheba even to this day.

Now, even though earlier in this narrative, we were told that Isaac moved to Beersheba, this may not have been its generally accepted name at this time. However, bear in mind that, under similar circumstances, his father previously named this area Beersheba (*well of the oath*).

The word for *well* is b<sup>e</sup>êr (בְּעַר) [pronounced *b<sup>e</sup>-AIR*], which means *well, pit; spring*. Strong's #875 BDB #91. That is transliterated *beer*. Sh<sup>e</sup>bâ' (שֶׁבַע) [pronounced *sh<sup>eb</sup>-VAW*], which means *seven; an oath; transliterated Sheba, Sebean*. Strong's #7614 BDB #985. When we put these together, we have *Beersheba, or Well of the Oath*.

Genesis 26:33 **Therefore, he called the well [lit., *her*] Shiba; for this reason, the name of this [lit., *the*] city [is] Beer-sheba even to this day.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 26:33 **Therefore, Isaac named the well *Shiba*; and, for this reason, this city even today carries the name Beer-sheba.** (Kukis paraphrase)

Here is what has taken place. Remember that there has been some disputations over this and that well that Isaac dug, and this was a major expense and a major problem for him. However, he has made an honest non-aggression pact with the King of Gerar, and we can reasonably assume that this will include the people of Gerar keeping their mitts off of Isaac's work. That is, Abimelech probably returned to Gerar and made another proclamation: "You will not harass Isaac. We have a treaty with him. You will not fill in any of his wells or you will be executed." This is pure conjecture, but what meaning is this treaty if it does not protect Isaac from the interference of Abimelech's people?

If we examine Genesis 21 and stand it next to this passage, we should take care not to become confused. Here we have Isaac naming this city Beer-sheba (actually, he names the well Shibah and the city which springs up takes the name Beer-sheba). His father, Abraham, also named an area Beer-sheba also after a meeting with Abimelech. What is likely is that Abraham named the area Beer-sheba, but the name did not stick (particularly after the well had been filled up by the Philistines) and Isaac, finding himself in the same area under very similar circumstances, names the well Shibah and the name for that area, or that city which sprung up, now remains as the very famous Beer-sheba. Just because Abraham chose to call an area Beer-sheba does not mean that everyone and his brother has agreed that it will be known as Beer-sheba. In fact, since the Philistines filled many of Abraham's wells, that indicates enough animosity on their part to keep from adopting this name. However, when Isaac returns to the approximate same area and gives it the same name, this time the people of that area adopt the name permanently, since they have just signed a nonaggression pact. It is not unlike the name Israel. Just because there was a country Israel in the first millennium B.C. in the land of Palestine and, behold, there is now a nation called Israel in the land of Palestine, this does not cause us any great alarm; nor should this passage and Genesis 21. Furthermore, v. 18 tells us that Isaac re-dug many of Abraham's wells which the Philistines filled and then gave them the same names. As we will recall, this name means *the well of the seven* which refers to *seven witnesses*; and that is a synonym for a *pact* or *covenant* (when 7 people observe an agreement, then it is called a *covenant* as that is what they did instead of signing legal documents and getting these legal documents notarized).

This has happened before, where the same place is named twice, first by the father and then by the son.

Keil and Delitzsch: *“Therefore the city was called Beersheba.” This derivation of the name does not shut the other (Genesis 21:31) out, but seems to confirm it. As the treaty made on oath between Abimelech and Isaac was only a renewal of his covenant concluded before with Abraham, so the name Beersheba was also renewed by the well Shebah. The reality of the occurrence is supported by the fact that the two wells are in existence still.*<sup>224</sup>

Clarke: *The name of the city is Beer-sheba - This name was given to it a hundred years before this time; but as the well from which it had this name originally was closed up by the Philistines, probably the name of the place was abolished with the well; when therefore Isaac reopened the well, he restored the ancient name of the place.*<sup>225</sup>

Barnes: *Now the writer was aware that this place had received the same name on a former occasion Genesis 21:31. But a second well has now been dug in like circumstances in the same locality. This gives occasion for a new application of the name in the memories of the people. This is another illustration of the principle explained at Genesis 25:30. Two wells still exist at this place to attest the correctness of the record.*<sup>226</sup>

Matthew Henry: *Providence smiled upon what Isaac did; for the same day that he made this covenant with Abimelech his servants brought him the tidings of a well of water they had found (Genesis 26:32–33). He did not insist upon the restitution of the wells which the Philistines had unjustly taken from him, lest this should break off the treaty, but sat down silent under the injury; and, to recompense him for this, immediately he is enriched with a new well, which, because it suited so well to the occurrence of the day, he called by an old name, Beer–sheba, The well of the oath.*<sup>227</sup>

Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge is pretty clear: *This may have been the same city which was called Beer-sheba a hundred years before this, in the time of Abraham; but as the well, from which it had its name originally, was closed up by the Philistines, the name of the place might have been abolished with the well; when, therefore, Isaac re-opened it, he restored the ancient name of the place.*<sup>228</sup>

Murphy: *Now the writer was aware that this place had received the same name on a former occasion. But a second well had now been dug in like circumstances in the same locality. This gives occasion for a new application of the name in the memories of the people. This is another illustration of the principle explained at Genesis 25:30. Two wells still exist at this place, attesting the correctness of the record.*<sup>229</sup>

If you will recall, we have a very similar narrative back in the life of Abraham, at the end of Genesis 21. The common explanation given by those who do not believe in the Word of God, is that this is the same story, but it got passed along through two different sources, and a few names and details got changed. But that is not what happened. We have similar situations occur in the lives of Abraham and Isaac. When Abraham gave this area the name *Beersheba*, this is how his family knew the area; this is the name by which the camp of Abraham knew this particular area. However, Isaac, when this incident occurs again, will give this name to the area, and that name will stick—it will be more than just a family name for that area—and become its name even **until today**.

<sup>224</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 26:26–33.

<sup>225</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:33.

<sup>226</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:26–33.

<sup>227</sup> Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:26–33.

<sup>228</sup> *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, Genesis 26:33.

<sup>229</sup> From Whedon, <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/whe/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 31, 2015.

Just as Abraham's pact with Abimelech was renewed and confirmed by Isaac, so is Abraham's well renewed and confirmed; and so is the name of this place renewed and confirmed.<sup>230</sup>

James Burton Coffman: *This chapter establishes the position of the Chosen People in a legal and treaty-protected situation, under the peace-loving guidance of Isaac whose vast resources would eventually pass into the hands of Jacob the father of the Twelve Tribes.*<sup>231</sup>

And, if you have not heard enough on this point already...

### When Critics Ask: Did Abraham or Isaac name Beersheba?

GENESIS 26:33 —Was Beersheba named by Abraham or later by Isaac?

**PROBLEM:** In Genesis 21:31 Abraham named this city Beersheba ("Well of the Oath"). But later (in Genesis 26:33), Isaac gave it the same name. But it is highly unlikely that two different people at two different times would call the same place by the same name.

**SOLUTION:** This is not unlikely at all for two reasons. First, the second person was the son of the first person and may have been familiar with his father's experience there. Second, Isaac's similar experience may have occasioned the memory of the name his father gave to this same place. So it is not at all uncommon that Isaac would have later renewed the name his father had earlier given to this important place in their lives.

From Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe, *When Critics Ask*; Victor Books; taken from e-Sword, Genesis 26:33.

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Now, what is the significance of this similar story, apart from the name *Beersheba*? This indicates that there is still some positive volition in Gerar. The royalty of that area still understands that Abraham was blessed by God and that his son Isaac is also blessed by God. Therefore, an alliance should be formed.

**Application:** This is not a weird thing, by the way. If you are going to college, and you know of a good teacher, then you attempt to get into one of that teacher's classes. When you become an adult and you start interacting with businesses (either as a consumer or as another business), then you choose businesses where the people are serious and have character. You do not necessarily choose the good-time, rock-and-roll businesses where, at 4:59 pm, they padlock their doors and head off to the nearest watering hole to imbibe. If you are able to find a person of character to associate with or to interact with, then you do it.

**Application:** I used to be in real estate and I worked with a loan officer who got loans through for me. However, on one deal, he was dishonest with me. He could have simply stated, "I have not done a deal like this before; let me recommend so-and-so to do it;" but he did not. As a result of his dishonesty, I began working with another loan officer.

Similarly, Abimelech and Phicol—probably the sons of Abimelech and Phicol who knew Abraham (Abimelech is doubtless a title; Phicol may or may not be) recognize the importance of an association with Abraham. Abimelech I may have told Abimelech II, "You want to continue to have a good relationship with the people of Abraham, because he knows God." So Abimelech II has the good sense to locate Isaac and form a bond with him. Remember, when Isaac was in Abimelech's periphery and not only did Isaac enjoy great blessing, but so did Abimelech and his people. Blessing by association. Then Isaac was forced to leave. Guaranteed that the prosperity of Gerar began to decrease the moment Isaac left town. So Abimelech's personal experience combined with what his father told him, causes him to realize that an association with Isaac is a good thing.

<sup>230</sup> I have paraphrased a little of Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:33.

<sup>231</sup> From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015.

The passages are set up to match in content. Genesis 21 is taken in the order it is given; Genesis 26 is moved about to match Genesis 21.

### Abraham and Isaac's Covenants with the Philistines

Abraham in Genesis 21	Isaac in Genesis 26
<p>Gen 21:22–23 At that time Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his army said to Abraham, "God is with you in all that you do. Now therefore swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me or with my descendants or with my posterity, but as I have dealt kindly with you, so you will deal with me and with the land where you have sojourned." Gen 21:24 And Abraham said, "I will swear."</p>	<p>Gen 26:26–27 When Abimelech went to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath his adviser and Phicol the commander of his army, Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, seeing that you hate me and have sent me away from you?" Gen 26:28–29 They said, "We see plainly that the LORD has been with you. So we said, let there be a sworn pact between us, between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you, that you will do us no harm, just as we have not touched you and have done to you nothing but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the LORD."</p>
<p>The agreement centered more on a non-aggression pact between their respective descendants.</p>	<p>Although this was a non-aggression pact, it was primarily between Isaac and Abimelech and Phicol; and it was very much about acknowledging that there was nothing done wrong by Abimelech and Phicol against Isaac.</p>
<p>Gen 21:25–26 When Abraham reproved Abimelech about a well of water that Abimelech's servants had seized, Abimelech said, "I do not know who has done this thing; you did not tell me, and I have not heard of it until today."</p>	<p>Gen 26:32 That same day Isaac's servants came and told him about the well that they had dug and said to him, "We have found water."</p>
<p>Abraham takes this opportunity to tell Abimelech about the wells that he had dug, but various citizens of Gerar had seized. Abimelech was unaware of it.</p>	<p>If wells were in any discussion between Isaac and Abimelech, we are not made aware of it. However, Isaac's servants had recently sunk a well and found water.</p>
<p>Gen 21:27–30 So Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two men made a covenant. Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock apart. And Abimelech said to Abraham, "What is the meaning of these seven ewe lambs that you have set apart?" He said, "These seven ewe lambs you will take from my hand, that this may be a witness for me that I dug this well."</p>	<p>Gen 26:30 So he made them a feast, and they ate and drank.</p>
<p>As a part of their compact, Abraham introduces some ewe lambs in order to be a witness to Abimelech as to the digging of his most recent well.</p>	<p>Isaac and Abimelech enjoy fellowship with one another.</p>
<p>Genesis 21:31–32 Therefore that place was called Beersheba, because there both of them swore an oath. So they made a covenant at Beersheba. Then Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his army rose up and returned to the land of the Philistines. (ESV)</p>	<p>Gen. 26:31 In the morning they rose early and exchanged oaths. And Isaac sent them on their way, and they departed from him in peace. Gen 26:33 He called it Shibah; therefore the name of the city is Beersheba to this day.</p>

## Abraham and Isaac's Covenants with the Philistines

### Abraham in Genesis 21

### Isaac in Genesis 26

Abraham names this place *Beersheba*. After making their covenant, Abimelech and Phicol return to the land of the Philistines.

They all exchange oaths early in the morning, and Isaac sends them on their way. Isaac names the well *Shibah*, so together *well + Shibah* is *Beersheba*.

Both wells are given essentially the same name. We know that Isaac knew the name of the well that Abraham sunk, because we are told that he named the wells after the names his father gave them.

Genesis 21:33–34 Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba and called there on the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God. And Abraham sojourned many days in the land of the Philistines. (ESV)

Gen. 26:23–25 From there he went up to Beersheba. And the LORD appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the God of Abraham your father. Fear not, for I am with you and will bless you and multiply your offspring for my servant Abraham's sake." So he built an altar there and called upon the name of the LORD and pitched his tent there. And there Isaac's servants dug a well.

Abraham plants a tamarisk tree, which probably commemorates their oaths.

God appears to Isaac (at the beginning of this narrative, and Isaac builds an altar as a result.

Both men call upon the name of the LORD.

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Unlike Abraham, Isaac plays a fairly small role in the New Testament.

### Isaac in the New Testament

1. Isaac is named in the line of Jesus. Matthew 1:2 Luke 3:34
2. Isaac is named in the formula, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*; or in similar passages. Matthew 8:11 22:32 Mark 12:26 Luke 13:28 20:37 Acts 3:13 7:8, 32
3. Paul talks about the line of Abraham, and names Isaac. Romans 9:6–12
4. Believers are compared to Isaac, insofar as, he is called a child of promise. We are also children of promise. Galatians 4:28
5. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are all called heirs to the same promise in Hebrews 11:8–10
6. The New Testament mentions that Abraham offered up Isaac to God. Hebrews 11:17–19 James 2:21
7. One of the few times Isaac is spoken of according to something that he did is, he passed along blessings to Esau and Jacob, his twin sons. Jacob was the child of promise and Esau was not. We will study this in the next chapter of Genesis. Hebrews 11:20 [By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau](#). Isaac knew that giving these final blessings to his son had actual impact upon their lives.

So, whereas Abraham's actions are related to a number of doctrines in the New Testament, Isaac is primarily noted for being the child of promise and the one Abraham was ready to sacrifice to God. In these two ways, Isaac portrays Jesus. Isaac is the type and Jesus is the antitype. However, there was very little that Isaac did that any New Testament author thought was worth noting and explaining in terms of Church Age doctrine.

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Isaac does not seem at all to be the spiritual atlas that Abraham was; but God still blesses Isaac. Jacob, his son, will seem even less deserving, yet God will bless Jacob as well.

Robert Dean: *[Our study of Isaac in] Genesis 26 is a reiteration of the same principles of spiritual growth that we saw with Abraham: that we face adversity through the faith-rest drill, we face adversity with people by grace orientation and impersonal love for all mankind. He doesn't retaliate, he doesn't get involved in mental attitude sins, he doesn't get involved in trying to justify himself. Every time they attack him they just move to the next well until eventually God made it clear to the enemy that Isaac was the one who was being blessed.*

Isaac is a fairly ordinary guy; and we learn a lot about our day-to-day existence through him.

### How to live your life...

1. As a believer, we have only so many hours in the day. Therefore, we need to have some kind of organization and focus in our lives.
2. You need to rebound (name your sins to God) regularly. That may be 2 or 3 times a day; that might be 50x a day.
3. Make certain that your life allows for you to take in Bible doctrine daily—maybe just 30 minutes, but preferably an hour. You need enough doctrine in order to counteract the constant flow of human viewpoint.
4. If you watch television, view movies, are on facebook, read a newspaper, then you are constantly bombarded with human viewpoint. It is so easy for the believer to completely become confused.
  - 1) Let me offer an example: most polls indicate that around 50–60% of Americans favor gay marriage (I write this in 2015 *after* the deplorably Supreme Court decision to give gay marriage state recognition).
  - 2) About 70% or more of Americans believe in God and believe in Jesus Christ. So, how do we have more than 30% of Americans supporting gay marriage?
  - 3) The simple answer is, human viewpoint, encouraged by the cosmic system, has infiltrated the thinking of a huge number of Christians.
  - 4) Many Catholic Christians in Latin and South America have similarly had their lives and nations upended by communism because they believed (many of them) that Marxism is Christianity in action.
  - 5) These are two examples of how cosmic thinking can confuse the mind of the believer. A nation of believers who understand Bible doctrine do not favor gay marriage and they do not favor communism. The key is what you think.
5. Therefore, in your life, your priority needs to be Bible doctrine. Ideally speaking, you attend a doctrinal church which meets 3–4 times a week, and that should be where you get the bulk of your teaching. If not, then you find a pastor-teacher that accurately teaches Bible doctrine, and you learn under that pastor-teacher (either by ordering their MP3 lessons or downloading them from their website).
6. You need to work. One of the most fundamental of the divine institutions is *work*. God has put us on this earth, and part of our time must be spent working.
  - 1) If you are the husband, then you need to be certain that you are providing for your family.
  - 2) If you are a wife, I can almost guarantee that you are working too hard as it is.
  - 3) If you are single, on your own, you need to make enough money to support yourself. You should not require help from the government.
  - 4) If you are living at home with your parents, working is a good idea—and at a young age, you will often end up doing crap-jobs (mowing lawns, washing dishes, cleaning toilets, whatever). If you can develop a skill (even if that skill is cleaning a kitchen and a bathroom), so much the better.
7. You will need to sleep so many hours a day; and you will need to eat so much per day. You will not die if, from time to time, you miss a meal or a few hours sleep. If that is necessary now and again in order to take in Bible doctrine, then Bible doctrine is far more important.

If you do all of these things, then you will pretty much fill in the totality of your life.

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At this point, we leave Isaac and go to Esau—Jacob's twin—but only for a moment.

## Esau's Hittite Wives

As Coffman<sup>232</sup> correctly points out, these verses might be better placed with the next (or another) chapter. However, throughout the Bible, we have a passage here or there which is essentially stand-alone. The chapter divisions are not divinely inspired; and sometimes, they are not correctly defined (however, most of the time, the chapter divisions are done quite well).

At the end of this chapter, we have a sudden insertion concerning Isaac's son Esau. Nothing has been said since chapter 25 about Jacob and Esau the twins. They are possibly traveling with their father and possibly not. However, we get an update in this verse.

Gen. 24:2–4 And Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh, that I may make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell, but will go to my country and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son Isaac." (ESV)

v. 35 continues the thinking of v. 34, so they are placed together here.

**And so is Esau a son of forty a year and so he takes a woman—Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite and Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite. And so they are bitterness of spirit to Isaac and to Rebekah.**

Genesis  
26:34–35

**When Esau was 40 years old, he took a wife: [he took] Judith, the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and [he took] Basemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite. These women [lit., they] were bitter of temperament toward Isaac and Rebekah.**

**When Esau turned 40, he took two wives to himself: he took Judith, who was the daughter of Beeri the Hittite; and he took Basemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite. These women were bitter toward Isaac and Rebekah.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so is Esau a son of forty a year and so he takes a woman—Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite and Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite. And so they are bitterness of spirit to Isaac and to Rebekah.
Targum of Onkelos	And Esau was the son of forty years; and he took to wife Yehudith daughter of Beari the Hittah, and Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittah. <u>And they bowed in strange worship, and set themselves to rebel in their evil conduct</u> against Izhak and against Rivekah.
Jerusalem targum	And Esau was the son of forty years; and he took to wife Yehudith daughter of Beari the Hittah, and Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittah. And they <u>were refractory, swelling in spirit with strange worship, and would not receive instruction either from</u> Izhak or Rivekah.
Latin Vulgate	And Esau being forty years old, married wives, Judith, the daughter of Beeri, the Hethite, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon, of the same place. And they both offended the mind of Isaac and Rebecca.

<sup>232</sup> From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015.

Peshitta (Syriac)	And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bismath the daughter of Elon the Hivite; And they made life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Esau was forty years old; and he took as wives Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath, daughter of Elon the Hittite. And they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebecca.
Significant differences:	The Hebrew word for <i>wife</i> ( <i>woman</i> ) is in the singular. The targums have a different final sentence.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English	When Esau was 40 years old, he married Judith the daughter of Beer, who was from Heth's family. And he married Basemath, the daughter of Elon, who was from Heth's family. Those women made Isaac and Rebekah very unhappy.
Easy-to-Read Version	When Esau was 40 years old, he married two Hittite women. One was Judith the daughter of Beeri. The other was Basemath the daughter of Elon. These marriages made Isaac and Rebekah very upset.
Good News Bible (TEV)	When Esau was forty years old, he married two Hittites, Judith the daughter of Beeri, and Basemath the daughter of Elon. They made life miserable for Isaac and Rebecca.
<i>The Message</i>	When Esau was forty years old he married Judith, daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath, daughter of Elon the Hittite. They turned out to be thorns in the sides of Isaac and Rebekah.
NIRV	When Esau was 40 years old, he got married to Judith. She was the daughter of Beeri the Hittite. He also married Basemath. She was the daughter of Elon the Hittite. Isaac and Rebekah became very upset because Esau had married Hittite women.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	<b>Esau's wives</b> When Esau was 40 years old, he married Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite. They made life very difficult for Isaac and Rebekah.
Contemporary English V.	When Esau was forty, he married Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. But these two women brought a lot of grief to his parents Isaac and Rebekah.
New Berkeley Version	At forty Esau married Judith, the daughter of Be-eri, the Hittite; also Basemath, the daughter of Elon, the Hittite, which brought great distress to Isaac and Rebekah.
New Life Bible	When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. And they made life full of sorrow for Isaac and Rebekah.
New Living Translation	<sup>34</sup> At the age of forty, Esau married two Hittite wives: Judith, the daughter of Beeri, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon. <sup>35</sup> But Esau's wives made life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then, when Esau was forty years old, he married Judith, the daughter of BeOch the Chettite, and BaseMath (the daughter of Helon the Chettite). And they made life very difficult for IsaAc and RebeKka.
International Standard V	<b><i>Esau Causes Trouble for Isaac</i></b>

When Esau was 40 years old, he married Judith, the daughter of Beeri the Hittite and Basemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite. This brought extreme grief to Isaac and Rebekah.

New Advent Bible Esau, who was by this time forty years old, married two wives, Judith the daughter of Beëri, the Hethite, and Basemath, the daughter of another Hethite, Elon. 35 Both of these distressed the hearts of Isaac and Rebecca.

Translation for Translators **Esau married foreign women**

When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith, the daughter of Beeri, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon. Both of those women were descendants of Heth, not from Isaac's clan. Esau's two wives made life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah.

Today's NIV **Jacob Takes Esau's Blessing**

When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and also Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite. They were a source of grief to Isaac and Rebekah.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Esau was a son of forty years. He took women: Judith, the daughter of Beeri of Central-Syria, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon of Central-Syria. But they were a spirit-wind of bitterness to Isaac and Rebekah.

Conservapedia Esau was forty years old when he married Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath daughter of Elon the Hittite. These marriages made Isaac and Rebekah very unhappy.

Ferar-Fenton Bible When Esau was forty years old, he took as a wife Judith the daughter of Bari the Hittite; and Basmath the daughter of Ailon the Hittite. But they were a bitter wind to Isaac and Rebekkah.

Lexham English Bible And [when] Esau was forty years old he took as wife Judith, daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath, daughter of Elon the Hittite. And {they made life bitter} [Literally "they caused bitterness of spirit"] for Isaac and Rebekah.

NIV – UK **Jacob takes Esau's blessing**

When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and also Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite. They were a source of grief to Isaac and Rebekah.

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible And Esau was a son of forty years when he took a wife, Judith, the daughter of Beeri, the Hittite, and Bashemath, the daughter of Elon, the Hittite; And they were a bitterness of spirit to Isaac and to Rebekah.

New American Bible When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith, daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath, daughter of Elon the Hivite. But they became a source of embitterment to Isaac and Rebekah. [34-35] These verses from the Priestly source, which have no logical connection with the preceding stories, serve as an introduction to the following section on Esau's loss of his birthright by suggesting a motivation for this in Isaac's and Rebekah's dislike for Esau's Canaanite wives.

New American Bible (R.E.) When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith, daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath, daughter of Elon the Hivite [Gn 27:46.]. But they became a source of bitterness to Isaac and Rebekah. [26:34-35] These verses from the Priestly source introduce the next section on Esau's loss of his right as firstborn by suggesting a motivation for this in Isaac's and Rebekah's dislike for Esau's Canaanite wives.

New Jerusalem Bible When Esau was forty years old he married Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite. These were a bitter disappointment to Isaac and Rebekah.

New RSV When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite; and they made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible <sup>34</sup> When 'Esav was forty years old, he took as wives Y'hudit the daughter of Be'eri the Hitti and Basmath the daughter of Elon the Hitti. <sup>35</sup> But they became a cause for embitterment of spirit to Yitz'chak and Rivkah.

exeGesés companion Bible And Esav is a son of forty years when he takes to woman Yah Hudith the daughter of Beeri the Hethiy and Bosmath the daughter of Elon the Hethiy: who are a bitter spirit to Yischaq and to Ribqah.

Judaica Press Complete T. And Esau was forty years old, and he married Judith, the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite. And they were a vexation of the spirit to Isaac and to Rebecca.

Kaplan Translation *Esau Marries*  
When Esau was forty years old [Emulating his father Isaac (Genesis 25:20; Bereshith Rabbah 65; Rashi).], he married Judith [Yehudith in Hebrew, a name that subsequently became popular among Jews. Some say that Esau did not have any children by this Judith. Others identify her with Oholibamah in Genesis 36:2, (see Rashi ad loc.; Josephus, Antiquities 1:18:4).] daughter of Beeri [The name is also found in Hosea 1:1.] the Hittite [See Genesis 10:15, 15:20, 23:5.], and Basemath [Some say that she was the Adah bath Elon in Genesis 36:2 (Ibn Ezra here, Rashi on Genesis 36:2. Also see Genesis 36:10, 13, 17). Some say that Esau's wives were from the land of Seir (Sefer HaYashar, p.73). The fathers of Esau's wives were great lords among the Canaanites (Radak; Josephus).] daughter of Elon the Hittite. [His wives] became a source of spiritual bitterness to Isaac and Rebecca.

Orthodox Jewish Bible And Esav was arba'im shanah when he took to wife Yehudit the bat Beeri the Chitti, and Basemat the bat Elon the Chitti: and they were a morat ruach (grief of mind) unto Yitzchak and Rivkah.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

*The Amplified Bible* Now Esau was 40 years old when he took as wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. And they made life bitter and a grief of mind and spirit for Isaac and Rebekah [their parents-in-law].

The Expanded Bible When Esau was forty years old, he married two Hittite women-Judith daughter of Beeri and Basemath daughter of Elon. These women brought much sorrow [bitterness] to Isaac and Rebekah [<sup>c</sup>because Esau had married outside the people of God].

Kretzmann's Commentary **Verse 34-35**  
The marriage of Esau  
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. Esau gave proof of the state of his mind toward his parents in taking this important step without asking either their counsel or consent. It is strange, indeed, if marriages contracted in this manner turn out well for all concerned. Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah. They were literally a bitterness of spirit to them, they caused them many a bitter hour, their heathen descent itself being mortifying, and their heathen belief and conduct agreeing with their ancestral traditions. Where temporal, fleshly factors are decisive in the matter of marriage, the chances are that true happiness

NET Bible®	will not live in such a home. Christian young people will not think of entering upon this most important step without the knowledge and consent of their parents. When <sup>83</sup> Esau was forty years old [Heb "the son of forty years."], he married [Heb "took as a wife."] Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, as well as Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. They caused Isaac and Rebekah great anxiety [Heb "And they were [a source of ] bitterness in spirit to Isaac and to Rebekah."].
The Pulpit Commentary	And Esau was forty years old - literally, a son of forty years; the age of Isaac when he married Rebekah (Genesis 25:20) - when he took to wife Judith (Jehu-dith, "Celebrated," "Praised," if Shemitic; but the name is probably Phoenician) the daughter of Beeri - ("of a well"? "The Well-finder," vide Genesis 36:24) - the Hittites, and Bashemath ("Sweet-smelling," "Fragrant") the daughter of Elon the Hittite) - adding to them afterwards Maha-lath the daughter of Ishmael, and sister of Nebajoth (Genesis 28:9). On Esau's wives vide Genesis 36:2, 3. Which were a grief of mind (literally, bitterness of spirit) unto Isaac and to Rebekah possibly because of their personal characters, but chiefly because of their Canaanitish descent, and because in marrying them Esau had not only violated the Divine law which forbade polygamy, but also evinced an utterly irreligious and unspiritual disposition. [Including this variety of translations does not mean I agree with the commentary or even with the translation itself. God's plan is for marriage between one man and one woman; however, this does not appear to be a mandate at this point in time.]
The Voice	Meanwhile Esau (Isaac's son) was turning 40. He married Judith (the daughter of Beeri the Hittite) and also Basemath (the daughter of Elon the Hittite). They would make life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And coming is Esau to be forty years old when he is taking as wife Judith, the daughter of Beeri, the Hittite, and Bashemath, the daughter of Elon, the Hivite. And coming are they to be a bitterness of spirit to Isaac and Rebecca.
Context Group Version	And when Esau was forty years old he took as woman { or wife } Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. And they were a grief of mind to Isaac and to Rebekah.
Darby Translation	And Esau was forty years old, when he took as wives Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basmath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. And they were a grief of mind to Isaac and to Rebecca.
Green's Literal Translation	And Esau was a son of forty years. And he took a wife, Judith, the daughter of Beeri the Hittite; also Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. And they were a grief of spirit to Isaac and to Rebekah.
H. C. Leupold	<b>(f) Esau's Hittite Wives (v. 34, 35)</b> When Esau was forty years old he married Judith, the daughter of Beeri, the Hittite, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon, the Hittite; and they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah.
NASB	When Esau was forty years old he married [Lit took as wife] Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite; and they brought grief [Lit were a bitterness of spirit to] to Isaac and Rebekah.
Third Millennium Bible	And Esau was forty years old when he took for a wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite, who were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah.
World English Bible	When Esau was forty years old, he took as wife Judith, the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite. They grieved Isaac and Rebekah's spirits.

Young's Updated LT

And Esau is a son of forty years, and he takes a wife, Judith, daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath, daughter of Elon the Hittite; and they are a bitterness of spirit to Isaac and to Rebekah.

**The gist of this verse:**

Esau marries two Hittite women, who become the bane of Isaac and Rebekah's existence.

Genesis 26:34a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
The NET Bible: <i>The sentence begins with the temporal indicator ("and it happened"), making this clause subordinate to the next.</i> <sup>233</sup>			
ʿÊsâv (עֵשָׂו) [pronounced gay-SAWV]	<i>handled, made, rough handling; hairy; transliterated Esau</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6215 BDB #796
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
ʿar̄bâʿîym (אַרְבָּעִים) [pronounced ar̄-BAW-GEEM]	<i>forty</i>	undeclinable plural noun	Strong's #705 BDB #917
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040

**Translation:** When Esau was 40 years old,...

Esau, when he was 40 years old, took a wife. Now, there will be two women listed below, which suggests either that he took his first wife at age 40 and the second one later; or he took them both at the same time.

Keil and Delitzsch: *Esau married two wives in the 40th year of his age, the 100th of Isaac's life (Genesis 25:26); and that not from his own relations in Mesopotamia, but from among the Canaanites whom God had cast off.*<sup>234</sup>

Ballinger: *Political alliances done in accord with proper regard for righteous principles was condoned in the OT. But marriage alliances with non-believers were condemned by the righteous. Esau takes two wives at age forty in total disregard of his family's traditions and sensibilities. He was the same age as Isaac when he married. Isaac was 100 years of age when this took place (1746 B.C.). Esau did what he did totally apart from his parent's knowledge and blessing. He married outside his spiritually based culture opting for foreign pagan wives.*<sup>235</sup>

<sup>233</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen26.htm> (footnote); accessed July 7, 2015.

<sup>234</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 26:34.

<sup>235</sup> From <http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/Gen26.htm> accessed July 23, 2015.

Genesis 26:34b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i> ]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
ʾîshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAW</i> ]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #802 BDB #61
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Y <sup>e</sup> hûwdîyth (תִּידוּקָי) [pronounced <i>heh-hoo-DEETH</i> ]	<i>Jewess, praised; transliterated Judith</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #3067 BDB #397
bath (בַּת) [pronounced <i>bahth</i> ]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #1323 BDB #123
B <sup>e</sup> êrîy (בְּעֵרִי) [pronounced <i>beh-ay-REE</i> ]	<i>my well; and is transliterated Beerî</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #882 BDB #92
Chittîy (חִיטִּי) [pronounced <i>khiht-TEE</i> ]	a descendant of Heth; transliterated <i>Hittite</i>	gentilic adjective; with the definite article	Strong's #2850 BDB #366
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Bâs <sup>e</sup> math (בַּשְּׂמַת) [pronounced <i>baws-MATH</i> ]	<i>perfume, fragrance; and is transliterated Basemath, Bashemath</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #1315 BDB #142
bath (בַּת) [pronounced <i>bahth</i> ]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #1323 BDB #123
ʾÊlôwn (אֵילֹן) [pronounced <i>AY-loan</i> ]	<i>oak, terebinth, tall tree, a strong and hardy tree; a plain; transliterated Elon</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #356 BDB #19
Chittîy (חִיטִּי) [pronounced <i>khiht-TEE</i> ]	a descendant of Heth; transliterated <i>Hittite</i>	gentilic adjective; with the definite article	Strong's #2850 BDB #366

**Translation:** ...he took a wife: [he took] Judith, the daughter of Beerî the Hittite, and [he took] Basemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite.

Whereas Abraham was very careful to make certain that Isaac married a woman from their family, which means they would have their standards—and Isaac would do the same regarding Jacob, Esau, Jacob's twin, was not so discerning. He married two Hittite women. So he failed in regards to two things: he married two women, which is not God's plan for any man (not at the same time); and he married Hittite women.

First, he seemed to rename the one wife, as she is known as *Judith*, which means *Jewess*; and perhaps this was somehow his way of saying that she was a member of their tribe. However, the proper name for *Jew* (Judah) is not found until Genesis 29. So, that explanation would be weak.

He took another wife named *Basemath*, which means *fragrance, perfume*; which sounds alright to me, apart from her being a Hittite.

Genesis 26:34 When Esau was 40 years old, he took a wife: [he took] Judith, the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and [he took] Basemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Abraham already warned his servant not to take a Canaanite wife for Isaac (Genesis 24:3) and, later, Isaac will warn Jacob not to marry a Canaanite woman (Genesis 28:1). The Hittites are descended from Canaan, so they are a branch of the Hittites (Genesis 10:15). So, we know that marrying a Hittite or a Canaanite is out of the question for those in the line of promise (obviously, there could be individual exceptions to this).

*Preacher's Complete Homiletical Commentary: [This] was a transgression of duty towards his parents. He was old enough to be free from the direct control of his parents—to act and choose for himself. But he ought not to have acted contrary to their wish, especially when that wish was reasonable and righteous. His conduct was a "grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah." It may truly be said, that one of the greatest griefs of this sad world is the grief caused by children to their parents.*<sup>236</sup>

As has been the case throughout the Bible, certain men will be followed; certainly lines will be followed. However, for the lines that do not lead to the Messiah, they would no longer be listed after a generation or three. That line might continue to live on for many generations, but the Bible no longer records the people in that line. We know that there were detailed records of these lines in the first third of the book of 1 Chronicles, which does follow many genealogies. However, in the rest of Scripture, there is no need to follow out any other line except for the line of promise. And the various authors of Scripture appear to know which line that is, as guided by God the Holy Spirit.

The important line is the line of the Messiah, so that is followed all the way from Adam to Noah to Abraham to David to Jesus. That is the *only* line followed out in the Bible. This, in itself, is quite remarkable. There are all kinds of detractors to Scripture, who disagree about when it was written and who wrote it. But, you know what no one disagrees with? There is about a 400 year gap between the Old and New Testaments. Furthermore, no one thinks that the Old Testament was written all at once, but over a period of several hundred years at least (I believe that, technically, the Old Testament was written over a period of about 2000 years). But somehow, whoever wrote it and at whatever time it was written, they knew enough to follow only one genealogical line from beginning to the end. There is a line going from Adam to Abraham. There is no other line followed during that time period. Then the line from Abraham to David is followed—and no other line. And then, *two* lines are followed from David, and one leads to Joseph and the other leads to Mary. How did someone know which line to follow? How did they know to make mention of this line of Esau, and to follow it out a couple of generations, and then to stop?

So that there is no misunderstanding—the Bible does not follow out the line of Moses; the Bible does not follow out the line of Joseph. Both of these are great men, but they are not in the line of the Messiah, and so their lines are not followed out (Chronicles probably follows Joseph's line—this would be through his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh—for a few generations).

As an aside, this is one of the many places where Mormons go off the rails. Although the Bible has genealogical lines, the focus is always on the line from Adam to Abraham to David to Jesus. The Mormon Scriptures (written

<sup>236</sup> From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/phc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 29, 2015.

long after the Bible) are filled with genealogical lines. If you understand why there are genealogies in the Bible (these genealogies lead from Adam to Jesus Christ), you then ask why do the Mormons record genealogies? There is only one genealogical line that matters. The first 8 or so chapters of 1Chronicles inform us that genealogical records for many people were preserved and over a long period of time. However, apart from these chapters in 1Chronicles, the Bible concerns itself with one genealogical line, because there is only one celebrity in the Christian life, and that is Jesus Christ. There is only one genealogical line that matters, and that is *the line of promise* or *the line of grace*. We may find our own genealogy to be interesting, and I have studied my own to some extent. However, I would not include my own genealogy in the study of this or that chapter, because it is not pertinent to anything. If you understand that my own genealogy has no place in the study of the Word of God, that should help you to understand why the Mormon genealogies recorded in their *scriptures* are without meaning—because there is only *one* line of promise.

Isaac was careful to chose a wife with a similar background (actually, Abraham was careful to see that this was done). Isaac either has no control over Esau or does not attempt to find Esau a wife as did his own father, Abraham, on his behalf. Since Esau is well-to-do, he marries two women and choses two women who are Hittites, so they do not have the same training in God's Word or in theology. This further disqualifies Esau from heirship to his father's wealth. Remember all of Jacob's trickery in order to receive the blessing of Isaac and the inheritance of Abraham? He did not have to do anything. Right here, Esau is cutting himself off. Now, Esau will be blessed—but the line of promise is going to go through Jacob. There is nothing that Jacob needed to do, tricky or otherwise, in order for that to happen.

As a family, Esau and his wives were problematic for Isaac and Rebekah; and their descendants will also be at odds for the centuries to follow. *Bitterness of spirit* means that Esau and his choice of wives *brought grief* to Isaac and Rebekah.

The names of Esau's wives have been a topic of discussion of those would discredit Scripture. They note the inconsistencies in the names. However, it is not unheard of for the same person to be called by two different names. At home, a young son might be called Bobby whereas in school he may be called Bob or Robert. When such a thing occurs, the school is not beside itself in an attempt to determine how many children emanate from the household. We may have a similar occurrence with Esau's wives, which we shall cover below.

Esau's wives are named in several different places, and their names are different, so what's up with that?

### When Critics Ask on, Esau's Wives

GENESIS 26:34 —How many wives did Esau have?

**PROBLEM:** Genesis 26:34 states that Esau married Judith the daughter of Beerli the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. However, Genesis 36:2–3 states that Esau's wives were Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, and Basemath, Ishmael's daughter. Did Esau marry Elon's daughter Basemath or his daughter Adah? Did Esau have two, three, or four wives?

**SOLUTION:** The wives of Esau were four—Judith, the daughter of Beerli; Basemath, who was also named Adah, the daughter of Elon; Aholibamah the daughter of Anah; and Basemath the daughter of Ishmael. The reason Judith is not mentioned in Genesis 36:2–3 is because she bore him no children, and Genesis 36 is a statement of “[the records of the generations of Esau](#)” ( Gen. 36:1 , NASB ). Also, it was a common practice for men and women to be known by more than one name. Apparently, Basemath, the daughter of Elon, was also named Adah and is so identified in Genesis 36:2 in order to distinguish her from Basemath the daughter of Ishmael. So Esau had four wives.

Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe, *When Critics Ask*; Victor Books; taken from e-Sword, Genesis 26:34.

Gill remarks: *Josephus makes Judith to be the same with Aholibamah; but her father's name was Zibeon, and an Hivite, and must therefore be another person, not only the name being different, but the tribe, Genesis 36:2. and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite; whom Aben Ezra takes to be the same with Adah, and so does Josephus; and in this they may be right, since the name of her father, and his nation or tribe, agree (Genesis 36:2). The fathers of these two women are represented by Josephus as men of great power and authority among the Canaanites, as very probably they were. Esau had another wife of the same name with this last, but she was daughter of Ishmael, and sister of Nebajoth (Genesis 36:3); for he had more wives than those; these were his two first, who very probably were not taken together, but one after another, though it may be but at a short distance from each other.*<sup>237</sup>

This is pretty similar:

### The Bible Query on, Esau's Four Wives

Q: In Gen 26:34 and Gen 36:2-3, who were Esau's four wives?

A: Wives 1-2: At 40, Esau married two Hittites, Judith and Basemath daughter of Elon (Genesis 26:34-35). Adah, daughter of Elon the Hittite (Genesis 36:2), is probably another name for Basemath.  
 Wife 3: After Jacob left, Esau married the Ishmaelite Mahalath, sister of Nabaioth (Genesis 28:8-9) Basemath, the daughter of Ishmael and sister of Nabaioth (Genesis 36:3), is probably another name for Mahalath.  
 Wife 4: Esau married Oholibamah daughter of Anah (Genesis 36:3).

Judith was probably not mentioned in the genealogies in Genesis 36, because she bore no children. See When Critics Ask p.56 and Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties p.99-101 for more info.

From *Bible Query*; March 2006 version. Copyright (c) Christian Debater(tm) 1997-2006.; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:34.

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Poole: *And as Esau had several names, being called also Edom and Seir; so it seems these women and their parents had, by comparing this with Genesis 36:2, which was usual in those times and places. Or Esau had more wives than these.*<sup>238</sup>

Using the dating system from the Scofield Bible, this puts us at approximately 1750 B.C. Other dating systems place this around 1870 B.C.

Esau married other women as well: [So when Esau saw that the Canaanite women did not please Isaac his father, Esau went to Ishmael and took as his wife, besides the wives he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth. \(Gen 28:8-9; ESV\)](#)

Coffman: *It is remarkable that Isaac refrained from taking other wives. This was due, perhaps, first of all to his great and sincere love for Rebekah, and also possibly, to the fact of his having known firsthand the horrors of a polygamous household.*<sup>239</sup>

<sup>237</sup> Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:34 (slightly edited).

<sup>238</sup> Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:34.

<sup>239</sup> From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015.

Genesis 26:35			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
môrâh (מָרָה) [pronounced moh-RAW]	<i>bitterness, grief, sadness</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #4786 BDB #601
rûwach (רוּחַ) [pronounced ROO-ahkh]	<i>wind, breath, spirit, apparition</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #7307 BDB #924
This is known as a metonym of the effect. This <i>grief of mind</i> is caused by these two Hittite wives. <sup>240</sup>			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Yis <sup>e</sup> châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced yihse-KHAWK]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Rib <sup>e</sup> qâh (רִיבְקָה) [pronounced rihb-KAW]	<i>ensnarer; a noose; fat, fattened; a quarrel appeased; which is transliterated Rebekah, Rebekkah, Rebecca</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #7259 BDB #918

**Translation:** These women [lit., they] were bitter of temperament toward Isaac and Rebekah.

They refers back to the wives of Esau. Esau, in his marriages, did not make good choices.

Life Application Bible Study Notes makes an application here: *Esau married pagan women, and this upset his parents greatly. Most parents can be a storehouse of good advice, because they have a lifetime of insight into their children's character. You may not agree with everything your parents say, but at least talk with them and listen carefully. This will help avoid the hard feelings Esau experienced.*<sup>241</sup>

Genesis 26:34–35 When Esau was 40 years old, he took a wife: [he took] Judith, the daughter of Beerī the Hittite, and [he took] Basemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite. These women [lit., they] were bitter of temperament toward Isaac and Rebekah. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

<sup>240</sup> *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; p. 561.

<sup>241</sup> From <http://newsyoucanbelieve.com/bible/2010/01/09/day-009/> accessed July 31, 2015.

Genesis 26:34–35 When Esau turned 40, he took two wives to himself: he took Judith, who was the daughter of Beeri the Hittite; and he took Basemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite. These women were bitter toward Isaac and Rebekah. (Kukis paraphrase)

The fact that his wives did not fit into the family well, will actually be used later by Rebekah, when she sends her son Jacob away. Gen. 27:46–28:2 Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I loathe my life because of the Hittite women. If Jacob marries one of the Hittite women like these, one of the women of the land, what good will my life be to me?" Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and directed him, "You must not take a wife from the Canaanite women. Arise, go to Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel your mother's father, and take as your wife from there one of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother. Even though this was cover to remove Jacob from their area (Rebekah his mother wanted to protect Jacob; yet could not reveal that she was in on the plan to deceive her own husband). The principle still stands.

Now, many times when I read this in the past, I thought that this meant that Isaac and Rebekah did not like these two women. However, they are the subject of the verb, suggesting that they did not like Isaac and Rebekah. Why would this be? Jacob has the blessing which he stole from Esau for a mess of pottage. So, all that they could inherit from Isaac would go to Jacob. No doubt Esau complained about this from time to time, and, as his wives, they took up for him here. Or, perhaps they did not think much of Isaac and Rebekah, finding them to be old fashioned and overly religious?

It is interesting. Isaac has two children, twins, Jacob and Esau. Jacob is clearly a schemer and a chiseler, always trying to put one over on Esau. He knew of the spiritual blessing and he believed it. However, Jacob tried to get this blessing through subterfuge and by human effort and deception. God's plan is going to move ahead, no matter what. However, it does not require deception in order to further it.

Esau was more straightforward than Jacob, but he married the wrong kind of women.

The ESV; capitalized was used below:

<b>Biblical Warnings About Marriage to the Wrong Kind of Women</b>	
<b>Passage</b>	<b>Text</b>
Gen. 24:2–4	And Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh, that I may make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell, but will go to my country and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son Isaac."
Ex. 34:12–16	Take care, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land to which you go, lest it become a snare in your midst. You shall tear down their altars and break their pillars and cut down their Asherim (for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God), <b>lest</b> you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and when they whore after their gods and sacrifice to their gods and you are invited, you eat of his sacrifice, and <b>you take of their daughters for your sons</b> , and their daughters whore after their gods and make your sons whore after their gods.

## Biblical Warnings About Marriage to the Wrong Kind of Women

Passage	Text
Deut. 7:1–4	"When the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations more numerous and mightier than yourselves, and when the LORD your God gives them over to you, and you defeat them, then you must devote them to complete destruction. You shall make no covenant with them and show no mercy to them. You shall not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons, for they would turn away your sons from following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of the LORD would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly."
Ezra 9:1–2	After these things had been done, the officials approached me and said, "The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands with their abominations, from the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they have taken some of their daughters to be wives for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy race has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands. And in this faithlessness the hand of the officials and chief men has been foremost." See also Ezra 9:11–12 10:19 Nehemiah 13:1–3 13:23–26.
2Co 6:14–15	Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?
James 4:4	You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.
See also Mal. 2:11, 15 1Corinthians 5:9.	
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V. 35: These women [lit., *they*] were bitter of temperament toward Isaac and Rebekah. The verb here is in the feminine plural, which means, these wives of Esau made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah. The Bible does not give us specifics as to *how* these women made life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah. We do not know why, exactly; but these wives were an unhappy choice. If you have lousy in-laws, then you have an inkling of what is going on. If a woman wants to make herself anathema to her mother-in-law, then she will find a way to do that. Women tend to be very skilled when it comes to making another woman dislike them.

You will recall that Abraham went to great lengths to go east to find a wife for Isaac; and that Jacob also will go east to find a wife from his family as well. Esau did not do this; he does not appear to be interested in perpetuating faith in the God of Abraham. Very likely, these other women worshiped false gods, and this was difficult for Isaac and Rebekah.

We may read this section and ask, *why is this here?*

### 3 Reasons for this Brief Section on Esau's Wives (Constable)

1. This explains and justifies the reason for Jacob's later departure for Paddanaram (Genesis 27:46—28:2).
2. This identifies the ancestors of the Edomites who later played a major role in Israel's history.
3. This reveals Esau's carnal character again, as well as his disinterest in the covenant of God.

Paraphrased from Dr. Thomas Constable in *Dr. Constable's Notes on Genesis*, the 2013 edition; Copyright © 2013 by Thomas L. Constable; p. 194.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Genesis 26:34–35 When Esau was forty years old, he took Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite to be his wife, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and they made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah. (ESV)

Rather than focus on the names and how many wives Esau had, the focus below will be on v. 35 and Esau's choice of wives.

There is some speculation contained in most of the commentary below.

### Commentary on Esau's Wives

Commentator	Commentary
<b>Albert Barnes</b>	<i>Esau at forty years of age forms matrimonial connections with the Hittites. Heth was the second son of Kenaan, and had settled in the hills about Hebron. Esau had got acquainted with this tribe in his hunting expeditions. From their names we learn that they spoke the same language with himself. They belonged to a family far gone in transgression and apostasy from God. The two wives chosen from such a stock were a source of great grief to the parents of Esau. The choice manifested his tolerance at least of the carnal, and his indifference to the spiritual.<sup>242</sup></i>
<b>Adam Clarke</b>	<i>It is very likely that the wives taken by Esau were daughters of chiefs among the Hittites, and by this union he sought to increase and strengthen his secular power and influence.<sup>243</sup></i>
<b>Clark continued</b>	<i>The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel, and that of Jerusalem, say they were addicted to idol worship, and rebelled against and would not hearken to the instructions either of Isaac or Rebekah. From Canaanites a different conduct could not be reasonably expected. Esau was far from being spiritual, and his wives were wholly carnal.<sup>244</sup></i>
<b>John Gill</b>	<i>The marriage of them itself was a trouble to them, it being contrary to their will that any of their children should marry with the Canaanites, and those the worst sort of them, the Hittites; it having been the care of Abraham, the father of Isaac, that his son should not marry with them, and laid a strict injunction on his servant not to take a wife for his son from among them; and which was an example to be followed in later times, and which Esau very likely was not ignorant of: and besides this, the women themselves he took for wives were very disagreeable on all accounts, partly because of their religion, being idolaters, and partly by reason of their temper and behaviour, being proud, haughty, and disobedient; as all the three Targums intimate.<sup>245</sup></i>

<sup>242</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:34–35.

<sup>243</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:34.

<sup>244</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:35.

<sup>245</sup> Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:35.

## Commentary on Esau's Wives

Commentator	Commentary
<b>L. M. Grant</b>	<i>Esau, the firstborn of Isaac, did not value the promise of God as his fathers did. Isaac had received a wife from the kindred of Abraham, for God's promise was connected with that line, the line of faith. Esau took two wives, both from the Hittites, the children of Heth, which means "fear," typical of those who live in fear of death rather than by faith. Compare Hebrews 2:15, which speaks of "those who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." How dishonoring to God it is to mix His promise with the fear of death! But mixed marriages have been a source of great trouble throughout history. Esau's marriages therefore were a grief of mind to his parents. May every believer pay closest attention to the serious admonition of 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, which begins, "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers."<sup>246</sup></i>
<b>Matthew Henry</b>	<i>(1.) It grieved them that he married without asking, or at least without taking, their advice and consent: see whose steps those children tread in who either contemn or contradict their parents in disposing of themselves. (2.) It grieved them that he married the daughters of Hittites, who had no religion among them; for Isaac remembered his father's care concerning him, that he should by no means marry a Canaanite. (3.) It should seem, the wives he married were provoking in their conduct towards Isaac and Rebekah; those children have little reason to expect the blessing of God who do that which is a grief of mind to their good parents.<sup>247</sup></i>
<b>Jamieson, Fausset and Brown</b>	<i>If the pious feelings of Abraham recoiled from the idea of Isaac forming a matrimonial connection with a Canaanitish woman [Genesis 24:3], that devout patriarch himself would be equally opposed to such a union on the part of his children; and we may easily imagine how much his pious heart was wounded, and the family peace destroyed, when his favorite but wayward son brought no less than two idolatrous wives among them—an additional proof that Esau neither desired the blessing nor dreaded the curse of God. These wives never gained the affections of his parents, and this estrangement was overruled by God for keeping the chosen family aloof from the dangers of heathen influence.<sup>248</sup></i>

Even though there is a lot of speculation, we may reasonably conclude that Esau married the wrong women and the wrong sort of women.

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Let's look at these 2 verses: [When Esau was forty years old, he took Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite to be his wife, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and they made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah. \(Gen 26:34–35; ESV\)](#)

### Snider Summarizes Genesis 26:34–35

1. The final two verses of this chapter shed further light on the nature of Esau.
2. At age forty, he marries two girls, Judith and Basemath.
3. The practice of polygamy was not sanctioned by God, and had not been practiced by either Abraham or Isaac.
4. Esau must have learned this from the culture in Canaan, where it was an accepted practice.
5. Just because the cosmos accepts something and says that it is all right does not mean that the adjusted believer accepts it.
6. Polygamy is not a part of the plan of God for the believer, monogamy is the norm. RM/RW

<sup>246</sup> From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/lmg/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015.

<sup>247</sup> Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 26:34–35.

<sup>248</sup> Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, Genesis 26:34.

### Snider Summarizes Genesis 26:34–35

7. Not only does Esau accept the norms and standards of the cosmos, he marries two girls who are from Hittite families.
8. It is clear from our earlier study that Abraham found nothing in these Canaanites which was acceptable in terms of marriage.
9. Nothing has changed by the time of Esau, the Hittites were worse, if anything.
10. The Hittites were the sort of people whom Esau pursued.
11. Esau was a cosmic fornicator, who had no regard for the doctrine of his parents.
12. He completely repudiated the spiritual heritage of Abraham and Isaac.
13. This marriage into families so obviously decadent and negative did not make Isaac and Rebekah happy.
14. This turn of events is described as bitterness of spirit to them.
15. The correct posture toward those who are overtly manifesting themselves to be negative, is complete
16. Failure to separate from these types will eventually drag Israel down. Ezra 9:1
17. Even great believers are not exempt from the consequences of failure in this area. IKings 11:1
18. The obvious application for us who live among the cosmos is to remain separate and uninvolved with the Hittites around us.

Ron Snider, [Genesis 26](#), accessed July 26, 2015 (slightly edited).

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Esau's wives here are called Hittites. Here is a brief bit in information on the Hittites.

### Snider on the Hittites

1. The original Hittites were descended from Ham through Heth. Gen. 10:15, 23:3
2. They occupied Canaan and are often listed among the groups of that region. Ex. 3:8,17; 13:5, 33:2, et
3. They were prominent in the area of Hebron during the life of Abraham. Gen. 23
4. They were for the most part unbelievers who were engaged in worship of a pantheon.
5. They referred to their pantheon as "the thousand gods", although the present listing of Divine names falls short of that.
6. The male head of their pantheon was a storm deity, and the female head was a solar deity.
7. Each king had his own patron deity.
8. God reveals that He is definitely against the Hittites and will eventually dispossess them of their land.
9. The Jews are told to completely annihilate them at the time of the conquest. Ex. 34:11, Deut. 20:17
10. They were not completely destroyed and continued to exist until the time of Solomon. c 950 B.C.. They were substantially a group of pagan idol worshipers with no redeeming spiritual values.

Ron Snider, [Genesis 26](#), accessed July 26, 2015 (slightly edited).

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Esau may have married 7 different women, comparing this passage to Genesis 28:9 36:2, 34. However, some of these are different names for the same person.

Why did Esau marry so many women? He was not happy with the first wife, so he married a second. He was not happy with the first two women, so he married a third. And so on. He came from a family that worshiped Y<sup>e</sup>howah Elohim, and he married women who worshiped heathen gods. As a result, Esau himself could not be made happy; and with each additional wife, his parents were made more unhappy.

It is likely that they all lived together on the compound. They would not all live in the same tent, but their tents would not be far from one another—Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob and Esau all being the chief members of this compound. How do you think things worked out with Esau and two or three or four wives, all living in the same compound, none of whom worshiped Y<sup>e</sup>howah, all of whom practices various forms of paganism, and these wives

would have been jealous of one another. How do you think that was for camp morale? How do you think Isaac and Rebekah felt about these wives?

Leopold writes: "*Grief of mind "bitterness of spirit," resulted from these marriages. The corrupt heathenish ways of those wives would have been the source of this.*"<sup>249</sup>

Coffman: *However, we feel sure that something far more important than cultural differences entered into the bitterness of Isaac and Rebekah, and that was the pagan gods that thereby found their way back into the affections of the chosen race. This would eventually be the undoing and dismantling of Israel. And it is strange that this prophecy of that eventual development in Israel would have appeared right here in the pagan marriages of Esau. Yes, it is true that Esau was not "of the covenant," but he and Jacob were still brothers, and the same contamination eventually appeared in the family of Jacob also.*<sup>250</sup>

The NEV commentary: *Isaac had waited a long time and his family had gone to great lengths so that he could marry a believer. He and Rebekah were understandably disappointed that their son chose to marry unbelieving women from the surrounding world.*<sup>251</sup>

The Bible tells us:

[Genesis 26:35](#) Esau's wives made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah.

We will study more about Esau and his wives, and even study, in a very limited way, his children. But the line of Jesus does not go through Esau; therefore, even though this portion of the Bible is written about 2000 B.C., the author knows enough that, Esau's genealogical line is not the line to follow. We never have any line that is not the Line of Promise followed out for too many generations. These lines always come to a dead end (even though Esau was, no doubt, a believer in the Revealed God).

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## A Set of Summary Doctrines and Commentary

### An Abbreviated Exegesis of Genesis 26:

Bible translation used: The Scriptures 2009. Unless otherwise noted, all other quotations will be taken from this translation as well.

In the Scriptures 2009, instead of *God*, we have the word *Elohim*, which is a transliteration from the Hebrew. The other name for God, YHWH (or Jehovah, Yahweh, Adonai, Lord, JHWH, Y<sup>e</sup>howah) is represented with the actual

<sup>249</sup> From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015. Coffman cites H. C. Leopold, *Genesis*; (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House); p. 734.

<sup>250</sup> From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=26> accessed July 28, 2015.

<sup>251</sup> From <http://n-e-v.info/ot/gen26.html> accessed August 1, 2015.

Hebrew הוהי. The reason for there being so many different words used here is interesting. Originally, the Hebrew was written without vowels—not just YHWH, but every single Hebrew word. Because the Hebrew Scriptures (which we know as the Old Testament) were read aloud so often, the reader could look at the Hebrew consonants and know the word that was there. In fact, the Masorettes, who preserved the Bibles' pronunciation, introduced diacritical marks in the 7th century A.D. (these are vowel points, which was added above and below the original Hebrew text). Up to that time, every word in the Bible was read aloud except for one, and that was YHWH. When the Jews came to this proper name, they said, *Adonai* (= *Lord*). As a result, the Jews preserved the pronunciation of the Biblical text for all but one word. Of the nearly 100 translations of the Old Testament to which I refer, any one of those eight forms may be found—and one of them, the Message (I believe) uses *GOD*. Furthermore, Bible translations are not necessarily consistent at this point. One place we may read *Lord*, and elsewhere we may read *Jehovah* in the same translation.

### The Section Headings in Genesis 26:

- vv. 1–33     **Isaac in Gerar and Beersheba**  
 vv. 34–35   **Esau and His Hittite Wives**

### Isaac in Gerar and Beersheba

Genesis 26:1 And there was a scarcity of food in the land, besides the first scarcity of food which was in the days of Abraham. And Yitshaq [= *Isaac*] went to Abimelek, sovereign of the Philistines, in Gerar.

As happened from time to time, there was a famine which was taking place in Canaan. The simplest reason for this would be a dry year. You cannot grow without water. Something similar took place in the time of Abraham.

The intent of God might be for Isaac to move around a bit more in the land which God had given him.

Isaac goes to Abimelech, the ruler of the Philistines in Gerar. The proper way to do this was through direct interaction between the two men.

Genesis 26:2 And הוהי [= *YHWH*, *Y<sup>h</sup>owah*] appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Mitsrayim [= *Egypt*], live in the land which I command you.

Apparently, when there was the drought, Isaac had considered moving down to Egypt. God told him, “Absolutely not.”

Genesis 26:3 “Sojourn in this land. And I shall be with you and bless you, for I give all these lands to you and your seed. And I shall establish the oath which I swore to Abraham your father.

God tells Isaac, “Use this time as an opportunity to travel around Canaan and get a better look at what God has given to you and your descendants.

Genesis 26:4–5 “And I shall increase your seed like the stars of the heavens, and I shall give all these lands to your seed. And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because Abraham obeyed My voice and guarded My Charge: My commands, My laws, and My Torot.”<sup>a</sup>



<sup>a</sup>Torot - plural of Torah, teaching.

God takes His promise originally made to Abraham and reiterates it to Isaac. God tells Isaac that his father Abraham obeyed God's voice and guarded His Charge, His commands, His laws and His Torah.

I would postulate that there were a number of laws given to the human race when Noah and his three sons exited the Ark. Let me also suggest that these laws were almost universally known.

Genesis 26:6 [And Yitshaq dwelt in Gerar.](#)

**The Journeys of Isaac** (a map); from [bible-history.com](#); accessed June 21, 2024.

At one time, Isaac stayed in Beer-lahai-roi while waiting for Rebekah to come to him. It appears that he decided to move further north but still remain in the Negev until his new wife arrives onto the scene (Genesis 24:62). Maybe Isaac and Rebekah stayed there; and maybe they moved around a little. You can see by the map that Gerar is a bit closer to the Mediterranean Sea. The Philistine-controlled cities were located on or near the coast.

Genesis 26:7 [And when the men of the place asked about his wife, he said, "She is my sister." For he was afraid to say, "She is my wife," thinking, "lest the men of the place should kill me for Ribqah \[= Rebekah\], because she is good-looking."](#)

Interestingly enough, Isaac puts Rebekah into the same circumstance as his father Abraham put Sarah into when in a *foreign* region. At first, you may think, *isn't this too much of a coincidence for Isaac to do the same thing that his father Abraham did?* No, and for a variety of reasons. Both Abraham and Isaac had married beautiful women, women who remained beautiful for many years. They both lived in a land where this section was controlled by one group, and this other region was controlled by another group. Since both men traveled around the land—as God had required them to do—they were both going to run into similar circumstances. And, most importantly, Isaac knew about this happening previously to Abraham (it happened twice); so why would he not try what his father tried? Since we know about these incidents today, Isaac no doubt knew about them back then.

The way that the Genesis Scriptures were preserved were, the patriarch of any era would speak, from memory, all of the previously recorded Scriptures (and by *recorded*, I mean *remembered*). Then this same person would add information about himself. When appropriate, one of the patriarch's sons would stand up after and speak to his life and personal circumstances. Isaac seems to be very big on knowing about his extended family (particularly because he did not seek them out and spend time with them, as they were outside of Canaan). Jacob will pretty much talk about himself. As we will find out, there are many chapters about Jacob. Many chapters about Abraham, many about Jacob, but not so many on Isaac.

Isaac, realizing that he is about to be put in the same situation as his father, reacts exactly as his father did. He makes the claim that Rebekah is his sister (and I believe this word can stand in for a relative). If memory serves, Isaac and Rebekah are third cousins; so they are relatives.

Genesis 26:8 [And it came to be, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelek sovereign of the Philistines looked through a window, and he watched and saw Yitshaq playing with Ribqah his wife.](#)

Isaac and Rebekah lived among the Philistines for a significant amount of time and Abimelech once, through their window, saw them being unusually playful (this is not necessarily a word that refers to sexual overtures). The interaction is intimate enough for Abimelech to recognize, this is not brother and sister, but husband and wife.

Genesis 26:9 [So Abimelek called Yitshaq and said, "See, truly she is your wife! So how could you say, 'She is my sister'?" And Yitshaq said to him, "Because I said, 'Lest I die on account of her.'"](#)

Abimelech appears to have confronted Isaac right then and there. He has just caught them in the act of being too familiar with one another.

Genesis 26:10 And Abimelech said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the people had almost lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt on us."

This Abimelech, unlike the ruler that Abraham interacted with, did not collect attractive women as his wives. However, it was certainly possible that any of his people could have been particularly forward with Rebekah.

I don't think that this was something which has actually happened, but this is what came to Abimelech's mind.

Genesis 26:11 And Abimelech commanded all his people, saying, "He who touches this man or his wife shall certainly be put to death."

Abimelech later made a decree that no one was to touch Isaac or his wife; otherwise, they would be subject to execution.

Genesis 26:12 And Yitshaq sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundredfold, and הויה blessed him.

Isaac continued to live in this land and when he planted crops, God blessed him with a massive harvest. I think the idea here is not that Isaac got exact 100 plants for every seed he planted, or anything that was so precisely measured. I believe the idea is, he had an incredible amount of produce for the amount of land which he planted, so much so that, anyone who knew about his farm was aware of that great return.

Genesis 26:13 And the man grew great and went forward until he became very great.

Based upon his farming, both with regards to his crops and his animals, Isaac did very well.

Genesis 26:14 And he came to have possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and a great body of servants, and the Philistines envied him.

Isaac possessed great herds of animals and he has many servants. I would assume that much of this he inherited from his father (Abraham was alive when Jacob and Esau are born, and apparently producing his own crop of kids at the same time). However, we read about Abraham's death in the previous chapter. Therefore, Isaac has what he has amassed on his own along with the slaves which previously belonged to Abraham.

Genesis 26:15 And the Philistines had stopped up all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, and filled them with dirt.

Because of the jealousy of the Philistines, they stopped up all of his wells. Apparently, these were wells dug earlier by Abraham's servants.

You may recall that in Genesis 20, Abraham and Sarah also lived in Gerar, so Isaac apparently moved in the land where Abraham lived previously, since many of the wells were already dug.

Was this the same Abimelech in Genesis 20 and 26? I would suggest that this is father and son. The father would have hit on Rebekah from the beginning. This Abimelech did no such thing.

Also, it is possible that *Abimelech* is simply a title (*melech* means *king, ruler*).

Genesis 26:16 And Abimelech said to Yitshaq, "Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we."

Those who were jealous of Isaac tried attacking him indirectly (by blocking his wells). Abimelech became concerned that Isaac, with his servants, was becoming more powerful than the Philistines over whom he ruled. This relationship could go in a completely different direction if Isaac was after power and/or land.

Genesis 26:17 So Yitshaq went from there and pitched his tent in the wadi Gerar, and dwelt there.

Isaac moves further away, apparently, but is still in Gerar.

Genesis 26:18 And Yitshaq dug again the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham. And he called them by the names which his father had called them.

His father had lived in this region previously and had dug many wells. Isaac has his people go out and clean these wells out.

Genesis 26:19–20 But when Yitshaq's servants dug in the wadi and found a well of running water there, the herdsmen of Gerar strove with Yitshaq's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours." And he called the name of the well Eseq, because they strove with him.

When Isaac's servants were digging in this region, coming across a very strong well of water, there were men of Gerar who disagreed with Isaac's servants as to who had clear ownership of this well.

Genesis 26:21 And they dug another well, and they strove over that one too, and he called its name Sitnah.

Isaac's servants dug another well and that also became a point of contention.

Genesis 26:22 And he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not strive over it. And he called its name Rehoboth, and said, "For now הוה has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."

Isaac apparently moved far enough away to dig another well, and there was no one who challenged him in this new location.

Genesis 26:23 And from there he went up to Be'ersheba.

At some point, Isaac went up to Beersheba (along with his wife, children, and slaves).

Genesis 26:24 And הוה appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the Elohim of your father Abraham. Do not fear, for I am with you, and shall bless you and increase your seed for My servant Abraham's sake."

God appears to Isaac and reiterates His promises that he made to Abraham.

Genesis 26:25 And he built a slaughter-place there, and called on the Name of הוה, and he pitched his tent there, and the servants of Yitshaq dug a well there.

Isaac built an altar here and his servants dug a well here as well.

Genesis 26:26 And Abimelech came to him from Gerar, with Ahuzzath, one of his friends, and Pichol the commander of his army.

Abimelech, one of this friends, and Pichol come to Isaac.

Genesis 26:27 And Yitshaq said to them, "Why have you come to me, seeing you have hated me and have sent me away from you?"

Isaac is somewhat upset with Abimelech. The circumstances in Gerar caused Isaac to move further and further from Abimelech's city.

Genesis 26:28–29 But they said, "We have clearly seen that הוה is with you. And we said, 'Please, let there be an oath between us, between you and us. And let us make a covenant with you, that you do no evil to us, as we

have not touched you, and as we have done only good toward you, and have sent you away in peace. You are now blessed by יהוה.' ”

Abimelech admits that it is clear that God is with Isaac. He asks to have a treaty with Isaac.

This also tells us that all three of these men believe in the Revealed God. They do not take the attitude that they have their gods and Isaac has his.

Genesis 26:30 *And he made them a feast, and they ate and drank.*

Apparently Isaac agrees; and they have a large feast where they all eat and drink.

Genesis 26:31 *And they rose early in the morning and swore an oath with one another. And Yitshaq let them go, and they departed from him in peace.*

In the morning, Abimelech and his crew left. There would have been more than three in this group; but we are only told about the three.

Genesis 26:32 *And on the same day it came to be that the servants of Yitshaq came and informed him about the well which they had dug, and said to him, “We have found water.”*

Isaac informs Abimelech about the well he recently dug.

Genesis 26:33 *So he called it Shihah. Therefore the name of the city is Be'ersheba to this day.*

The well was given a name like the others.

Someone, perhaps 100 years later, remarks that this well is still in Beersheba. Given that Jacob and his sons will move to Egypt at the end of the book of Genesis, logically, this additional remark had to be made by someone prior to that move. This also speaks to the fluidity of the book of Genesis. Although we stay with this day and time, an extra verse was added which looks back from the perspective of 100 years in the future.

### **Esau and His Hittite Wives**

Genesis 26:34 *And when Ėsaw [= Esau] was forty years old, he took as wives Yehudith [= Judith] the daughter of Be'eri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Ėlon the Hittite.*

Now we consider Esau and he has two wives who are Hittites.

Genesis 26:35 *And they were a bitterness of spirit to Yitshaq and Ribqah.*

These Hittite wives never got along with Isaac and Rebekah. Let me suggest that the cultural difference and the morality difference are too much for the wives and Isaac and Rebekah to reconcile.

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### **Addendum**

My only problem with this summary is, I don't see the idea of Isaac asserting his rights, when his wells are taken over as the right thing to do. He appears to be attempting to be at peace with those around him, which is good advice. None of this land belongs to Isaac at this time, even though God has promised it to him. Therefore, how can he demand his rights?

In any case, God took care of everything. Isaac is reconciled to Abimelech; and therefore, to the Philistines of Gerar. Abimelech sought him out; not the other way around. All of this is God working towards the blessing of Isaac.

### Ballinger Summarizes Genesis 26

1. After chapter 27 Isaac is not hardly mentioned except in the mention of his death (35:27-28).
2. His sons and their actions dominate the text.
3. Isaac lived somewhat in the shadow of his father and his sons.
4. He appears as a man who is passive and easily pushed about.
5. His considerable monetary blessing comes as a result of his association with his father and not so much on his own merit.
6. Abraham is frequently mentioned in this chapter to illustrate the point.
7. With the appearance of the man Isaac on the scene the promises made to his father are now guarantees.
8. Like his father before him he lied about his wife because "he was afraid."
9. And this in the face of the divine pledge to be with him and bless him when he was in a state of mental attitude fear.
10. Despite his failures, he continues to flourish in the land, even in the face of harassment from the servants of Abimelech.
11. This was particularly evident in his temporary endeavor at farming.
12. His flocks and herds flourished as well.
13. Due to jealousy wealthy Isaac is finally expelled from Gerar, and then finally he is bullied into leaving the territory of Gerar altogether.
14. All the wells of his father that had been restored by Isaac's servants were seized by the Philistines and Isaac retreats.
15. In the face of all his setbacks, his conditions improve, and God appears to him a final time while he resides at Beersheba (v. 24).
16. This divine appearance strengthened him for the unexpected appearance at his encampment.
17. This time he stands his ground not fearing the king (v. 27).
18. Abimelech, seeing his great blessing, sues for peace.
19. The episode ends with Isaac securely situated in Beersheba and having a treaty with the Philistines in which they acknowledge his special status before God.
20. If one thing stands out it is this: despite his failings he is blessed and the LORD is with him as He was with his father.
21. The outcome of his failings was ever more prosperity!
22. God's grace is realized and that often in spite of the frailties of his children.

From <http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/Gen26.htm> accessed July 23, 2015.

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[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

**Application:** Now and again, you might feel as if you are spinning your wheels (as Isaac no doubt did when digging and rejigging these wells. There is a reason for this; and we need only be patient and wait upon God.

The idea here is, there are things which we find in this chapter which are extremely important.

### Why Genesis 26 is in the Word of God

1. This is one of the few chapters which deals with Isaac. There is very little history of this man in Scripture.
2. This is one of the many passages which informs us about famine in the ancient world and how this is very similar to a national economic downturn today.
3. We find out clearly in this chapter that Abimelech is a title or a family name and does not refer to only one person.
4. We learn a great deal about the geographical will of God in this chapter. There are some principles found

## Why Genesis 26 is in the Word of God

- only* in this chapter.
5. We see the changing attitude of the Philistines people toward the Jews. What had once been a very close relationship with Abraham was becoming strained during the time of Isaac.
  6. It is clear in this chapter that the rulers of Philistia did believe in Isaac's God; and that they respect Isaac and his God; and they recognized blessing by association.
  7. Because the Philistines are spoken of more times in this chapter than in any other in Genesis, we learn a great deal about them.
  8. We find out that Isaac is aware of what his father Abraham had done in previous times in heathen areas (like about the identity of his own wife); and so Isaac did exactly the same thing.
  9. We see the advancement to degeneracy of the Philistine kingdom. In the time of Abraham, it was very attuned to God and what God wanted; we see this slip somewhat in the time of Isaac. There seems to be less structure and less respect among the Philistines. The king does not appear to be as strong.
  10. This is important because the Jews will take the land, and, further, the Philistines will be a problem to them for many centuries. We begin to learn how a wonderful group of people become more and more degenerate over the years.
  11. One of the sins we besets the Philistines is jealousy. They observe what Isaac has and this makes them unhappy.
  12. It ought to be clear that coveting destroyed the economy of the Philistines.
  13. We see of the mental attitude sin of jealousy leads to other sins, like vandalism.
  14. Isaac, like every other believer in the Word of God, is not perfect. He lies to his host nation about his relationship to his wife Rebekah, saying she is his sister.
  15. Despite his shortcomings, God still blesses Isaac.
  16. We learn very important lessons concerning the relativity of wealth.
  17. We learned about the importance of a successful business and how it stimulates the economy of a geographical area.
  18. Unbelievers and atheists should desire believers to live near them and to receive all the blessing that God allows to flow to them.
  19. Why didn't God simply tell Isaac, "Now, go to Beersheba"?
  20. Even though we take a brief look at Esau's line, we also noted that we will not follow this line out, simply because it is not the line of promise.

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When I began working on this chapter, I had no clue as to how important it would be.

## What We Learn from Genesis 26

1. We studied the concept of passing down, from generation to generation, the Word of God.
2. Although our knowledge of Isaac is not expanded greatly (there is surprisingly little about him in Scripture), he does appear to add to the topics about which he writes and includes moving among them. Next to births, deaths, marriages, and a person's relationship to God, the next most important things in a person's life are vocation and moving. So, we notice that Isaac moves to Gerar where his father once lived (and where Isaac would have been raised as a youngster).
3. The liberal lie that God wants all rich people to give all of their possessions away to the poor is debunked.
4. We compare thoroughly the 3 separate incidents in Scripture, and show how they each tell a very different story and have a different lesson as well.
5. Effort was made to explain vv. 4–5, where words we normally associate with the Law of Moses are applied by God to Abraham.
6. We see how the patriarchs died out almost all at once.
7. We studied how one generation can change *everything*.

## What We Learn from Genesis 26

8. We studied how many movements appeal to the arrogance of youth in order to sell their agenda.
9. We saw how the sexual mores of our leaders can impact the morality of a country.
10. We studied the fluid morality of a country.
11. We studied how taking risks, building big, and have great vision is in the DNA of some people. Constraining them is not a smart way for a nation to go.
12. We saw how political movements based upon covetousness are the wrong movements to get behind.
13. We studied the doctrine of Envy and the politics of envy.
14. Related to this is the concept of all slaves being paid a living wage.
15. We studied liberals, government regulations, and the economy.
16. We studied the relativity of wealth.
17. Many people believe that the solution to our nation's problems is to elect good leaders. The top brass of Gerar were honorable men who understood blessing by association. However, the problem with Gerar was the people, not the leaders.
18. Do you know someone who writes this word? *G-d*. I explain why this is so stupid to do.

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The ancient historian Josephus seems to take the Old Testament texts at face value and uses them to record the history of this era.

## Josephus' History of this Time Period

### CHAPTER 18.

#### CONCERNING THE SONS OF ISAAC, ESAU AND JACOB; OF THEIR NATIVITY AND EDUCATION.

3. It was now that Isaac's affairs increased, and in a flourishing condition; and this his great riches. But Abimelech, thinking in opposition to him, while their living made them suspicious of each other, and retiring showing a secret enmity also, he afraid that his former friendship with Isaac would not secure him, if Isaac should endeavor the injuries he had formerly offered him; he therefore renewed his friendship with him, Philoc, one of his generals. And when he had obtained every thing he desired, by reason of Isaac's good nature, who preferred the earlier friendship Abimelech had shown to himself and his father to his later wrath against him, he returned home.

8. Now the mother delivered Jacob, when she was afraid that his brother would inflict some punishment upon him because of the mistake about the prayers of Isaac; for she persuaded her husband to take a wife for Jacob out of Mesopotamia, of her own kindred, Esau having married already Basemmath, the daughter of Ismael, without his father's consent; for Isaac did not like the Canaanites, so that he disapproved of Esau's former marriages, which made him take Basemmath to wife, in order to please him; and indeed he had a great affection for her.

From: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/josephus/ant-1.htm> accessed April 13, 2012. Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews*; Book 1, Chapter 1.

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Alfred Edersheim wrote a book called *The Bible History, Old Testament*, which is very similar to Josephus, where he simply rewrites much of what is in the Bible, and adds in notes and comments as he deems to be relevant.

This comes from Chapter 15, entitled *The Marriage of Isaac - Birth of Esau and Jacob - Esau sells his Birthright - Isaac at Gerar - Esau's Marriage*.

## Edersheim Summarizes Genesis 26

### CHAPTER 15

#### The Marriage of Isaac - Birth of Esau and Jacob - Esau sells his Birthright - Isaac at Gerar - Esau's Marriage (GENESIS 24; 25:19-26:35)

Before farther following the history of Isaac's trials and joys, it seems desirable to make here a few general remarks, for the purpose of explaining the conduct alike of Isaac and of Jacob, and its bearing on the history of the covenant. It has been common to describe Abraham as the man of faith, Isaac as the model of patient bearing, and Jacob as the man of active working; and in the two latter cases to connect the spiritual fruits, which were the outcome of their faith, with their natural characters also. All this is quite correct; but, in our opinion, it is necessary to take a broader view of the whole matter. Let it be borne in mind, that God had both made and established His covenant with Abraham. The history of Isaac and Jacob, on the other hand, rather represents the hindrances to the covenant. These are just the same as we daily meet in our own walk of faith. They arise from opposite causes, according as in our weakness we either lag behind, or in our haste go before God. Isaac lagged behind, Jacob tried to go before God; and their history exhibits the dangers and difficulties arising from each of these causes, just as, on the other hand, God's dealings with them show how mercifully, how wisely, and yet how holily He knew to remove these hindrances out of the way, and to uproot these sins from their hearts and lives. Accordingly, we shall consider the history of Isaac and Jacob as that of the hindrances of the covenant and of their removal.

Viewed in this light we understand all the better, not only Jacob's attempt to purchase the "birthright" - as if Esau had had the power of selling it! - but what followed that transaction? It seems that a grievous famine induced Isaac to leave his settlement, and it naturally occurred to him in so doing to follow in the wake of his father Abraham, and to go into Egypt. But when he had reached Gerar, the residence of Abimelech, king of the Philistines, where Abraham had previously sojourned, "Jehovah appeared unto him," and specially directed him to remain there, at the same time renewing to him the promises He had made to Abraham. Both in this direction and in the renewal of blessing we recognize the kindness of the Lord, Who would not expose Isaac to the greater trials of Egypt, and would strengthen and encourage his faith. Apparently, he had on reaching Gerar not said that Rebekah was his wife; and when he was, at last, "asked" about it, the want of courage which had prompted the equivocation, ripened into actual falsehood. Imitating in this the example of Abraham, he passed off his wife as his sister. But here also the kindness of the Lord interposed to spare him a trial greater than he might have been able to bear. His deceit was detected before his wife had been taken by any one; and an order given by Abimelech - whether the same who ruled at the time of Abraham, or his successor - secured her future safety. The famine seems now to have become so intense, that Isaac began to till land for himself. And God blessed him with an unusually large return - still further to encourage his faith amidst its trials. Commonly, even in very fruitful parts of Palestine, the yield is from twenty-five to fifty times that which had been sown; and in one small district, even eighty times that of wheat, and one hundred times that of barley. But Isaac at once "received an hundredfold" - to show him that even in a year of famine God could make the most ample provision for His servant. The increasing wealth of Isaac excited the envy of the Philistines. Disputes arose, and they stopped up the wells which Abraham had digged. At last, even Abimelech, friendly as he was, advised him to leave the place. Isaac removed to the valley of Gerar. But there also similar contentions arose; and Isaac once more returned to Abraham's old settlement at Beersheba. Here Jehovah again appeared unto him, to confirm, on his reentering the land, the promises previously made. Beersheba had also its name given it a second time. For Abimelech, accompanied by his chief captain and his privy councilor, came to Isaac to renew the covenant which had formerly been there made between the Philistines and Abraham. Isaac was now at peace with all around. Better still, "he builded an altar" in Beersheba, "and called upon the name of Jehovah." But in the high day of his prosperity fresh trials awaited him. His eldest son Esau, now forty years old, took two Canaanitish wives, "which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah." Assuredly, if Isaac had not "lagged far behind," he would in this have recognized the final and full unfitness of Esau to have "the birthright." But the same tendency which had hitherto kept him at best undecided, led, ere it was finally broken, to a further and a far deeper sorrow than any he had yet experienced.

There will not be a complete history found to match that in the Bible. Significant portions will be skipped over.

From <http://www.levendwater.org/books/v1bhot.pdf> accessed .

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

It may be helpful to see this chapter as a contiguous whole:

A Complete Translation of Genesis 26	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
God Guides Isaac to Gerar	
There was a famine in the land apart from the first famine in the days of Abraham. Isaac went to Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, to Gerar.	There was another famine in the land, in addition to the one during the time of Abraham. Isaac, therefore, went to the king of the Philistines, Abimelech, to Gerar, their state capitol.
Y <sup>e</sup> howah had appeared to him and He said, “You will not go down to Egypt. Dwell in the land which I say to you. Reside in this land and I will be with you and I will bless you and I will give all these lands to you and to your seed; and [by this] I will fulfill the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. I have multiplied your seed as the stars of the heavens and I have given to your seed all these lands; furthermore [lit., <i>and</i> ], all nations of the earth of blessed [themselves] by your seed. [This is] because Abraham listened to My voice and he kept My charge, My commandments, My statues and My laws.”	Jehovah appeared to Isaac and said to him, “Do not go down to Egypt; instead, move into the land that I tell you to live in. Live in this land and I will be with you and I will bless you and I will give all of these lands to you and to your descendants—by this, I have fulfilled the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. I will continue to multiply your descendants as the stars in the heavens and will give all of these lands to your descendants; furthermore, all nations of the earth cause themselves to be blessed by means of your Descendant. This has been done in eternity past because your father Abraham listened to My voice and kept My ritual observations, My commands, My statues and My laws.”
Isaac Lies to Abimelech	
Isaac is living in Gerar, and so the men of [that] place asked concerning his wife, and he answered [them], “She [is] my sister;’ for he was afraid to say, “[ <i>She is</i> ] my wife, lest the men of [that] place kill me because of Rebekah, for she is good to look at.”	When Isaac began living in Gerar, the men of that area asked about his wife. He told them that she was his sister, because he was afraid to say, “She is my wife.” He was afraid that the men there might kill him because of Rebekah because she was attractive.
And it was when the days were long to him there that Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looks out through a window and, behold, he sees Isaac playing with Rebekah his wife. Abimelech called for Isaac and he said, “Indeed she [Rebekah] [is] your wife. How could you say, ‘She [is] my sister’?”	Isaac lived there for many days. Abimelech, the Philistine king, looked out through a window and he suddenly saw Isaac playing with Rebekah his wife. Abimelech summoned Isaac and said to him, “Surely this woman is your wife and not your sister. How could you have told us that she was your sister?”
And Isaac said to him, “Because I thought [it was a good idea], so that I did not die because of her.”	And Isaac answered him, “I thought I might die because of her.”
Abimelech then said, “What [is] this [that] you have done to us? Easily one of the people could have lain with your wife and you [would] have brought guilt upon us.”	Abimelech then said, “What have you done to us? It would have been easy for one of the people to have lain with your wife, thus bringing guilt upon this city.”

A Complete Translation of Genesis 26	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
Abimelech issued an edict to [lit., <i>ordered</i> ] all the people, [which] said, “Anyone touching [or, <i>violating</i> ] this man or his wife, will surely be executed.”	Abimelech ordered his people, saying, “If anyone touches or violates this man or his wife, he will certainly be executed.”
<b>Isaac’s Success in Gerar; the Envy of the Philistines</b>	
Isaac sowed [seed] in that land and he discovered that year [that he reaped] a hundredfold. Therefore Y <sup>e</sup> howah is blessing him. So the man became great and advancing [in life] he advances.	Isaac sowed seed in that land and reaped a hundredfold, indicating that Jehovah was blessing him. So he became great in life, making progress and advancing further.
Becoming great he surely became very great [or, <i>he became greatly celebrated and valued</i> ]. Isaac [lit., <i>he</i> ] had herds of (smaller) livestock and herds of cattle as well as a large household [staff]. Therefore, the Philistines envied him.	As he became great, he was greatly celebrated and valued. Isaac had great herds of cattle and smaller livestock, as well as a huge household staff. For this reason, the Philistines envied him.
But all the wells that his father’s servants dug in the time of his father Abraham, the Philistines stopped them up and filled them with debris.	The Philistines stopped up all of the wells that the servants of his father Abraham had dug when Abraham lived on this land. They had filled them with dirt and debris.
Abimelech said to Isaac, “Go away from us, for you have become much stronger than us.”	Abimelech said to Isaac, “Move away from the city, for you have become much stronger and more powerful than us.”
<b>Isaac Digs 3 Wells</b>	
Isaac went from there and encamped in the valley of Gerar and lived there. Isaac returned and dug water wells—[the same wells] which [the servants of Abraham] dug in the time of Abraham his father.	Isaac went from there, camping out in the valley of Gerar and then deciding to live there. Isaac returned and dug water wells—the same wells which have been dug during the time of his father’s life (after Abraham had died, the Philistines filled in these wells).
The Philistines obstructed them after the death of Abraham. Isaac called the wells by the names his father called them [lit., <i>He named them the same names as the names which his father called them</i> ].	Isaac gave these wells the same names that his father used.
The servants of Isaac dug [for water] in the valley and discovered there a life-sustaining water well. The herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac’s herdsmen, saying, “The water [belongs] to us.” Therefore, Isaac called the name of the well <i>Esek</i> , for they quarreled with him [there].	The servants of Isaac dug a well in the valley and discovered there life-sustaining water. The herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac’s herdsmen, saying, “This water belongs to us.” Therefore, Isaac named this well <i>Esek</i> , because of the quarreling which took place there.
Isaac’s servants [lit., <i>they</i> ] dug another well, but they also quarreled over it. Therefore, he calls its name <i>Sitnah</i> .	Isaac’s servants dug another well, but they again quarreled over it with the herdsmen from Gerar. Therefore, Isaac named the well <i>Sitnah</i> .

## A Complete Translation of Genesis 26

### A Reasonably Literal Translation

### A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase

So they were caused to move from there and they [lit., *he*] dug another well, but they did not quarrel over it. Therefore, Isaac [lit., *he*] called its name *Rehoboth*. He said, “For now, Y<sup>e</sup>howah has made room for us and we are [now] fruitful [and prospering] in the land.”

Because of this, they were caused to move to another area, where they dug yet another well. However, they did not quarrel over this well; therefore, Isaac named it *Rehoboth*. He said, “At this time, Jehovah has made room for us, so that we are now fruitful and prospering in the land.”

### God Appears a Second Time to Isaac

He went up from there [to] Bathsheba. Y<sup>e</sup>howah appeared to Isaac [lit., *him*] in that [same] night and said, “I [am] the Elohim of Abraham your father. Do not fear for I [am] with you; and I have blessed you. I have multiplied your descendants for the sake of My servant Abraham.”

He went up from there [to] Bathsheba. Jehovah appeared to Isaac that very same night and He told him, “I am the God of Abraham your father. Cease fearing what may happen to you because I am with you and I have blessed you. I will multiply your descendants on this earth for the sake of My servant Abraham.”

He builds there an altar and he proclaims the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah. He also pitches his tent there and Isaac’s servants dig a well there.

Isaac built an altar there and he called upon the name of Jehovah. He also pitched his tent there and his servants dug him a well there as well.

### Abimelech Proposes a Non-Aggression Pact

Abimelech came to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath from his advisory staff [lit., *friend*] and Phicol, the commander of his army. Isaac said to them, “Why have you come to me, [seeing] that you hate me and you sent me away from you?”

Abimelech came to him from Gerar accompanied by Ahuzzath, a special advisor and Phicol, the commander of his army. Isaac asked them, “Why have you come to me, seeing that you were angry with me and sent me out of your jurisdiction?”

They said, “We clearly see that Y<sup>e</sup>howah is with you—therefore, we say, let there now be an oath between you and us. Let us make a covenant with you; that you do [not] do evil against us, as we have not violated you and as we have only done good toward you. We sent you away in peace, you who are now being blessed by Y<sup>e</sup>howah.”

They answered, “We clearly see that Jehovah is with you—therefore, we now ask, let there be an oath, between all of us; allow us to make a covenant with you. We ask that you do not do evil against us, as we did not violate you and we did only good to you. We sent you away in peace, and we recognize that you are greatly blessed by Jehovah.”

Isaac [lit., *he*] prepared a feast for them and they ate and they drank. They rose up early in the morning and each man swore [an oath] to his brother. Then Isaac sent them away and they departed from him in peace.

Isaac prepared a feast for them and they ate and they drank. They rose up early in the morning and each man swore an oath to his brother. Then Isaac sent them away and they departed from him in peace.

And it was on that [very] day that the servants of Isaac came and told him of the occasion of the well which they had dug. They said to him, “We have found water.” Therefore, he called the well [lit., *her*] Shiba; for this reason, the name of this [lit., *the*] city [is] Beer-sheba even to this day.

And on that very day, the servants of Isaac came to him and told him about the well that they had just dug, telling him, “We have found water.” Therefore, Isaac named the well *Shiba*; and, for this reason, this city even today carries the name Beer-sheba.

### Esau’s Hittite Wives

A Complete Translation of Genesis 26	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
When Esau was 40 years old, he took a wife: [he took] Judith, the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and [he took] Basemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite.	When Esau turned 40, he took two wives to himself: he took Judith, who was the daughter of Beeri the Hittite; and he took Basemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite.
These women [lit., <i>they</i> ] were bitter of temperament toward Isaac and Rebekah.	These women were bitter toward Isaac and Rebekah.
<a href="#">Chapter Outline</a>	<a href="#">Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines</a>

The following Psalms would be appropriately studied at this time: **Psalm 105** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Doctrinal Teachers* Who Have Taught Genesis 26			
	Series	Lesson (s)	Passage
<a href="#">R. B. Thieme, Jr.</a>	1971 Civilizations (#624)	#12	Genesis 26:34
Ken Reed	<a href="https://www.lakeeriebiblechurch.org/exegesis/">https://www.lakeeriebiblechurch.org/exegesis/</a>		Genesis 38–50
Dr. Robert Dean	<a href="https://deanbible.org/old-testament-menuitem/genesis-menuitem">https://deanbible.org/old-testament-menuitem/genesis-menuitem</a>		Genesis 1–50
Bill Wenstrom	<a href="https://www.wenstrom.org/index.php?option=com_libwritten&amp;view=libwritten&amp;selCat=2&amp;Itemid=124">https://www.wenstrom.org/index.php?option=com_libwritten&amp;view=libwritten&amp;selCat=2&amp;Itemid=124</a>		Genesis 1–50
Jack M. Ballinger	<a href="http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/genesisindex.html">http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/genesisindex.html</a>		Genesis 1–49
Ron Snider	<a href="http://www.makarios-bible-church.org/oldtest.html">http://www.makarios-bible-church.org/oldtest.html</a>		Genesis 1–50

\* By doctrinal teacher, I mean a man whose primary focus is the teaching of the Word of God, verse-by-verse and book by book. A believer under the teaching of such a man should fully understand the gospel and rebound after less than a month in attendance.

When it comes to teaching, I should think that a 45 minute teaching session would be the bare minimum; and that, at least 3x a week (with provisions for getting teaching in some way on the other days of the week). Although this man may interact or even learn from other teachers, he should clearly be the authority over his church; and the authority over him is the Word of God and God the Holy Spirit (Who guides the pastor in his study).

ICE teaching would also be a part of the package, ICE being an acronym standing for Isagogics (a teaching of the history of that time in order to understand the context of a passage), Categories (a study of categories of Bible doctrine), and Exegesis (a close study of each passage, word-by-word whenever necessary).



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