

Genesis

Chapter 26:1-14

Well, we it made past the halfway point in Genesis since there are 50 chapters and we are now starting chapter 26.

I pray you have enjoyed the book of Genesis so far and have grown as a Christian, or maybe even come to know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior through God's word. So let's get started in chapter 26.

✧ **Gen 26:1** *There was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines, in Gerar.*

Famine? What famine in the days of Abraham are they talking about here?

To find out, if you don't remember, we have to go back to chapter 12, even before Abraham was called Abraham, back to when he was called Abram.

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

This famine was right after God told Abram to leave his country and family, with Abram being around 75 years old. So this is the famine in the days of Abraham that verse one is talking about.

So this was another famine, probably around 100 years later. I say this because there is no mention of Abraham being around during this second famine, which is now in Isaac's time.

Isaac's response is to go the Abimelech, king of the Philistines. Possibly for some help or even to let him know that he is planning on going to Egypt.

(This is not the same Abimelech that Abram met with. Remember from the past studies that Abimelech is not his name but rather a title, like Pharaoh, King or President.)

But before Isaac could leave for Egypt God intervenes.

✧ **Gen 26:2-5** *Then the LORD appeared to him and said: "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land of which I shall tell you. ³ "Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and your descendants I give all these lands, and I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. ⁴ "And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; ⁵ "because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."*

Wow, here is God once again reassuring Isaac that His promise to his father Abraham will be fulfilled through him.

God is also letting Isaac know that He is with him, and not to worry even though there is a famine in the land. God says that He will take care of Isaac, and not only provide for him but bless him too.

✧ *Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you*

We have got to stop right here for a minute and think back on our lives.

Was there ever a time when you had nothing, and maybe even wondered where your next meal would come from?

Or maybe there were bills that needed to be paid, with no money to pay them.

Did you pray then, crying out to God?

Even if you didn't, God still helped you out.

How do I know this? Well if God didn't help you out, then you wouldn't be reading this right now.

We have all been in situations in the past where we just don't know what to do or how in the world we will make it through this one.

But we always do, and Why? Because God has always been there with us, watching over us, providing for us, and loving us.

I remember times when all I had to eat was popcorn. But I didn't starve. I remember having to sleep in my car because I had nowhere to go. I remember a lot of hard times in my past, but God was always there watching over me.

"Eating only popcorn, sleeping in your car. How can you say God was always there, that was no way to live?" You may be thinking.

The things I went through were because of my own sinful decisions that I made. God didn't make those decisions for me. But God loved me and always provided for me and protected me!

When you are hungry and have nothing but popcorn to eat, you're not starving, in fact you are happy with even that. With no place to live but having the protection of a car to sleep in was better than sleeping on the street.

You may not think God was taking good care of me, but the reason was because of what I chose through my sins. But still God was there.

Even now I'm not rich and I don't drive a big expensive car, or own a home, and I have to go to work everyday. But that doesn't mean God is not taking care of me.

God can give me riches and even more. But I don't need them.

God has provided a nice apartment in a nice neighborhood for me to live in.

God has provided a good job to provide for my needs. I don't make millions of dollars a year; I only make what God knows I need to provide for my family and ministry.

And my car is not fancy, but I consider it a blessing from God, because it's good and reliable, great on gas, and has everything I need to get me where I need to go. I'm even

blessed with a radio and tape player in my car so I can listen to teaching or sing songs to God. What more could I ask for or need? Nothing!

We should all learn to be happy with what we have, because if you're not, then you're saying that God is not taking care of you. Kind of like a spoiled child wanting everything they see.

† **Matt 6:7-8** *And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.*

Trust in God because He says:

† **Deut 31:6** *"Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you."*

† **Heb 13:5-6** *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we may boldly say:
"The LORD is my helper;
I will not fear.
What can man do to me?"*

I also noticed that the blessing for Isaac was not because of Isaac, but rather because of his father's obedience to God.

✠ **5** *"because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."*

Even though Abraham blew it a few times, as we saw in past studies. God still said that Abraham was obedient to Him.

King David was another man in the bible who messed up a few times. But still God says this about King David.

† **Acts 13:22** *"And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.'*

One of Satan's little tricks or lies he tells us is that if we sin that God doesn't love us anymore.

Have you ever felt that way?

But rest assured that God loves you, even when you mess up.

God is not like us. We tend to love others for what they do for us, or how they treat us.

But God loved us even though we were, and are still sinners.

† **Romans 5:8** *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

God also says:

† **Psalms 103:8-12 (Living)** *He is merciful and tender toward those who don't deserve it; he is slow to get angry and full of kindness and love. He never bears a grudge, nor remains angry forever. He has not punished us as we deserve for all our sins, for his mercy toward those who fear and honor him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. He has removed our sins as far away from us as the east is from the west.*

So if you have messed up in the past, or even recently. Remember that if we confess our sins HE IS faithful and just to forgive us for our sins.

† **1 John 1:9** *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

And that is what Abraham did. He confessed his sins to God and God forgave him. And through Abraham's obedience to God, not only was Abraham blessed but so were his descendants; as we see, starting with his first begotten son of the promise, Isaac. But not only was Isaac blessed by Abraham's obedience and God's sovereign grace toward Abraham, but we to are blessed.

† **4b ; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed;**

All the nations of the world includes us, with the Blessing being Jesus Christ. We see this in the first book of the New Testament, in the very first verse.

† **Matt 1:1** *The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:*

The lineage of Jesus Christ goes not only back to Abraham, but in the book of Luke it goes all the way back to God and the creation.

† **Luke 3:38** *the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.*

Yes we are blessed through His Son Jesus Christ, and that blessing is salvation and the blessing of being able to spend eternity in heaven with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, God and the Holy Spirit.

What more could you ask for? Nothing!

✠ **Gen 26:6-7** *⁶ So Isaac dwelt in Gerar. ⁷ And the men of the place asked about his wife. And he said, "She is my sister"; for he was afraid to say, "She is my wife," because he thought, "lest the men of the place kill me for Rebekah, because she is beautiful to behold."*

“Wait a minute Steve,” you may be thinking. “Didn’t we read this already in past studies?”

Yes we did, but no we didn’t.

We did read this in the past, but it was about Isaac’s father, Abraham.

Our children not only watch us, but they listen to the things we say (Although it may not seem like it sometimes.).

It’s very possible that Abraham told Isaac of how God had saved him from both the Egyptians as well as the Philistines with this same situation.

So what does Isaac do? That’s right, he followed in his father’s footsteps, even if they were wrong. Not only the same thing, but also in the same place.

† **Gen 20:1-2** ¹ *And Abraham journeyed from there to the South, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and stayed in Gerar. ² Now Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah.*

So does God protect Isaac just as He did with Abraham?

✧ **Gen 26:8-11** ⁸ *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. ⁹ Then Abimelech called Isaac and said, "Quite obviously she is your wife; so how could you say, 'She is my sister'?" And Isaac said to him, "Because I said, 'Lest I die on account of her.' " ¹⁰ And Abimelech said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the people might soon have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt on us." ¹¹ So Abimelech charged all his people, saying, "He who touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death."*

As I said before, this is not the same Abimelech that was around when Abraham was going through the same thing. This was very possible his son who would reign after he died. And I believe that he may have told his son about this guy named Abraham who did the same thing, and the consequences of it. This was back in chapter 20. Just think if your father told you the following.

† **Gen 20:3-7** ³ *But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, "Indeed you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife." ⁴ But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, "Lord, will You slay a righteous nation also? ⁵ "Did he not say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she, even she herself said, 'He is my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this." ⁶ And God said to him in a dream, "Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. For I also withheld you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her. ⁷ "Now therefore, restore the man's wife; for he is a prophet, and he will*

pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours."

This Abimelech knew from what his father told him, and that was that you never do this to a man of God. If you do, not only will you die, but also your family and possibly the whole nation. His father may have told him about what happen to the Egyptians who did this also.

† **Gen 12:17** *But the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife.*

So I would say, yes that God was watching over Isaac. Even though we don't read of God speaking to Abimelech in this case. God used Abimelech's father to tell him about God.

What are you telling your children about God?

Maybe you don't have children right now. What about your friends or co-workers?

† **Gen 26:12-14** ¹² *Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundredfold; and the LORD blessed him.* ¹³ *The man began to prosper, and continued prospering until he became very prosperous;* ¹⁴ *for he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and a great number of servants. So the Philistines envied him.*

The first thing we read in chapter 26 is that there was a famine in the land.

But here we read, that even though there is a famine, God blesses Isaac through this famine.

The stock market may fall, you may lose your job, you may have been robbed of all you have. But nothing can stop God from blessing you, if that is what He wants to do.

"If He does then how come I have so little?" you may be thinking.

We seem to rate our blessing on the material things we have, and not the real blessings of God.

God can and may bless you with material things. But first you must learn to be thankful for His Son Jesus Christ, to be thankful for your salvation, and to be thankful for what you have.

† **John 6:26-29** *Jesus answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him." Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."*

Do you believe?

If not, tell God that you don't, and ask Him to help you to believe or to destroy those things that are making you not believe in His Son, Jesus.

Ask God to reveal His Son Jesus to you, and He will.

No you won't see Him, but your heart will know, and then the choice is yours whether you follow the Holy Spirit's leading of your heart, or if you reject God's Son Jesus.

Well, that's it for this week.

Next week we will look at the jealousy against Isaac for God's blessing in his life. We will also read about a pack that Isaac makes, that will affect the children of Israel for a long time.