

**Gen. 26:1** And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar.

**Gen. 26:2** And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of:

**Gen. 26:3** Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father;

**Gen. 26:4** And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

**Gen. 26:5** Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

This chapter begins by telling us of another time of famine. The Lord appears to Isaac and tells him to stay where he is—not to go to Egypt. Isaac was still in the area of Abimelech, king of the Philistines. Abimelech was the title used in reference to the Philistine kings, just as Pharaoh was used for the Egyptian kings; it means father of a king.

Isaac wasn't married until he was 40, had children at 60, and now they are young men at the least. We are told that "Isaac went to Abimelech." It would seem from the verses to follow that Abimelech suggested that he go to Egypt to ride out the famine.

The Lord is still speaking to Isaac. He tells Isaac to stay where he is and He would bless him. He promises to give all these lands to Isaac and his descendants. The Lord is again confirming the promise He made to Abraham. He promises to make Isaac's descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and to bless ALL nations on earth through him. The Lord reiterates that all this would happen because Abraham had kept His "charge, commandments, statutes and laws." Now, I really don't see a lot of difference in those last four words. I guess I think of a charge as something that has been decreed to bring about a successful result/response—like an ingredient in a recipe. A command tells me that it is coming from someone in authority, but it still requires a choice of response. A statute would be a statement of law, and a law would be a directive or instruction. Again, they would be issued from someone in authority to bring about intended results. If obeyed, the intended result was certain. Suffice it to say I think they represent shades of meaning of the same main idea. The most important point is that God is pleased with obedience to Him in every way. The resulting blessing to Isaac and his descendants was a direct result of Abraham's obedience.

(9/06) Wayne Walter makes further clarification in his article on 6<sup>th</sup> Sedrah at [www.lampresource.com](http://www.lampresource.com). He translates *charge* as "safeguards," which is from the Hebrew.

"Safeguards protect us from involvement with temptations.

Commandments are laws that man's moral sense would have dictated.

Decrees [statutes] are laws that reason cannot expound as they are royal decrees that God enacts on His subjects. Torah [my laws] or teachings in

righteousness are God's instructions to the man who will hear."  
[brackets=my clarification]

**Gen. 26:6** And Isaac dwelt in Gerar:

**Gen. 26:7** And the men of the place asked *him* of his wife; and he said, *She is my sister*: for he feared to say, *She is my wife*; lest, *said he*, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she *was* fair to look upon.

**Gen. 26:8** And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac *was* sporting with Rebekah his wife.

**Gen. 26:9** And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety she *is* thy wife: and how saidst thou, *She is my sister*? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her.

**Gen. 26:10** And Abimelech said, What *is* this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us.

**Gen. 26:11** And Abimelech charged all *his* people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.

Isaac stays in Gerar, which is a little northeast of Beersheba. He tells the men of Gerar that Rebekah is his sister. He is afraid that they will kill him to get her (Rebekah was "fair to look upon.") if they know he is her husband. (Like father, like son.) Isaac had been in Gerar quite a long time when Abimelech looks out a window one day and sees Isaac "sporting" (caressing, entertaining) Rebekah. The king summoned Isaac and confronted him. He told Isaac that he knew Rebekah was his wife and wanted to know why he had lied. So Isaac told him. He let Isaac know that he could have "brought guilt" upon his people. Abimelech issued an order that anyone who molested this man or his wife would be put to death. (Sounds like they were dealing with some of the same sins as Sodom by having to warn them not to molest Isaac, but evidently not to the same extent.)

**Gen. 26:12** Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the LORD blessed him.

**Gen. 26:13** And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great:

**Gen. 26:14** For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him.

Isaac planted, the Lord blessed, and he reaped a "hundredfold" in one year! He became so wealthy and had so many possessions that the Philistines were jealous.

**Gen. 26:15** For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.

**Gen. 26:16** And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.

**Gen. 26:17** And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

**Gen. 26:18** And Isaac dug again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

**Gen. 26:19** And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.

**Gen. 26:20** And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water *is* ours: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him.

**Gen. 26:21** And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah.

**Gen. 26:22** And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

The Philistines decided to run him off by filling up with earth all the wells that Abraham had dug. The king finally came and told him to leave because he had become too powerful for them to be comfortable with him in their land. Isaac moved, but not too far away. He reopened the wells that Abraham had dug in the Valley of Gerar and called them by the same names his father had. Isaac's servants dug and discovered a well of fresh water, but the herdsmen of Gerar argued with Isaac's herdsmen and claimed it was theirs (Esek). They dug another well, but the men from Gerar claimed it also (Sitnah). He moved from there and dug another well, which no one else claimed (Rehoboth). So he took this as a sign from the Lord that here they would have room to grow.

It's interesting that even though they thought Isaac was too powerful; they didn't hesitate to provoke him. It doesn't appear that Isaac ever responded to their provocation with anything but peaceful actions. He just kept moving on until he felt he had a sign from God that he was in the right place.

**Gen. 26:23** And he went up from thence to Beersheba.

**Gen. 26:24** And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, *I am* the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for *I am* with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.

Isaac finally went back to Beersheba. On his first night in Beersheba the Lord appeared to Isaac again. He is still really an alien in this land. God again confirms His promise to Abraham. He reminds Isaac that He is the God of his father Abraham. Isaac is not to be afraid, "for I am with thee" (present tense continually), and "will bless thee" (not maybe), and will "multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake." Abraham's obedience is still being rewarded, and his son is the beneficiary. Our obedience or lack thereof impacts those we love. Isaac's life before the Lord was very much a mirror reflection of those of his father Abraham. He had always seen his father obey God, and I don't think he ever considered doing less than that himself. Although each person is responsible to the Lord individually, a child who has the proper teaching and parental examples is highly more likely to be successful in the area of obedience to God. One reason Abraham was so successful with obedience was that he was a servant of the Lord. That means that he considered the pleasure of his Lord a higher priority than his own desires.

**Gen. 26:25** And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well. Isaac built an altar there and prayed. That was where he decided to settle and his servants dug a well.

**Gen. 26:26** Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army.

**Gen. 26:27** And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?

**Gen. 26:28** And they said, We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, *even* betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee;

**Gen. 26:29** That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou *art* now the blessed of the LORD.

Abimelech shows up with his advisor, Ahuzzath, and his commander, Phicol. They want to make a treaty of peace with Isaac. They reminded Isaac that they had always treated him well and had sent him away in peace. They recognized that Isaac was blessed of the Lord.

**Gen. 26:30** And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink.

**Gen. 26:31** And they rose up betimes in the morning, and swore one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

**Gen. 26:32** And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water.

**Gen. 26:33** And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city *is* Beersheba unto this day.

So Isaac made them a feast. The next morning they swore an oath of peace with each other, and Isaac sent them on their way. That day Isaac's servants came to tell him that they had found water in the well. We are told that Isaac named the well Shebah and that the city of Beersheba derived its name from that well. (The writer is telling the history of the Jewish people. He has already made reference to Beersheba previously, but decides to give us this extra tidbit of information.)

**Gen. 26:34** And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite:

**Gen. 26:35** Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah.

When Esau was 40 years old, he married two Hittite women, Judith and Bashemath. This grieves his parents.