

# Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 26: March 14-21

## Genesis 26

Of the three patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), the Bible says much more about Abraham and Jacob than it does about Isaac. However, there are three distinguishing facts about Isaac that are commendable. First, Isaac lived longer than either Abraham or Jacob (180 years). Second, Isaac is the only patriarch who lived his entire life in the Promise Land. Third, Isaac is the only patriarch who was married to only one woman. Genesis 26 is the only chapter in the book that focuses on Isaac. Here, we see God helping Isaac to develop his faith through times of famine, prosperity, and contention.

### Read Genesis 26:1-16

1. What did Isaac do when there was a famine in the land? (26:1)
2. Where did God tell Isaac not to go in verse 2?

In many ways (both good and bad), Isaac followed in the footsteps of his father. Like Abraham in chapter 12, Isaac wanted to leave the Promised Land and go to Egypt because of a famine. However, this time God intervenes and tells Isaac to stay in the land and trust in His promises.

3. What promise did God give to Isaac in verse 3?

There were many times when God repeated His promises to Abraham, but only one time when He emphasized His promises with an oath (Gen. 22:16; see also Heb. 6:13). The traumatic event was forever burned into Isaac's memory. He was a young man tied up and lying on an altar when he heard the LORD swear by Himself to fulfill His promises.

4. What promise did God give to Isaac in verse 4?
5. According to verse 5, why did God make all these promises to Abraham and Isaac?
6. What did Isaac do when he arrived in Gerar? Why? (26:6-7)

Like Abraham in chapters 12 and 20, Isaac is worried about powerful ungodly men killing him in order to take his wife, so he lies and tells people that Rebekah is his sister.

7. How did Abimelech find out that Isaac was lying? (26:8-9)
8. What did Abimelech say when he rebuked Isaac in verse 10?
9. What did Abimelech do in verse 11 to make sure Isaac and Rebekah would be safe among his people?
10. How did the LORD bless Isaac in verse 12?

The Bible never tells us if Abraham or Jacob ever did any planting. Here we see that Isaac was a farmer as well as a shepherd. Paul Kissling notes,

Isaac acts as though he is a resident of the land, planting crops like a landowner. The potential fruitfulness of the land is indicated by the yield he received, one hundredfold. This came, however, under the Lord's blessing.<sup>1</sup>

11. How does verse 13 emphasize the growing prosperity of Isaac?
12. How did the Philistines respond to Isaac's prosperity? (26:14-15)
13. Why did Abimelech tell Isaac to go away in verse 16?

### Read Genesis 26:17-25

14. Where did Isaac settle in verse 17?
15. What did Isaac do after his servants re-dug the wells of his father? (26:18)
16. What kind of water did Isaac's servants find in verse 19?
17. Why did Isaac name the well in verse 20 "Esek"?
18. Why did Isaac name the well in verse 21 "Sitnah"?

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Kissling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 2* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2009), 259.

19. Why did Isaac name the well in verse 22 “Rehoboth”?
20. How did the LORD encourage Isaac in Beersheba? (26:23-24)
21. After hearing God’s word in verse 24, what did Isaac do in verse 25?

**Read Genesis 26:26-35**

22. Why was Isaac surprised to see Abimelech coming to visit him? (26:26-27)
23. Why did Abimelech want a peace treaty with Isaac? (26:28-29)
24. What did Isaac do in response to Abimelech’s offer? (26:30-31)

Kissling observes,

The oath that was taken is said to be "a man to his brother" ( אִישׁ לְאָחִיו, 'iš lə'āhîw), indicating the new relationship which the oath marked. Isaac and Abimelech no longer regarded each other as rivals, but as brothers. This time Isaac sent Abimelech and his men on their way, not the reverse. But this time it implies no hostility whatsoever. In fact they departed from him "in peace." The resolution of the conflict is a hint of God's ultimate purpose to choosing Abraham. It is God's desire and commitment that one day all nations will live in peace.<sup>2</sup>

25. What happened on the same day that Isaac and Abimelech confirmed their peace agreement with each other? (26:32-33)
26. Whom did Esau marry, and how did this affect Isaac and Rebekah? (26:34-35)
27. How should we respond when we see other people being blessed with prosperity?
28. When is it important to take a stand for our rights? And when is it wiser to let go of our rights and seek peace?

**Sermon Notes 3/14/21**

**“The Faith of Isaac”**

**How should we respond to Genesis chapter 26?**

1. Go to God in times of \_\_\_\_\_.  
Genesis 26:1-3  
Hebrews 13:5-6
2. Follow leaders as they follow \_\_\_\_\_.  
Genesis 26:7  
1 Corinthians 11:1  
Philippians 3:17
3. Plant crops for \_\_\_\_\_ blessings.  
Genesis 26:12-14  
2 Corinthians 9:10-11
4. Keep digging for the \_\_\_\_\_ water.  
Genesis 26:18  
John 7:37-38



The Well at Tel Be'er Sheva

<sup>2</sup> Kissling, 266.