

Genesis 26

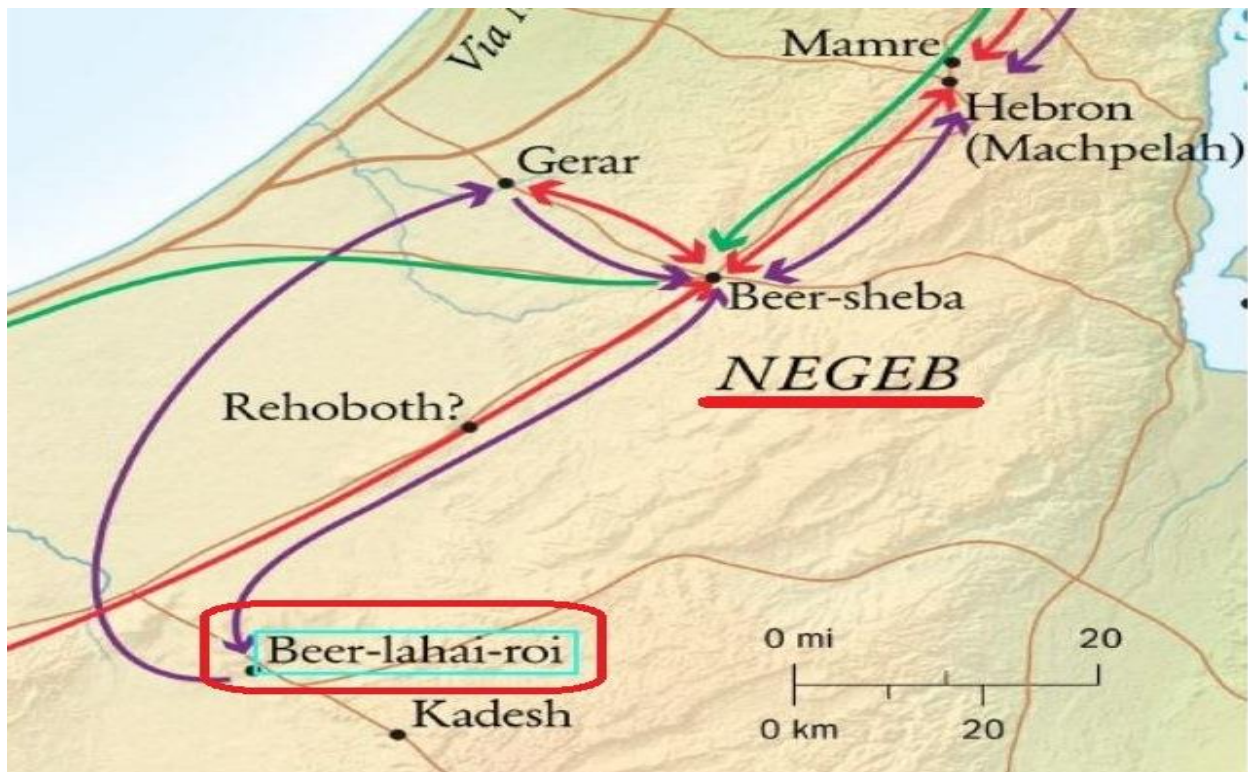
Verses 1-5

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. ² And the Lord appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land of which I shall tell you. ³ Live for a time in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. ⁴ I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, ⁵ because Abraham obeyed Me and fulfilled *his* duty to Me, and kept My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."

Now there was a famine in the land

In Genesis 25:11 Isaac was dwelling by Beer-lahairoi

See Map 2605



Besides the previous famine that had occurred in the days of Abraham

Abraham was 75 when he left Haran in chapter 12

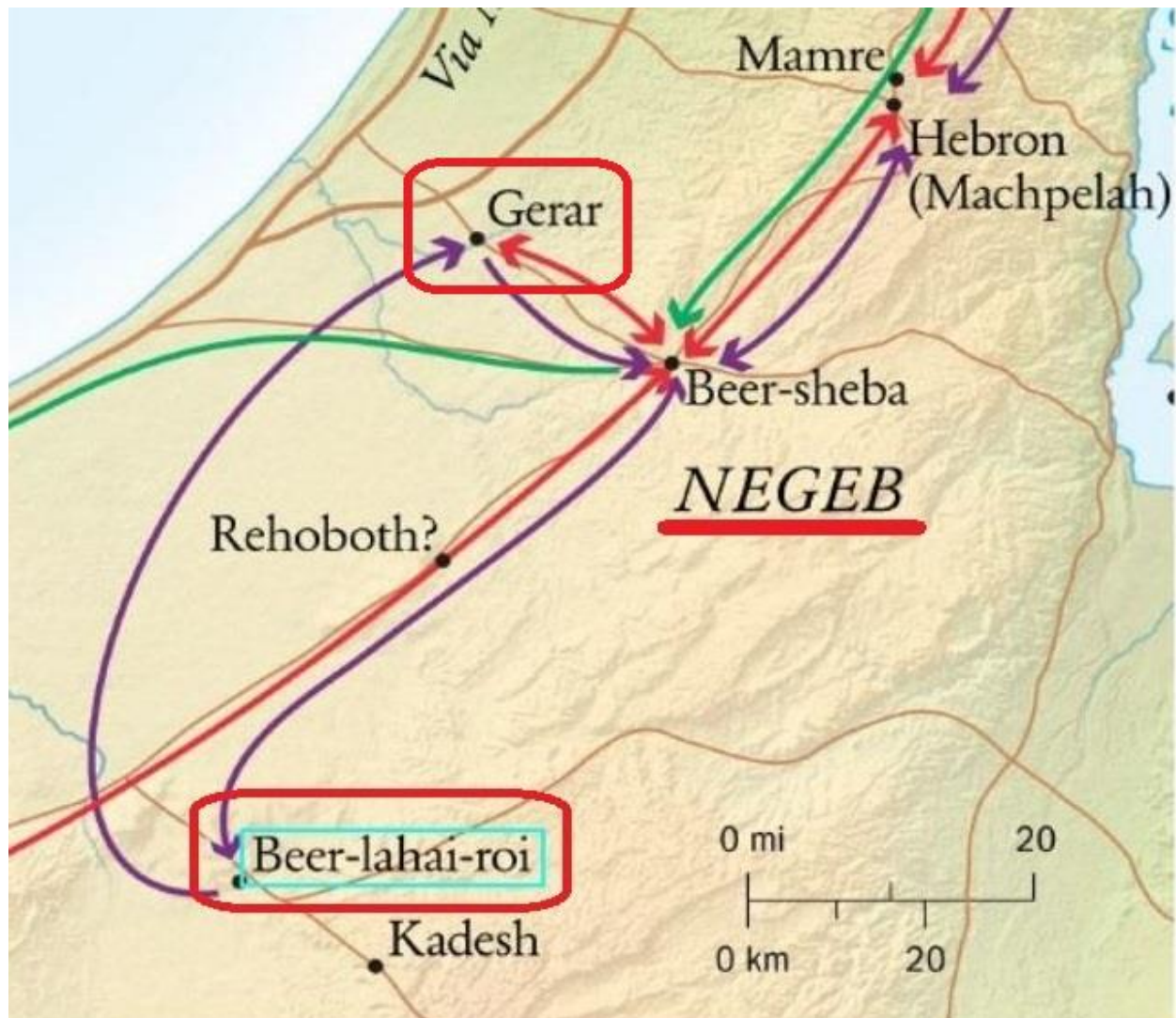
When he got to the Negev, there was a famine in the land, so he went to Egypt

This famine takes place after Abraham had died (at the age of 175)

So this famine came nearly a hundred years after the one in Abraham's day

So Isaac went to Gerar, to Abimelech king of the Philistines

See Map 2610



² And the Lord appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land of which I shall tell you.

This is the first appearance of God to Isaac since he was on Mount Moriah

God told Isaac he was not to go to Egypt but to stay in Gerar

Then God repeats the promise to Isaac that he made to Abraham

I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven

And will give to your seed all these lands

In your seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed

Because Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws

God fulfilled his promise to Abraham, which was conditional, because of Abraham's obedience

Verses 6-11

⁶ So Isaac lived in Gerar. ⁷ When the men of the place asked about his wife, he said, “She is my sister,” for he was afraid to say, “my wife,” *thinking*, “the men of the place might kill me on account of Rebekah, since she is beautiful.” ⁸ Now it came about, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked down through a window, and saw *them*, and behold, Isaac was caressing his wife Rebekah. ⁹ Then Abimelech called Isaac and said, “Behold, she certainly is your wife! So how *is it that* you said, ‘She is my sister?’” And Isaac said to him, “Because I thought, ‘otherwise I might be killed on account of her.’” ¹⁰ And Abimelech said, “What is this *that* you have done to us? One of the people might easily have slept with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us.” ¹¹ So Abimelech commanded all the people, saying, “He who touches this man or his wife will certainly be put to death.”

When the men of the place asked about his wife, he said, “She is my sister

Abraham passed Sarah off as his sister 2 times

Once in chapter 12 when he was 75 and she was 65

The 2nd time was in chapter 20 when he was 99 and she was 89

Isaac was born shortly after the second time Abraham had done this

So Isaac did not learn this from watching his father

However, it is likely that Isaac heard about those events when he was older

Like father like son!

Abimelech king of the Philistines looked down through a window, and saw *them*, and behold, Isaac was caressing his wife Rebekah

This happened about 80 years after Abraham was in Gerar

This Abimelech is a different king then when Abraham was there.

Any confusion about this comes from the fact that this was a title not a name

Just as the kings of Egypt were called Pharaoh, a title not their name

And Abimelech said, What is this that you have done to us?

This is exactly what the former king said to Abraham

See Genesis 20:9

One of the people might easily have slept with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us.

The morality of this statement is interesting

The Philistines had a code of ethics concerning marriage

And they believed in guilt and consequences

He who touches this man or his wife will certainly be put to death.”

Isaac thought someone might kill him to get Rebekah

But the king did not seek her nor did anybody else as far as we know

As it turned out the Philistines were more righteous than Isaac in this matter

So Isaac got the security he was looking for when the King made this decree

But he should have trusted God not the king of Philistia

Verses 12-17

¹² Now Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundred times as much. And the Lord blessed him, ¹³ and the man became rich, and continued to grow richer until he became very wealthy; ¹⁴ for he had possessions of flocks and herds, and a great household, so that the Philistines envied him. ¹⁵ Now all the wells which his father’s servants had dug in the days of his father Abraham, the Philistines stopped up by filling them with dirt. ¹⁶ Then Abimelech said to Isaac, “Go away from us, for you are too powerful for us.” ¹⁷ So Isaac departed from there and camped in the Valley of Gerar, and settled there.

¹² Now Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundred times as much.

This is the first time that we know of, that Abrahams family had grown crops

The famine that caused Isaac to leave the Negev was not a factor in Philistia

And the Lord blessed him, ¹³ and the man became rich, and continued to grow richer until he became very wealthy

We don’t know for sure how many years Isaac was in Gerar, but he prospered so much that the king and his people became envious of him

¹⁵ Now all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of his father Abraham, the Philistines stopped up by filling them with dirt.

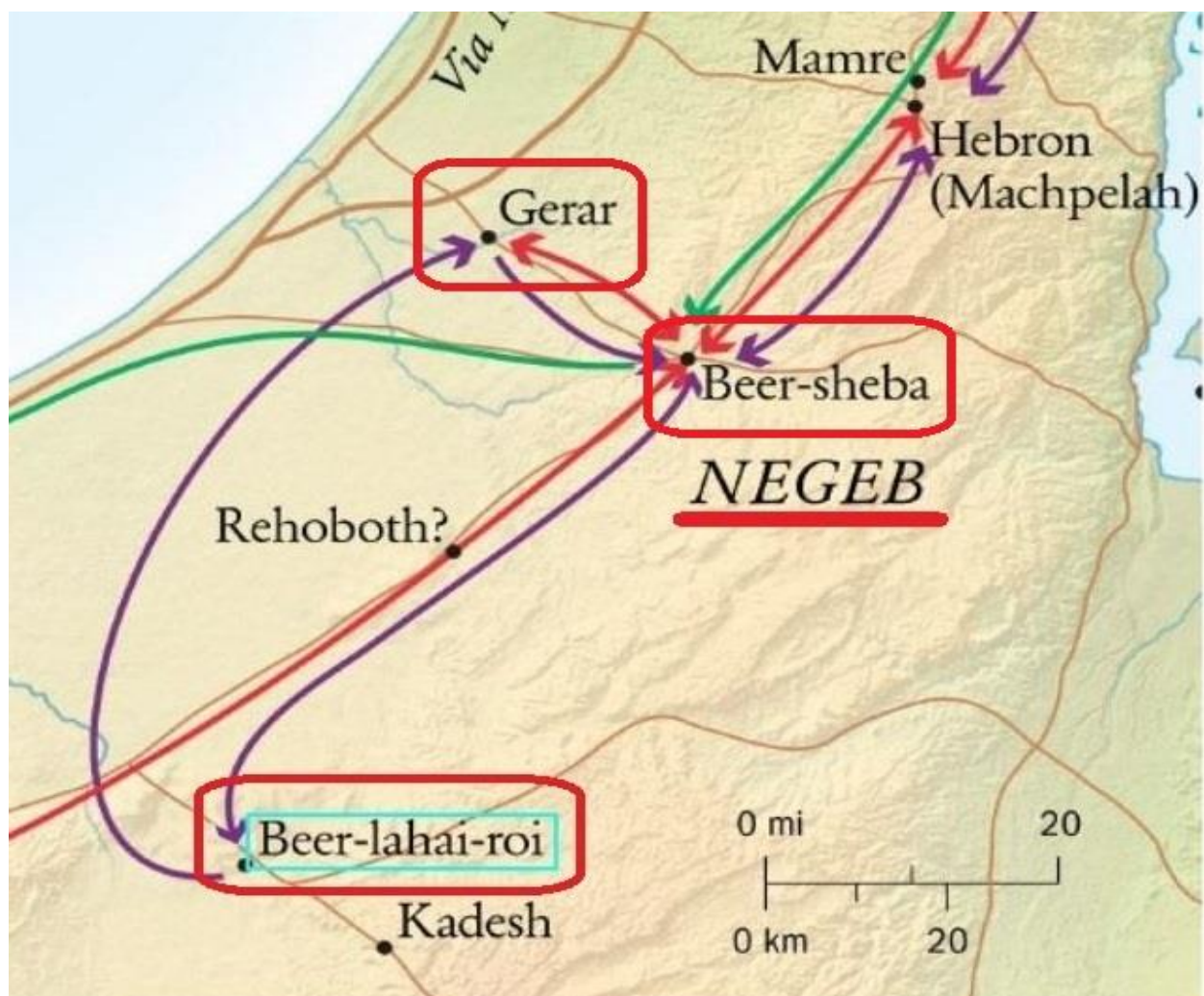
The wells were in the area of Beersheba

See Genesis 21:30-31

¹⁶ Then Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are too powerful for us." ¹⁷ So Isaac departed from there and camped in the Valley of Gerar, and settled there.

This valley is east of the city near Beersheba

See Map 2615



Verses 18-22

¹⁸ Then Isaac dug again the wells of water which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham; and he gave them the same names which his father had given them.

¹⁹ But when Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found there a well of flowing water, ²⁰ the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with the herdsmen of Isaac, saying, "The water is ours!" So he named the well Esek, because they argued with him.

²¹ Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over it too, so he named it Sitnah. ²² Then he moved away from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it; so he named it Rehoboth, for he said, "At last the Lord has made room for us, and we will be fruitful in the land."

Then Isaac dug again the wells of water which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham

Isaac reopened these wells, but needed more

¹⁹ But when Isaac's servants dug in the valley

They dug 3 wells in all

However, the Philistines claimed that the first two were theirs

Then he moved away from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it;

At this point Isaac and his tribe must be east of Beersheba

When the servants of Isaac dug this third well, there was no dispute

So Isaac knew that he had finally moved far enough away

Isaac seems to have had a peaceful nature

When disputes arose, Isaac resolved them by yielding and moving to another place

Trusting God to provide a place for him rather than engaging in armed conflict

Verses 23-25

²³ And he went up from there to Beersheba. ²⁴ And 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,
For the sake of My servant Abraham.”**

²⁵ 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.

And he went up from there to Beersheba

Isaac had left the area of Beersheba because the Philistines disputed with him

But now we find him returning to this area but we are not told why

And 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.

His move to Beersheba caused Isaac some concern but God appeared to him that night and told him not to be afraid

So he built an altar there and called upon the name of the Lord,

Abraham had built an altar in this area about 90 years ago

Now his son Isaac was following in his footsteps

And pitched his tent there; and there Isaac’s servants dug a well.

Isaac took the appearance of the Lord as a sign that he should stay in that area

So he moved his mobile home there ☺ and dug a well

His way of saying, we’re staying right here

Verses 26-33

²⁶ Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with his adviser Ahuzzath, and Phicol the commander of his army. ²⁷ Isaac said to them, “Why have you come to me, since you hate me and have sent me away from you?” ²⁸ They said, “We have seen plainly that the Lord has been with you; so we said, ‘An oath must now be *taken by us,*’ *that is,* by you and us. So let us make a covenant with you, ²⁹ 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.” ³⁰ Then he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. ³¹ In the morning they got up early and exchanged oaths; then Isaac sent them away, and they left him in peace. ³² 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.” ³³ So he called it Shibah; therefore the name of the city is Beersheba to this day.

Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with his adviser Ahuzzath, and Phicol the commander of his army

Ahuzzath was the chief advisor and Phicol was the general of his military force

Isaac said to them, “Why have you come to me, since you hate me and have sent me away from you?”

Isaac let the Philistines know right away that things had changed and he would not let them try to bully him.

So let us make a covenant with you, ²⁹ 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

It seems the Philistines had a short term memory problem

They must have forgotten about the dirt filled wells and the confiscation of the new wells

However, Isaac had lied about his wife and created some hard feelings

Seeing both parties had done some wrong, Isaac decided to let bygones be bygones

Then he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. ³¹ In the morning they exchanged oaths; then Isaac sent them away, and they left him in peace.

Isaac accepted the peace agreement and the Philistines left in peace

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." ³³ So he called it Shibah; therefore the name of the city is Beersheba to this day.

Isaac called the well Shibah (Sheba)

Therefore the name of the city is Beersheba to this day

Verse 34-35

³⁴ When Esau was forty years old he married Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite; ³⁵ and they brought grief to Isaac and Rebekah.

And when Esau was forty years old he took two wives

His father, Isaac, was 40 years old when he got married

However, Isaac was not a polygamist

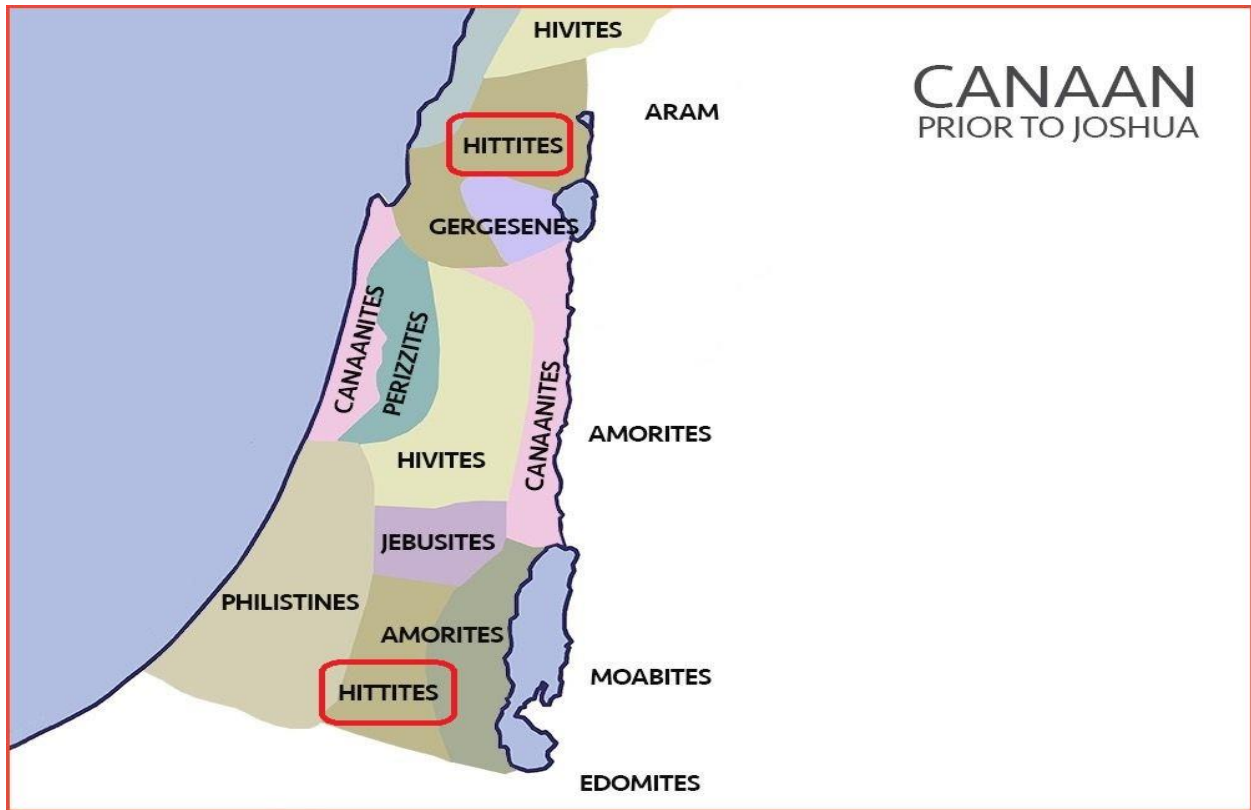
³⁵ and they brought grief to Isaac and Rebekah.

We can assume these were pagan women and thus the reason for his parents disappoint.

Judith the Hittite, and Basemath the Hittite

The Hittites lived in the northern and southern parts of Canaan

See Map 2620 below



The main empire of the Hittites was just to the North of Canaan

See map 2625

