



On Genesis
Chapters 15 - 27

By

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Introduction

Teaching Notes are Bible studies we taught before GraceLife Ministries began publishing articles online in 1995. Some were presented as sermons, others as group studies.

Our hope is that these older studies will be a blessing to you in your life and ministry. Please use them in any way God leads you.

These teaching notes are from a series of studies about the **Book of Genesis**.

[These notes are from a study from almost 45 years ago.]

Genesis 15:1-5

“After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.”

Sometime after the victory Abram received the “word of the Lord” in a vision. God told him not to be afraid because He is Abram’s shield and “exceeding great reward.” Apparently, Abram was afraid for some reason. It may have been the natural depression that often follows “high” experiences (like a battle). It might have been that Abram feared retaliation from the armies of the defeated kings.

Heavy on Abram’s mind was an heir to his estate. He questioned God (Lord God) about this. He believed that his servant, Eliezer of Damascus, would inherit everything.

Eliezer (*’ēlî’ezer*), which means “God is help,” was the chief servant of Abram. Since Abram had no children, the chief servant would be the heir. This was possibly a custom of that time.

God was very direct in pointing out that Eliezer would not be the heir. Abram would father a child that would become his heir.

Next, God took Abram outside and used the stars in the sky to give him an understanding of the bigness of God's promise.

I wonder if God gets irritated when I don't understand or have doubts and He keeps having to work with me slowly and painstakingly?

Genesis 15:6

“And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”

Abram believed what God told him and it was credited (counted) as righteousness. This was not the imputing of salvation-righteousness. Abram had already received the grace-gift. Here Abram was making the pilgrimage of faith and each step was “right” and taken note of by God.

Genesis 15:7-8

“And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?”

God reminded Abram of past promises which were still in effect. God was also reminding Abram of the bigger picture – the purpose for which Abram had been chosen. He was to take possession of the land God had given him.

Right after a step of faith, Abram questioned how he could know that what God had promised would happen. All believers do that at different points in their journey of faith. We trust and then doubt or wonder how.

Genesis 15:9-11

“And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.”

God is so patient. He doesn't scold Abram or get angry. He understands Abram's humanity and the difficulty he was having in walking by faith and in the Spirit.

God was going to do something special. Abram was to bring five animals to God:

1. a three-year-old heifer
2. a three-year-old she goat
3. a three-year-old ram
4. a turtledove
5. a young pigeon

There was probably some significance to why the animals were chosen. The fact that the heifer, goat and ram were to be three-years-old also must have had some significance. The dove usually symbolized peace and the pigeon was to be young (*gōwzāl*).

Abram got the animals and birds and brought them to God. He cut the animals in half and arranged the halves opposite each other, but he didn't cut the birds in half.

Birds of prey were very bold creatures that lived off dead flesh as well as living beings. Abram had his hands full driving them away from the carcasses.

I wonder why this is even mentioned? What is the importance of these birds flying in for a meal? In other places, birds were used to portray Satan and his co-workers. The interpretation of this may play a part. (see Parable of Sower, Matthew 13; Mark 4; Luke 8)

Genesis 15:12-16

“And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old

age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.”

“And when the sun was going down ...” Abram had been up since the night before driving birds of prey away from the animal carcasses. He may have been doing that for more than 18 hours. His faith in God and trust in Him was probably being tested.

God put Abram to sleep. A great darkness fell upon Abram and God told Abram of a terrible time when Abram’s descendants would be strangers in a foreign land where they would be enslaved and afflicted four hundred years. That nation would be punished by God and the descendants would leave with great possessions. They would return to the promised land when the iniquity (sin) of the Amorites had reached its full measure.

Abram would die before that would happen and be buried in a good old age.

Genesis 15:17-21

“And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.”

After it got dark, a smoking fire pot with a blazing torch passed between the pieces. it was a custom of that day to complete a covenant (contract, agreement) through the divided sacrifice. Both parties were responsible to keep the agreement. If one failed to keep their part, the other person was freed from their part.

However, God passed through alone. Abram was asleep. God alone is responsible for doing what He said. Abram and his descendants would reap the benefits. No matter what Abram or his descendants did, God would keep the covenant.

God then defined the land area involved in the covenant – from the river of Egypt unto the great river Euphrates. Israel has never extended to the full borders of its promise.

To whom the land belonged at that time was also mentioned.

Genesis 16:1-2a

“Now Sarai Abram’s wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her.”

Sarai took matters into her own hands at this point. Rather than wait for God’s perfect timing, she instructed Abram to sleep with her Egyptian maidservant named Hagar.

In studying the Code of Hammurabi, it was a custom of the time to build a family through a secondary wife (maidservant) if the primary wife could not bear children. Sarai was looking to the flesh to provide her need for a child.

Genesis 16:2b

“And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.”

Abram agreed. We might think he would have known better, but let's not judge too harshly or quickly. I have done the same. God promises me something, but I still try to work it out in my own way. Abram was not some super-saint. He was a man – saved by God's grace and gift of faith. So am I – so are we.

Genesis 16:3-4a

“And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife. And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived.”

Abram had been in Canaan for ten years. He would have been about 85 or 86 by then. He has intercourse with Hagar and she conceived.

Genesis 16:4b-6

” ... her mistress was despised in her eyes. And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the Lord judge between me and thee. But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thine hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.”

Abram’s problems really began then. We cannot look to the flesh for solutions to spiritual problems without reaping the reward of the works of the flesh.

Hagar discovered that she was pregnant and began to despise Sarai. The despising may have come about for many personal reasons, but the Apostle Paul shows us that this is a picture of the opposition of Grace and Law (Galatians 4:21-31).

Sarai represents the free woman who gave birth to a son of promise. That's grace.

Hagar represents the sale woman who gave birth to a son of bondage. That's the Law.

The Law will despise Grace as the flesh will despise the Spirit (Galatians 5:16-18).

Sarai was upset by what happened and turned on Abram. Relying on the flesh will affect every area of our lives. Sarai blamed Abram for the problem she was having with Hagar. In a way she was right. Abram should have led her to rely on the Spirit of God and His promise and timing.

Sarai said, “the Lord judge between me and thee.” She may have meant that God would decide who was wrong.

However, Abram threw off the responsibility of dealing with Hagar to Sarai. Sarai mistreated Hagar in some way and Hagar ran away.

Genesis 16:7-10

“And the angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. And he said, Hagar, Sarai’s maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.”

The angel of the Lord. The context of the passage points out that the angel was God Himself.

He found Hagar near a spring in the desert beside the road to Shur (*šūr*) which is a desert east of the Gulf of Suez. The word means “wall” and may refer to the mountain wall of the El Tih plateau. ¹

The Lord told Hagar to go back to Sarai and submit to her. God added that He would increase her descendants that they would be too numerous to count.

This is the beginning of two lines from Abram. One will be the Spirit line and the other the flesh line. The war against each other would continue throughout history.

Genesis 16:11-12

“And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou art with child and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.”

Hagar learned that she was carrying a son and his name would be Ishmael (*yišmā‘êl*) which means “God hears.” Her son would be wild and live in hostility to all others.

Genesis 16:13-14

“And she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me? Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.”

Hagar may have seen a theophany (Son of God before birth as human) or the glory of God. The well she was by was called *Beerlahairoi*, which means “well of the living One that sees me.” It is located between Kadesh and Bered.

Genesis 16:15-16

“And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son’s name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael. And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.”

Hagar bore her son and Abram named him Ismael. Abram was 86-years-old.

¹ ISBE – Vol. IV, p 2782

Genesis 17:1-2

“And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.”

Abram is 99-years-old now. 13 years have elapsed since Ishmael was born.

God appeared to Abram and said, “I am the Almighty God” (*’êl šadday*). Here is a new name for God.

Abram is told to walk before God and be blameless. He said it after telling Abram that He is Almighty.

God is now going to “make” (*'ettēnāh*) the covenant with Abram. The meaning of the Hebrew word is “set” and has the idea in the context of establishing the covenant, bringing it into fulfillment. God was faithful in bringing to fruition His covenant agreement.

The word “covenant” (*bərit̄î*) is used 13 times in this brief chapter. It is a key word.

This chapter has been called the key chapter of Genesis and even the key chapter of the whole Bible.

Genesis 17:3-9

“And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.”

Abram fell on his face before the Lord. He may have responded to the new way in which God revealed Himself as “Almighty God.”

God spoke again of His covenant with Abram and promised him that he would be the father of many nations.

Abram’s name was changed to Abraham. Abram means “exalted father” and Abraham means “father of many.”

God promised to be the God of Abraham’s descendants. The whole land of Canaan would be an everlasting possession for them.

Genesis 17:10-14

“This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.”

Next, God gave Abraham a covenant that he would have to keep. It's the covenant of circumcision.

Circumcision (*mōwl*) is the removal of the foreskin. It might be called the *sign* of the covenant. I believe it also has spiritual implications.

The sign of the covenant between God and Abraham's descendants was the cutting off of "flesh" from the source of life. Cutting off the flesh seems to be a main theme throughout Scripture. God gave an ordinance that would continually remind people of His covenant and the cutting away of the flesh.

Every male born into Abraham's household would have to be circumcised on the eighth day after birth. This probably symbolized that God was creating or working anew. He worked for six days and rested on the seventh day. On the eighth day, God created a new people from the first creation.

This covenant in the flesh was to be an *everlasting* covenant. Any male who would not be circumcised would be cut off from his people. The flesh must be put out! God would save His people, but deal with the flesh. He would not put away the nation, but would put away the disobedient individual.

Genesis 17:15-16

“And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.”

God changed Sarai’s name to Sarah. The meaning of Sarai’s name is somewhat obscured since she brought it with her from Mesopotamia. The name Sarah (*śārāh*) means “princess.” (Some scholars think that Sarai meant “contentious one.”)

The Lord promised Abraham a child through Sarah. She would be the mother of nations and kings just as Abraham would be the father of nations and kings.

Genesis 17:17-18

“Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!”

Abraham fell on his face again, but laughed and doubted God’s Word. He looked at the impossibilities of the flesh and questioned God. Again, Abraham looked at the flesh, but this time there was no way for the flesh to meet his needs or provide for him.

Abraham told God he wished Ishmael could live under His blessing. Abraham was looking back at the accomplishments of the flesh wishing that was good enough.

Genesis 17:19-22

“And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.”

God restated the promise – He would give Sarah a son and his name would be called Isaac (*yīṣḥāq*). The names “he laughs.” This may have been a reminder to Abraham of how he had questioned God’s power and ability.

God would establish His covenant with Isaac and all his descendants.

God would bless Ishmael, as Abraham asked, and greatly increase his numbers. Ishmael would be the father of twelve great rulers and a great nation.

However, the Abrahamic covenant would be passed along only to the line of Isaac.

Isaac would be born at this time next year. The baby would be conceived in about three months.

Genesis 17:23-27

“And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham’s house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him. And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. In the selfsame

day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son. And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him.”

On the same day Abraham took Ismael and all those born into his household or bought with money (males only) and circumcised them. Abraham was 99 and Ishmael was 13. He and his son were both circumcised on the same day.

It's interesting that the account of the circumcision is repeated in these verses twice. The account of the circumcision would be of extreme importance to the nation of Israel.

Genesis 18:1-5

And the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.

Abraham, a very old man, was sitting at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day when he saw three men standing nearby. He hurried out to greet them.

The greeting of Abraham was a politeness of that age. It is questionable whether he knew it was God. He seems very glad that they've stopped and he wants to refresh them for their journey. The word "servant" might simply be a term of friendship or openness to help.

All three answered and said, "So do, as thou hast said."

The three men were probably two angels and Christ the Son of God who was and is the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Genesis 18:6-8

And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

Abraham told Sarah to bake some bread and have a servant prepare a choice and tender calf. Then he brought all of that plus butter and milk to the strangers who ate out under a large tree.

Genesis 18:9-12

And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?

The men asked where Sarah was and Abraham told them that she was in the tent. Then the Lord (or he) said that He would return the same time next year and Sarah would have a son. Sarah heard all of this and laughed at the idea. She was waxed old and Abraham was old as well.

Genesis 18:13-15

And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is any thing too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.

The Lord asked why Sarah had laughed saying, “Is any thing too hard for the Lord?” Abraham and Sarah may have suspected they were talking to God by now and were afraid. Sarah lied about her laughing, but God said, “Nay; but thou didst laugh.”

Genesis 18:16-19

And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way. And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

The men begin to leave and look toward Sodom. The Lord speaks to the angels about hiding from Abraham what He's doing to do. He talks about Abraham's heritage as a powerful nation who will bless other nations.

Next, we get a new insight to the Lord's choice of Abraham. Abraham was chosen so that he would direct his children and household to keep the way of the Lord "to do justice and judgment."

This is the leading of the Spirit in our lives. We have been chosen to be Abraham's children keeping the way of God and doing what is right and just.

Genesis 18:20-25

And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the Lord. And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and

not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

God speaks to the angels so that Abraham can hear. The angels will go to Sodom to see if their sin is as bad as the outcry that had reached the Lord. The angels went to Sodom, but Abraham stayed with the Lord.

Abraham, concerned about Lot and his family, questioned the Lord's destruction of the righteous with the wicked. He asks God if He would spare the city if there were fifty righteous people in it

Abraham is a bit theological here. "That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

He is quite bold to speak in this manner, but we do get an insight to how God deals with the righteous and wicked.

Genesis 18:26-33

And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes: Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it. And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake. And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there. And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for

twenty's sake. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake. And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

God will spare the whole place for the sake of fifty righteous people.

However, Abraham doesn't have too much faith in the influence of Lot on the people of Sodom. He finally brings the discussion with God to sparing the city if ten righteous men are found. This is his last plea. He may have thought Lot's influence would have brought several men to God, but how could he? Lot was trying to be one of God's people in a fleshly place. He should have stayed with Abraham, but greed and pride led him to camp on the doorstep of the flesh. This type of believer is to going to affect anyone. The life that will affect unbelievers is one walking in the Spirit.

Genesis 19:1-5

And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground; And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat. But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter: And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.

Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. The gateway (*bəša'ar*) would often have stone benches or seats as a built-in part of the structure. People would wait for their friends or engage in conversations. Legal transactions took place there also. (1)

The two angels arrived at Sodom. The word “angels” (*mal'ākîm*) is used to explain who these ‘men’ were accompanying the Lord.

Lot invites them to his house in the same way that Abraham had invited them earlier. The angels wanted to sleep in the square, but Lot made quite a fuss and they went to his home. He baked them bread without yeast and they ate. Angels can take on the appearance of men and even eat natural food. Before the angels had gone to bed the whole male population of the city had surrounded Lot's house and demanded that the two visitors (angels) be brought outside so they could have sex with them.

Now I have a better insight to the great wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah. It was mass homo-sexuality touching both the young and old.

It's interesting that God would tolerate polytheism and prostitution, but would draw the line at national homosexuality. God is extremely patient with men and nations, but He will judge and repay.

Genesis 19:6-11

And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof. And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they

pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door. But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door.

Lot goes out to meet with the men of Sodom and offers his daughters in the place of the angels. Lot is trying to offer a lesser evil here, but it isn't good enough. Lot, however, does say that this homosexuality is wicked.

Lot has tried to live in peace with the flesh, but it will stop until it devours us. We cannot live in the ways of the flesh and not be burned eventually. Lot is an alien and the flesh does not want him to now play the judge. Trying to reason with fleshly desire from a spiritual vantage will not work once we have spent time in the flesh. We must escape from the flesh that would destroy us and the flesh must be purged.

The men of Sodom tried to get Lot and break the door in. However, the angels snatched Lot in and blinded the men outside. The men could not find the door.

Genesis 19:12-14

And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place: For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it. And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.

The angels now give Lot time to get his family ready to leave the city. However, his future sons-in-law think he's just joking.

Genesis 19:15-17

And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city. And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

At dawn the angels urge Lot to take his wife and daughters and get out or they will be destroyed with the rest of the city.

Here we see the mercy of God even on the carnal believer.

Lot is told to flee to the mountains. The cities of the plain are going to be destroyed and in the mountains are safety. The

believer must get totally away from the flesh in order to experience safety and a life of blessing.

Genesis 19:18-24

And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord: Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die: Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live. And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken. Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar. The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven;

Lot has other ideas, though. He's afraid that he will be destroyed in the mountains, so he asks to be allowed to run to a nearby city for safety.

Here Lot the carnal believer wants to hold onto the flesh. He's not used to depending on God and he doesn't want to start now.

The angel reluctantly gives in and grants Lot's request. He will not destroy this small bit of flesh that Lot wants to hold onto.

Lot and his family reach Zoar (*small*) around noon. Then the Lord rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah. It came down from the Lord out of the heavens.

Some scholars think that a great earthquake caused a violent explosion mixing oil and asphalt into hot salt and sulphur falling on the cities of the plains. (2)

Genesis 19:25-29

And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the Lord: And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace. And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.

God destroyed the cities, the people and the vegetation.

Archaeological explorations at the south end of the Dead Sea, particularly at the site of Bad ed-Dra, have shown evidence of a break in civilization about 2000 BC. Recent research by Nelson Glueck also have shown a break in culture about 2000 BC in Transjordan, which he connects with the period of Abraham. (3)

Lot didn't get far enough away and his wife turned to look at the city where she was turned into a pillar of salt. There are many pillars in the region to this day.

Early in the morning Abraham went to the place where he stood before the Lord and looked at the rising smoke from the destruction of the land by the hand of God. It was like the smoke of a furnace.

God remembered Abraham and saved Lot.

Genesis 19:30-38

And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters. And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth: Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. Thus were both

the daughters of Lot with child by their father. And the first born bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day. And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Benammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day.

Lot was afraid to stay in Zoar (the flesh never gives us the security we think it will). He leaves and heads for the mountains with his daughters.

The daughters now retreat to the flesh to continue their family line. Their fiancés were destroyed in the judgement of God. The daughters get their father, Lot, drunk and then have intercourse with him. The older daughter did it the first night, the younger daughter the next night. Lot wasn't even aware of what he had done.

Out of this fleshly union came two boys, Moab and Ben-Ammi, who would father a line of enemies of Israel—the Moabites and Ammonites. The flesh gives birth to flesh.

[Note: the daughters' names are never given]

(1) Archaeology & Bible History Joseph Free – pg. 62

(2) Unger's Bible Handbook, pg. 69

(3) Archaeology & Bible History Joseph Free – pg. 63

Genesis 20:1-7

And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife. But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her

not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine.

Abraham moves on. Maybe because of the pain of what had happened or possibly because new pasture lands were desired.

He moved south to a place between Kadesh and Shur. Kadesh (*qādêš*) and Shur (*šūr*) are in the southeast portion of Judea. Shur is mentioned in Genesis 16:7 as the place where Hagar met the angel of the Lord. Abraham may have gone back to the same spot.

Abraham took his family to Gerar, several miles away, where he said that Sarah was his sister. He's playing the old fear game again. Abraham is maturing, but still looks to the flesh at times.

Abimelech (*'ăbîmelek*) was king of Gerar. This is a name borne by five Old Testament persons. The name means “father of a king.” He must have heard about Sarah and sent for her and took her.

Write a bit is at stake now. The Lord had promised that Sarah will have a son by Abraham, but Sarah has been taken by Abimelech to be a wife or concubine.

What follows is a demonstration of God’s intervention in human affairs to bring about His will and purpose. Even the flesh would not overrule God’s plans.

God appeared to Abimelech in a dream and told him that Sarah was married. God had kept him from sexually using her, so she is not yet pregnant.

God called Abraham a prophet. I'm not sure whether God meant this title as one who proclaims truth and/or one who foretells the future. I believe Abraham is the first person called a prophet though other men proclaimed God's message and told of future events (e.g. Noah).

Genesis 20:8-10

Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid. Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing?

Abimelech called an early morning meeting of his officials to tell them of what God had said to him in a dream. The officials were very afraid.

Then Abimelech called in Abraham and asked why he had done what he had done.

Genesis 20:11-13

And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake. And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt shew unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother.

Abraham explained his reasoning. Here we discover that Sarah is Abraham's half-sister. Both had the same father.

Abraham shows that he still didn't fully trust God. From the very beginning he had told Sarah to tell strangers that they were brother and sister. Abraham still hasn't gotten too far in that area of his life and walk with God.

Genesis 20:14-18

And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave them unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife. And Abimelech said, Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee. And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver: behold, he is to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that are with thee, and with all other: thus she was reprov'd. So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare children. For the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife.

Abimelech brought Sarah back to Abraham with apologies. He gave Abraham sheep, cattle and slaves. He told them to live wherever they pleased and gave them about 25 pounds of silver.

Abraham prayed to God and God healed all the people. God had closed up every womb in Abimelech's household because of what happened. This demonstrates the awesome power of God.

Through this story we learn much about the sovereignty of God. He controls life at its very source. He can actually allow or disallow children to anyone in the world.

Genesis 21:1-7

And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him. And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him. And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me. And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age.

God's grace is the important point here. He was gracious towards Sarah and kept His promise. She certainly didn't deserve it. She had laughed at the idea of having a child earlier.

The boy was named Isaac. When he was eight days old, Abraham circumcised the boy in obedience of God's command.

Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90. This was certainly an extraordinary feat if not supernatural for such an old couple to have a child.

Sarah was super pleased. God had brought her laughter. Others would laugh with her.

Genesis 21:8-13

And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned. And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's

sight because of his son. And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.

Isaac grew as a baby and then was weaned from his mother's milk. Some believe this to be at one year, but others think Isaac may have been as old as three.

On the day Isaac was weaned, Abraham threw a great feast. This apparently was the custom of the day. However, Ishmael was seen mocking Isaac and Sarah told Abraham to get rid of Ishmael and Hagar. He may have been mocking the importance of Isaac or some such thing.

Abraham loved Ishmael and was distressed, but God also told him to follow Sarah's suggestion. Because Ishmael was Abraham's offspring too, God would make of him a nation of people.

The Apostle Paul refers to this in Galatians 4:28-31. He used the event in an exhortation to walk in the Spirit (new covenant) instead of the law (old covenant).

I believe this picturing the time in a believer's walk when the flesh is dealt a mortal blow. It might be a facing of legalism or walking in the flesh. It might be a dealing with slavery in our walk with God. We've been called to a freedom in our walk, not slavery.

“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”

Genesis 21:14-21

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bow shot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept. And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink. And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an

archer. And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.

The next morning Abraham sent Hagar on her way with Ishmael. I believe this follows the concept of the believer's walk in dealing with legalism and the flesh. It is to be dealt with in a similar way. However, it will not die completely. It is still alive in each of us and must be continually acknowledged and faced

Next, we see the compassion and purpose of God. He hears the cries of mother and child and saves them from death. He will make of Ishmael a great nation, as He promised. God opened Hagar's eyes to see a well that would save and refresh them.

God is with this child as he grows. His descendants would become enemies of God's chosen, but God saves keeps them. Sometimes it is very hard to understand God's ways. In a similar way we see that God allows our flesh to remain alive in us and continue as an enemy of our souls. Hard to understand, but definitely within His great planning.

The fact that Ishmael lived in a desert, was an archer and married an Egyptian have interesting insights to our flesh as believers Like Ishmael, it dwells in barren and empty places. It is the archer (shooter) of 'fiery darts' and is married to all that would hold us captive and in bondage.

Genesis 21:22-31

And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God is with thee in all that thou doest: Now therefore swear unto me here by God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son: but according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned. And Abraham said, I will swear. And Abraham reprov'd Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away. And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing; neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I of it, but to day. And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant. And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves? And he said, For these seven ewe lambs

shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well. Wherefore he called that place Beersheba; because there they sware both of them.

King Abimelech and the commander of his armies, Phichol, approach Abraham and ask that he not deal falsely with them or their children or their descendants. They ask that he show them kindness as they have shown to them. Abraham swears to that.

Next, Abraham brings up a problem concerning the seizing of a well by Abimelech's servants. Abimelech says he does not know who did this. Abraham brings sheep and cattle to Abimelech and makes a treaty between them. He takes seven ewe lambs and sets them apart as witness that he (Abraham) had dug the well. This became known as the treaty of Beersheba. The name "Beersheba" (*bə'êr šābā'*) means "well of seven" or "well of the oath." This may have been the well of Hagar's salvation in 21:19.

Genesis 21:32-34

Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba: then Abimelech rose up, and Phichol the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines. And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God. And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days.

Abraham plants a “grove” (*'ešel* – tamarisk trees) and calls upon the name of the Lord the “everlasting God” (*'êl 'ōwlām*). After this Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines for a long time.

The Philistines (*pəlištîm*) were first mentioned in Genesis 10:14. They came from the Casluhimites who came from Mizraim the son of Ham, the son of Noah. They inhabited the shore plain between Gezer and Gaza in southwestern Palestine. They play heavily into the future history of God's

people. It's interesting that God did not move Abraham away from them (isolation).

Genesis 22:1-2

And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

Sometime later God tested Abraham. We're not told how long — just that it was later (after these things). Note that this is a **test**. Of course, Abraham doesn't know it, but God does. The Lord brings many tests into our lives for purposes that only He knows.

Abraham is to take his only son, Isaac, to the region of Moriah and sacrifice him as a burnt offering on a mountain. We're not told how Abraham responded initially, but God knew his true feelings when He said, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest." God knew the depth of Abraham's feelings for the boy.

It is not certain where Moriah (*mōrîyāh*) was located. 2 Chronicles 3:1 might place it where Solomon built his temple. Some think it might be Mount Golgatha where Jesus was crucified (Golgatha might be one of the hills that is part of Mt. Moriah).

Genesis 22:3-14

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there,

and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

Abraham lets no one know what he's doing — not the boy nor the servants. He places the wood for the burnt offering on Isaac who carries it up (Jesus carried His own wooden cross). Abraham carried the fire and the knife.

The boy asked his father where the sacrifice was, but Abraham answered, “My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering” (Jesus, our sacrificial Lamb, is God who spoke with Abraham).

Abraham prepares to slay Isaac, but an angel stops him. The test is over and Abraham has proved his love for, fear of, and obedience to God. God provides a ram to take Isaac’s place and Abraham calls the place “Jehovahjireh” (The Lord will provide).

This is far too close to the events of Christ’s life to miss the prophetic nature of this story. It prefigures the death and resurrection of Christ. Isaac was dead three days in his father’s mind even as Christ lay dead for three days. [More insight given in Hebrews 11:19.]

Even at this writing people looked to the mountain of the Lord for provision (substitutionary atonement).

Genesis 22:15-19

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

The angel of God called to Abraham a second time and reminds him of the covenant. The angel goes on to say that Abraham's descendants will take possession of their enemies' cities and that all nations will be blessed because of his obedience.

After this Abraham goes back to Beersheba.

Genesis 22:20-24

And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah, she hath also born children unto thy brother Nahor; Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram, And Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel. And Bethuel begat Rebekah: these eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother. And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah.

In this section we are introduced to Abraham's nephews. These are children of his brother, Nahor, and his wife, Milcah. Milcah was mentioned in Genesis 11:29 as the daughter of Haran and the sister of Isaac. Haran was also the father of Lot and died several years earlier. It appears that Nahor married his niece.

The way the passage is introduced, it appears that Abraham had lost contact with his brother Nahor. This may have been because Nahor remained in Ur and did not go with Terah, Abraham, Sarai and Lot to Canaan. Whether the feelings were unfriendly or not is hard to tell from the passage.

The firstborn is named Uz (*'ūṣ*). Several other persons in the Old Testament have this name. Also, the home of the patriarch Job was known as Uz.

Other brothers mentioned were Buz (*būz*), Kemuel (*qəmə'êl*), Kesed (*keśeḏ*), Hazo (*ḥăzōw*), Pildash (*pildāš*), Jidlaph (*yidlāp*), and Bethuel (*bəṭ'ū'êl*).

In this list of Nahor's sons, it is mentioned that Kemuel was the father of Aram (*'ārām*) and that Bethuel was the father of Rebekah (*ribqāh*), who would become the wife of Isaac.

Nahor also had a concubine named Reumah (*rə'ūmāh*). His sons through her were Tebah (*ṭebaḥ*), Gaham (*gaḥam*), Tahash (*taḥaš*), and Maacah (*ma'ăkāh*).

Genesis 23:1-16

And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old: these were the years of the life of Sarah. And Sarah died in Kirjatharba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her. And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying, I am a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight. And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him, Hear us, my lord: thou art a mighty prince among us: in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead. And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth. And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight; hear me, and intreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar, That he may give me the cave of Machpelah,

which he hath, which is in the end of his field; for as much money as it is worth he shall give it me for a possession of a buryingplace amongst you. And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth: and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, even of all that went in at the gate of his city, saying, Nay, my lord, hear me: the field give I thee, and the cave that is therein, I give it thee; in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee: bury thy dead. And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land. And he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the people of the land, saying, But if thou wilt give it, I pray thee, hear me: I will give thee money for the field; take it of me, and I will bury my dead there. And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him, My lord, hearken unto me: the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver; what is that betwixt me and thee? bury therefore thy dead. And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the

audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant.

Sarah died in Hebron at the age of 127. She is the only woman in the Bible to have her age given. Hebron is just south of Bethel. Abraham mourned for her and then spoke to the Hittites who were descendants of Heth (Genesis 10:15). They owned great portions of this area, but were thought to have come from the north.

Abraham asked for some land from them to bury Sarah. Their response shows the great respect they had for him.

In the ensuing story we see Abraham to be a kind and honest gentleman. The property he asked for was given to him, but he insisted on paying for it. Abraham purchased a choice field from Ephron (*eḫrōwn*) the son of Zohar (*ṣoḥar*) plus a cave for the burial site. Abraham paid a large amount of money, 400 shekels of silver, for the land.

Genesis 23:17-20

And the field of Ephron which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field, and the cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the borders round about, were made sure. Unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city. And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre: the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan. And the field, and the cave that is therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a buryingplace by the sons of Heth.

The field Abraham bought is located near Mamre in Machpelah (*maḵpêlāh*). It comes from *kaphal* (double, double over, folded double), which might mean it was a double cave.

“The fact that Abraham purchased a burying-place in strictly legal form as an hereditary possession in the promised land, was a proof of his strong faith in the promises of God and their eventual fulfillment.”

“Commentary on the Pentateuch,” Keil & Delitzsch, Eerdmans

This is an act of a more mature Abraham — a man who is walking boldly with God.

Genesis 24:1-9

And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things. And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: And I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac. And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest? And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again. The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee,

and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence. And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again. And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter.

Abraham is a very old man. He has been blessed by God in every way. This probably means in health, money, lands, stock, crops, family and joy.

He charges his chief servant, who may have been the oldest, to go to Abraham's kin and get a wife for Isaac. Abraham is speaking of the family of Nahor (Genesis 22:20-24). He causes the servant to swear that he will not get a bride from the Canaanites, but only from his kin.

The servant asked if he should take Isaac with him if the woman chosen refused to come. Abraham said no, standing firm on the word of the Lord quoting, "To your offspring I will give this land."

An oath under the thigh was of vital and important significance. It was the part from which the posterity issued.

If this had been the Abraham we first met, he would have worked feverishly to make this marriage work right. But now we find a man strong in faith, completely trusting God's promise. Abraham goes so far to say that if the woman was unwilling to come back with the servant, then the servant would be released from the oath made to Abraham.

What a lesson to learn from the very real walk of this man. He was great in faith, but it took many, many years to develop his walk. We too can be great men and women of faith if we will "continue."

Genesis 24:10-22

And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor. And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water. And he said O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master. And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was

born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hastened, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking. And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels. And the man wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not. And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold;

The servant took ten of Abraham's camels (showing wealth) and many good things. He set out for Aram Naharaim (Northwest Mesopotamia) and the town of Nahor.

He arrived near evening when the women went out to draw water. There he prayed for God's blessing upon Abraham. Both men were entirely dependent upon the will of God in this matter. The servant prayed specifically about the girl to receive a sign showing which one had been chosen.

Rebekah met all the requirements of the servant's prayer.

The servant took out a gold nose ring and two gold bracelets, possibly in repayment of her kindness.

Genesis 24:23-32

And said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in? And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor. She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in. And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren. And the damsel ran, and told them of her mother's house these things. And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well. And it came to pass, when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man; and, behold, he stood by the camels at the well. And he

said, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels. And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him.

The servant asks who she is and her reply satisfies him that she is the one chosen of God.

(Rebekah is the daughter of Abraham's nephew and thus a grand niece.)

The servant worships God who has so faithfully supplied.

Laban, probably the oldest brother, would have position in the household and comes out to speak with Abraham's servant. He invites him in to the house. The camels and other men are also taken in.

Genesis 24:33-67

And there was set meat before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on. And he said, I am Abraham's servant. And the Lord hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses. And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath. And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell: But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son. And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me. And he said unto me, The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house: Then shalt thou be clear from this my

oath, when thou comest to my kindred; and if they give not thee one, thou shalt be clear from my oath. And I came this day unto the well, and said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way which I go: Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw water, and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink; And she say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels: let the same be the woman whom the Lord hath appointed out for my master's son. And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well, and drew water: and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee. And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also. And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou? And she said, the daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the earring upon her face, and the

bracelets upon her hands. And I bowed down my head, and worshipped the Lord, and blessed the Lord God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son. And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me: and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left. Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken. And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he worshipped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth. And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah: he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things. And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and tarried all night; and they rose up in the morning, and he said, Send me away unto my master. And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel

abide with us a few days, at the least ten; after that she shall go. And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master. And they said, We will call the damsel, and enquire at her mouth. And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go. And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men. And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them. And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way. And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahairoi; for he dwelt in the south country. And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel. For she had said unto the

servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is my master: therefore she took a vail, and covered herself. And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done. And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

The servant refuses to eat until he has talked with Laban. He tells them who he is and relates the entire story of what had occurred.

Both Laban and Bethuel saw the design of God in all this and gave Rebekah to the servant to become Isaac's wife.

They left the next day and returned to the land of Abraham. While journeying, they saw Isaac coming to them. Isaac took Rebekah and married her and was comforted after his mother's death.

Notes

Some Bible students believe that this story is typology of salvation:

- Abraham – Type of God the Father
- Isaac – Type of God the Son
- Servant – Type of God the Spirit
- Rebekah – Type of Bride of Christ

God the Father (Abraham a type) sends the Holy Spirit (servant a type) to choose a bride (Rebekah a type) for His Son (Isaac a type).

The Spirit brings the bride back to marry the Son and is met half-way home by the Son. Many see this as a type of the rapture.

This may be a prefigurament, but it is not taught as such in the New Testament.

The servant may have been Eliezer of Damascus (Genesis 15:2), though we cannot be sure.

Genesis 25:1-3

Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.

Abraham took another wife – Keturah (*qəṭūrāh*) and had six sons with her: Zimran (*zimrān*), Jokshan (*yāqəšān*), Medan (*məḏān*), Midian (*miḏyān*), Ishbak (*yišbāq*) and Shuah (*šūah*). These are thought to be ancestors of various Arab tribes and nations.

Jokshan was the father of Sheba (*šəbā*) and Dedan (*dəḏān*). These are the same names of the children of Raamah, son of Cush, son of Ham, son of Noah.

The descendants of Dedan were the Asshurites (*'aššūrim*), the Letushites (*ləṭūšîm*) and the Leummites (*lə'ummîm*).

Genesis 25:4-11

And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah. And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country. And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years. Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people. And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre; The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife. And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahairoi.

The sons of Midian were Ephah (*‘êpāh*), Epher (*‘êper*), Hanoch (*ḥănōk*), Abida (*‘ăbîdā’*) and Eldaah (*‘eldā‘āh*).

While Abraham was still living, he gave gifts to the sons of his concubines and sent them away to the land of the East (Arabia).

In death, Abraham left everything he had too Isaac.

When Abraham was 175 years, he died. He was buried by Isaac and Ishmael in the cave of Machpelah, where Sarah was buried.

“He was gathered to his people” means that Abraham went to his people who had gone on before him in death.

(Note: Read Hebrews 11:8-16)

God blessed Isaac.

At the time of Abraham’s death, Isaac lived near Beer Lahai

Roi (*rō'î*). It means “well of the Living One that seeth me.” This was the same place that Hagar saw the theophany. The site is in the Negeb between Kadesh and Bered.

Genesis 25:12-16

Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham: And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah: These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations.

At this point, Moses lists the names of the sons of Ishmael. The list is chronological according to birth:

- Nebaioth (*nəbāyōt̄*)
- Kedar (*qêḏār*)
- Adbeel (*'adbə'êl*)
- Mibsam (*mibśām*)
- Mishma (*mišmā'*)
- Dumah (*dūmāh*)
- Massa (*maśśā*)
- Hadad (*ḥăḏaḏ*)
- Tema (*têmā*)
- Jetur (*yəṭūr*)
- Naphish (*nāpîš*)
- Kedemah (*qêḏəməh*)

These are the names of the twelve tribal rulers according to their settlements and camps.

Genesis 25:17-18

And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people. And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria: and he died in the presence of all his brethren.

Ishmael lived to be 137 years old, then he died and was gathered to his people.

Ishmael's descendants settled in the area from Havilah to Shur, near the border of Egypt, as you go toward Asshur. This would be in the area of Saudi Arabia.

These people (Ishmaelites) lived in hostility toward all other people. This is a trait that continues even to this day. They are the desert Bedouin tribes.

Ishmael has a special place in the plan of God because he and his descendants are the children of Abraham through Hagar. I'm certain that I'll see more of this line in future Bible study.

Genesis 25:19-34

And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac: And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian. And Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren: and the Lord was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger. And when her days to be delivered

were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them. And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob. And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.

Now we have an account of the line of Isaac. He was forty years old when he married Rebekah. She was Aramean (Syrian). Her father, Bethuel, was from Paddan Aram (also known as Northwest Mesopotamia).

Rebekah was physically barren, so Isaac prayed on her behalf and she became pregnant. Rebekah could sense an unusual stirring in her womb and asked the Lord what it meant and why it was happening to her. The Lord told her that two nations were in her womb and the two peoples from within would be separated. One of the peoples would be stronger, and the older would serve the younger.

The day of birth came and two (twin) boys were born. The first came out and was red and very hairy. Isaac and Rebekah named him Esau (*ʿêśāw*), which means “hairy.” Following right on his heels was the second son grasping the heel of Esau. His parents named him Jacob (*yaʿăqōb*), which means “he grasps the heel.” It’s figurative definition is “he deceives.”

Isaac was sixty years old when they were born, so he spent twenty years alone with Rebekah.

The boys grew up. Esau became a very skillful hunter, a man of open country. Isaac had a taste for wild game and took more to Esau. Jacob was a quieter man and stayed close to home becoming the favorite of Rebekah.

It's unfortunate when parents choose favorites. It drives an unnatural wedge between the children and each other.

One day Esau came in from the open country and was quite famished. He saw Jacob making some stew and asked him for some. The stew had a red color and Esau got the name Edom (*'ē-dō-wm*), which means "red." Jacob used this situation to press for the birthright (*bəḵōrāṭəḵā*). The birthright was the right which naturally belonged to the firstborn son. This birthright consisted of a double portion of what the father had to leave. Esau responded by saying he was about to die and that the birthright was of no use to him. Jacob made him swear by an oath and sell the birthright. Then he gave Esau

some bread and lentil stew. Esau ate and drank and left. In effect, Esau despised his birthright.

Hebrews 12:16 says that Esau was a “godless” man, selling his inheritance rights as the oldest son for a single meal.

Genesis 26:1-6

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. And the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: 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; 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. And Isaac dwelt in Gerar:

Another famine comes up. Isaac does the same thing his father did by leaving the promised land and going to Egypt — the granary of that area. However, God appeared to Isaac and told him not to go to Egypt,, but to stay in the land of Gerar and of the Philistines. The king at that time was Abimelech.

Gerar (*gəṛā*), which means “circle” or “region,” was a town in the Philistines’ plans south of Gaza.

The Philistines (*pəlištîm*) were an uncircumcised people inhabiting the shore plain between Gezer and Gaza in southwestern Palestine. In Genesis 10:14 they are reckoned with other tribes in Mizraim (Egypt) as descendants of Ham, and as cousins of the old inhabitants of Babylonia.

God confirmed the oath He swore to Abraham and Isaac stayed in Gerar.

Genesis 26:7-11

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

Isaac did the same thing with Abimelech** that Abraham had done with Sarah. Isaac was afraid for his life because of Rebekah's beauty. He thought that the men might kill him and take Rebekah. Isaac told the men that she was his sister (Genesis 20).

After living in Gerar a long time, Abimelech looked out his window one day and saw Isaac caressing Rebekah. He quickly summoned Isaac and inquired as to why he had lied about Rebekah. Isaac told Abimelech he was afraid for his life. Abimelech rebuked Isaac for lying and ordered that no one was to molest Isaac or Rebekah on threat of death.

Genesis 26:12-18

Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him. 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. And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we. And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac digged 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.

That same year Isaac planted crops in the land of Gerar and reaped a hundredfold*** because of the Lord's blessings. That must have been quite a sight due to the famine in the land. Isaac grew more and more wealthy. He had many flocks and herds and servants. His neighbors, the Philistines, were envious of him. They went out and stopped up all the wells with dirt that Abraham's servants had dug. Even Abimelech was concerned about Isaac's great power and asked him to move away.

Isaac did move to the Valley of Gerar some miles away. Isaac reopened his father's wells and gave them the same names.

Genesis 26:19-22

And Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found there a well of springing water. 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. And they dug another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah. And he removed from thence, and dug 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.

Isaac's servants discovered a well of fresh water while digging in the valley, but the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen and claimed it was their water. Isaac named this well Esek (‘êśeq), which means “dispute” or “contention.”

Isaac's servants dug another well, but the men from Gerar quarreled over, too. So, Isaac named it Sitnah (síṭnāh), which means “opposition” or “hostility.”

Isaac moved on from there and dug another well, and no one quarreled over it. He must gotten far enough away from Gerar. He named the well Rehoboth**** (*rəḥōbōwt*), which means “room” or “broad places.” The Lord had led them there.

Genesis 26:23-25

And he went up from thence to Beersheba. 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. 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 left the area and went up to Beersheba (*šāba*^). That night the Lord appeared to him and said, “Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bless you and will increase the number of your descendants for the sake of my servant Abraham.”

This is the second time Isaac received a reminder of the covenant God made with Abraham. God was blessing Isaac out of total grace, not because of works on his or Abraham's part.

Isaac built an altar there and prayed. He pitched his tent and his servants dug a well.

I think the digging of a well speaks of the purpose of remaining in the area for some time.

Genesis 26:26-31

Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army. And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you? 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; 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. And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink. And they rose up betimes in the morning, and sware one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

Abimelech arrives on the scene with Ahuzzath (*'ăḥuzzat*), a personal friend and advisor of the king, and Phicol^{*****} (*pîkōl*) the commander of the king's forces.

Isaac wanted to know why they came to see him after being so hostile to him. They told him how clearly they saw the Lord's presence with Isaac and they thought there ought to be a sworn agreement between them. They were apparently afraid of what Isaac could do in the way of physical harm.

Isaac made a feast for the men and in the morning they swore an oath to each other.

Genesis 26:32-35

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. And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day. And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beerī the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite: Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah.

That same day Isaac's servants came and told him that a new well had been dug. He called it Shibah (*šib'āh*), which means "seven." To the present time the name of the town has been Beersheba.

"Beer" means *well* and "Sheba" means *seven*, so the literal translation is "well of seven." Keil-Delitzsch wrote that the wells are still in existence – the well of Abraham and the well of Isaac.

Esau married two Hittite women when he was forty years old – Judith () daughter of Beerli () and Basemath () daughter of Elon (). Those marriages were a source of great grief to Isaac and Rebekah.

This seems to be another proof of Esau's inadequacy to be the heir of promise.

** Keil-Delitzsch point out that "Abimelech" was the standing official name of the kings of Gerar. It may or may not have been the same man Abraham dealt with many years earlier.

*** Keil-Delitzsch says that this was an unusual blessing as the yield even in very fertile regions is not generally greater than from twenty-five to fifty-fold.

**** Rehoboth is probably identical with the ruin Ruhaibeh, eight hours southwest of Beersheba.

***** Phicol is the same name of King Abimelech's commander that met with Abraham in Genesis 21:22.

Genesis 27:1-29

And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, here am I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death: Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison; And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die. And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it. And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying, Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the Lord before my death. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of

the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth: And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death. And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man: My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing. And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me them. And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother: and his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved. And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son: And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck: And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob. And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son? And Jacob said unto his father,

I am Esau thy first born; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the Lord thy God brought it to me. And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not. And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him. And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am. And he said, Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought it near to him, and he did eat: and he brought him wine and he drank. And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a

field which the Lord hath blessed: Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.

Isaac is a very old man and could no longer see. He told Esau to go out and hunt wild game for him and cook it just the way he liked. He promised Esau that he would bless him when he returned.

Rebekah overheard all of this and made a plan to have Jacob blessed instead. She prepared some tasty food and dressed Jacob with some of Esau's clothes and goatskins.

Jacob lied to his father and told him that he was Esau. His father questioned him because of his voice, but believed after touching his hands. Isaac also caught the smell of his clothes. Isaac blessed Jacob and placed Jacob as ruler over all

Isaac's property. The blessing included leadership over the household as well.

Genesis 27:30-40

And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau. And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed. And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father. And he said, Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy

blessing. And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me? And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son? And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

Jacob left and was immediately followed by Esau. Isaac trembled violently when he found out what had happened. Esau screamed and cried out to Isaac to bless him, too.

Esau said that Jacob (deceiver) had been rightly named because he had taken both the birthright and blessing away from him by deceit.

Isaac did prophesy about Esau by saying he would live by the sword and serve his brother. But a time would come when he would grow restless and throw off his brother's yoke.

It is estimated that Isaac was 137 years old when this occurred. Esau and Jacob would have been 77. Though Isaac was concerned that he might die at any time and needed to pass the blessing to Esau, he would not die until 43 years later at the age of 180.

Isaac apparently gave no regard to what God had said about the birth of the two boys and the frivolous bartering away of the birthright by Esau and his ungodly connection with the Canaanites.

Though Rebekah said she would take any curse upon herself, she didn't seem to be too worried by it. She was probably relying upon God's Word.

Unfortunately, the Teaching Notes for Genesis chapters 28 - 50 are no longer available. We do pray that these chapters of our Genesis study will be a blessing to you and your life and ministry.

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