

LESSON NINE

ISAAC

TEXT: Genesis Chapters 21 - 26.

A. **ISAAC, THE PROMISED SON:**

Isaac was born twenty-five years after the promise had been given. Abraham was now one hundred years old, and Sarah was ninety years old. Ishmael was fourteen years old.

The name "Isaac" means "laughter." Abraham laughed in faith and joy when the Lord confirmed the promise to him (Genesis 17:17). At first Sarah laughed in unbelief (Genesis 18:12), but later she laughed with true delight at the birth of Isaac.

"And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me" (Genesis 21:6).

Although Isaac lived longer than the other patriarchs did, we have less written about him in the Bible. He died when he was one hundred and eighty years of age.

Isaac was considerably different from his father Abraham. He was a gentle and peaceful man. His character is clearly seen in his submission on Mount Moriah. As Abraham was the man of the "altar," Isaac was the man of the "well." As Abraham's life would speak to us of Calvary, Isaac's life would point us forward to Pentecost. Isaac left wells of water wherever he went. He even reopened wells which enemies had stopped and the waters flowed again (Genesis 26:18).

B. **GOD'S PROVISION FOR ISHMAEL:**

Isaac was circumcised when he was eight days old (Genesis 21:4). According to Eastern custom Isaac was weaned when he was between three to five years old. When he was weaned, Abraham made a great feast to celebrate the occasion.

Ishmael was now about seventeen years of age. Very likely up to this time he had been a very wonderful son, but now his true character shows up. He is keenly disappointed and very jealous. He begins to mock Isaac. This mockery is called persecution in Galatians 4:29. Naturally Sarah resented this and acted accordingly.

The conflict between Ishmael and Isaac is a type of the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit. The flesh lusteth against the spirit (Galatians 5:17). Another lesson we may learn here is that the true nature and character of the flesh is not revealed until we are born of the Spirit. It is then revealed just how mean and vile the flesh is.

Naturally Abraham was greatly distressed when Sarah insisted that Hagar and her son be cast out. God comforted Abraham and promised to make of Ishmael a great nation because he was the seed of Abraham. God provided for Ishmael by leading Hagar to a well of water. Ishmael married a wife out of Egypt, the same nationality as his mother. The Egyptian mother was the mother of twelve sons who became princes. They eventually formed the chief element of the Arab nations. The conflict, which began in the tent of Abraham, is still going on today.

Ishmael was present at the burial of his father, Abraham (Genesis 25:9). Ishmael died at the age of one hundred and thirty-seven years (Genesis 25:17).

C. ABRAHAM'S GREATEST TEST:

"And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham..." (Genesis 22:1).

The word "tempt" means to "test" or "prove" (James 1:12-15). God had tested Abraham on many occasions but his greatest test took place on Mount Moriah.

Mount Moriah is located within the city walls of Jerusalem and is the same location where David sacrificed on the threshingfloor of Araunah. Ten centuries after the offering of Isaac, the Temple of Solomon was built on the same site.

For twenty-five years Abraham had waited and believed God for the promised son, Isaac. Now God was requiring him to offer up the very object of his faith. This was the greatest trial of his faith. *"And Abraham rose up early in the morning" (verse 3).* Abraham immediately obeyed God. There was neither argument nor delay. Faith conquered his love for Isaac, natural reason and unbelief.

The scene that took place on Mount Moriah was one of the clearest types to be found in the Old Testament:

1. The two young men represent the two thieves crucified with Jesus but were not permitted to witness exactly what took place because of the three hours of darkness.
2. Isaac carrying the wood points forward to Jesus carrying the cross.
3. Isaac's submission is a type of Christ's submission. Let us note that if Isaac could have carried the wood, he could have resisted his aged father.
4. The type passes from Isaac to the ram teaching substitution. At this point we find the type of sinners, bound and unable to help himself or herself, with the knife of Divine justice suspended over them.

"And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering" (Genesis 22:8). These words of Abraham tell us that God would provide the lamb and that the lamb was "FOR HIMSELF." Nothing of man could meet the Divine requirements. The "LAMB" would be provided by God and for God.

In Hebrews 11:17-19 we read that Abraham believed that God would at once raise up Isaac from the dead. This fact is brought in his words to the young men, *"I and the lad will go yonder and worship and come again to you" (verse 5).* This faith was remarkable because there had not been a resurrection before this time.

D. A BRIDE FOR ISAAC:

Genesis chapter twenty-four contains one of the most beautiful stories that we can read.

Abraham's concern that Isaac should not marry a young woman from the heathen nations around him strongly teaches the truth of separation and just how wrong it is for Christians to marry an unbeliever. Israel also got into trouble when intermarriage took place with the heathen nations. Also his concern that Isaac should never return to the land from which he had come teaches the necessity of maintaining the separation from the world.

The faithful servant is a type of the Holy Spirit seeking out a bride for Christ. Rebekah is a type of the church, the bride of Christ. The gifts presented are the gifts of the Spirit. As her relatives tried to delay her departure even for ten days, so the world tries to have the church procrastinate and put off salvation.

The final decision had to be Rebekah's. Only she could decide. So it is that every sinner coming to Christ must make his own decision and say, "*I will go*" (*Genesis 24:58*). The long weary camel ride is a type of the church's pilgrimage here.

Rebekah was the granddaughter of Nahor, the brother of Abraham. Her father, Bethuel, was a first cousin of Isaac. Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah and was sixty years of age when the twin sons, Esau and Jacob, were born.

E. THE WELL DIGGER:

"And Isaac dwelt in Gerar" (Genesis 26:6).

This one verse tells us how Isaac repeated the sin of his father by lying about his wife, and saying that she was his sister. In the time of famine he started for Egypt but he listened to God and remained in Palestine. During this time he dwelt in the land of the Philistines.

Isaac was a man of peace and did his utmost to live at peace with his neighbors. Because of this he was constantly on the move digging new wells. Wherever Isaac went he left behind him a well of water. What a lesson is here for us today to do our utmost to live at peace with our neighbors and do for them wells of living water.

LESSON NINE

SELF HELP TEST

Fill in the blanks with the correct words:

1. Isaac was circumcised when he was _____ days old.
2. For a time Isaac dwelt in _____.
3. Abraham offered up Isaac on _____.
4. Rebekah was the daughter of _____.
5. Solomon's temple was built on the threshing floor of _____.
6. _____ said, "I will go."
7. Ishmael died at the age of _____ years.
8. Isaac was _____ years old when he married Rebekah.
9. _____ and Jacob were twin brothers.
10. Ishmael was about _____ years old when he mocked Isaac.

List of words to use:

Bethuel	Esau	forty
Gerar	eight	Mount Moriah
seventeen	Araunah	Rebekah
one hundred and thirty-seven		