

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

1) 03 Mar	Genesis 21-23	A Substitute
2) 10 Mar	Genesis 24	Guidance Needed
3) 17 Mar	Genesis 25-27	A Deceiver
4) 24 Mar	Genesis 28-30	A Stairway
5) 31 Mar	John 20	Believe!
6) 07 Apr	Genesis 30-31	Blessed
7) 14 Apr	Genesis 32-33	Wrestled
8) 21 Apr	Genesis 34-36	Renewed
9) 28 Apr	Genesis 37	Dreamer
10) 05 May	Genesis 38-39	Accused
11) 12 May	Genesis 40-41	Revealed
12) 19 May	Genesis 42-46	Reconcile
13) 26 May	Genesis 47-50	Revenge?

INTRODUCTION

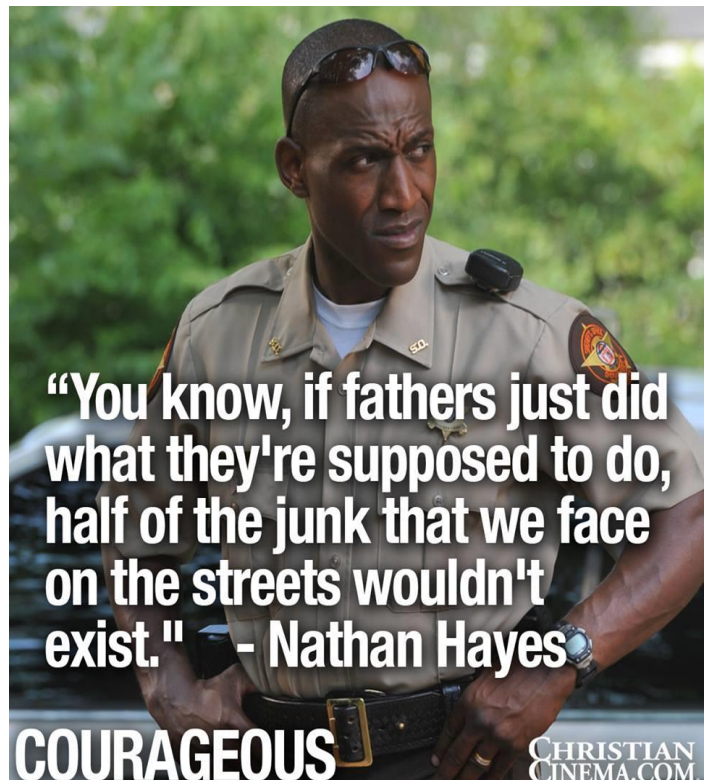
- Isaac is born and Ishmael is tossed out
- Abraham got himself in trouble when he first listened to his wife; Now God tells him to take his wife's advice this time and kick the other woman, Hagar, out with her son, Ishmael

Passage	Comments
Genesis 21:1-11	<p>Hagar and Ishmael are forced out</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the beginning of the fulfillment of the 2nd part of the covenant with Abraham - that concerning the seed • Abraham was now a hundred years old, so the birth of Isaac was about thirty years after the call <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ How long would we be willing to faithfully wait for God to answer a prayer? ♦ How long have you waited for answered prayers? • v1. "And the LORD visited Sarah" –The birth of every child is rightly deemed the effect of a divine visitation ('The fruit of the womb is the gift of God' - Ps 127:3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ BUT Isaac was special – He was born supernaturally as a result of a special promise to a mother who was well beyond the age to conceive and nurse a child • vv1-8. Abraham, 100 years old, and Sarah, 90 years old, must raise a child for the next 20 years. How would you react to being pregnant and over 60 years old? • vv9-11. Hagar's son, Ishmael, was seen mocking little Isaac. This would've been very disturbing to Momma <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Recall that Isaac's name meant "laughter"; so Ishmael (16-18 yrs old) was probably mercilessly teasing his little brother and making fun of his name ♦ Naturally, Mom told Abraham to dismiss/disinherit Ishmael ♦ Naturally, Abraham was grieved over this, so there must've been some kind of Father/Son bond
Why was Sarah so harsh to Ishmael – her son of the moment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We don't have all the details of Ishmael's behavior • Was his "mocking" harmless teasing that older brothers often give to their younger siblings? • Or was it more demonstrative of Ishmael's true behavior – of being obstinate, possibly cruel and belligerent? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Recall, Ishmael would soon have a reputation that was prophesied of him of not being able to get along with anyone, even with his own kinfolk..... Gen 16:12 ♦ Ishmael does exhibit fatherly & brotherly love when he later hooks up with Isaac to bury their father Gen 25:9
21:12-21	<p>Strange Behavior – Strange Promise – Strange Visitation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv12-13. God tells Abraham to listen to Sarah this time, for God will make great nations out of Isaac and Ishmael <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Why would God make a great nation out of someone who was prophesied to be uncontrollable – a "wild donkey"? • v14. Why did Abraham provide such meager provisions for Hagar's departure? Or were they meager? • vv15-16. Why did God listen to the lad's cry but not Hagar's? • v17. God basically asked Hagar, 'Why are you concerned?' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Sometimes we just need to consider all the godly circumstances in our lives to realize God is heavily involved in directing our footsteps • vv18-21. Notice that God told Hagar to get up before He opened her eyes to see water – and God was with Ishmael

Passage	Comments
	<p>Genesis Dating Principles – How to Find a Wife</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Let God do it (Gen 2) Adam & Eve 2. Find your own (Gen 4:17) Cain finds his own wife 3. Let your Mom do it (Gen 21:21) Hagar finds a wife for Ishmael 4. Let your Dad do it (Gen 24) Dad's servant finds Rebekah for Isaac
21:22-34	<p>Good Traditions Gone Bad Can Kill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abimelech and Abraham's treaty and disagreement over a well seems awfully trivial for it to be recorded in Scripture • v33. The passage ends with Abraham planting a tree (or a grove of trees) for a place of quiet worship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ The significance of this passage shows up later when the Israelites would abuse this practice and worship false gods at tree groves Deut 16:21 ♦ Israelites also worshiped Moses' bronze serpent which was once a powerful emblem of good.....2Kings 18:4
What does it take to raise godly children?	<p>Godly Men Who Raised Godless Sons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King David's son, Absalom, tried to usurp David's rule • Eli's sons were godless and caused others to sin • Samuel's sons took bribes and perverted justice <p>Godless Men Who Raised Godly Sons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wicked King Abijah raised godly King Asa • Wicked King Ahaz raised godly King Hezekiah • Wicked King Amon raised godly King Josiah
	<p>Was Abraham a good father to both Ishmael and Isaac?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We don't have enough info to assess Abraham's influence on his sons • BUT, God's hands were on both lads throughout their lives • Each son was solely responsible for their willful obedience to God, and therefore, accountable for their behavior

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- Blended families are more common these days than the typical traditional family. And statistics reflect that traditional "intact" families seem to have fewer delinquent children issues than all other types of modern families (see <http://www.familyfacts.org/briefs/26/marriage-and-family-as-deterrents-from-delinquency-violence-and-crime>)
- And families having a father, step-father, or a grandfather involved with raising a family are more stable than those families without a father figure
- What can churches do to strengthen families and keep them "intact"?



INTRODUCTION

- Why would God test his good disciples?
 - A. To punish them?
 - B. To prepare them for something bigger?
 - C. Just because God can do anything He wants?
 - D. To make good disciples great and great disciples greater?

Passage	Comments
22:1-24	<p>God tested Abraham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v3. Abraham did not quibble, bark, or question God's directives. He dutifully got up early the next day to carry out the command. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ In fact, Abraham was never noted to question any command, either from God or from his wife ♦ Is Abraham a passive piece of milk toast? ♦ Abraham might have been passive, but he was not a milk toast. Would you have the nerve to negotiate with God as Abraham did for the lives of any righteous people in Sodom & Gomorrah? • vv7-10. Isaac also must've had faith in his Dad to be bound willingly (a strong teenager could easily out run, or even overpower a 113 year old) • vv11-12. The Angel of the Lord (probably Jesus Himself) speaks to Abraham for the 2nd time in 2 days – but this time, He speaks "from heaven." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ If God is omniscient, and He knows the heart of man, why did He say, "...now I know that you fear God..." • Principle – We are constantly open for godly testing. Will we honor God "thoroughly" or do our own thing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ We are tried every moment Job 7:18 • vv20-24. Nahor's children are listed, including Rebekah. Any significance to this passage? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Consider this. God is tying in the family tree to address issues that skeptics often have with lineages and timelines. Also note Nahor's son, Uz. Recall that Job was from the land of Uz..... Job 1:1
23:1-20	<p>A Sliver of The Promised Land is Purchased</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah dies at 127. Abraham is ~137 years old, and he would live another 38 years, dying at 175 – a young man compared to Noah (950), Shem (600), Terah (205) • Abraham purchases a tiny parcel of land for a cemetery – the only piece of the Promise Land he ever owns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Abraham realized the promises God gave to him would be fulfilled long after his death ♦ As Heb 11:13 states, All OT saints died in faith, without receiving the promises, but saw them from a distance.
Consider this about the Land of Israel	<p>The Promised Land Plays Prominently in the Bible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is 1st promised in Genesis 15 (~2000 years after Gen 1) • And we see the Jews residing in the land at the close of human history in Revelations (~4000 years later) • Yet, the Israelites only possess and rule the Promised Land of Israel for about 450 years, suffering 3 major deportations (Assyrians, Babylonians, and Romans) • ...and they have only recently been back in the land for a mere 100 years after being gone almost 2000 years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ 1917 – Balfour Declaration re-established Israel as a Jewish nation (calculated as a 50th Jubilee year of restoration) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balfour_Declaration ♦ 1967 – 6-day war restored Jerusalem to Israel (another Jubilee year of restoration) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Six-Day_War ♦ 2017 – Keep your eyes focused on Israel, since 2017 is another year of Jubilee..... see Leviticus 25 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jubilee_(biblical)

Comparison of the Sacrifices of Isaac and Jesus Christ
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Both Isaac and Jesus Christ were miraculously born. [Recall that Abraham was over 100 years old and Sarah his wife in her 90's!] 2. Both Isaac and Christ brought joy to their Father 3. Both Isaac and Christ were born at a set time 4. Both Isaac and Christ were persecuted by their brothers 5. Two young men went with Isaac; Christ hung between two men 6. Isaac carried the wood, Christ carried the cross 7. Isaac questioned his father ["where is the sacrificial ram?"] and Christ asked, "Is there another way?" 8. Christ was obedient unto death; Isaac was also willing to die since he could've easily outran or overpowered his 113-year-old Dad 9. Both sons were "resurrected" or "given back" to their fathers 10. The sacrifices were offered on Mt Moriah (OT) – Mt Calvary (NT) 11. Isaac's ram was caught in the thorns, and Jesus had a crown of thorns on his head 12. The ram was Isaac's substitute; Jesus was our substitute 13. The Cross was hard, but not impossible for God to put His Son through; For Abraham, Isaac's sacrifice was not as difficult to go through either since Isaac was probably a teenager at that time (a little humor thrown in)

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- Testing of God's children is a foregone conclusion – Bank on it happening to each and every one of us if we truly belong to God
- We cannot grow or mature without tough times...and sometimes the bigger the challenges you have in life means God wants to use you in big ways (consider the lives of Abraham, Job, Joseph, Apostle Paul)

NEXT WEEK: Genesis 24. OT Dating Practice #4 – Let your dad find a wife for you. Abraham sends his servant with 10 camels to search out a wife for Isaac. 10 Camels can carry 4500 lbs of stuff. Was this wife-searching serious business, or what?



“Dude, blood sacrifices are so old school. Here, if you’re going to make an offering, use this. ...It’s much more convenient and a whole lot less messy.”