

Genesis Part Two

Chapters 12 through 27

Abraham

Abraham is the founding father of the Jewish nation. He was a man of great faith and obedience to the Will of God. His name, Abraham, means Father of a multitude. The original name of Abraham was Abram which means, exalted father, but after God made a covenant with him his name was changed by God to Abraham. God's promise was that his descendants would become a great nation and that through this nation all nations of the earth would be blessed.

Before God changed the name of Abraham God visited him when he was at the age of seventy-five promising to bless him and make his offspring a mighty nation. All that Abraham had to do was obey God and do what He told him.

This was the beginning of the promise God made with Abraham. This was also a test of Abraham's faith as he was fatherless because his wife Saria was barren. Later Saria's name was also changed by God to Sarah. Abraham displayed a complete faith in God's Word and left his family and moved to an unknown land call Canaan.

Abraham's nephew, Lot, went with him on the journey to the Promised Land that God had sent him to. He settled there in a land filled with pagans as a rancher and shepherd. Abraham's faith did wavier at times as he remained fatherless and endured time of testing of his faith.

Famine struck Canaan and instead of waiting for God's provision Abraham packed up and moved to a land called Egypt. Abraham lied about his relationship with Sarah and told the Pharaoh that she was his sister. Pharaoh became attracted to Sarah and exchanged gifts with Abraham for his sister Sarah. This placed Sarah in danger; and Abraham's deceptive plan had backfired.

God remained faithful to his promise to Abraham and caused a disease to fall on Pharaoh and his family, revealing to him that Sarah must be returned to Abraham.

As time continued to pass Abraham and Sarah questioned the promise of God. At the urging of Sarah Abraham slept with her Egyptian maid servant Hagar, which gave birth to Ishmael. Ishmael was not the son that God had promised to Abraham and Sarah and God returned to Abraham when he was ninety-nine years old.

God reminded Abraham of His promise and a year later Isaac was born to Abraham and Sarah.

God brought more test of faith to Abraham, including a second time that Abraham lied about his relationship to Sarah. This time is was to another King named Abimelech. The biggest test of Abraham's faith came when God asked him to sacrifice his son Isaac on the altar.

This time Abraham fully obeyed God trusting that God would raise Isaac from the dead or provide an alternative sacrifice. The death of Isaac would have contradicted every promise that God had made with Abraham. God did at the last minute proved a ram for the sacrifice. Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac is the most striking testament to faith and trust found in the Bible.

Abraham is the great patriarch of the Israelite nation and the father of many nations. To the New Testament believers Abraham is the father of us all. (Romans 4:16)

Abraham was born in the city of Ur which was located in present day Iraq. He traveled with his family to Haran in present day Turkey and remained there until his father's death. Abraham's father was Terah and direct descendant of Noah through Shem. Abraham had two brothers named Nahor and Haran. When God called Abraham he moved to Canaan and remained there for most of his days here on earth.

The Seven Promises God Made To Abraham

1. God would show to Abraham and give to him a special land.
2. Abraham, though still childless, would become the father of a great nation.
3. God would richly bless Abraham.
4. God would make his name great.
5. Abraham would become a blessing also to others.
6. According to their attitude toward Abraham, people would receive either God's blessing or His curse.
7. In Abraham all the families of the earth would be blessed.

It is important to take note of the final promise first. The final promise is the meaning and purpose of the first six promises. All the other promises must be kept in close connection to the final promise. Only this would Abraham's faith in the first promises becomes a faith that reckons him to righteousness through faith. Only in this manner can Abraham's faith be considered in these promises in the account of Genesis. For example in Genesis 15:6, Abram believed that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars of heaven. God counted this faith unto him as righteousness. This is the only way that the families of the earth could be blessed through Abram. It was through the seed of Abram that the savior of the world would come. The seed of the woman, Eve, whom God said in Paradise would overcome the curse and power of Satan from his victory over man through sin. This was

the meaning as Paul writes in his letter to the Galatians in 3:8, "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "All the nations will be blessed in you." Through these promises God revealed His Saviors heart to Abram, God's deep desire to give salvation to a lost world of sinners.

To this point those of us who live in the light of these promises, their content is continually being revealed to us. When God chose Abraham to play his part in God's plan of salvation, Abraham's name would forever remain at the forefront. When and wherever the gospel is preached, not only the name of Abraham but the temporal and spiritual blessings that God placed upon him will be remembered. Abraham lived in God's protection, as God's purpose was to bring about His plan of salvation through Abraham. By God's intensive care He trained Abraham in faith and gave him a great blessing in the spirit. By Abraham's steadfastness in faith truly all the nations of the earth have been blessed in that from Abraham, in the flesh, God the man in the person of Jesus Christ, our redeemer, came forth. Jesus came to save that which was lost and took away the sin of the world, not only ours, but all sin. It is true that all who bless Abram shall also be blessed, as they see their peace and eternal hope through the Savior who God brought forth through Abraham. However those who think lightly of Abraham and denies the salvation that through Abraham came forth will perish under the curse of sin. God's chosen people, Israel, were the gospel message until Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary. Even now Abraham is the spiritual father of the Israel of God, the Christians who are the adopted sons of God through the Messiah Jesus Christ.

Abraham did not know all the details as we know them today but he was able to see through these promises the revelation of God's grace. Jesus said in John 8:56, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad." Abraham knew that the goal of all these promises was the gift of salvation to all mankind. In that vision Abraham was glad because it gave him comfort against sin and death. By this measure Abraham trusted in the same gospel that we have our faith in today. Abraham's faith in the coming savior enabled him to have faith in all the other promises God had given him. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 1:20, "For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us."

Chapter 12

Verses 1-3

Abram's father Terah was given to idol worship and his family followed him in this practice. God saw that Abram was a faithful man and called him to leave his family and travel to a land that God would show him. At first Abram did not answer God's call but after his father's death he determined to serve God and He and his wife Saria packed up and left

for the land of God's choosing. Because of Abram's faith and obedience in God's command God made six promises to Abram. God promised to make Abram a great nation, that God would bless Abram, that Abram's name would be great, that Abram would be a blessing, that God would bless those who blessed him and curse those who cursed him, and that through Abram all the families of the earth would be blessed.

God telling Abram to leave his family was God's way of protecting his future chosen people. It is a principle that those who are in the faith with God should not be in the company of the wicked. As a follower of God Abram would be set aside and on a different path than the unrighteous and what does good have to do with evil. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 6:17 that we are to come out from the midst of evil and be separate from them. Jesus Said that anyone who leaves their family and possessions for His sake will receive many more times that and eternal life. God's call to Abram is much the call to the Gospel that we here in the New Testament. "And I will make you a great nation." As followers of Jesus we are adopted sons of God and part of God's chosen people the Israelite nation. We are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a people of God's possession. "And I will bless you" by turning away from this world and following Jesus we have an inheritance in the glory of God's Kingdom. "And make your name great." In Romans 8:30 Paul writes that whom God calls he will justify and those whom He has justified He will glorify. "And so you shall be a blessing." We are called to glorify God and we do that by preaching His gospel to every nation. "And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse." Jesus promised to be with us always and he will reward those who reward us and deny those who deny us. "And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed." we are to shine the light of truth through us to a darkened world that by our testimony they may come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Through the posterity of Abram we have the bible, a Savior, and the gospel. The nation spawned by Abram's seed is the stock that the Christian church is grafted.

Verses 4-5

Abram and his wife, Saria, along with Abram's nephew Lot, and company traveled to the land of Canaan. They left the life of home and family behind following God's command. Abram's obedience to God's Word was a sacrifice of the security they had and trust in God for what lay ahead would be a better life. Abram also knew that disobedience to God's call would cause nothing but misery. It is much like the call of God today. We are not traveling to Canaan but to a far grander land, the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatever the sacrifices we must make along the way, even death, is a small payment compared to the riches of His glory. Abram persevered and reached the land of Canaan. We are told in our walk of faith with Jesus we must persevere for there is no greater prize and our eternal lives depend upon it.

Verses 6-9

Abram traveled on in the land of the Canaanites who were not a good people to have as neighbors. Abram was a stranger in that land and of different belief than the Canaanite people. Much as we are today, journeying through this world on our way to the next in God's Kingdom. Much as the writer of Hebrews said in Hebrews 8:13-14 that we are exiles on this earth seeking a land of our own. When Abram reached the sight of Shechem at the Oak of Moreh, God appeared to him and promised the land of Canaan to his descendants. In praise to God Abram built an altar and worshiped God. Abram did not have much conversation with the Canaanites but God did not leave him uncomforted and communed with him. Abram had an abundance of communion through prayer and worship. Abram seemed to have the correct concept of God's plan for him. Abram was now in this strange land which God had promised to his descendants but he saw this as a grant to the true Promised Land to come. That is a land found in the heavenly home of God's Kingdom. This acceptance of this concept is revealed in Hebrews 11:16. Abram continued in the land of Canaan to grow his family and those in close proximity to worship and faith in the Lord.

Verses 10-20

Famine came to the land of Canaan, as no place on this earth is free from tribulation. Abram journeyed to Egypt to seek relief from the famine. It was not Abram's intention to forsake the land that God had promised him but only to sojourn there until the famine had passed from the land of Canaan. Abram feared for his life, as his wife Saria was a very beautiful woman. Abram feared that he would be killed if they knew that she was his wife so that they could take her freely. The servants of Pharaoh reported to him of her beauty. Abram confessed Saria as his sister and Pharaoh took her into his own house. Abram had lied to the Pharaoh and now had lost his wife Saria to him. Abram was noted for his faith in the Lord God. Yet in a weakness of his trust in Divine protection he let his faith waver. When we show our faith to be weak and fall into sin and folly we bring the chastisement of a loving Father upon us. Least we ruin ourselves. For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines. (Hebrews 12:6) "But the LORD struck Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Saria, Abram's wife." Pharaoh's reproof of Abram was a just reaction to what Abram had done. Abram was known as a man of faith. If we claim a faith in righteousness then we mock our Lord by being deceptive and lying. Pharaoh sent Abram and Saria away, he told his men not to harm them but to escort them away.

Chapter 13

Verses 1-4

Abram returned from Egypt with a large measure of wealth. There are many burdens that come with wealth. The fear of keeping your wealth, the temptations that wealth can bring, guilt of abusing your wealth, the sorrow of losing wealth, and the account of how you used

your wealth. Jesus said in Matthew 19:24 that is very hard for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but it is not impossible. In God's providence sometimes he makes good men wealthy, and God blessed Abram without sorrow. (Proverbs 10:22)

Lot

Lot was the nephew of Abram. Lot seemed to be influenced by the environment that he was in. As long as he remained with Abram he lived a peaceful righteous life. The joined wealth of Abram and Lot caused strife between them and they agreed to separate.

Lot moved to the city of Sodom and settled there. Lot knew he was in a place of great sin and it distressed him as recorded by Peter in 2 Peter 2:7-8. God considered Lot and his family righteous so he sent two angels out to Sodom before its destruction.

While Lot and his daughters were living in a cave, because of the lack of men, his daughters got Lot drunk and lay with him. It has been noted that if Lot had raised them in a more faithful way towards God they may have not committed such an evil act.

God still made good come out of it. The older daughter's son was named Moab and God gave Moab a section of land in Canaan. One of his descendants was named Ruth who is an ancestor of the Savior of the World Jesus Christ.

Verses 5-9

Abram and Lot shared poverty together, they shared the hardships of travel from their home to the land of Canaan, and they shared in their wants and built their fortunes together, but their wealth drove them apart. Riches so often cause strife between people and are most often the thing striven over. Wealth stirs up a spirit of contention making people proud and covetous in their relationships. The hard labors of their past could not drive Abram and Lot apart but wealth did. Because of this strife and contention between them and their hired hands, Abram and Lot knew they were hurting their testimony of the faith in God and by Abram's lead decided to separate. Abram was wise in that as a believer in God he was a man of peace. Fighting contention with contention does not bring about a peaceful solution. Abram gave Lot the choice of which land he wanted and Abram would be satisfied with the other. Abram's action is a demonstration of trust in the promise of God and His provision to care for Abram. By right God had given all the land to Abram and to share it was a graceful act on Abram's part. Not only was Abram willing to share what was given to him but also to let Lot have the first pick. It is noble to be willing to yield for peace' sake.

Verses 10-13

Abram offering Lot the first choice he quickly made his decision. Often we base our decision on the wrong criteria. Too often we are taken in by the desires of our flesh as Lot was. Lot looked over the valley of the Jordan and saw plenty water and good grazing

for his livestock. Lot was taken in by what was best for his worldly desires, “the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life.” (1 John 2:16) If we make decisions based on these motives we cannot expect God’s blessing. We are often disappointed in the outcome of decisions made without thought to what is best for our souls. What is best for our souls should be a guiding principle in all of our decisions. The men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and they were engulfed in sin. Ezekiel explains their sin as pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness. Lot was grieved by his poor decision in that the sin of Sodom was repulsive to him and his family. It must also have been grievous to Lot also because he brought this trial to himself by a bad decision.

Verses 14-18

God blessed Abram with spiritual peace for what he had lost in neighborly peace. Even when our relations have left us God remains with us. As a reward God blesses Abram with a good land and an innumerable nation to enjoy it. Abram built an altar to worship, praise, and thank God for His blessings. Our God who is gracious towards us expects us to humble ourselves before Him and praise His name. In times of our difficulties it is profitable for us to meditate on the inheritance that God has prepared for us in His Kingdom in Heaven.

Chapter 14

Verses 1-12

From Chaldea and Persia came four Kings and made war with the five Kings in the valley of Siddim near Sodom and Gomorrah and defeated them. They collected their spoils from Sodom and Gomorrah including Lot, his family and all his possessions. This the land Lot chose from his uncle Abram because it was pleasing to his eye. Because Lot coveted his wealth and could not bear any of it falling by misunderstanding to Abram left the safety of Abram’s camp and moved into the wicked city of Sodom. Even though Lot was distressed by the unrighteous living of the people in Sodom he remained there. The people of the Siddim Valley were ripe for conquest as they were consumed by their lust and were slothful in their manner. Yet it was here that Lot chose to live and many a good man has faced unbearable trials because of the wickedness of his neighbors. In all good wisdom the man who chooses to live a righteous life should separate himself from the unrighteous. When the Lord God brings His judgment against the wicked the affliction placed upon them will also be shared by the righteous that live with them. Paul in 2 Corinthians warns us of this. “Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,” says the Lord. “And do not touch what is unclean; And I will welcome you.”

Lot has only himself to thank for his plight in Sodom, as he chose to leave the safety of God’s protection and live among the unrighteous in Siddim Valley. If we decide to follow our lust and not chose to follow God’s plan for us then we cannot expect the result to end in our comfort.

Verses 13-16

Abram heard of the capture of Lot and he and his servants went out and defeated Lot's captures. Abram gathered up Lot, his family, his possessions, and the people with him and returned Lot to his home.

Verses 17-20

Melchizedek was said to be the King of Salem and was a priest of the Most High. We find in Midrash Rabbah the first born was responsible for the sacrificial duties and therefore considered the Priest. "Our Rabbis have said: Why did the Holy One, blessed be He, order the firstborn Israelites to be redeemed by means of the Levites? Because originally, before the tribe of Levi arose, the firstborn performed the sacrificial service." Though it is not given in the bible Melchizedek can be traced back to Adam. "Go back to the beginning of the creation of the world. Adam was the world's firstborn. When Adam died he transmitted his duties to Seth. Seth transmitted them to Methusaleh. When Methusaleh died he transmitted them to Noah. Noah arose and offered a sacrifice; as it says: And he took of every clean beast... and offered burnt-offerings on the altar (Gen. 8:20). Noah died and transmitted them to Shem. But was Shem a firstborn? Japheth, surely, was the firstborn; as it says: Shem... the brother of Japheth the elder (Gen. 10:21) Why then did he hand them on to Shem? Because Noah foresaw that the line of the patriarchs would issue from him." Further reading brings the line from Shem to Melchizedek. Mas. Nedarim 32b - R. Zechariah said on R. Ishmael's authority: "The Holy One, blessed be He, intended to bring forth the priesthood from Shem"

Melchizedek as the King of Salem is the place that Jerusalem is built on in later times. Hebrews 7:3-4 also makes reference to Melchizedek. "Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he remains a priest perpetually. Now observe how great this man was to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest spoils."

Abram gave a tenth of the spoils received in his conquest out of gratitude to Melchizedek. Jesus who sacrificed Himself for us and now is our High Priest, who sits at the right hand of the Father, interceding in Prayer for us, also desires a great amount of our thankfulness. Considering that Jesus gave us His all He is worthy of our all.

Verses 21-24

The King of Sodom out of gratitude for the help of Abram in the recovery of his people told Abram to take the spoils but return the people. Abram refused all the spoils and took that which compensated his loss. Abram continued his faith in the Lord God that He would through His provision provide for the needs of Abram.

Chapter 15

Verse 1

In a vision the Lord came to Abram and assured him he need not fear. That the Lord would be his shield and the reward for his faith would be great.

Verses 2-6

Abram expresses to God the concerns of his heart. Not the little grievances of daily life but his anxiety over the promises that God had made to him. We must never complain of God but He is available for us to complain to Him. Talking to God is the best way to ease the burdens of our heart. God had promised that Abram's seed would become a great nation yet he and Sarai had remained childless. Abram believed God that his promise was true but he had become anxious as to how and when. God reassured Abram by telling him, if he could, number the stars in the heaven. God assured Abram that his seed would be as the stars. If we continue in constant prayer and pray in humility for His divine will, we shall not seek in vain. Christians today express their concerns to God in prayer, but the faith by which they are justified is in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Abram believed God with the same kind of faith, he believed that God would give him a son in the same fervor that we believe that Jesus was raised from the grave. (See Romans 8:22-25)

Verses 7-11

Abram then questions God as to how he would know that he would possess the land God had promised. God told Abram to bring beast and divide them according to the ceremony used for confirming covenants, which Abram did. (Jeremiah 34:18-19) Abram kept the birds of prey away from the beast that he had slain so that God could perform the sign to assure Abram. We too when making spiritual sacrifices to the Lord, should keep away the vain thoughts that enter into our minds. Just as Abram drove away the birds of prey and sought to wait on the Lord without distraction.

Verses 12-16

Abram falls into a deep sleep and the Lord came to him and spoke four prophecies. 1. "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years." The heirs of God's Kingdom shall be strangers here on earth. They shall be servants and shall suffer. The blessed and beloved of God are sometime caused to suffer at the hands of wicked men. 2. "But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve." Though God may allow wicked men to persecute His children he will bring justice upon them. 3. "Afterward they will come out with many possessions." Abram's seed being delivered out of Egypt is foretold. 4. "Then in the fourth generation they will return here" They return again back to the land of Canaan.

Verses 17-21

The smoking oven and the torch passing between the pieces was God's way of consuming the sacrifice showing the He had accepted it. The fire consuming the sacrifice demonstrates that God's covenants with man are made with sacrifice. (Psalms 50:5)

Chapter 16

Verses 1-3

Sarai lost her faith that she would bear a child and went to Abram and discussed her plan to give him her handmaid Hagar as a wife. Abram listened and without taking council with the Lord God submitted to Sarai's plan. Unbelief worked and God's mighty power was forgotten. Throughout our lives in every relation and situation that comes along they will also bring a cross we must bear. The exercise of our faith is our willingness to wait upon the Lord for Him to work His plan in His time. It is only by the means that God chooses that the crosses in our lives can be removed. Temptations come into our lives that have the pretence of being the right course to take. Anytime we substitute God's wisdom for our own fleshy wisdom puts us out of God's way. We can avoid this departure from the will of God if we would only seek His council by His Word and prayer.

Verses 4-6

Hagar became pregnant and despised Sarai because she was now with child. Perhaps Hagar was filled with pride because she was able to do that which Sarai was not. This caused contention and strife to come between Hagar and Sarai and Hagar became quarrelsome with Sarai. We should thank ourselves for the guilt and grief that follow actions of our own making. Sarai chose to blame Abram for the trouble between her and Hagar. One does not speak wisely when pride and anger fill our mouths. Hagar herself had forgotten that it was she that had provoked Sarai by despising her. Those that suffer for their faults should also bear them. (1Peter 2:20)

Verses 7-16

The Angel of the Lord caught Hagar in flight, possibly back to Egypt. He asked her where she was going but He knew she was traveling back into sin. Hagar was blessed to be in a righteous family and now she was fleeing back to the idol worship of the Egyptians. Being asked from where we have come brings to our mind that which we are leaving. Then the Angel of the Lord asked to when she was going. That question would cause us to be mindful of the trouble we are traveling into. The declaration of the Angel, "I will," shows this Angel was the eternal Word and Son of God. Hagar must have been humbled that the Lord would show His mercy towards her. This gracious experience must have brought her to a better attitude and softened her feelings towards Sarai and in turn must have received better treatment for Sarai.

Ishmael

Ishmael was a favored child but then his life took an unexpected turn. Ishmael was the son of Abram by his wife Sarai's handmaid Hagar. Sarai was barren and persuaded Abram to have relations with her to produce a child.

Ishmael was born in his father's eighty-sixth year. The Name Ishmael means "God hears". Thirteen years later Sarah gave birth to Isaac and Ishmael was no longer the heir. Ishmael mocked his half brother Isaac which angered Sarah and she told Abraham to cast him out.

God however did not abandon Hagar and Ishmael. They were stranded in the desert and God sent an angel and showed them a well and they were saved.

Hagar found Ishmael an Egyptian wife and he fathered twelve sons. Two generations later the descendants of Ishmael bought Isaac's grandson Joseph from his brother's and took him to Egypt to be sold as a slave.

Ishmael became a skilled hunter and fathered the nomadic Arab nations which inhabit most of the Middle East today.

Chapter 17

Verses 1-6

When Abram was ninety-nine years old and thirteen years after the birth of Ishmael God appeared to him. Some speculate that the expanse of time was because of Abram took Hagar as a wife for producing a son. The Lord appeared before Abram signifying a physical appearance and possibly was Jesus. He addresses Himself as God Almighty which Jesus said of Himself in Revelations 1:8. He told Abram to walk before Him, not that Abram had not been but as a continuance of His grace towards him. God knows the thoughts of men and knew that Abram had faith and was a righteous man. (Hebrews 8:12-13)

God renews His promise that He will multiply Abram's seed exceedingly. The promised seed was Jesus Christ and the Christians through Him. All who are in the faith of Jesus Christ are blessed by the faith of Abram. Abram was more than the father of the Israelite nation through Isaac, but also he was the father of many Arabian nations, and of the Turks in the line of Ishmael; and of the Midianites, and others, in the line of his sons by Keturah; as well as of the Edomites in the line of Esau; and in a spiritual sense the father of all that believe, in all the nations of the world, circumcised or uncircumcised, as the apostle explains in. (Romans 4:11 Romans 4:12 Romans 4:16-18)

Now was the time that God changed the name of Abram to his new name of Abraham. From a name meaning exalted father to a name which meant father of multitudes. The entire Christian world is blessed through the seed of Abraham.

Verses 7-14

God establishes a covenant with Abraham, a covenant which is referred as the covenant of the circumcision. It was a covenant of grace for everlasting and also to everlasting the consequence of it. The sign of the covenant was circumcision and it was not only to Abraham and Isaac and their posterity but to Ishmael and his as well. The whole house of Abraham was to be circumcised including servants and slaves. The covenant not only sealed the land promised to Abraham and his son Isaac but also the Kingdom of Heaven through Jesus Christ and His church.

Circumcision was the outward sign to all nations that they would know the children of God. It was a sign of cutting away the flesh and serving God in the spirit. The Holy Spirit today provides this sign that all may know the children of God by the Spirit that lives within them. The inward seal of the Spirit is unique to those whom God knows to be believers. We should not make light of Divine Institutions, as the penalty can be severe for disobedience. The covenant God made with Abraham brought great blessing for the world in all future generations. The Blessedness of Abraham and the rewards given to him for his obedience and faith were for the sake of Jesus Christ. Abraham was justified not by his righteousness but by his faith in the coming Messiah.

Verses 15-22

Sarai was also renamed to Sarah. Sarah means “princess”. Jarchi observes her name was changed to princess because she became the mother of all princes as well the mother of all princess and daughters than came from her. (1Peter 3:6) God said from Sarah a son would be born in the next season. Abraham laughed in joy, not distrust; it was Abraham’s joy to see the day of Christ coming. (John8:56)

God said that his son should be named Isaac and that He would establish the covenant with him also.

Abraham fearing that Ishmael should be forsaken by God pleaded for him. God blessed Ishmael with common blessings and secured his future. God said Ishmael would be the father of a great nation and the he shall also become the father of twelve princes. (Geneses 25:13-15) Outward good things are often given to the children of Godly parents but with Isaac God would establish His covenant.

Chapter 18

Verses 23-27

Abraham was at the door of his tent cooling himself in the heat of the day. He looked up and saw three men approaching and knew them to be heavenly bodies. One of them was the Angel of the Lord, being Jesus. Abraham bowed and offered to wash their feet, as was customary in that day. As it was in the heat of the day Abraham also offered them refreshment. We should always be ready to entertain strangers that come our way as they could be ministering spirits in need. (Hebrews 13:2) Or possibly it could be the Lord of Angels himself, as we do when we entertain the least of His brethren. (Matthew 25:40) Our Lord stands at the door of our heart and knocks. If we open the door He will come in and by His gracious consolations provide a feast to share with us. (Revelations 3:30)

Verses 9-15

The angels asked where Sarah was and Abraham answered she was in the tent tending to her duties. This the proper way that the Lord should find us when He comes, as it was in Luke 2:8 when the angels of the Lord appeared to the Sheppard's in the fields to announce the birth of our Savior. We are slow to believe and often need to be told several times in the same purport. The blessings of many come from God's common providence but the blessings believers receive come from Divine promises. The angel's declared that when they returned next year Sarah would have given birth to a child. Sarah heard what they had said to Abraham and laughed. It was not the same as when earlier when Abraham had heard the promise that he laughed, for his laughter was that of joy and Sarah's was of disbelief. The Lord who searches the heart knows the motive behind our actions. He knew that one laughed out of faith and the other sprang from unbelief. The Lord will discipline the one who He loves and this he did. He rebuked Sarah in order to convict, silence, and brought her to repentance.

Verses 16-22

Two of the angels went off toward Sodom while the Angel of the Lord remained with Abraham. The Angel of the Lord shared with Abraham that the cry of wickedness from Sodom was great and their sin was exceedingly grave. God is forbearing towards sinners but this is mistaken and fancied that God does not see and therefore does not regard. When the day of His wrath has come God will look towards them.

Verses 23-33

Here we read the first recorded solemn prayer in the bible. Abraham pleads for the Lord to spare Sodom for the sake of the righteous. First if but fifty then for forty-five and on down to only ten righteous found in Sodom. Here we see the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. (James 5:16) The prayer of Abraham did not save Sodom but Lot and his family was spared because of it. It is encouraging to us then to pray for our family, friends, and neighborhood for the blessing of God upon them.

Chapter 19

Verses 1-29

Lot was a righteous man living in the city of Sodom and the Angels came to the city. Lot was at the city gate in the evening and recognized them to be of the Lord and bowed before them. Care was taken to save Lot and his family from the judgment of the Lord but Lot lingered in his preparations to hastily leave Sodom. Salvation comes by God's grace and His mercy. When we fall under His conviction to often we linger in our sinful condition and delay the work we must do. By the grace of God we are saved but if God had not been merciful towards Lot he would have missed the opportunity to escape the judgment of God. When God issues His call we must not return to Satan or linger in our sin or rest in our self and the world but reach for Jesus and heaven for that is escaping to the mountain. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was the revelation of God's wrath against sin and sinners. Sin and unrighteous behavior is a path to our own destruction.

Verses 30-38

Lot went out of Zoar and up into the mountains with his two daughters. Lot was a righteous man and mourned for the sin of Sodom. Now on the mountain he felt safe from the wickedness of this world. It is when we think we are above our sinful nature that we are most venerable and should never let our guard down. Sometimes the trap can be laid from the least expected place. His daughters offered him wine in order to seduce him so they could bear children. Lot willingly drank until he was drunk and unknowing of what was happening to him. The sin of drunkenness is a great peril which very often leads to greater sin. Many a person does that in drunkenness that would be a horror to them if known with a sober mind. Both Lot and his daughters are without excuse and nothing more can be said but this. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? From the silence of the scripture about Lot from here forward, learn that drunkenness, as it makes one forgetful, so it also makes one forgotten.

Chapter 20

Verses 1-8

Unrighteous acts will not prosper us and can bring others into grave danger. It is a comfort that if we have in our ignorance been snared into sin, that we like Abimelech can honestly plead ignorance and had been caught in a snare and not knowingly had sinned against God. God knows our heart and if we are found honest He will acknowledge it. God displays His great mercy in hindering us from committing sin and for this we must give God the glory. If we have ignorantly done wrong that will not save us from the consequence if we still persist in our sin. The one that does sin will receive the punishment for it unless they repent from it.

Verses 9-13

As a man of faith Abraham offers a pour line of excuses for his conduct and a continuing distrust in God's Divine providence. Abraham continued his attempts to deceive as he had before to the Pharaoh in Egypt. He also twisted the truth by saying that Sarah was he sister as the daughter of his father but not the daughter of his mother. Being warned by God Abimelech took the steps to do as God had said.

Verses 14-18

We often trouble ourselves with our prejudgments of others. Often leading us in temptation and sin, and we find the fear of God in places that we least expect it.

Chapter 21

Verses 1-8

As we go through life we find few people who do as they have committed themselves to do. What God says you can consider it not only what will be, but done. In Genesis 18:14 God said that at the appointed time he would return to Sarah and she would have given birth to a son. I can imagine that as Sarah's pregnancy advanced people were amazed that a woman of her age could carry a child. On the appointed day the Lord returned, as He said He would, and Sarah gave birth to a son. In spite of the impossibility of a woman her age giving birth to a child she did. People must have marveled at the impossibility of this. Nothing is impossible for God to accomplish and I marvel in view of His creation and wonder why we cannot trust His Word. (Mark 10:27)

Sarah gave birth to Isaac, as the Lord had said. In Genesis 18:12 Sarah had laughed with doubt that she at her age could have carried and given birth to a child. Her laughter was that of doubt and the Lord rebuked her and she believed. By her faith in the one who is faithful, God, she accomplished the work that God had given her to do. (Hebrews 11:11)

Abraham gave the name of Isaac to his son as God had directed in Genesis 17:19. The name means laughter which may signify the laughter Abraham had at the news he would have a son. It may also signify the laughter that Sarah had in distrust of God's promise that now is laughter of joy. On the eighth day Abraham circumcised Isaac as God had directed for the sign of the covenant between him and God. Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born and 1896 years before the birth of Christ. Sarah now laughed with joy in her heart and in a spirit of deep thankfulness to God. The entire house of Abraham laughed with her much like the neighbors of Elizabeth with the birth of John the Baptist. (Luke 1:58)

Verses 9-13

Ishmael being the first born of Abraham believing that he should receive the birthright began to mock his younger brother Isaac. It does not say how serious this mocking was

but it was more than the usual conflicts found in the brotherhood of families. Sarah became distressed at the treatment of Isaac by Ishmael and demanded that Abraham put Hagar and her son Ishmael out. She referred Hagar as a bondswoman, which she was as Sarah's maidservant. Paul made this comparison in Galatians 4:28-30 that the son born of the flesh persecuted the son born of the spirit. As Ishmael was born not of God's choosing and Isaac was the promised heir to continue the bloodline to Jesus Christ. Abraham was saddened by Sarah's request to cast out one of his sons. Abraham had natural affection for his son Ishmael and also knew of the promise God had made that he would be prosperous and the father of nations himself. If Abraham followed the plea of his wife Sarah, how could this be true for Ishmael being put out without proper training and preparation for life? God comforted Abraham's consternation and told him to comply with Sarah's request. God also reminded Abraham that Isaac is the called seed. The covenant seed of Abraham must be a people set aside and not mingled in with people who were not in the covenant. God's assurance turned alright what Sarah had said.

Verses 14-21

The disrespectful behavior of Hagar and Ishmael resulted in the departure from the comforts of Abraham. Those who abuse privileges soon lose them and not knowing when they are well off will learn the worth of mercies by the need of them. They are sent away with meager supply in a hot country. The water soon ran dry and Hagar could not bear to see Ishmael die. God heard the cries of Ishmael and called to Hagar telling her to lift the boy up. God reminds Hagar that He would make a great nation from him. Then God opened her eyes to a nearby well and she went and filled the water skin and gave Ishmael a drink. Ishmael continued to live in the wilderness and Hagar found him a wife from Egypt. Those who are born of the flesh tend to take up in the wilderness of this world while children of the promise seek the heavenly home in Canaan, and do not rest until they are there.

Verses 22-34

Abimelech respected Abraham because of his faith in God. Abimelech also believed that the God of Abraham would continue to bless him. Abraham and Abimelech made a covenant together that Abraham would not abuse Abimelech or his offspring and Abraham would return kindness for the kindness Abimelech had shown him. Men living in covenant with God should do all they can to improve the moral state of those whom they share the land with. Those who put their faith in the Lord God should never neglect or be ashamed of their worship of God.

Chapter 22

Verses 1-2

There are many age predictions of the time that had passed when God tempted Abraham. Some put the age of Isaac as early as five but that would not have been possible as the

load of wood in verse 6 would have been too much for a five year old to carry. Most commentary place the age of Isaac between 30 and 35 with most agreeing on 35 years of age. These times in Abraham's live were good years. He was living in a good land with the Philistines and had a peace covenant with King Abimelech. It was in the midst of Abraham's enjoyment of the many blessings of God that God decided to tempt him. Not a temptation into sin, as Satan does, but tempted Abraham in order to test his faith. That Abraham might know his fear and love for God, know his cheerful obedience for God's Word. Not only for Abraham to know but also to make others know as well the strength of Abrahams faith. God also tempts us in order to strengthen our faith. At God's call Abraham answered "Here I Am."

God said to Abraham take your son, your only son. Meaning this was the son of his blood, not Ishmael who was born of Hagar but his son born of Sarah his lawful wife. His son Isaac, whom he loved, his dutiful son with whom the promise of numerous offspring was to come and in whose line the Messiah was to come.

God commanded Abraham to take Isaac to the land of Moriah. Moriah is called "the hill country" in Canaan particularly where the location of Jerusalem is. There, at a mountain that God would show him, Abraham was to offer Isaac as a burnt offering. This was dreadful work Abraham was called to, and must be exceeding trying to him as a man, and much more as a parent, and a professor of the true religion, to commit such an action; for by this order he was to cut the throat of his son, then to rip him up, and cut up his quarters, and then to lay every piece in order upon the wood, and then burn all to ashes; and this he was to do as a religious action, with deliberation, seriousness, and devotion.

There were several mountains in and near the area of Moriah that could have been the place that God sent Abraham. Mount Sion, (Deuteronomy 4:48) the hill Acra, Mount Calvary, (Luke 23:33) and Mount Moriah 2 Chronicles 3:1). Most agree that the mountain Abraham was lead to be Mount Calvary.

Verses 3-10

Abraham began the day early preparing for the travel to the place God had told him to go. He gathered the wood that would be needed for the altar and other provision and he along with Isaac and two servants left the tent of Abraham and began their journey.

They traveled for two days and on the third day the place where Abraham was told to go was in his sight. The Targum of Jonathan records this verse," Abraham lift up his eyes and saw the cloud of glory smoking upon the mountain, and he knew it afar off."

Abraham shows his full intent to obey God's command by telling his two servants to wait here until they return. This was a precautionary move to prevent the servants, once they realized the intent of Abraham to sacrifice his son, from preventing Abraham to complete the command God had given him. Abraham showed a great amount of faith that God will

either provide the lamb for sacrifice or raise Isaac from the dead by saying, "and we will worship and return to you." This passage states Abraham's belief that both he and Isaac would return.

Abraham took the wood from the servants and laid it on Isaac. This may be symbolic of Jesus, who a little more than 1800 years from that time would be made to carry His cross to the hill of Calvary. (John 19:17) Others suggest the wood represent the sins that was laid upon Jesus by the Father, as remarked in 1 Peter 2:24.

Abraham then took the fire and knife and he and Isaac went off together to the place of sacrifice.

As Abraham and Isaac walked together Isaac asked where was the animal to be sacrificed? Isaac was certainly familiar with sacrifices in his time and what must be done to perform one. Isaac could see that all that was needed was prepared but there was no animal for the sacrifice. As of yet Isaac had no idea that it was he that was the sacrifice.

Abraham answered that God would provide the lamb for a sacrifice. Abraham may have been seeing the grander picture of God providing the lamb through the Messiah. (John 1:29) The Lamb of God, who had been promised, and was slain before the foundation of the earth. (Revelation 13:8) Who at the proper time would send into the world, (John 10:36) who made His Son an offering for the sin of the world. (Isaiah 53:10) This was done in the infinite wisdom of God in the fruit of His grace and good will, which Abraham was aware of. (John 8:56) Abraham's answer left Isaac to speculate the possibility the he could be the sacrifice although Abraham did not say that. They both went on together, the Targum of Jonathan says, "they went both of them with a perfect heart as one."

They arrived to the place that God had appointed, Maimonides records, "It is a tradition in or by the hands of all, that this is the place where David and Solomon built an altar in the threshing floor of Araunah, the Jebusite, and where Abraham built an altar, and bound Isaac on it; and where Noah built one when he came out of the ark, and is the altar on which Cain and Abel offered; and where the first man offered when he was created, and from whence he was created."

Abraham built an altar and laid the wood on the altar and then he bound his son Isaac. He then laid Isaac on the altar upon the word. Isaac had to be in agreement with what was about to happen to him at the hand of his father. Isaac was between the age of 25 and 35 years and was certainly able to resist his aged father if he had chosen to do so. Here again the comparison to the Christ is evident in that Isaac submitted to the will of his father.

Abraham stretched forth his hand and took the knife and moved to cut the throat of his son Isaac. With full determination in faith to do that which God had commanded him to

do. God could see for all reasoning that the intention and motive of Abraham's heart was to obey God's command.

Verses 11-14

Before the fatal blow could be administered an Angel of the Lord appeared. This was Jesus who appeared as in verses 16-18 His swearing was of Himself which no created creature could do. The Angel of the Lord called out Abraham's name twice to quickly gain his attention as Abraham was intent of completing God's command. Abraham answered here am I Lord and probably overwhelmed with joy that he was distracted from sacrificing his only son.

The Lord commanded Abraham not to lay a hand on Isaac and not to bring him any harm. The Lord testified that He now knew that Abraham feared God. That Abraham's faith was full and complete, that he was obedient to God in trust of His judgment and in submission to His will. This was a test for Abraham that would strengthen his faith and prove to all the Lord would make known. God knew that Abraham would be faithful and follow His Word. (Psalms 1:6) All who would hear of it and all who would read of it would know the faith of Abraham in his complete fear, love, obedience, and belief in God.

Rather than Abraham sacrificing his only son God provided the sacrifice in his son's place. For this reason Abraham named the place "The Lord will provide." Solomon built the temple on this place (Chronicles 3:1) and Calvary where Jesus was crucified was not far from there. It was there that God provided the perfect Sacrifice for the salvation of mankind, His Son Jesus Christ, the Holy Lamb of God. (Romans 8:32)

Verses 15-19

The Angel of the Lord then calls down again to Abraham and confirms the covenant between him and God. Only now because of Abraham's obedience to God's command it exceeds what had been promised before. It is a testimony to us that if we are willing to sacrifice our all for Him the rewards for our obedience will far exceed that which we have given. Verse eighteen points to the promised Messiah and the grace of the gospel. "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." In this we see the lovingkindness of our God and His Son the Savior of the world. Our Savior is a risen Lord and calls to us to freely take of His blood bought salvation by the loving grace of God. The redeemed are to rejoice and glorify Him. We live for and through Him that died for us that we might inherit an eternal life with Him in God's glory. Whatever is treasured most by us here on this earth is our Isaac and we should freely offer it up in faith to our Father God.

Chapter 24

Verses 1-9

Abraham was now at a very advanced age and Isaac was about forty years of age. Abraham called his servant Eliezer and instructed him to return to the land of Abraham's family and chose a wife for Isaac. Abraham did not want Isaac to marry a woman from Canaan, as they were not in the covenant between him and God. The Canaanites were the descendants of Canaan which Noah had cursed because of Canaan's mistreatment of Noah. The Canaanites were a very wicked people and idol worshipers. It is true Abraham's family, the family of Nahor his brother, which now dwelt at Haran in Mesopotamia, called the city of Nahor. They too worshiped idols but also worshiped God. Abraham believed that once the woman of Eliezer's choice was brought back to Canaan where Abraham lived that she would forget about her idolatry and be a fitting wife in the same faith as Isaac.

Eliezer asked what to do if the woman of his choice did not wish to return with him. Abraham replied that he did not want Isaac to go to the land of Nahor. Abraham told his servant that the God who called him out of the land of his family would also send an angel before him. Abraham instructed him that if she would not return with him that he would be released from the oath he was to swear to.

Verses 10-28

Eliezer acknowledges God's hand in his search for a wife for Isaac once arriving in the city of Nahor. He proposes a sign by which he would know the woman of God's choosing. We have this leeway in seeking God's guidance in that we can suggest a sign in knowing His blessing. It is notable that Eliezer did not go to places of amusement but to the well where he would find a woman busy about her duties and employed aright. Eliezer was bold in his prayer to God so that the answer would be unmistakable and strengthen his faith rather than weaken it. The woman came to the well and filled her jar and began her return to her home not being distracted by the view of a strange man. She showed resoluteness in her duty and not musing or dreaming about things that were not of her affair.

Eliezer had asked God that the sign be the woman would be willing to give him a drink from her jar of water. Once he had his fill she would also draw more water for his camels to drink their fill as well. The woman that had caught Eliezer's eye and who he had asked for a drink gave him the drink from her jar. She also drew more water and gave his camels their fill of water to drink also. Being satisfied that his prayer had been answered Eliezer gave the woman some ornaments as gratitude for her service. Then he asked the woman whose daughter she was and if there was room for lodging in her home. Then upon learning that she was of Abraham's relations Eliezer bowed and worshiped blessing God. Though his prayer was addressed to God it was prayed aloud so that the woman could

hear and know from where and who Eliezer had come. Then the woman ran to her mother's house and told her the things that had happened at the well.

Rebekah's brother Laban came out to meet Eliezer to see this man she had told her mother about. Laban's interest had been peaked by the earring and bracelet that had been given to Rebekah. Laban's attitude towards Eliezer may have been in hope of a reward for him also and may have not been so eager to entertain Eliezer otherwise. Eliezer was invited in and offered a meal but before there would be any rest on Eliezer's part he would first complete his mission. It is our duty to complete our work that we have been entrusted to, rather it be for God or man, before taking our leisure. (John 4:34)

Eliezer tells them of his charge from Abraham and his prayer at the well for God to give him a sign to know the right woman of God's choice. He explains how Rebekah had fulfilled the signs that he had asked for. This also shows to Rebekah's family that this is not of his doing but that of the Lord Gods. They all agree and the matter closed with the acceptance of the proposal. Most matters in life come to a comfortable resolve when they are accomplished in the will of God.

Verses 54-67

Isaac was in the field meditating when he looked up and saw the camels of Eliezer's procession coming. Rebekah also looked up and saw him in the field and asked who he was. Once learning that the man she saw in the field was Isaac she placed the veil over her face. Isaac brought Rebekah into his mother's tent and they were married.

Isaac

The birth of Isaac was a miracle to say the least. His parents, Abraham and Sarah were well past the age to bear children. Also Sarah had been barren all her life, yet God promised Abraham and Sarah a son and they had faith that God would keep his promise. When Isaac was born Abraham was 100 years old.

While Isaac was still a youth God told Abraham to take him to a mountain and sacrifice him to the Lord. Sadly Abraham obeyed God's word and took Isaac to the mountain to sacrifice him. At the last moment God sent an angel to stop him and provided a ram for the sacrifice.

Isaac married Rebekah and then found out that she, like his mother Sarah, was also barren and unable to give childbirth. Being a good husband Isaac prayed to God that He would open Rebekah's womb so they could have children. God answered his prayer and Rebekah gave birth to twins Esau and Jacob.

Esau was a burly hunter and was favored by his father Isaac. Rebekah favored Jacob the more sensitive and thoughtful of the two. This was an unwise move on the part of Isaac as he should have worked harder to love the both, Esau and Jacob, equally.

Isaac was a faithful man to God and obeyed His word. He also was a loyal husband to Rebekah.

Isaac became the patriarch of the Jewish nation of Israel. *Isaac fathered Jacob who went on to father twelve sons who became the twelve tribes of Israel.*

Isaac was faithful to God and never forgot how God had saved him from being sacrificed by his father Abraham by providing a ram. Isaac watched and learned from his father Abraham one of the most faithful men in the bible.

To avoid death by the hand of the Philistines, Isaac lied about his relationship to Rebekah saying she was his sister. Isaac's father Abraham had used the same lie about Sarah to the Egyptians.

Chapter 25

Verses 19-26

The days of Isaac were less trying than of his father Abraham and most of his time was spent in quietness. Isaac was forty when he married Rebekah. Rebekah like Abraham's wife Sarah and was barren. Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of Rebekah and twenty years later Rebekah became with twins in her womb. The two struggled with each other and caused Rebekah much duress and pain. It is speculated that she would have consulted with other women who were with child to see if they suffered the same anxiety. Finding out that her trial in giving birth was unique Rebekah inquired with the Lord. The Lord answered that she would be the mother of two nations which were in her womb, the Edomites and the Israelites.

They will be separate nations in their bodies, complexions, manner of life, the land they shall call home, and their religion. Esau's nation the Edomites were the stronger people and brought forth Dukes and Kings before Jacob's Israelites. In later times the Israelites became the stronger. The Lord also told Rebekah the older would serve the younger. The birthright always by tradition went to the first born male but the Lord was saying the blessing would fall upon the younger. This prophecy became true when King David made servants of the Edomites in 2 Samuel 8:14. The day will come in later time that the Edomites will be completely destroyed. (Obadiah 1:18-21)

The first born came out covered in red hair as a garment and he was named Esau. The second was born and came out holding his brother's heel. He was smooth and his name was called Jacob.

Verses 27-28

Esau was a skilled hunter and a successful conqueror ruling over his neighbors. Jacob was a gentle man one that liked the pleasures of retirement. Jacob was more a spiritual man and a shepherd for all of his days. Isaac and Rebekah had but these two children. One was the favored by the father and the other favored by the mother. Godly parents must be drawn to the Godly child, yet they should not show partiality. Their affections should lead to what is equal and just for each child, otherwise evils will arise.

Verses 29-34

There was a bargain made between Esau and Jacob over the birthright. Esau as the first born was to receive the birthright from Isaac. It was Esau's birthright by birth but it was also Jacob's by God's promise. Jacob decided to obtain it by a crooked course. Jacob was right that he coveted the best of the gifts but wrong that he took advantage of his Brother Esau's needs. The inheritance of their father's worldly goods did not come to Jacob and was not meant in this bargain between him and Esau. Jacob was trading for the promised lands of Canaan for his descendants and the bloodline of the Messiah Jesus Christ the promised seed. Jacob valued this above all else but unbelieving Esau discarded them.

Jacob had made some stew and the famished Esau was pleased by the sight of it. Esau asked his brother Jacob for some of the red, as Esau was called Edom, or red. When the hearts of men seek after that which is pleasing to the eye they are bound for trouble. (Job 31:7)

Jacob told Esau that he would give him some of the stew in exchange for the birthright of the first born. There were many privileges that the birthright would hold for the one who would be blessed with it. It was Esau's by right of being the first born, but Jacob's by divine right, as his mother knew and had probably explained to him. Rebekah most likely had advised Jacob to bargain Esau for the birthright that he might have it. The birthright came with honor and authority, a parental blessing which would include the bloodline of the Messiah, the inheritance of the land of Canaan, which is symbolic of the heavenly inheritance.

Esau replied he was about to die from his hunger so what use is a birthright to him. It cannot be expected that Esau was actually dying as a result of his hunger while living in the house of Isaac. Esau's words were spoken as if he was moving towards death and that he would never live to inherit Canaan. It was short sighted on Esau's part and not taking into considerations the generations that would follow him. These words of Esau were profane, as the apostle in Hebrews 12:16 takes note, "That there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal." Esau's desire for the stew in the present moment agreed to trade the birthright in exchange for a meal.

It is complete foolishness to part with our interest in God, Jesus, and heaven, for the riches, honors, and pleasures of this world and exchange our heavenly inheritance for a meal here in this world. Esau ate his meal and got up and went his way. In complete contempt for the birthright he had traded away and put it out of his mind. People are not so much doomed to an awful fate by what they had done in this world as they are from not repenting from it.

Chapter 26

Verses 1-5

Famine returned to Canaan much like back in the days of Abraham. The Lord God told Isaac not to go to Egypt but to go to the land that He would show him. Isaac then went to the land of Gerar and sojourned there. God promised to establish the covenant with Isaac that He had made with his father Abraham.

Verses 6-11

As his father before him, Isaac became afraid for his life because of the beauty of his wife Rebekah. He told the people of Gerar that Rebekah was his sister. One day King Abimelech, who was not the same King in Abraham's day but possibly a relation, saw Isaac caressing his wife Rebekah. He summoned Isaac and said surly this is not your sister but your wife. Why have you done this thing to the people? If one had lain with her he would have brought guilt upon us. Then King Abimelech decreed that no one should bring any harm to Isaac or his wife Rebekah. The sins of those who claim to be righteous shame themselves before God and those who are unrighteous.

Verses 12-17

God blessed Isaac and his wealth and His possessions increased, as he sojourned in the land of Gerar. His Philistine neighbors became envious of his success in their land. It is an example in the vanity of this world that the more men have of it by the fruit of their labors the more other men will envy and covet it. It is a part of the corruptness of the sin nature of man that by the honest efforts of one man he prospers and makes another man grieve at his success. King Abimelech made Isaac and his family depart from Gerar because he feared they had become too powerful. There are times that it is the wiser move to avoid contentions and move away trusting God to provide for us in another place.

Verses 18-25

Isaac again dug the wells of his father Abraham for the Philistines had stopped them up. The first well dug the herdsmen of Gerar fought over the well with the herdsman of Isaac. So Isaac named the well Esek, which means contention. Isaac moved and dug another well which also brought forth water. The herdsmen came and also fought with Isaac's herdsmen for that well also. Isaac named that well Sitnah, which means hatred. Again Isaac moved and dug another well and this time no one fought with him over it. Men who

study peace seldom fail to find peace. When men treat us falsely and with unkind measures, still God is faithful and gracious. God will reveal Himself as such in the times that men disappoint us.

Verses 26-33

When a man's ways are pleasing to the Lord He will make even his enemies to be at peace with Him. (Proverbs 16:7) The hearts of Kings are in God's hands and He can turn them to favor His people. We must always be on our guard for the people which have in the past treated us unfairly. Isaac did not hold the unkindness of the past before King Abimelech and accepted his offer of peace. King Abimelech could see by the blessings of Isaac that the Lord God was pleased with him. Jesus teaches us to be neighborly in our relationships with the people around us. (Matthew 19:19)

Verses 34-35

Esau married two Canaanite women when he was forty years old. This grieved his parents Isaac and Rebekah, as he had married out of the covenant. The Canaanites were subject to the curse of Noah for Canaan's abuse of him. It grieved Isaac and Rebekah that Esau married without their advice or consent. Children have little to expect from the blessing of God who bring grief to the minds of good parents.

Chapter 27

Verses 1-5

After 135 years of age Isaac eyes had become dim and he knew his days on earth were short. He called for his son Esau and told him to go and hunt his favored game and prepare him a dish that he might enjoy a meal and then bless him with the birthright. This was not according to the plan of God, as it was Jacob who God wanted to be the seed of his nation and the eventual birth of the Messiah. Rebekah overheard this conversation between Esau and Isaac. Sometimes we are bound to take measures into our own liking for one reason or another and miss the Divine calling we are bound to.

Verses 6-17

Rebekah, knowing that the will of God was for Jacob to receive the blessing, called to her younger son Jacob to come in to her. Rebekah told Jacob to go to the flock and take two of the best goats and she would prepare the meal for Isaac. Rebekah said that she would provide all that Jacob needed in order to deceive his father and receive the blessing of the birthright.

Rebekah wronged Isaac with her deceitful plan of getting the birthright for Jacob. She wronged Jacob by tempting him in a wicked plan of deception. She put a stumbling block in the way of Esau and gave him a reason to hate his brother Jacob, and to have disdain for anything to do with the worship of the Lord God. All were to be blamed in this evil

deed. Men often result to crooked measures in order to promote Devine purposes, believing the end accomplishment will justify the means to obtain them. Unrighteous behavior never advances the cause of Christ.

God declared to Abraham that He was God almighty, to walk before Him and be perfect in all his was. It was very reckless for Rebekah to say, “Your curse be on me, my son.” Christ has born the curse of the law for all who have taken up the yoke of this command from God Almighty for the cause of the gospel. It is very foolish for any creature to say may the curse be upon them.

Verses 18-29

The deception worked for Jacob and Isaac ate of the meal prepared for him. Then Isaac had Jacob draw near to him and he blessed him. Isaac’s blessing was mostly in physical terms and dealt with the bounty of earthly blessing. He made no mention of the spiritual blessings that God had promised. That his seed would bring forth a mighty nation, that all nations would be blessed through him, that the Messiah would come from his seed. Perhaps this is because this was more a fitting blessing for Esau than for Jacob. Esau despised the spiritual benefits of the covenant between God and Isaac. Esau’s faith had been weakened by his marriage to heathen women. It might be then that Isaac’s blessing was lean in agreeing with the mind of Esau.

Verses 30-40

Esau discovers that his brother Jacob had stolen the blessing of Isaac from him and breaks into bitter weeping. Esau pleads with his father to revoke the blessing and give it to him. Isaac cannot bring himself to repent of the blessing he had given to Jacob. Esau questions are there not a blessing for him? The only blessing that Isaac can give to his son Esau is that which he cannot have. There would be no peace for Esau as he must live in a land surrounded by enemies. That Esau would be subject to Jacob and serve him. Edom was ruled by the Kingdom of Judah. Eventually, as Isaac said, “that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck”, the Edomites will revolt and be free of the Jewish Kingdom. (2 Kings 8:20-23)

Esau by his choice parted from the wisdom and grace of the Lord, he forsook his faith in the Lord God, and desired the wealth and pleasures of this world. He cared not for the blessing of his father and traded it to his brother for a bowl of stew. Now in the truth of his foolishness he must find that he judged himself and must bear the consequence. Many travel the wide road to destruction with their mouth full of good wishes. There is nothing in Esau’s blessing that points to the coming Messiah and without that the blessings of the earth and the plunder of the fields will give little comfort at the ultimate end.

Verses 41-46

Esau planned revenge against Jacob much like Cain against Able. But Rebekah heard of his plan and sent Jacob away to her brother Laban's to stay until Esau's anger had ceased to be a threat.

In reading this chapter we must consider that we should not follow men further than they act according to the purpose and will of God. Neither should we foolishly try to accomplish that which is good by that which is evil. God overruled the bad actions of this chapter to fulfill His purposes. Yet God placed His judgment upon those evil actions taken in the name of good intentions. Yes they were painful judgments to all the parties involved in this chapter. Jacob was the preferred son to receive the blessing out of the good pleasure of God Almighty. The Lord God, who is the righteous judge and can dispense his favor as He sees proper, according to His purpose and will.

Key Verses

Romans 4:16, Genesis 15:6, Hebrews 11:8-12, 2 Corinthians 6:17, Matthew 19:29, Galatians 4:5, 1 Peter 2:9, Romans 8:30, 2 Corinthians 4:6, Matthew 28:20, Exodus 23:22, Hebrews 11:13-14, Hebrews 11:16, Hebrews 12:6
