

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON 5 – THE PATRIARCHS (PART 1 - ABRAHAM & ISAAC)

The Patriarchs are truly fascinating. There is much more going on than at first meets the eye.

We are familiar with the lineage of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But, why does this lineage immediately come to mind rather than, Abraham, Isaac and *Esau* or, Abraham, Ishmael, *Esau, and Gad*?

By now you have probably guessed the answer must have something to do with the "He" of Genesis 3:15.

Something is happening through the line of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and, Joseph that involves the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15 down to the coming of Christ.

Esau, Dan, Gad and many others do not keep faith or Covenant with GOD. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, do.

ABRAHAM

Abram (later named Abraham by GOD Himself), lived his entire life in a polytheistic culture. The fact he becomes the father of Biblical monotheism (a firm believer in ONLY One GOD) is quite remarkable in itself.

The call of Abram by GOD is a type or symbol of our call out of a land of sin.

Like us, Abram does not at first perfectly obey. He delays before making a total commitment. Abraham of course, becomes the father of the Jewish nation. His faith is the basis for GOD's Covenant Promise.

Later the Children of Israel will depart from the Truth. Despite this, GOD keeps His end of the bargain. Why? Because of GOD's relationship with Abraham. **GOD keeps Covenant with the Jews because of the faith of Abraham and not because of the obedience of Abraham's children.**

THE ROAD TO SINAI

To get to Sinai, GOD selects a man of faith to become the father of a nation that will one day lead to the coming of the "He", but even more important, one day lead to our purpose on earth being fulfilled so that we regain our original state in Eden with GOD.

ABRAM provides both the lineage and faith that connects our return to Eden. It is little wonder Abraham is so key to understanding who we are.

CALLED FROM COMFORT TO FAITH

To understand Abraham's faith and obedience in context imagine being in his place. You are wealthy, living in one of the greatest civilizations the world has ever known (Babylon). The "proof" that the gods of Babylon are real is easily seen before your very eyes.

In your own lifetime your country and culture are the greatest on earth.

Then, one GOD (of perhaps many gods?) personally calls you to leave everything you know and travel into a wilderness away from everything that "makes sense". You are also told to bring everything you

have and everyone you are connected with into that same wilderness of fear and danger, perhaps where they will all perish.

Abraham does exactly as he is told. **That is the faith of Abraham.**

Many would call it lunacy, but I believe there are two reasons Abraham trusted GOD.

First, GOD gives Abraham many promises (Covenant Promises) and many signs (proofs) for making such a sacrifice. In fact, the assurance that his trust is built on a strong foundation is referenced in the famous passage in Hebrews Chapter 11.

The writer of Hebrews says, Biblical faith is the "**assurance**" (or evidence) **of things unseen**. Biblical faith is built on the **evidence** that GOD is faithful, **not "blind faith"**.

Second, Abraham was already a righteous man. GOD and Abraham came as close as possible to being in the same relationship that GOD had with Adam and Eve in the Garden. GOD wants and desires such a relationship and He reveals Himself to those who are willing to accept such a relationship. He revealed Himself to Abraham in a special way because Abraham was, who he was.

THE ABRAMIC COVENANT

In Genesis 12 we find our Covenant statement made by GOD to Abram.

"I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse those who curse you; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Genesis 12:1

Big Words. Big Promises.

Even still, when you consider what Abraham left behind and that he literally walked into the valley of death in total faith, it is quite hard to imagine any one of us doing the same. (He left a lot behind!)

The life of Abraham is fascinating.

There are battles with Kings; dividing of the land with Lot, his nephew, which leads to the scenes in Sodom and Gomorrah; a visit with a mysterious priest-king, Melchizedek who is certainly a type of Christ, if not Christ Himself; a mysterious new blood oath of circumcision.

Note that the covenant with Abram is made by GOD when he is asleep.

Why? **Because this covenant is so holy, so one-sided, so completely and utterly irrevocable, even Abram is too "human" to keep such a covenant.** (Genesis 15 and Hebrews 6)

ABRAM'S SIN AND THE BIRTH OF ISHMAEL

Before the covenant is established, Abram is impatient with GOD. 10 years since the promise and still no child of promise with Sarai. He and Sarai decide to *help GOD out* and Ishmael is born by Sarai's maidservant, Hagar.

GOD is quiet during this time of testing. 13 years pass before GOD reveals the true child of faith, ISAAC.

Note that Ishmael is the child of doubt & disobedience.

GOD'S TIMING

Genesis Chapter 17 is one of the most amazing chapters in the Bible.

In it GOD announces to Abram the time has finally come to see the beginning of the promises kept. Not in Abram's human ways, but in GOD's Way.

THE "HEH" (HOLY SPIRIT)

GOD changes Abram and Sarai by adding the Hebrew word "heh" which means "Holy Spirit", to their name. Abram and Sarai now carry the name of the Holy Spirit by becoming Abraham and Sarah(eh).

CIRCUMCISM

It is so important GOD creates a *blood oath* by having all the males in the new Abraham's family circumcised. This blood oath symbolizes that **GOD's promises are not to be taken lightly; man's human nature must be kept under control**; and, **sin requires the shedding of blood for atonement**.

THE MIRACLE CHILD IS BORN

Finally, GOD tells the new Abraham that Sarah (NOW in their new spirit state), will bear **a child of faith through whom the "He" of Genesis 3:15 will come**. And, JUST AS THE "HE" OF GENESIS 3:15 WILL BE A MIRACLE CHILD, the birth of Isaac is a miracle!

Abraham left home at age 75. Abraham is now **ninety-nine** years old.

When Abraham is **100**, Isaac is born. (100 = **10 x 10**)

*Then GOD said, "Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation. **But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year.**" When he had finished speaking with Abraham, GOD went up from him.*

Genesis 17:19-22

Isaac is the child of faith.

Then, in Genesis 22 there is the AKEDAH.

ISAAC

"Take your son, **your only son**, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of **Moriah**. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering **on one of the mountains** I will tell you about." Genesis 22:2

The Jews call this story "Isaac's Faith". Christian's call it, "Abraham's sacrifice".

Why does GOD wait for Isaac to be born? The child of faith will be a miracle birth just as Christ is a miracle birth.

Ishmael is born out of **the will of Sarah and Abraham**. Isaac is born out of **the will of GOD**.

People often miss the subtle statement made by GOD that Abraham is to take his **“only”** son Isaac. When Isaac is born Ishmael is already thirteen-years old. In fact, Abraham is literally crazy about the boy and bargains with GOD for him to become a great nation.

Later GOD says because of this sincere request and because of His love for Abraham, Ishmael will become a great nation. (I wonder if Abraham would have pleaded with GOD so earnestly had he known what we know about the children of Ishmael?)

SYMBOLS OF THE COMING “HE”

When GOD instructs Abraham to sacrifice his “only son” Isaac he is about 30 years old	Christ is about 30 years old when he is sacrificed on the cross.
From the moment GOD tells Abraham his “son of Promise” , must die, <u>Isaac is dead in the mind of Abraham</u> because GOD keeps his promise (the proof for Abraham is that GOD has kept the promise of the miracle child, Isaac).	Christ’s requirement of death is real in the mind of GOD.
Abraham travels <u>for three days</u> to the mountain region of Moriah to a mountain GOD shows him.	Christ is dead in the tomb for three days before He (like Isaac) is resurrected
Abraham takes <u>two servants</u> along with Isaac to the top of the mountain	Two sinners are nailed to crosses next to Christ <u>on top of the mountain</u>
Abraham places <u>wood</u> on the back of Isaac	Christ carries a wooden cross on His back.
When Isaac asks his father, “Father, where is the sacrificial lamb?” Abraham says, “GOD HIMSELF will provide My Son.”	Christ HIMSELF is the sacrifice
GOD directs Abraham to Moriah and on the journey tells Abraham about one mountain in particular.	Christ is crucified on Mount Moriah.

ABRAHAM KNOWS ISAAC WILL BE RESURRECTED

Previously God had promised Abraham that **Isaac would have children**. When God instructed Abraham to sacrifice Isaac as yet, **Isaac had no wife or child**.

Abraham’s faith in the resurrection is what saved him . . . just as it saves us today!

So why do the Jews call this story Isaac’s Faith? Because a 30-year old man was bound by his 130 year old father and could have escaped his fate at any time.

Christ also agreed to die on that same mountain, under similar circumstances (at least metaphorically), and He too could have escaped His fate at any time.

In the final analysis however, perhaps it is both.

Abraham’s sacrifice	GOD’s willingness to give up His Only Son
Isaac’s faith	GOD’s Only Son willing to accept GOD’s plan

Either could have said, “No” and you and I would be doomed.

ISAAC'S BRIDE

And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-Jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen. Genesis 22:14

What is the "it", that shall be seen" almost a thousand years before "it" occurs?

ISAAC DOES NOT LEAVE THE MOUNTAIN

So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba. Genesis 22:19

We are told that Abraham and the two servants came down from the mountain and travel home. We might naturally assume Isaac goes home with them but notice Isaac is very carefully edited out of the text.

In fact, Isaac **disappears completely** from the narrative until **2 chapters later** when he is united with his bride **Rebekah**, by the well of **LaHai Roi**.

The Well of leHai Roi means in Hebrew, "The Well of Living Water," (or "The Well of the Living One.")

THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

- Abraham is a type of **GOD** (The Father).
- Isaac is a type of **CHRIST** (The Son).

After Isaac becomes invisible (as Christ became invisible), Abraham commissions his senior servant to gather a bride for the invisible Isaac.

NOTE: Following his sacrifice and final instruction to his followers, Christ became and still is, invisible, until He will be personally united with his bride (the Church), following the final judgment.

The servant *qualifies* Rebekah by the well (of living water) just as we are qualified (the Church). Is she found worthy? Yes. Notice, she agrees to marry the bridegroom without seeing him personally (through faith). We too agree to become the bride of Christ without actually seeing Him personally however, we know of His Sacrifice. (For this reason I believe Rebekah was told of Isaac's sacrifice)

The senior servant gives the bride gifts. We are given a gift.

THE GIFT

We see Isaac joining his bride at the well of the Living One.

- The Servant is a type of the **HS**.
- Rebekah is a type of the **Church**.

As the Jews studied the OT, they were being told time and time again, GOD's Plan.

By the time Christ appeared, it should have been clear what was to occur.