

# **THREE STUDENTS IN THE SCHOOL OF FAITH -ABRAHAM, SARAH & ISAAC-GENESIS 12-35**



- **Thirteen chapters in Genesis are devoted to the life and times of Abram.**
- **In Genesis 12 — 23, we see the development of faith in Abram's life by 7 appearances of God to him. We will restrict our discussion to these occurrences, for sake of time.**
- **Into this discourse we will infuse issues about Sarah and Isaac because the record of the lives of Sarah and Isaac are very intertwined with that of Abraham.**

- We will proceed today by showing that Abraham was one of the outstanding members of the SCHOOL OF FAITH.
- He graduated with honors and became a friend of Our Head Master.
- From the time of his entry in the SCHOOL OF FAITH in Ur of the Chaldees (Genesis 12) until the time he passed his final exam (Genesis 22:12) this student faced **seven stiff recorded examinations until he excelled at the final one.**
- **We will note from his report card that he did not pass them all.**
- Since all of the courses that Abraham took are core or compulsory courses, they are of particular interest to all scholars in the SCHOOL OF FAITH.
- **But permit me to begin with a word on Sarah's report card**

# Sarah (Hebrews 11:21)

- Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.
- Sarah entered our co-ed school with her husband, Abraham, whom she often influenced, as he often listened to her as they discussed vital matters through to a decision (Genesis 16:2,5,6)....also chaps 12/13 & 20
- Her stiffest exam was to come to grips that God could indeed give her the son of promise even after she was well past the normal age of child bearing.
- She learned well one of the rules of our school, that nothing is too hard for the Lord-an important principle from Genesis 18:14. God is still doing the seemingly impossible in lives all around the world today. He can still do the same in your life and mine.
- Christ can yet live in our lives, so that our life can demonstrate the lifestyle of faith exemplified by Christ in His earthly sojourn. Our Great Heavenly Head Master travails tirelessly as he seeks to ensure that Christ is formed in us
- He toils untiringly so that Christ might dwell or take up his permanent and complete abode in our hearts, with our minds and affections and wills bowing to His sovereign control.
- God accomplished this in Sarah as he turned her laugh of doubt to the laugh of faith and reliance in his promise. He will do the same for us!

# Exam #1 - the Test of Separation (Genesis 12:4).

- First, Abraham was asked to make a vital break with the past. It took a while before he finally passed this course.
- When God appeared to Abram the first time, he asked him to exhibit faith and obedience and leave his country, and kindred and from his father's house and go to a land of God's choosing.
- Initially Abraham set out in faith and partial obedience from his idolatrous but affluent civilization, with his father and nephew and settled temporarily at Haran until the death of his father (Genesis 11:31-32).
- After Terah's death in Haran, Abram went on to Canaan-a land of idolatry and religious sexual perversions.
- In Genesis 12:7, when Abram had eventually reached his destination, the Abrahamic covenant was amended to include the promise of the land of Palestine- a promise that is reiterated throughout the Old Testament.

- **Like Abram, we are also expected to make a clean cut separation from the world and sin. We must ace this test, because God still expects us on accepting His offer to enter the SCHOOL of FAITH to make a clean clear cut from the old way of life.**
- **We must like the Thessalonians, turn from our several idols to serve the living God.**
- The old nature loves Ur, with all its lush civilization, and hates the thought of the pilgrim's path of faith that seeks the promise of the unseen city, but we must step out on the word of God's promise to dwell with us, and walk in and with us, and be our God
- Only a clean cut separation to God will facilitate our fight against the lures of the world, where the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life seem so attractive.
- Abram eventually fully met the requirements of this test as recorded in Hebrews 11:8, 7 Romans chapter 4 . So must we.



# Exam #2 was the Test of Providence (Genesis 12:10).

- Abram's faith was tested a second time in the incident in Genesis 12:10-20 which describes Abraham's doubt concerning God's promises in response to a famine in Canaan and his exodus to Egypt—a type of the world—even though the country God appointed for him was the land of Canaan.
- We are unsure as to whether God permitted or specifically sent this famine but when it descended upon Canaan, it proved to be a test of Abram's faith, which he failed by not depending on God for Sustenance and went down to Egypt.
- It is noteworthy that he built no altars there, as was his passion; neither did he hear God's voice there. With no altar to invoke him to daily communion, and without the guidance of the Heavenly Headmaster, no pupil can get very far in the pursuit of excellence in this course.
- Though Abram lapsed and his faith failed temporarily, and he leant to his own understanding, as we often do, he was not a failure. His faith was growing and God was growing Abram up.
- Whenever, he stumbled and fell, he came back to God, as all true sons of God do..... as all true pupils in the school of faith do.

- **Not only did Abram's sin lay in neglect to call on God for sustenance or guidance, but his fault was compounded by deception.**
- **On entering Egypt, Abram realized that the possibility existed that the King of Egypt might desire Sarai for his harem because of her beauty. Abram refused to risk death because of the beauty and desirability of his wife, and in effect, morally abandoned his wife when he devised the plan that they would pretend that they were merely brother and sister-a half truth.**
- **Though this sounds logical, it was a diabolical ploy in which Abram got out of God's definitive will for his life. Like we often do, Abram misunderstood the meaning of faith, and defined the word promise as God instructing him in general terms, rather than in all areas of his life. Abram committed the fallacy that is prevalently proclaimed that "God helps those who help themselves"**
- **Like we sometimes do, Abram did not yet understand that God would himself fulfill all the promises that He made because of his faithfulness and omnipotence.**
- **However, God overruled, because if Sarai were lost to Abram, the Abrahamic covenant, the rise of the Hebrew nation as a witness to God in the world, and the arrangements for the coming of the Messiah would all be endangered.**
- **It is to be noted that God did not appear to Abram at all until he returned from Egypt and restored his fellowship with God. God does not promise to bless us or fellowship with us while we linger or loiter in the world-represented here by Egypt.**



- We, like Abraham often fail this test, as we seek ourselves to ascertain from whence the next meal will come and similar important, but mundane issues.
- Often we succumb, and set off for the Egypt of this world, independently of the will and power of God.
- There, the sin of unbelief easily besets and trips us up. There we engage in compromise and find unhappiness eventually; and sometimes sooner than later.
- As you know, Abraham would later fail this test at Gerar, under identical circumstances; just as we often do, with the sin that easily besets us.
- This is a course that is offered at every level and grade in our Christian Education. It is on the program from spiritual kindergarten to the doctoral level.
- May we all conquer it and gain our Heavenly Headmaster's approval and be placed on the honor roll.
- **When we fail, we too must return to God and get His help to carry on. We must cry out like the man in Mark 9:24 who said to Jesus "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief".**

# Exam #3 was the Test of Prosperity (Genesis 13:7).

- Many believers respond to the test of poverty as they do to this exam; by total failure and departure from God.
- However, just as the test of poverty is meant for us to be dependent on God-the All Sufficient One, **the test of prosperity is meant for us to glorify God (not self) by using His blessings to bless his people and spread the gospel.** Abraham passed this test with flying colors, and displayed great unselfishness in his dealings with his nephew Lot.
- **We need an abundance of God's grace as we seek to master this course, and not let our prosperity get the better of us.**

- **Abram's unbelief took him from his place of worship; it led him into sin, and caused him to lead others into sin. It made him more confident in his ability to lie than in the protecting power of God. It even broke apart his family for a while. Finally, even an ungodly king rightly rebuked him.**
- In Genesis 13:1-4 we see that **Abram returned from Egypt to the land promised to him, to the same place back where he started. Although he returned with great riches Abram's time in Egypt was essentially, *wasted* time. God could have and would have provided for his needs in Canaan.**
- He came back into the Promised Land basically as a beginner doing what he needed to do. He came back to Bethel and the altar, as a worshipper, and calling on the name of the LORD. He came back to doing what he should.
- **God wants us to walk in our *first* love and our *first* works ([Revelation 2:4-5](#)).**

- We will not dwell too much on the contention between Abram's and Lot's hired workers .But we should note what happened when Abram returned to doing the right thing again as pointed out in verses 1-4, because we face the same.
- **When we get right with God, we can often expect attack from the devil.**
- **In Egypt, Abram thought he had to take his fate into his own hands, and that he had to look out for "number one." Now, he is wiser and is willing to let God look out for his interests.**
- **Now he has began to see that everything he owned was the free gift of God as taught in John 3:27...**A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven, **and James1:17a** Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.
- **In the resolution of the conflict Abram fulfilled the New Testament principle of love: *Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.* ([Philippians 2:4](#))**

# **Exam #4 was the Test of Partnership (Genesis 14:14).**

- This course involves brotherly care, and being our brother's keeper. To pass this course we must do much research in the Joahnine epistles and Gospel.**
- Paul is also an instructor in this course and teaches that we are to restore falling brethren in Galatians 6:1.**
- Abraham might easily have abandoned Lot and said "It serves him right!"**
- Instead he set out to rescue him, as we are taught to do also in Jude 23 & James 5:19-20.**

- **Abram's Test of Partnership involved his rescuing of his nephew, as well as his learning that God was his partner.**
- **Using the clever tactic of a night attack with his army split into two groups, he succeeded in rescuing Lot and recovering all the booty seized by the confederacy of the five kings.**



- **Then Genesis 14: 21-24 describes Abram's refusal of the booty from the battle.**
- **As seemed proper, the king of Sodom wanted to reward Abram for all he did in recovering what was taken by the confederation of five kings, and he offered Abram a tremendous amount of booty.**
- **Abraham's decision not to accept a reward from the king of Sodom in Genesis 14:23 reflects his early understanding of the promises which would later be enunciated in John 3:27 and James 1:17.**
- **According to the code of Hammurabi, Abraham had every right to both the booty and the people he rescued. However, he realized that if he had accepted them, that afterwards it could have been said that men rather than God had made him rich, and were responsible for his success.**
- **Furthermore, it seems that prior to setting out on this escapade, that Abraham had promised God that he would not seek to benefit from it. God approved of Abraham's decision and faith in both rescuing Lot and refusing the booty offered by the king of Sodom, and appeared to him as his shield and exceeding great reward in an act of encouragement. (Genesis 15:1). Abraham was learning to partner with God**
- **God promised to protect Abraham, as well as to reward his faith in God to provide for him. God promises to reward all men who will have faith in Him, and His promises.**

# Exam # 5 was the Test of Delay (Genesis 16:15).

- This is a hard course for all believers, and Abraham failed this test initially. Oh how we hate to wait on God! Why does He always have to wait until the last minute? Why doesn't he show up when we think he ought to? Doesn't He know that we are depending on Him? (Actually we often are not really.) These are just our frequent familiar thoughts.
- So we respond to our perceived beliefs by taking matters into our own hands, and intervene by human reasoning and planning.
- Our actions then issues forth in the production of grief with attendant long term effects. Just as Abraham's failure to pass this test produced Ishmael, the ancestor of the Arabs, our failure of this course will result in similar untold difficulties for ourselves and those around us for many generations to come.
- This is the caveat of failure of this course. We must be careful to avoid using the arm of flesh to help God. We must follow only exactly as he has directed.

- **We observe in Genesis 16, that Sarah misunderstood the promise and its method of fulfillment and tried to help God keep his promise by suggesting that Abram get the “promised child” by cohabiting with her maid Hagar, as was the custom in that era.**
- **The misunderstanding here is that she seemed to have interpreted God’s promise to mean that she must find a way to have the promised son, rather than waiting for God to provide him. Abram and Sarai allowed themselves to be guided by circumstances rather than God.**
- **At the birth of the child, the custom was that the child would be placed in Sarah’s lap (a type of adoption), and then she would present the child to Abram, as the fulfillment of the promise from God. Abraham obeyed his wife, but God did not accept the offspring, because **customs of the day have nothing to do with the method of implementing God’s promises. God’s work ought to be done in God’s way rather than according to the prevailing practices which are usually determined by the devil’s crowd, as Sarah soon found out (Genesis 16:5).****
- **It is important to observe that the sin of Abram and Sarai at this point was the same as Adam and Eve in the Garden- unbelief!**

- **In Romans 4: 19-21 we read with respect to this event that God did the seemingly impossible, when against all hope, he actually did what Abraham and Sarah thought to be impossible.**
- **Abraham thereby became, the father of many nations, just as God had promised him in Genesis 12, inter alia.**
- **Genesis 21:1-2 proves that God kept his promise with respect to the birth of a son for Abraham even though Sarah was 90 and Abraham was 100 years old.**
- **Hebrews 11:11 comments on this episode thus, “By faith Abraham, even though he was past the age-and Sarah herself was barren-was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise.”**
- **Evidently, both Abraham and Sarah came to believe in God’s promise, and God’s power to enable the physical rejuvenation necessary for her to become pregnant.**

## Exam # 6 Test of Duty (Genesis 21:14).

- In this test, Abraham was asked to cast out the bondwoman and her son. We can see that Abraham loved Ishmael. Ishmael was a son of Abraham. But Ishmael was not the son that God had chosen. Abraham obeyed at great cost, and so must we, as we seek to pass this test in our lives.
- Our duty and devotion will cost as much; but so do our worthwhile secular pursuits.
- We must learn to attack and engage in our spiritual endeavors with the same verve, vim and vigor and detail as we employ in our secular interests.
- We must pass this course just as Abraham did by simple obedience.

- In Genesis 16:10-13 we have God's promise to the pregnant Hagar with respect to the birth of a son to be called Ishmael ("God hears") with regard to his physical and moral characteristics, and concerning the exceeding great number of his offspring. The number and nature of the Arabs today confirm the fulfillment of this promise.
- **It is important to note that God did not omit Ishmael from his promises (since he promised that he would beget 12 princes) but he was omitted from the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 17:19-20). "Ishmael, the child of Sarai's and Abram's lapse into unbelief, was the progenitor of the Arabs, the traditional enemy of the Jewish people.**
- **In Genesis 21 we are told also how Hagar and Ishmael were sent away at this time. This incident is most significant because it is used by Paul in his allegory in Galatians 4:21-31**



- **In Galatians 4:21-31** Paul uses this incident in Sarah & Abraham's life to present the contrast between the two sons from two different mothers in what he calls an allegory.
- It is noteworthy that Paul did not say that the story of Abraham is an allegory-as some have interpreted this statement-but said that the incident of the two women who bore Abraham sons contains an allegory, from which we can learn a lesson.
- **Paul points out that the son born to Hagar was the son of a bondwoman who represents the Mosaic law. Paul explained that Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman was born after the flesh.**
- **This meant that according to the Code of Hammurabi, which governed the culture in Abraham's day, that even though Ishmael was Abraham's son, he was a slave. In contrast, Isaac who was born to Sarah by promise was the son of a freewoman, who represents grace.**
- **Paul then stated that the lesson to be gleaned is that these two births represent two covenants. Paul compared Hagar to Mount Sinai and stated that she was synonymous with the covenant of the Mosaic law which Moses received from God on Mount Sinai. Paul said that Hagar as Mount Sinai corresponded to the earthly Jerusalem (representing the nation of Israel) of his day, which was still in slavery with her children, and was still under the bondage of the law.**
- **In contrast, "Jerusalem which is above" is the new Jerusalem (Revelation 20) which is the mother city of the believer under grace, in the same way that the old Jerusalem is the mother city of those under the law.**
- **What Paul is stressing in all these analogies is that believers have no connection with legalism at any time.**

- Galatians 4:27 point out that though Sarah was barren until the birth of Isaac, more spiritual descendants have come from Sarah than from Hagar.
- Paul wants us to see that God is saving under grace more members of the human family than He ever saved under the Mosaic law by the sacrificial system. Believers today are also children of promise, just as Isaac was. Our birth is a new birth, which came about when we believed and grabbed God's promises in Scriptures like John 3:16; I Peter 1:23; 2Corinthians 5:21etc.
- We must never mix grace with law in our teaching and preaching even though many people hate the gospel of the free grace of God, and have been blinded by Satan to think that they must *do* something or *seek* something from another source other than Christ as presented to them by the wooing of the Holy Spirit. The ungodly insist that they must go through some ceremony in order to receive the salvation that God offers by grace alone.

- Paul points out clearly that just “as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.”
- He would have us see that we are not to be surprised that the natural unsaved man hates the gospel of the grace of God, and not only try to contradict us but would eliminate us by any form of persecution that is necessary.
- **Just as Abraham could not have both the son of Hagar and the son of Sarah, Paul is teaching that we can't be saved by law and grace. We have only one choice for there is only one name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. Christ alone is the way. Christ alone is our peace. Christ alone is the promised seed. Let us therefore not add to what Jesus Christ did for us on the cross. Let us pass the Test of Duty and put out the bondwoman that represents the Law.**

# Exam # 7 Test of Graduation (Genesis 22).

- Genesis 22 records God's hardest test for Abraham. This test involved his sincerity, loyalty and faith and was designed to prove that Abraham did in deed have these qualities.
- In light of the incidents in Job 1-2 and the clear teaching of 1 Corinthians 10:13; Jude 24; James 1:2, 13-14, we are taught to enjoy the privilege of being honored by God as capable of enduring this degree of intensity of testing, since those who faithfully endure indicate that they are indeed blessed by God.
- Such testing produces endurance during our earthly sojourn (James 1:3-4), and promises rewards in heaven (James 1:12). James suggests that we are to praise God for it (James 1:12), pray while in it (James 1:5) , and persevere through it (James 1:12), lest we be become as tossed waves or withered flowers (James 1:6-11).
- James wants us to see that by testing us, God desires to purify and strengthen us so that we might become better (James 1:2,12). In contrast, Satan who often instigates and seeks God's permission for severe trials (Job 1-2; Luke 22:31), seeks to pervert and weaken us and make us bitter, and lose our testimony and the joy of our salvation (James 1:13-15).
- **This test illustrates another phase of faith in Abraham's spiritual development. It demonstrates that in the life of faith, that in addition to the opportunities to turn back that are presented by the devil, that they we will also be tested by trials sent by God to prove our worth, and spiritual metal.**

- In Abraham's severest test **of obedience, which he passed**, he was told to offer up Isaac, his only begotten and beloved son, and the very one through whom the promises of God were to be fulfilled.
- "Then God said, "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).
- **Note that this passage is the first place the word "love" appears in the Bible.**
- God did not intend that Abraham should slay Isaac, but simply told him to offer him as an offering to test Abraham's sincerity, loyalty and faith. God was asking Abraham to prove that he (Abraham) would always trust God.
- **Hebrews 11:17-19 explains what Abraham was thinking. He knew that God could even make dead people live again. And Abraham knew the promises that God made about Isaac.** So, Abraham was confident that he could trust God.
- **Abraham believed that even if he sacrificed Isaac, God would raise his son from the dead: He (Abraham) said to his servants,** "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you." (Genesis 22:5, )
- His faith overcame this test, and enabled him to offer up his son, accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead.

- And Abraham was right. Abraham soon discovered that God's plan was to save Isaac.
- Abraham did not know about God's plan to save Isaac. But Abraham realized that God had such a plan. That Abraham expected God to perform some sort of miracle is evidenced by the fact that on approaching the Mount, He told his servants to wait for him and Isaac and said "**We \_will come back to you.**"
- **Abraham passed the test**, although God stopped it before any actual harm to could come to Isaac - "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from Me your son, your only son." (Genesis 22:12).
- **God's plan to save Isaac was to provide a ram to die instead of Isaac.** In the same way, we all deserve God's punishment because of our evil deeds (Romans 6:23).
- But God sent his son, Jesus, to die in our place. And God will forgive us if we trust him. We should confess our evil deeds to God. And we should invite him into our hearts.



- **It is imperative to realize that at this final exam that God did not want Isaac's life although he asked for it as a burnt offering. He wanted Abraham. God wants us too. He wants to use us for His glory- and OURS!**
- **That we have more to gain in the matter of giving our all to God is clearly detailed in Roman 8:17-18. God asks us for the nearest and dearest of our hearts (which usually only has value to us) and gives us the nearest and dearest of His heart, just so that we can get His glory. Let us not try to understand this transaction, except to say that this is clearly a win-win situation which obviously seems to make us the winner by far.**
- **I can not explain why God spared Abraham's son, and yet could not find a way to spare HIS OWN SON (Romans 8:32)! But I accept the fact, and so should you, so that our Heavenly Headmaster and Examiner can say of us " Now I know that you fear me and do not withhold the nearest and dearest of your heart from me."**

- For his part, Isaac willingly became the sacrifice because of his faith in his father and in God.
- Isaac's near-sacrifice can be compared to God's sacrifice of his only son, [Jesus Christ](#), [for the sins of the world](#).
- It must be stressed too, that Abraham did not compel Isaac to go to the place with him, because to have compelled him would have spoiled the type and object lesson inherent in this event, which prefigured the willingness of Christ to come down to earth and willingly go to the cross to die for man's sin at His Father's pleasure and command ( John 10: 17-18).
- The phrase "laid it upon Isaac" in verse 6 foreshadows the cross and also corroborates with the teaching in Romans 8:32, where we read that God "spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all".
- The fact that Isaac was not a child but a young man at this time demonstrates his loving submission to his father, just as is described of Jesus throughout the book of John and in Hebrews 5:7-8).

- The typical lessons in this chapter are to be seen in:
- **Abraham, a type of the Father who “spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all” as taught in Romans 8:32; John 3:16.**
- **Isaac, a type of Christ “obedient unto death” as taught in Philippians 2:5-8.**
- **The ram, a type of Christ offered as a substitute as a burnt offering in our stead as is taught in Hebrews 10:5-10.**
- **A type of the resurrection as implied in James 2:21-23 and Hebrews 11:17-19, where the phrase “in a figure” in verse 19 confirms the typology.**
- **NOTE ISAAC IS NOT SEEN AGAIN UNTIL THE END OF CHAPTER 24 WHEN HE RECEIVES HIS BRIDE**

- **“It is significant that the life of Isaac is tied in with that of Abraham. Isaac’s birth and his life is interwoven with that of Abraham’s experiences. Although Isaac was important there upon the altar, it was again Abraham and Isaac together. [This] presents a wonderful picture of the intimacy between the Lord Jesus Christ and the Father.”**
- **Proper study of the Gospel of John enables us to see that it is very proper that the story of Abraham and Isaac be interwoven together. Glaring examples include John 5:17; 14:6,9;17:4; to mention a few.**
- **Isaac seems to play a subordinate role to his father, Abraham, AND IS A PERFECT PICTURE OF THAT PRESENTED IN THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE LORD WITH THE FATHER IN JOHN’S GOSPEL.**

- **The importance of Abraham’s life as perceived by the New Testament authors is seen in his appellation of “Friend of God” in James 2:23, “Our Father” in James 2:21, and the fact that he is cited by Paul as an illustration of justification by faith before God-the root of faith (Romans 4; Galatians 3), and by James as an illustration of the faith that works, and thereby provides evidence of one’s justification by God before men-the fruit of faith (James 2:21).**
- **Paul also acclaims him as an illustration of faith in Hebrews 11:8-19.**
- **It is noteworthy that in the “Hall of the Faithful” in Hebrews 11 where the heroes of faith are listed and discussed, that more verses are devoted to Abraham than to any of the others there listed.**

# Isaac's story is told in Hebrews 11:20 & the following chapters of Genesis

- chapter 17, **Promise of his birth**
- chapter 21, **Fulfillment of this promise**
- chapter 22, **His offering as sacrifice**
- chapter 24, **His marriage**
- chapter 25, **receives father's estate, helps bury his father**
- chapter 26: **inherits father's wealth & receives covenant blessing**
- chapter 27, **Fooled by wife and Jacob**
- chapter 28, **and**
- chapter 35: **Record of his death.**



- **ISAAC**
- One of our alumni was Isaac (Hebrews 11:20). **He was a special boy who was promised by God to his parents. He grew up in the faith of his father, and learned the workings of faith in a dramatic lesson, in which he accompanied his dad to his final examination in the SCHOOL OF FAITH, as described in Genesis 22. He learned that day that our Heavenly Head Master wants full time students, that the life of faith is a full time occupation which requires devoted participation on a daily basis-24/7 as we say today.**
- Isaac was a rather quiet student compared to the others of our alumni MENTIONED IN Hebrews 11 , **but God has such in His school- those who will quietly obey and thus excel, and attain to their full potential.**
- **We often wonder why Isaac is listed in the roll of honor of our school, since he is certainly not as flamboyant as the others there listed.**
- **The answer ought to be a lesson and challenge to us. Isaac simply did his assignment.**
- Unlike Peter in John 21: 21, who on receiving his assignment from the Savior, asked what was John's assignment, Isaac just did what he was told to do. So must we.
- Isaac's major assignment was to bless his sons and communicate to them that they were destined to become nations that would fill the Middle East, even though in conflict with each other, and play a vital role in world history until the end of the ages.
- **Isaac's challenge to us is therefore that we should obey God, and simply do His bidding.**

- Isaac was assigned an appropriate name by God before his birth,
- was offered up in sacrifice by his father,
- was submissive to his father's will, and condemned to die,
- was humble, pious, full of faith, and obedient unto death;
- was a foreshadowed substitute, and saw the need of a lamb;
- **Was a sacrifice provided, bearing the wood for the sacrifice, was placed on the altar, but expected to be raised by his father, was brought back from the dead (Ephesians 1:19-23) to be the head of a great nation and to bless all peoples,**
- Isaac was hidden three days from sight; Christ was hidden three days in Sheol but was received back by the Father; was last seen just after his “sacrifice” even though his name was frequently on the lips of the Father, the servant, the bride, and others, and does not Himself appear again until he goes out to meet the bride. (Cp Genesis 22:13,16; 24; I Thessalonians 4:16, 17).
- **Isaac was the Bridegroom of a called- out bride. (Cp Genesis 24;Matthew 16:18),**
- Christ is awaiting union with His bride when she comes to Him, and in the meantime preparing a place for her (John 14:3) as she approaches.



- **Genesis 24 is perhaps the most type filled chapter in Genesis.**
- God uses Abraham here to teach and prefigure the church as the bride of Christ.
- (1) Abraham, a type of a certain king (the Father) who would make a marriage for his son (Matthew 22:2); sends Eliezar, Abraham's servant) a type of the Holy Spirit into the world to find a bride
- (2) the servant does not “speak of himself” but takes the things of the Bridegroom with which to win the bride (John 16:13-14); **In this beautiful type, we see how the servant speaks never about himself but only of Isaac and of his master Abraham.**
- This is exactly in keeping with what Jesus taught the role of the Holy Spirit would be in his relationship to the Son and the believer as presented in John 14:26; 16:9-15.
- **(3) the servant, a type of the Spirit as enriching the bride with the Bridegroom's gifts (1 Corinthians 12:7-11; Galatians 5:22-23);**
- **In verse 22, we see that the servant gave Rebekah a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten *shekels* weight of gold. In verse 53 There were more presents for Rebekah. And the servant also gave presents to her family.**
- **It was the custom for the bridegroom to pay a price for his bride. This was a very expensive present. It showed clearly to Rebekah that the servant's intention was to arrange a marriage**

- Verse 49 The servant told all the facts to Rebekah's family. But he **nobody forced Rebekah to marry Isaac. Her family asked her whether she wanted to go.** She said that she would go.
- (4) the servant, a type of the Spirit as bringing the bride to the meeting with the Bridegroom (Acts 13:4;16:6-7;Romans 8:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17);
- (5) Rebekah, a type of the Church, the *ecclesia*, the "called out" virgin bride of Christ (Genesis 24:16; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:25-32);
- **(6) Isaac, a type of the Bridegroom "whom having not seen" the bride loves through the testimony of the unnamed servant (1 Peter 1:8); and**
- **(7) Isaac, a type of the Bridegroom who goes out to meet and receive His bride (Genesis 24:63; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17). Verse 64 At last, Rebekah saw Isaac for the first time**
- **When we read the story in Genesis 24, these truths are not so apparent. We need the contribution of our New Testament tuition to fully appreciate this wonderful story in Genesis.**

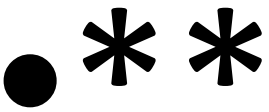
- **Genesis 25** makes it abundantly clear that only Isaac was considered the son of the covenant.
- Abraham realised that Keturah's six sons should not live with Isaac in Canaan because **God's promises were not for those other sons, God's promises were for Isaac.**
- So while he was still alive, **he gave his entire estate to Isaac** and gave gifts to his concubines' sons , **and sent them to live far away from Isaac to avoid conflict or claims as heirs after his death.**
- Abraham died at age 175 years, and **his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave** in Machpelah., where he had buried Sarah his wife

- **Genesis 26 is the only chapter that concerns Isaac alone.**
- **in verse 7, we see history repeating itself as Isaac, just like his father, passes his wife off as his sister, for fear of his life.**
- Isaac's conduct in Gerar was similar to his father's in Philistia in that when both of them were confronted with the ravages of a famine they both decided to leave their homes and set out towards Egypt.
- Both Isaac and Abraham in these circumstances lied about the relationship between themselves and their wives (calling them Sister) for fear that they might be murdered by men who would lust after their beautiful and desirable wives.
- This reveals the fact that "like father, like son," that sins are carried from father to **son...there is no generation gap of sin. It just flows right from one generation to the other. Generally, the son makes very much the mistakes that the father did, unless something [or God] intervenes.)**

- However, God appeared to him, to command him not to go to Egypt, and **to indicate that He was with Isaac according to the promise to Abraham to be with his people.**
- **God ordered Isaac to stay in Canaan and gave him a reaffirmation of the covenant He had made with Abraham in verse 3 and again in verse 24.**
- **In Genesis 26:2-5 we see that God re-affirms the covenant with Isaac that He had made with Abraham.**
- **Isaac had already heard about these promises from Abraham. But this experience was very important for Isaac, for God was now making these promises to Isaac and his descendants. So, Abraham's God was now Isaac's God too.**
- **In Genesis 26:23-25 God spoke to Isaac again and gave him confidence that he would do for Isaac everything that he (God) promised to Abraham.**
- **Like his father Abraham, Isaac stayed in Beersheba, prayed to God, and worshipped the Lord.**

- **Genesis 26:18-22 indicates the struggle that Isaac had in the attempt to keep the water in the wells he dug.**
- **Since water and well is a picture of the Word of God this is a promise to all believers that they will always have to pay a price to study and teach the Bible.**
- **The devil will not permit us to do this without a big struggle.**
- **We must note too, that the water of the Word is that which differentiates believers from unbelievers, and mature believers from carnal believers.**

- **Genesis 27:1-4 tells us of the time when Isaac thought he was about to die.**
- **Isaac intended to bestow the birthright to Esau, his favorite son, as was the common custom, even though he knew about the prophecy at his sons' births (Genesis 25:23) that Jacob was the son that God had chosen to be the heir of the covenant.**
- **Whereas we can't be sure that Isaac knew of Esau's sale of the birthright to Jacob, it is inconceivable that he had not been told of God's revelation to Rebekah in Genesis 25:23. Isaac, however, surely knew of Esau's marriage to pagan wives and that his lifestyle was unsuitable to one who was the heir of promise.**
- **We are thus flabbergasted that this patriarch would so flagrantly fly in the face of God's divine ordination and bestow on Esau the position God had given to Jacob prior to his birth. We must also remember that his ways are not our ways or his thoughts our thoughts as taught in Isaiah 55: 8- 9.**
- **Isaac eventually saw (Genesis 27:33) that God's will for his sons was better than his own will for them.**



The consequences of this favoritism

reverberate through the next generation, as Jacob favors Joseph, who suffers greatly at the hands of his brothers as a result of this favoritism.

- That was an unwise move for a father to take. Isaac should have worked to love both boys equally.
- **Parents should not favor one child over another. The division and hurt this causes can result in irreparable harm. Every child has unique gifts that should be encouraged.**
- **Isaac is fooled by Jacob & Isaac blesses Jacob**
- Sadly just as Isaac was fooled by Jacob, Jacob's sons did the same to him.



- In **CHAPTER 28**, at Rebecca's insistence, Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him again, and commanded him not marry a Canaanite woman. He sent him to Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel, his mother's father.
- This time, Isaac knew whom he was blessing, as he gave to Jacob the same promises that God had given to Abraham and Isaac. And so, we call God, 'the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob' (Exodus 3:6).
- In Hebrews 11, this incident is rated as the high point of Isaac's life.
- Genesis 35: 27-29 records the death of Isaac at age 180, and his burial by his sons.

- **While it is easy to overlook Isaac and his role in the biblical narrative, we can learn quite a lot from three aspects of his life that distinguished him from both his father and his son:**
- **1 Isaac lives his entire life in the Land of Israel.**
- In fact, twice in Genesis we see instructions given about Isaac not leaving the Land.
- Eliezer was expressly forbidden by Abraham not to bring Isaac to Mesopotamia if Isaac's wife to be refused to come to Canaan. **(Genesis 24:6).**
- **Later, when Isaac travels to Gerar because of a famine, God warns him not to go down to Egypt, and promises to be with him and bless him if he stays in the land (26:3)**

- **2 Isaac is unique among the patriarchs for remaining faithful to his only wife Rebekah, and only fathered children with her.**
- **When after many years of marriage to Isaac, Rebekah still had not given birth to a child and was believed to be barren, just as Sarah had been, Isaac does not have a child with his wife's concubine (as does Abraham, or his son Jacob); rather, he "pleaded with the Eternal on behalf of his wife" (25:21). God answers his plea and they soon become parents of twins.**
- **Isaac's loyalty and commitment to Rebekah are admirable, especially in a culture that encouraged men to take multiple wives and increase their progeny at almost any cost.**
- **He serves as an example not just for couples who stay together when they are not able to bear children, but for any man or woman who remains committed to his or her partner despite significant challenges.**
- **NB The Lord has one bride and he intercedes for her.**

- **3 The third distinguishing factor of Isaac's life is that his name is not changed.**
- **Whereas Abram becomes Abraham and Jacob becomes Israel, the new names symbolizing important transitions in their lives, Isaac remains Isaac.**
- **One reason that his name is not changed is that God named him (17:19).**
- **But it seems that Isaac remaining Isaac also indicates a certain stability and consistency of character.**
- **Abraham and Jacob had to go through significant changes in their lives to become the persons that they needed to be.**
- **Isaac, on the other hand, required no such change. He has the same basic character and essence throughout his life.**
- **Let us here remember that Jesus not only received a name, but that he received a name that is above every other name.**

- **Due to his ability to overcome the many trials and challenges that he faced and overcame, the account of Isaiah's life should inspire us to deal with the many challenges that we face so that we might create a world where the ideals of Isaac's life become a reality.**
- **It takes faith to enter the SCHOOL OF FAITH, and it takes much faith to complete the courses**, but our Heavenly Headmaster is none other than *El Shaddai*- the all sufficient One.
- Nothing is too hard for Him. He can bring the most hard headed pupil from the primary to Ph.D level in the courses of His school. Just enroll and let Him give you the indwelling Resident Tutor- the Holy Spirit as your guide.
- No school I know can afford to give each student a Resident Tutor at all, far less for the duration of their studies from the primary to Ph.D, level, and in every course! Let us make the best use of this outstanding offer.
- Can he say of us **“I have not seen such great faith.”**
- Or must he ask **“Have ye no faith?”** or will He comment on our final exam paper in red ink **“Oh ye of little faith.”**