

We have surveyed five key events and characters in the first 23 chapters of Genesis.

Event or Character	Passage	Key Thought
Creation	Genesis 1-2	God created a perfect world out of nothing.
Fall	Genesis 3	Man chose to reject God, thus suffering loss of dominion. Yet, a Savior is promised who will restore dominion.
Pre-Flood	Genesis 4-6	God destroyed the earth due to Satan's plan to block the promise of a Savior.
Post-Flood	Genesis 7-11	The earth was again populated and nations were established.
Abraham	Genesis 12-23	God's chose one man, Abraham through who he would work.

In this session we have an overview of Abraham's son, Isaac. Isaac's name is mentioned thirteen times in previous chapters, so far as his birth is concerned, yet he has only appeared once in the narrative; the time he was offered up as a sacrifice (Genesis 22:3-9). Beginning in chapter 24, Isaac is brought to the forefront, but before he appears we must be formally introduced to his future wife, Rebekah (See Genesis 22:23).

Genesis 24

Verse 1

-Abraham is old (about 140 years old) and **well stricken in age** (literally, *gone into days*). For a time, before Isaac's birth, Abraham had been temporarily rejuvenated by the Lord so that he was able to father a son at the age of one hundred. Now he has *entered into the days of old age*.

-During that time, the **LORD had blessed Abraham in all things**. How could God have blessed him in all things? Didn't Abraham have failures/sin along the way?

1. He took some time to obey the Lord's command to leave his country and his father's house..
2. He left the land of Canaan, where God had called him, and went to Egypt because of a famine.
3. He lied to the Egyptians by calling Sarai his sister.
4. He took matters into his own hands regarding father a child God had promised.
5. He allowed Sarai to deal harshly with Hagar and his son Ishmael.
6. He laughed when he was told by God he would father a child at the age of one hundred.
7. He questioned God about Sodom.
8. He lied again, to Abimelech, about Sarah being his sister.

Doesn't sin deserved to be punished? Romans 5:13 illuminates why Abraham was not punished for his sin,

"For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law."

Abraham sinned, but his sin was not put on his account because the Law had not yet been given to Moses. When there is no law, sin is not counted against us. That truth holds true for us today—Christ has *abolished the law* (Ephesians 2:15). That word *abolished* is the strongest word available for *removing all energy*. It is *the law of commandments...in ordinances that was abolished in his flesh*, which removed *the enmity* between and and God. With that enmity removed, we are now reconciled to God! Therefore, God is not *imputing their trespasses unto them* (2 Corinthians 5:17-21). And because of that we can enter into a relationship with Him by grace, through faith. This is wonderful to think about.

God had promised to bless Abraham. Notice God did not discipline Abraham (because his sin was not imputed to him), and likewise, those who are *in Christ* are not disciplined. The dispensation of grace is truly what it professes to be.

God's promise to Abraham was unconditional and so is his promise to us, for all who believe in him; we are washed, we are sanctified, and we are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (1 Corinthians 6:11). The book of Hebrews mentions discipline, but that letter is being addressed to the Hebrews—it deserves a closer look at another time since this discussion goes beyond the passage at hand.

Verses 2-4—

-Abraham instructed his **eldest servant** (maybe Eleazar of Damascus? See 15:2), via a pledge; **put thy hand under my thigh** (a euphemism for the organs of generation) to go to Abraham's **country** in Mesopotamia, **to his kindred** (not the Canaanites), to find a wife for Isaac.

Verses 5-9—

-If the woman he finds is not willing to come back with him, he is released from his pledge.



Verse 10-

-This was a big operation. Abraham was very rich. His purpose was to impress the family to who the bride for Isaac would be found.

-**Mesopotamia**. *Meso* = between. *Potamia* = rivers. The Tigris and the Euphrates.

-This would have been a trek of over 500 miles and yet the entire journey happens between verses 10 and 11.

Verses 11-14

-The servant timed his arrival for evening, when the young girls (**women**) came out to **draw water**.

-Drawing water was often the task of young girls; See Exodus 2:16; 1 Samuel 9:11; also Genesis 29:9.

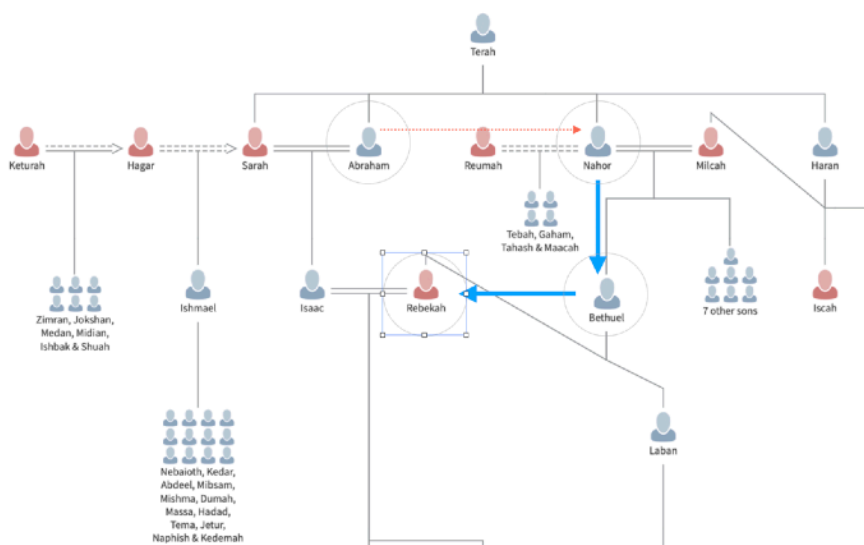
-The servant prayed a prayer of success indicating Abraham's spiritual leadership in his home rubbed off on his servant. What was his prayer? **Send me good speed today...show kindness to...Abraham.** Psalm 37:3-4:

"Delight thyself also in the Lord;
And he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

- 5 Commit thy way unto the Lord;
Trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

-Abraham's household was one of faith. The servant prayed for a formula in his prayer that would show beyond a shadow of a doubt who the future wife of Isaac would be. The formula: *"When I say give me a drink, and she says, 'I will give a drink to your camels also.'"* It is okay to be specific in our prayers.

Verse 15-21-



Verses 22-28-

-After Rebekah had finished watering all of the camels, which must have taken much time and effort. The servant presented her with gifts, and asks **Whose daughter art thou?**

-It is too good to be true, she is the **daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor.** She is the grand-daughter of Abraham's brother.

Verses 29-58-

-After some negotiating as to when Rebekah would go with the servant, to Isaac, the final decision is left in her hands. She said, **"I will go."** (verse 58).

Verses 59-61-

-The very next day they departed. Rebekah took her maid with her, as well as her servant girls; **they rode upon camels** (which is why Abraham had sent so many camels).

Verse 62,63-

- Just as we saw on the outbound trip, there is no mention of how long the journey took. What happened along the way is not germane to the story. The bride has been found who will carry the seed of the Promise. All other details are ancillary.
- For only the second time we see Isaac again in the narrative (See Genesis 22).
- What Isaac was meditating on, or praying about, the text does not say. Perhaps he was praying for the journey of his bride whom he had never met?

I think more likely he went out to *mourn* the death of his mother which fits the context of 23:19, and 24:67.

- As Isaac prays he **lifted up his eyes, and, behold, the camels were coming.**

Verse 64,65-

- Notice how it appears at the exact moment Isaac looked up, Rebekah **lifted up her eyes**. She **saw** a man and asked the servant **What man is this?** The servant identified him as **my master**. Rebekah **lighted off the camel**, meaning *she fell off or she got off quickly*. She **took a veil and covered herself** (a custom followed today, even in American culture, the bride covers her face with a veil).

Verses 66-67-

- We don't know anything about the Isaac and Rebekah's first meeting. **Isaac brought her into his mother's tent.** Meaning, she lived there until the marriage ceremony. After she would live in his tent.
- Isaac **loved her**. God had made the perfect match.
- And he mourned no more for his mother as he was **comforted after his mother's death**. *A man shall leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife and the two shall become one flesh* (Genesis 2:24).

Chapter 25

Verses 1-4-

- Abraham took** another **wife...Keturah**. His rejuvenated reproductive systems was still working! He had six sons with Keturah.
- He undoubtedly sought to follow God's will for his life, in that he would be *the father of many nations* (Genesis 17:4). Of his six sons with Keturah only one is mentioned frequently in the Old Testament, Midian. His descendants were the Midianites who allied with the Ishmaelites, the Moabites, and the Amalekites (See Genesis 37:25, 27, 28, 36; Numbers 25:1, 6-15; Judges 6:3, respectively).

Verse 5-

- Because Isaac was the heir of the Promise, all that Abraham **had he gave unto Isaac**. He was very rich, Genesis 13:2.
- But the sons he fathered through Keturah and Hagar he gave **gifts**. The main inheritance went to Isaac.

Verses 7-11-

- Abraham's death is recorded. He was 175 years old. He was buried by his sons Isaac and Ishmael. Ishmael would have been about 89 years old! Apparently, these two men's relationship had been restored since they both took part in the burial.
- Abraham was **buried...in the cave of Machpelah** with **Sarah his wife**.

Verses 12-18–

-We have the recording of the generations of Ishmael and Isaac. The genealogies are more than a list of names. They deserve more study since they are a literary method Moses uses to create structure in the book of Genesis. These genealogies mark the development of the account. We could say they divide the book of Genesis into ten episodes.

Verses 19-23–

-One might think the Promise God gave to Abraham of a great nation is on shaky ground. Isaac is the only hope of this Promise being fulfilled. He was forty years old when he married Rebekah, twenty years have passed and he has no son.

-Isaac **intreated the LORD** for his wife. He made supplication—he asked. This is the primary force of prayer—asking. Certainly, it is good to adore God, and praise Him, but prayer is really supplication. We have somehow come to think that it is selfish to make supplication to God before we have shown our adoration or praise to him. God wants us to ask, ask, ask. Never fear going before the Lord with requests.

“Be careful for nothing (don’t take anxious thought about anything); but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6,7.

-God blessed him, not with one son, but with two!

-The **children struggled together within her**. The Bible describes these two in the womb as **children**. This word is also translated in other passages as *sons*, and even *people!* The life inside of the womb is a person. Abortion today is the scourge of our society. We are wiping out life each day and no one even cringes or blinks.

-These babies in the womb exhibited feelings and emotions, and even fought. We should take this passage literally.

-The babies are identified by the LORD as **two nations...one people shall be stronger than the other...and the elder shall serve the younger**.

Verses 24-26–

-As the LORD had said, **behold there were twins in her womb. Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them.**

-A score is twenty years. Thus, $3 \times 20 = 60$ years old.

-The first to come out was Esau. He was red and had hair. Esau means red, perhaps like the red soil of the earth.

-Jacob followed, **his hand took hold of Esau’s heel**. His name means *heel catcher* or *heel grabber*; or even, *contender*.

And we will see the meaning of his name more clearly in our next session.