

I. THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB

- A. Genesis 12-36 is the story of 3 men: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In the OT, God calls Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- B. Their lives are contrasted with their counterpoints: nephew Lot, step-brother Ishmael, twin Esau. Just as there was since Cain and Abel, there are 2 lines running through human history: godly line and an ungodly line. The message is clear: Which will you line up with?

II. ABRAHAM (GEN. 12- 22)

- A. Abram was 75 when God first spoke to him to leave his father's land. Isaac was born to Sarah when Abraham was 100. Sarah was 90 years old. When Abram was 99, God renewed His covenant, changing Abram's name to Abraham ("Father of Nations").
- B. Abraham's faith was fully tested when God asks Abraham to give up his son, Isaac (Gen. 22). Abraham reasoned that if God can raise up life from the body of a 100 year old man and 90 year old woman, then God must be able to raise up his son from the dead if He wanted to! (Heb. 11:17-19).
 - 1. Abraham calls the place Yahweh Yireh (or more popularly known as: Jehovah-Jireh) or "The Lord Will Provide" because God dramatically provided a ram for the sacrifice in place of Isaac, looking forward to the day that God would give His one and only Son to die for the ones He loves.
 - 2. Perhaps one reason that Abraham was called a friend of God (Jam 2:23) was because he knew what it felt like to offer up his one and only son and receive him back from the dead (Heb. 11:17-19).
- C. Abraham's counter-point is his nephew, Lot, the son of his youngest brother, Haran. When Lot and Abraham separated, Lot choose the well watered Jordan valley (Gen. 13:8-13). Lot ends up living near Sodom. Abraham rescues Lot once. God delivers Lot by sending 2 angles because God remembers Abraham (Gen. 19:29).

III. ISAAC (GEN. 21 – 27)

- A. Isaac's name comes from the Hebrew word for "laughter." When Sarah first heard that she was going to be pregnant at that age, she broke out in laughter.
- B. Isaac was probably in his early thirties at that time when Abraham was asked to offer him up as a sacrifice. Isaac could have resisted but submitted to his father, Abraham. The sacrifice was offered at Mount Moriah (which later came to be Golgotha, or Calvary). Isaac also trusts Abraham in that he allows Abraham to find a wife for him from

- C. By faith, Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau (Heb. 11:20). All 3 patriarchs gave the whole land as an inheritance, land which they did not yet possess. They believed it was all theirs because God spoke to them individually.
- D. Isaac's counter-point is Ishmael. 11 years after receiving the promise, Abraham, at Sarah's suggestion, seeks to have an heir through Hagar, the maidservant. Ishmael was not a "child of faith" but a "child of the flesh." Although God did not choose Ishmael, God blesses him with many generations of offspring (Gen. 17:20). The Arab peoples today trace their roots to Ishmael.

IV. JACOB (GEN. 25 – 35)

- A. Jacob was the son of Isaac, and twin brother of Esau. His name could mean "he clutches" or "supplanter." He was born clutching the heel of Esau. He obtained Esau's birthright for some stew, fraudulently obtained his father's blessing (Gen 27). The promise passed from Isaac to his second (not firstborn) son, Jacob. God's promise would not go to Esau because he embraced the spirit of the world, embracing the temporary satisfaction of the world and despising what God deemed noble, worthy, and glorious.

1 John 2:15 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

James 4:4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

- B. Jacob's name is changed to "Israel" (Gen. 32:28; 35:10), signifying a change in his nature after wrestling and clinging to God. God renews the covenant which He had made with Abraham. Jacob has 12 sons. The nation of Israel traces its roots to the 12 sons of Jacob.

V. WHY DOES GOD IDENTIFY HIMSELF AS THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB?

- A. It is His sovereign choice.
 - 1. They had no natural claim on God. The first son of the family would inherit the family wealth from the father, but in each generation, God choose the youngest son.
 - 2. They had no moral claim on God. They all lied to get themselves out of a pickle. Abraham and Isaac both lied about their wives to save their own skins.
- B. There were all men of faith.
 - 1. All of them faced challenges that they could only overcome by faith in God.
 - 2. None of them had received what had been promised (Heb. 11:13-16). They gave as an inheritance land which they did not at the moment possess. They gave it as an inheritance completely believing that it belong to them since God gave it to them.