

## **Study 6: Isaac - Genesis 21-35**

### **Overview of chapters:**

Gen 21: Birth of Isaac. Abraham is 100 years old.

Gen 22: Isaac becomes a sacrifice (almost)

Gen 23: Death of Sarah at 127 years old.

Gen 24: Abraham sends his servant to his old home territory (Haran) to find a wife for Isaac. The servant is divinely guided to Rebekah, the granddaughter of Abraham's brother, Nahor. He brings her back to Canaan, and Isaac marries Rebekah (his cousin). Isaac is 40 years old.

Gen 25: Abraham remarries (Keturah), and has 6 more children. Dies at age 175. Ishmael's genealogy – 12 tribes, but divided (v 18: "He fell among [attacked] all his brothers" (CEB); "And they lived in hostility toward all the tribes related to them" (NIV). Isaac's sons: Esau ("hairy," also called Edom or "red") and Jacob ("he grasps the heel" = a Hebrew idiom for "he deceives"). Isaac is 60 when the children are born. Favoritism: v 27 "The boys grew up, and Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was content to stay at home among the tents. 28 Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob."

Gen 26: Famine. Isaac travels to Gerar (Philistines) warned by God not to go to Egypt. Verse 2: The Lord appeared to Isaac and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land where I tell you to live. 3 Stay in this land for a while, and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham. 4 I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your seed all nations on earth will be blessed [Or and all nations on earth will use the name of your seed in blessings (see 48:20)], 5 because Abraham obeyed me and did everything I required of him, keeping my commands, my decrees and my instructions." Isaac repeats what his father did, saying that Rebekah is his "sister." God still blesses him and appears to him at Beersheba. Verse 23: From there he went up to Beersheba. 24 That night the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham. Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bless you and will increase the number of your descendants for the sake of my servant Abraham." 25 Isaac built an altar there and called on the name of the Lord. There he pitched his tent, and there his servants dug a well. King Abimelek (at least 3 Abimeleks) renews the covenant he made with Abraham. Esau marries Canaanite women. Isaac fails to lead as a father.

Gen 27: Isaac old and blind. Desires to bless Esau. Blessing had power to bestow what was blessed. Blesses Jacob unaware. Physical blessings: v 28: "May God give you heaven's dew and earth's richness— an abundance of grain and new wine. 29 May nations serve you and peoples bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed." Rebekah gets Isaac to finally act as the father/leader he should have been: v 46 Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I'm disgusted with living because of these Hittite women. If Jacob takes a wife from among the women of this land, from Hittite women like these, my life will not be worth living."

Gen 28: Verse 1: So Isaac called for Jacob and blessed him. Then he commanded him: "Do not marry a Canaanite woman. 2 Go at once to Paddan Aram [Northwest Mesopotamia], to the house of your mother's father Bethuel. Take a wife for yourself there, from among the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother. 3 May God Almighty [El-Shaddai] bless you and make you fruitful and increase your numbers until you become a community of peoples. 4 May he give you and your descendants the blessing given to Abraham, so that you may take possession of the land where you now reside as a foreigner, the land God gave to Abraham." 5 Then Isaac sent Jacob on his way.... 6 Now Esau learned that Isaac had blessed Jacob and had sent him to Paddan Aram to take a wife from there, and that when he blessed him he commanded him, "Do not marry a Canaanite woman," 7 and that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother and had gone to Paddan Aram. 8 Esau then realized how displeasing the Canaanite women were to his father Isaac; 9 so he went to Ishmael and married Mahalath, the sister of Nebaioth and daughter of Ishmael son of Abraham, in addition to the wives he already had. – Esau seems like he was trying to please his father, but goes about it all wrong. By selecting a wife from the

rejected branch of the family, he shows (again – remember the selling of his birthright?) that he is unworthy to be the recipient of God’s blessing and the one to continue the godly line that would lead to the Messiah.

Gen 35: Isaac dies at 180 years old.

### **Themes set forth in Genesis chapters 21-35:**

#### **1. Covenant**

- a. Brother vs. brother
- b. Ishmael sent away
- c. Isaac blessed with covenant

#### **2. Types & Shadows**

- a. Isaac as a type of Christ
  - i. Carries wood of his own sacrifice (cross)
  - ii. Offered by his father
  - iii. Does and says exactly what his father does/did
- b. Leah as a type of the Gentiles
  - i. Unloved (“Not a people”)
  - ii. Romans 9:25-26: As He says also in Hosea: “I will call them My people, who were not My people, And her beloved, who was not beloved. And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not My people,’ There they shall be called sons of the living God.”

### **Some other references to Isaac in the N.T.:**

**Romans 9:7:** Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham’s children. On the contrary, “It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.”

**Galatians 4:28:** Now you, brothers and sisters, like Isaac, are children of promise.

**Hebrews 11:9:** By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.

**Hebrews 11:17:** By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son,