

**GROUNDS OF FAITH CAFÉ: “Genesis” (Subtitled: Is there a snake in your Garden too?)
Further subtitled: Lessons from the Garden! Genesis Lesson 18 (24:1-67): Some
Summary Thoughts:**

As was mentioned in the lesson, Genesis 22 was both a strategic point in the larger Abraham cycle and also a watershed moment in Abraham’s life. Thus, Genesis 22 epitomizes Abraham’s entire life in microcosm. The text acknowledged his life as journey, his life as test (will he embrace or distance himself from God’s call?), and his life as trust in the promises of God. His great faith response: “*The LORD will provide*” (22:8) became proof that *El-Roi* (the God who sees Hagar, 16:13; 21:17-19) is also *Yahweh-Yireh*, the God who “sees” to the sacrifice in place of the promised son (22:14).

As we begin our examination of Isaac, it is apparent that God blesses Isaac throughout his life. We see Abraham and Abraham’s servant’s faithfulness evident as they search for the right wife for the promised son. We see Rebekah’s family’s response and acceptance in a similar vein. God is clearly superintending His selection by His Power and according to His plan.

The reality is that Isaac is the beneficiary of Abraham’s faithful obedience to his call from God. And, if we are honest with ourselves, we should also acknowledge that we too stand on the shoulders of those before us who lived in faithful obedience to the LORD.

- Like Isaac, the blessings in our lives often derive less from our own endeavors than from the faithful choices and actions of those who have gone before us.
- The life of Isaac reminds us that even in our seeming weaknesses, God faithfully wills to protect and care for us! Interestingly, Isaac will experience even a greater realization of the promise than his father, Abraham.

It would appear from the text that Isaac and those in Abraham’s household have learned about God from Abraham and his own experiences with the LORD. You may recall in our study, before God wreaked destruction on Sodom and Gomorrah, He noted that one purpose in His selection of Abraham was: “*For I have chosen him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice; in order that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him*” (Gen 18:19).

- Abraham’s servant’s statements and actions reveal that Abraham has taken God’s Word to heart. The servant prays for a sign that God will reveal His choice and thus bless Abraham by showing His everlasting love (24:12-14). He credits God for His guidance in the journey (24:27); credits God for Abraham’s many blessings (24:35); and worships the LORD prior to the family’s response (24:48).
- In his passive receptivity of Abraham’s actions, Isaac also shows his acceptance of God’s Promise and provision. Scripture states that Isaac “*lifted up his eyes*” (24:63) to see the realization of God’s future for him coming forth as he was going out to “meditate.” Similarly, Rebekah “*lifted up her eyes*” (24:64) to see her part in God’s blessing of His world about to begin.

A couple of lessons seem to emerge from our study so far:

(1) Abraham and his family are engaged in a “journey” – a life walk with God – a journey marked with twists and unexpected turns – a journey with seemingly endless delays and hazards. But this is the mark of “faith.” Life is never as simple as a single declaration of faith. It is a journey.

(2) The lives in the text that we have followed so far also remind us that even though God is a God of Promise, Provision and Power, His Promises do not always come to realization overnight. Abraham experiences 25 years waiting for the promised heir to arrive. Isaac will soon pray for Rebekah to become pregnant (and while the response seems immediate, in reality about 20 years will pass). Like Abraham and his family, we too live between the “already” and “not yet.” And in that interim, we too live as pilgrims until we reach our promised land.