

Abraham

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The Birth of Isaac

According to plan and time.

This birth was according to the plans of God, we must note that God was not in a hurry in His plan. From the first promise at Haran to the birth of Isaac we find 25 years have passed. Abraham, too old at 100 years and Sarah, nearly 90, suddenly find that God fulfils His promise. God has eternity to work in, a few years delay is nothing to Him, plus He knows when and what is the correct, appointed and perfect time.

Examine some other "appointed times", [Job 7:1](#); [Job 14:14](#); [2 Samuel 24:15](#); [Jeremiah 46:17,18](#); [Daniel 9:19](#); [Daniel 11:27-35](#); [Habakkuk 2:3,4](#); [Acts 2:1](#); [Galatians 4:4,5](#)

God is faithful.

God promised a son to Abraham and Sarah, at first this seems impossible, but the Word of God never fails. See [Luke 1:34-38](#).

Infinite Power

The birth shows that nothing is impossible to God, He has infinite power, therefore nothing will prevent Him carrying out His plan. Whatever problems a Believer has, just put them into the hands of God as nothing is impossible to Him, [Genesis 18:14](#).

Faith under test.

Abraham's faith was under test, [Romans 4:19](#),

"18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. 19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: 20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;"

God did all that was required according to His plan. Abraham may have become impatient and tried to help God along with Ishmael, but God promised that the covenant would be through Isaac, [Genesis 17:21](#).

"21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year."

Isaac and his family.

[Genesis 21:8](#).

"Isaac grew and was weaned."

During Old Testament times this refers to a specific time in a child's life, when a child was old enough to be left with a stranger, the child did not need the constant care of a mother. This would normally be when the child was somewhere between 3 and 5 years old. See [1 Samuel 1:22-28](#) as an another example.

Abraham arranged a feast as a celebration for the child Isaac reaching this point in life. However, this feast also created a family situation, a conflict.

"verse 9. And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, Ishmael, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking."

This conflict is an example of a spiritual conflict in a Believer. Ishmael, born to Abraham and Hagar the Egyptian servant, was born a son of bondage(slave) while Isaac, the child of Abraham and Sarah was born a child of a free woman, now Isaac is considered of a age, there is conflict. This can be compared to a

Believers old and new natures, before the new nature from God was present, there was no conflict for the old nature.

The fighting between Isaac and Ishmael demanded that they separate. Sarah wanted Ishmael, now about 14 years old, and his mother sent away, she did not want them to share the inheritance with Isaac, this may seem wrong for her attitude to be like this but there is a conflict of natures. It was God's plan that only Isaac would be part of His plan. The old nature will still exist, just as in a Believer, the old nature still exists after salvation, Ishmael would still exist but the Salvation of the world was through Isaac.

Consider what Jesus said to Nicodemus [John 3:6,7](#) or Paul in [Colossians 3:9](#).

If Ishmael had remained present with the Abraham family, Abraham might have been tempted to involve Ishmael in any future plans, tempted to "glory in the flesh," [1 Corinthians 1:29-31](#).

Ishmael's departure

[Genesis 21:11-21](#).

Though Abraham is very sad at having to send Ishmael away, God spoke to Abraham and told him to send the mother Hagar and the boy away, for *"in Isaac shall thy seed be called."* Abraham does as instructed, he gave food and water to Hagar and the boy and sent them away into the wilderness of Beer-sheba. God takes care of Hagar and Ishmael, because God told Abraham that *"the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed."*

Isaac is offered.

This event must have taken place many years later, God needs to test the faith of Abraham, so God puts Abraham through the greatest test of his life,

[Genesis 22:1-19](#).

Abraham departs with Isaac, who was now possibly a teenager, as instructed by God. Why this test? God wanted Abraham to prove his love and show his trust and faith in God, so God chooses the person who was dearest to Abraham.

It was common practice for human sacrifices in the times of Abraham, but this is the only time that God used this type of test. Human sacrifices were condemned by God in the Old Testament, Later the Tribe of Israel were instructed to totally keep away from human sacrifice.

Why such a test? Abraham might concentrate on the promise of God but at the expense of ignoring who was the source of the promise. It is easy to look on the God given gifts rather than the source of the gift. Note that God did not tell Abraham why He had made this instruction to sacrifice Isaac, unlike the sending away of Ishmael. God did not wish Isaac to die, He wanted Abraham to turn away from anything the world offered, to ensure Abraham's heart was in God and not in Isaac.

Abraham had to trust God, that even if he killed Isaac, God would still be able to fulfil the promise of a great nation through Isaac. The only instruction God gave were *"Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."* No reason and no exact instructions, *"Go and I will show."*

Abraham's response

Abraham could not possibly understand the command from God but rapidly responded,

[Genesis 22:3](#),

no reluctance, no doubts. *"On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. He instructs the young men with him "to wait here," he wanted to make sure that nothing would prevent what was about to take place. Yet, he still did not know how God was going to do it but he said "Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." Abraham not only expects to return but also with his son, so showing his faith in God and His power of resurrection. Abraham believed, that after he had offered his son as a sacrifice, God would raise him again. Isaac's birth had been after both Abraham and Sarah were incapable of being parents, their bodies were dead, yet God had done the impossible, raised a baby, Abraham therefore believed that God had done it once and could therefore do it again.*

Would you have this much trust and faith?

Isaac's Question.

[Genesis 22:7,8.](#)

As Abraham and Isaac continued on the journey, Isaac asked a serious question, "Where is the sacrifice animal?" Abraham's reply "God will supply the sacrifice" seems to have ended the conversation. Isaac had probably guessed that he was to be the sacrifice. He would have been old enough to resist, possibly late teens. Physically able to fight off elderly Abraham. But *"they went both of them together."* indicates that Isaac's faith was the same as Abraham.

The Sacrifice.

[Genesis 22:11-13.](#)

The altar is built, Isaac is tied, laid upon it, probably Isaac would have helped Abraham carry out these tasks. The knife is raised to kill Isaac. God has waited to the last minute but now He stopped the sacrifice, *"11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.*

12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son, "

Consider [James 2:21,22](#); [Romans 4:2,3](#). [Hebrews 11:8-12](#).

The Greater Blessing.

Because of Abraham's demonstration of faith, being willing to give up his son to God, Abraham receives another visit from God's messenger, [Genesis 22:15-18](#). There is no greater than God, so He swears by Himself "By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD." He promises to multiply the seed of Abraham to be as the "stars of heaven," the spiritual seed, and as the sand on the seaside, his earthly seed. In addition, his seed *"shall possess the gate of his enemies,"* mainly a future promise still to happen.

Finally, a future promise, [Genesis 22:18](#). "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice,"

[Genesis 24:1.](#)

"And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things."

Sarah died when she was 127 years old and following purchase of the land, *"Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre: the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan."* [Genesis 23:1-20](#).