



Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School



Episode 007: Abraham Gets Cave Genesis 23

Sixty-two years ago Abraham left his homeland with a three-part promise from God- offspring, land and blessing. Now as he buries his beloved wife, look back over the years to consider what God has accomplished.

- If Abraham and Sarah had raised an average size family for that time- perhaps ten sons- how many offspring might they have expected to see before Sarah's death?
- How much land would a family that large require?

Instead she left behind one single offspring- Isaac the son of promise- the unmarried son of promise. And as for being a blessing to the world, Abraham and his offspring were having a pitifully small impact.

- If you were Abraham what questions might you have about God's faithfulness to His promises?

Most of us enter adulthood with great hopes for our earthly life- especially the things we will be able to accomplish with God's help.

- Describe the accomplishments God has granted you in your life to this point.
- What disappointments have you encountered?
- What questions do these things raise in your mind about God's faithfulness to you?

The lesson of Abraham's life and ours is that God's timing is not our timing. Abraham's descendants will be a great nation, they will inherit the land of promise and through Jesus Christ he will be a blessing to all nations. But he won't see it in his lifetime. Was Abraham discouraged and doubtful?

"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God... These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth... But as it is they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared for them a city." (Hebrews 11:8-10, 13, 16)

By faith Abraham saw ahead to the salvation his offspring Jesus Christ would win for you and the whole world as He suffered and died in our place on the cross. By His death Jesus satisfied God's wrath and by His resurrection He has opened heaven to us and promised to raise us on the Last Day.

- When you look forward to your eternal life with Christ in the new heavens and the new earth how does that affect your thoughts about the failures and frustrations you face today?

In the coming weeks we will see how God "grew" Abraham's descendants into a great nation.