

LifeWay Family Bible Series for May 29: Leave a godly legacy for others to emulate_51605

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Leave a godly legacy for others to emulate

- Genesis 24:1-67

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The lives our children watch us live determine in many instances the people they will become in the future. This sobering reality thrusts a very large responsibility on our shoulders. Discovering the impact we have on future generations is daunting, to say the least. But is anyone more qualified than you to help mold and shape your future generations? Is there anyone more knowledgeable than you to maintain the goals you have established in your family? Is anyone else more committed to the cause of carrying on the family legacy? The answer, of course, is no.

Up to this point in the Abraham narrative, the father of many future generations has not been the best role model to follow. He has lied about his wife, putting others in danger. He has circumvented the plan of God,

establishing a divide within his own family. He most assuredly mourns the thought of exiling his own son for the purpose of pacifying his wife. Yet Abraham is growing older in the story, and as he does, his thoughts turn to his legacy.

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Ishmael has been exiled from the family, but Isaac remained as the bearer of God's promises. While Abraham felt like he could do nothing to help Ishmael at this point, he knew the decisions Isaac would make would forever shape the future of his family. Thus, the story of choosing a wife for Isaac begins.

Genesis 24:1-9

Abraham gave instructions to his servant and made him swear a very private oath. Abraham instructed him to find Isaac a wife, but not a Canaanite woman. Abraham wanted his future daughter-in-law to be a woman from his homeland. There are a number of reasons we could ponder as to why Abraham was so adamant about this notion, but one surfaces quite clearly.

Abraham knew, by experience, the danger of clashing two cultures together for self-gratifying purposes. The Egyptian slave girl, Hagar, had caused Abraham more pain than he ever could have imagined. It was not her fault of course, but the poor decision of Abraham and Sarah lived on through his

memory. Ishmael, his eldest son, was out there somewhere, and there was nothing he could do about it. This sobering thought surely played within his mind, as he thought of Isaac and his prospective bride.

The servant expressed some worries to his master, but they are resolved quickly. He made the oath with Abraham, and then set off to fulfill his duty.

Genesis 24:10-67

The servant traveled to the city of Nahor. There, he stopped to water his camels and asked God for guidance on his mission. As he was praying, a young woman by the name of Rebekah came to the well to fill her jar. She was beautiful and the daughter of Abraham's brother. The servant's prayers were answered, as Rebekah offered the servant water for him and his camels. The Lord was at work.

The story continued as Rebekah and the servant talked for a moment. Then, the girl ran and told her family of the guest they were about to receive. Rebekah's father, and her brother, Laban, offer her as a bride for Isaac (24:50-51). The servant was astonished at the news but understood that Abraham was living in the favor of God. Abraham's legacy would be fine, for the Lord himself was looking over his family.

Legacy

If there were one standard within the state of Texas by which the term "legacy" was measured, that standard would have been set by one figure. Whether you are from Houston, San Antonio, El Paso or Dallas, the name Tom Landry has earned the respect of many. Not only was he a spectacular football coach; Landry was a better man. His faith in Christ was known

around the National Football League. Speak to any of his former players and they will refer to their old coach with tears in their eyes. His honesty, integrity and ability to motivate moved many young men from being common to great.

For those of us seeking to build our own legacies within families, Landry would be a good modern- day model. As we have learned from the story of Abraham, the legacy we leave behind begins while we live here on earth. We must live today with the understanding that decisions rendered in haste will have lasting effects for future generations. Yet the character and resolve we build within this life also will be handed down to future generations. Live well and walk in faith, for there are more sets of eyes upon us than we ever could imagine.

Discussion questions

- Is legacy important?
- What were some the good and bad traits that Abraham handed down?
- How did Abraham's legacy affect his children and grandchildren?
- What type of legacy are you building?

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