

The Offspring

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 24 September 2023

Preacher: Roy Davidson

[0 : 00] Our Father in heaven, thanks for your word and we pray as we hear it this morning, as we study your word this morning, that you would encourage us and spur us on in our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We ask it in his name. Amen. Well today we come to one of those big climaxes in Abraham's life. Against the odds, Sarah has a child and the child is Isaac.

Everything's been stacked against him up to this point, hasn't it? Both he and Sarah are old, like really old. Like there are some people we know who are 80 years old but these guys are older than old, right?

The child by Hagar has not been the one to bring about the nation or blessing to the world. That option's closed off. He's been wandering around the Philistines and Palestine for a while.

No place to settle. He's been down to Egypt and almost lost his wife there. Almost did it there. He's gone into battle to rescue Lot from captivity and against far greater odds and come out victorious.

[1 : 13] And then even last week he's almost lost his wife again to Abimelech. Along the way we've seen that Abraham's recognised as the man of faith.

We've been told that a number of times. But we've also seen him wavering in his faith. He's before Pharaoh. He sort of wandered off in his faith.

And with Hagar in chapter 16 having a child by her. And then before Abimelech last week. And he's the man of faith but a man of flawed faith.

It's not so rock solid, is it? You know, he's shaky with what he's doing. It's been a long and twisted tale to this point in life. It's been about 30 years since God spoke to him.

And against the odds, today we hear of Isaac being born. Finally, after all these years, after all these events, after all these trials, after all these twists and turns in the story, Isaac has arrived.

[2 : 16] And so we see he is the promised offspring. Isaac is born according to promise. Here's the verses, verses 1 to 7. Notice with me as it was read.

As the Lord had said, verse 1. As the Lord promised, verse 1. At the time God spoke, verse 2.

God visited Sarah. It's a direct intervention by God. Sometimes he intervenes in judgment, right? And often, like he does here, it's in salvation that he intercedes, intervenes.

And God has kept his promise, fulfilled his promise, as he has said. Against the odds, it's happened. About 30 years of waiting for Abraham.

About 25 years or so of disappointment. 25 years or so of wandering in the wilderness. 25 years of painful prayer for his wife. And now Abraham has an heir.

[3 : 25] As God promised, born of his own wife, Sarah. See there in verse 4. It's emphatic. And Abraham circumcised his son when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him.

Oh sorry, verse 3. Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah born to him.

It's emphatic. It was Abraham's son born to Sarah, named Isaac. As the Lord had told him to name his son.

It's very emphatic, isn't it? But very brief. Just five verses. Sarah conceives. Bears. Abraham his son. He's named in obedience to God's word.

Circumcised in obedience to God's covenant or command. And it's done. Abraham is 100 years old. And there's laughter in the house.

[4 : 37] For that's the meaning of Isaac's name. He laughs. That's what his name means. The birth of a child is always good news and brings great joy. Particularly so in Sarah's case.

People are not laughing at her. Ridiculing her. They're laughing with her in joy that she's had this child. She knows.

Sarah knows. That this is God's work. God has been the one who's in control from beginning to end. At every stage. The Lord said and did.

God has done as he said he would. At the time that he said he would. God has established the circumcision right. And God has made laughter for her.

God has done the absolute impossible. Who would have said. She says. To Abraham and Sarah.

[5 : 35] That she would nurse a child. And yet I have born him a son. In his old age. Well.

Here is. The promised. Child. The promised offspring. The seed. Of Abraham. Who's been born. And notice.

We hear of Abraham's age. But it's nice. Isn't it? Now we don't hear of Sarah's age. Particularly. She's just. Okay. We won't make that one a big point about that.

The offspring of the flesh though. We see now. Mocks. The offspring. Of the promise. And a lot more is given. On Hagar.

And Ishmael. Than at one level. On. Isaac. There's another child to consider. It's Ishmael.

[6 : 34] The son. Born to Hagar. From chapter 16. Strangely enough though. All through this incident. He's not given a name. He's not given his name. He's just the boy.

He's just the boy. And Isaac grows. And is weaned. And. He's possibly about three years of old. When Isaac's weaned. And then. Ishmael would have been around about.

15 or 16 years old. That's how old Ishmael would have been. And notice what Ishmael does. Ishmael. Laughs.

See there verse 9. But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian. Whom she had born to Abraham. Laughing. It may be that.

Ishmael is. Mocking. Baby. Isaac. After all his name means laughter. But it's a malevolent laughter.

[7 : 29] It's not a joyful laughter with him. Not a friendly half brotherly. Look. Welcome to the family. It's possible that Isaac's life's in danger. From a rival brother.

Ishmael. Who would want to actually have. All the blessings of Abraham. And the nation to come after him. God's promised seed. God's promised offspring.

Is mocked. Right. And ridiculed. By. Those. Who do not. Honor. Abraham.

And do not bless. Abraham. Now. Sarah. Wants Hagar. And her son. Out of the place. Wants them banished.

Removed. Cast out. And God tells Abraham. To do what Sarah says. Even though it grieves him to the heart.

- [8 : 27] Look at verse 12. Oh look at verse 10. 11. 12. So she said to Abraham. Cast out this slave woman. With her son. For the son of this slave woman. Shall not be heir.
- With my son Isaac. Now put that verse. Deep into your memory bank. Right. That verse. Verse 10. And the thing was very displeasing to Abraham.
- On account of his son. But God said to Abraham. Be not displeased. Because of the boy. And because of your slave woman. Whatever Sarah says to you. Do as she tells you.
- For through Isaac. Shall your offspring. Be named. Through Isaac. Your offspring. Will be named.
- Not Ishmael. Well there's mercy though. To this mocking one. Ishmael. Hagar and Ishmael. Are banished into the wilderness.
- [9 : 25] With just a skin of water. And some bread to eat. And Hagar has been. Cast out before. Once before. Hasn't she. For her contempt of Sarah.
- But now. Both she. And her son. Are cast out. The son. Who'd been born. According to flesh. The plans of man. Faces certain death.
- No food. No water. Scorching heat. In the wilderness. God. Now. No mother. Can stand. Watching her child die. And in God's kindness.
- He shows to all people in the world. Who don't deserve it. God. He's the cry of the young boy. And shows.
- Mom. A well of water. In the wilderness. And in God's mercy. Both child. And mother. Survive. Ishmael. Is blessed.
- [10 : 25] He survives. God protects him. Blesses him. And he. Grows up to be an expert. With the bow. And lives in the wilderness. Taking a wife. From Egypt. Now remember. Egypt is.
- A bad place. Because. As Moses writes this. In hindsight. It's after he left Egypt. And they are the. Ones who have oppressed them. As people. So.
- Here it is though. But Ishmael. Takes a wife. From Egypt. And that is the last. We hear. Of Ishmael. In Genesis.
- The promised seed. Has been born. The promised offspring. Has come. But now we see. The promised land. We see a covenant. With Abraham.
- Abimelech. In verses. 22 to 24. We meet. Abimelech. Turns up again. He has a meeting. With Abraham. And brings. The commander. Of his army. With him.
- [11 : 21] It seems like. This is a bit of a show. Of force. In verse 22. A covenant's made. Abimelech. Recognizes. That. Abraham. Has got on his side. And so. Doesn't want to.
- Make. Any. Problems there. And so. He wants to make sure. That Abraham. Will deal with him. Well. I'll bless you. Abraham. So I trust. That you'll bless.
- Me as well. And so. It's greed. There in verse 23. And 24. There's an agreement made. We'll get on with each other. But.
- What's it all about? Previously. Abraham. Had built. Altars. All through the land. And now. He's dug a well. A place. To water.
- His livestock. And so. We see. There's a well. For Abraham. In verses 25 to 34. We hear this agreement.
- [12 : 16] Though. Being broken. Right. Between Abimelech. And Abraham. Only to be resolved. Right. That. This will. Is recognized.
- As Abraham's will. Finally. In verse 30. It's a toehold. In the promised land. As Abimelech. Receives the gifts. From Abraham. He acknowledged. That.

This is Abraham's will. It's the one thing. In the promised land. That belongs. To Abraham. Marked by. Well. It's been going back.

For a long time now. A tree planting ceremony. Tamarisk tree. Is planted there. Near the well. A long.

Living. Drought. Tolerant. Tree. Is planted. At the well. Takes a long time. For it to mature. It's a landmark. Of the pledge. That Abraham.

[13 : 07] Will live in the land. And here. Abraham. Calls. On the name of the Lord. He doesn't call on foreign gods. He knows.

He recognizes. That the Lord. Is his God. And worships him. And him alone. Knowing that it's the Lord. That his God. Is the Lord.

As God has promised. He would be. And the Lord. Has promised. And protected him. And given him. These things. Well. Let's press forward. Then though. That's the events.

Of Genesis 21. Let's press forward. To what God means. Of this part. Of God's word. And the first. And best. Commentary. Of any part.

Of the Bible. Is. The Bible. Itself. The New Testament. Now. Can you think. Of where you hear. Of these events. Being actually. Remembered.

[14 : 02] Or raised. Or spoken about. Again. The New Testament. Particularly. Verse 10. I'm thinking. That you're thinking. We looked at.

Galatians. Fairly recently. Yeah. So. Before we get there. Let's just go to. Genesis. To. To. Matthew.

Chapter 1. And see the promise. Fulfilled. Matthew. Chapter 1. Come forward. In the Bibles. Matthew. Chapter 1. So. Matthew. Is the first book. In the New Testament.

I know. You're. Flogging your phones. But. You've got your paper versions. Matthew. Chapter 1. Have a look. Matthew. Chapter 1. And the genealogy. Can be like. Looking at other people's.

Wedding photos. I know that. All right. You look to see yourself. In them. Where. If you're not in them. They seem pretty boring. Let me look at your wedding photos. I'll be happy to see you also. Josh. It's all right. I'll look forward to seeing it.

[14 : 56] But. But just notice. Matthew. Chapter 1. For a minute. The book. Of the genealogy. Of Jesus Christ. The son of David.

The son of Abraham. Abraham. Was the father of. Isaac. Abraham's the father of Isaac.

And then you trace the lineage. Down through Matthew. Chapter 1. And you get to. Jesus. Being born. At verse 16.

And Jacob. The father of Joseph. Joseph. The husband of Mary. Of whom. Jesus was born. Who is called. Christ. Or Messiah. Or King.

Is the idea. It was Isaac. Who was the offspring. According to the promise. Of God. Who then comes. Down the line.

[15 : 52] To Jesus. No Isaac. No Jesus. Now. With the offspring in mind. Come to. Galatians. Chapter 3. It's in the New Testament.

A bit further on. So 1 Corinthians. 2 Corinthians. Galatians. Ephesians. Philippian. You'll be going too far then. But Galatians. Chapter 3. And you can't get any clearer.

That in Galatians. Chapter 3. That Jesus. Is the offspring. Right. Jesus. Is the descendant. In mind here. Galatians.

Chapter 3. Well. Pick it up at verse. 15. To give a human example.

Brothers. Even with a man-made covenant. No one. Annuls it. Or adds to it. Once it's been ratified. Now the promises. Were made to Abraham. Right.

[16 : 52] The promises. Genesis 12. Were made to Abraham. And to his. Off. Spring. It does not say.

To off. Springs. Plural. Right. Referring to many. But referring to one. And to your offspring. Who is. Christ.

That is. The Lord Jesus Christ. Is the offspring. That Abraham. Is actually. Going to be. Responsible for.

That's who we're looking at. It was Isaac. Who then. Is the first instance. But he's not the final instance. The offspring. According to promise.

For Abraham. Is the Lord Jesus Christ. Now. John chapter 8. If you come to Union Church tonight. You'll see that. It's. Jesus. That is.

[17 : 48] The one. That Abraham. Was looking forward to. All right. So. It's through faith. In the Lord Jesus Christ. That we inherit.

The blessing. Given to Abraham. That is. The blessing. Of being declared. Okay. With God. Being declared. Righteous. Being declared. Forgiven. Having true life.

As being one of true. God's true children. Right. That's the great blessing. That comes to Abraham. By faith. That is now. Comes to all.

Who trust in Abraham's. Offspring. Singular. The Lord Jesus Christ. Okay. So. What of. The incident.

Of Hagar. And Sarah. Of verse 10. Of chapter 21. Of Genesis. Well. Come to Galatians. Chapter 4. Verse 21. Now.

[18 : 41] This gets a bit tricky. I've got some slides. To show you. And I'll get them up. In a minute. But firstly. Abraham's. Children. It's through.

Have a look at this. Galatians. Chapter 4. Verse 21. Tell me you. Who desire. To be under the law. Do you not listen. To the law. Right.

The law. Is the. The 10 commandments. Summarises. The first. Five books. Of the Old Testament. That's the idea. Of the law. Right. For it's written.

That. Abraham. Had two sons. One. By a slave woman. And one. By a free woman. But the son.

Of the slave. Was born according to the flesh. While the son. Of the free woman. Was born. Through promise. Now. This may be interpreted.

[19 : 36] Allegorically. So. Here's the interpretation. That God's giving us. Of Genesis. Chapter 21. Verse 10. Right.

One. Is from Mount Sinai. Bearing many children. For slavery. She is Hagar. Now. Hagar. Is Mount Sinai. In Arabia. She corresponds.

To the present Jerusalem. For she's in slavery. With her children. But the Jerusalem. Above. Is free. And she is our mother. For it's written. Rejoice.

O barren one. Who does not bear. Break forth. And cry aloud. You who are not in labor. For the children. Of the desolate one. Will be more. Than the one. Who has a husband. Now.

You brothers. Like Isaac. Are children. Of promise. But just. As at the time. He was born. According to the flesh. Persecuted him.

[20 : 30] Who was born. According to the spirit. So also. It is now. But what does the scripture say? Cast out. The slave woman. And her son. For the son.

Of the slave woman. Shall not inherit. With the son. Of the free woman. So brothers. We are not a children. Of the slave. But of the free. For freedom. Christ has set us free.

Stand firm. Therefore. And do not submit again. To a yoke. Of slavery. Okay. It's through. Abraham's. Offspring. That blessing.

Comes to the world. The blessing. Of being called. God's children. All by faith. In Abraham's. Offspring. Jesus.

The Christ. And so because. His. And so we become. His saved. Precious people. Become God's. Precious people. Right. Through faith.

[21 : 26] In the Lord. Jesus Christ. No matter what. Earthly. Fleshly. Family. You come from. Jew. Gentile. Whatever. Doesn't matter. It's all.

Through faith. In the Lord. Jesus Christ. That anyone. Becomes one of. God's. Special. Chosen. People. It never was. And never will be.

By observance. Of the law. That someone's made right. With God. The law. Given at Mount Sinai. Which then brings us. To Sarah. And Hagar. Sarah. Who is. Has a child.

By promise. And Hagar. Who is a child. By the flesh. So Galatians 4. Says it's. An allegory. To understand. The gospel. So two covenants.

Here's the first slide. You've got. The slave woman. Born of the flesh. That's Ishmael. Has a son. She bears a son. Born of the flesh.

[22 : 22] And you have Sarah. Who is. The free woman. She bears. A. Promised. Child. According to the spirit.

Who is. Isaac. Yeah. Okay. Next slide. You see here. That Ishmael. The boy.

Born. Of the flesh. Right. He is the one. Who mocks. Isaac. Persecutes him. If you like. And so you see there. That the son.

Born of the flesh. Perse. This is the second slide. Here. Persecutes the son. Born. Of the promise. Of the spirit. Now. Hagar.

We're told. Equals Mount Sinai. Where the nation of Israel. Is established. That is the Jewish people. And Hagar. Bears children. Of slavery. That is.

[23 : 17] Earthly Jerusalem. Jews. Enslaved. By seeking. To be saved. By observance. To the law. Of Moses. Slavishly.

Obedying the law. Doing what they can. To think this will please God. And make him happy with me. So slide three. You see here. Hagar. Equals Mount Sinai.

Equals the Jerusalem. Below. Right. The home. Of slaves. Of the Jewish nation. If you like. And Sarah.

Is the one. Who is the mother. Who represents Jerusalem above. The home of the free. Not America. But the home of the free. All believers. Right.

Saved by faith. In the promises of God. Heaven. If you like. Why. Well. Quoting Isaiah 54. Because there's going to be so many more children born of the woman who couldn't bear children.

[24 : 12] That you can't count them all. That's Isaiah 54. And so verse 28 of Galatians chapter 4. We see. That those who are trusting in Jesus Lord and Saviour.

You and I are children of promise. That's who we are. We are people born of the new covenant written in Jesus sacrificial death. Now in Paul's day.

The Jewish officials persecuted Christians. Just like Ishmael persecuted Isaac. So slide 4.

You see here. Hagar equals Mount Sinai in Jerusalem below. Home of the slaves. Jewish nation. Who bear children for slavery.

Fleshly obedience to the bloodline of Abraham. And they persecute the offspring of promise. That's what they did.

[25 : 11] That's what they do. And Sarah equals Jerusalem above. She's the home of the free. She's the mother of all believers at one level. Bears children for freedom. True spiritual offspring of Abraham.

You and I. And they persecuted. So they were persecuted by the slave children.

The Jews. So every day. People born of the flesh. Normal people in the street. Mock those born of the promise.

Still today. Just as they did way back in Jesus' day. In fact. The people born of the flesh. Persecuted. The offspring. Born of promise.

To the point of death. Even death on the cross. And yet. The scriptures say. Cast out the slave woman and her son.

[26 : 16] For the son of the slave woman. Shall not inherit from the son of the free woman. The sons of the slave woman. In an incredible turning of the tables. You see.

That the bloodline of Abraham. Are considered as those born under slavery. And they are to be cast out. Removed.

From the true offspring. The spiritual offspring. The people of promise of God. It's not the Jews. Who slavishly try to obey the law.

Who are the children of God. It's not merely every day. Let me get a bit closer here. It's not merely every day. Law abiding citizens. Who are children of God.

You can be as moral and upright. As you possibly can be. By the rules of our day. It is the person who is trusting in the cross. Of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[27 : 12] Who is. The child of promise. We are citizens. Of the heavenly Jerusalem above. Blessed.

Along with a man of faith. Abraham. Inheriting the same blessing of Abraham. Righteousness. Salvation. And so finally. Slide five.

You see here. There is no inheritance. For those. Who are just. Of the fleshly bloodline. Of Abraham. They persecute.

The offspring. Of the promise. But. The people. Who are born of Jerusalem above. We inherit. The blessing.

Of Abraham. That. That inheritance. Is ours. Now. So the big point. That Paul is pressing home.

[28 : 10] In Galatians. Is. Make sure. Having. Trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ. And so being born of the promise. Of tasting the blessings of Abraham.

And the freedom of. Being declared. Okay. By faith. Being born of the promise. That you don't go getting enslaved. In law keeping.

And thinking. That'll make you right with God. It never did. Never will. Make anyone right with God. Salvation is not by being.

Children. Born. Of the flesh. Legalistically. Law keeping. Salvation is by being. Children of Abraham.

Abraham. And so God. By faith. In the promises of God. Not by works. Not by observance of the law. But by everything that God does.

[29 : 06] For us. And so. Chapter 5. Verse 1 of Galatians. For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm. Therefore. And do not submit again.

To a yoke of slavery. At the same time though. There is still mercy. For the mocker. For anyone who comes. To honour Jesus as Lord.

Is saved. The apostle Paul. Hear this. Being the. Chief. Example. He was the man.
Born of the flesh. Born according. To the lineage. Of Abraham. A Hebrew. Of Hebrews. Of
righteousness. By the law. Spotless.

But he realised. It was all. As good as dung. And came. To the great. Change. From being
a. Persecutor. Of the promised.

[30 : 03] Seed. And his descendants. Changed. By God's mercy. To being. He was the. Chief.
Ishmael. If you like.

But God has. Mercy on him. And brought him. To recognise. Jesus. As the. Offspring. Of
Abraham. And so. To be adopted. As a child. Of God. Born of promise. Born.

From Jerusalem. Above. And so. Blessed. By being. A true. Offspring. Of Abraham. Just
like. All of us. Here. In this room.

Who are trusted. In the Lord. Jesus Christ. And so. Brothers and sisters. We need to live.
By faith. Faith. But I'm not sure. How your faith.

In the promises of God. Are going. But let me encourage you. God made promises. To
Abraham. That. Had some long horizons. To come off.

[30 : 57] Didn't they? In the case of. Isaac. Being born. Around 30 years. Or so. And. Along the
way. Even though he trusted in God. His obedience.

Wavered. At times. And he never saw. The birth. Of Jesus. But in John chapter 8.

We hear that it was the coming of Jesus. That he was actually looking forward to. His
ultimate offspring. And it took another.

Eighteen hundred years. Or so. Well beyond his lifetime. Well beyond his lifetime. And
brothers and sisters.

It can be difficult. To keep trusting God. Now. To persevere in the faith. When life's
circumstances get difficult. When the things God has promised.

[31 : 55] Seems so distant. And removed. The things we're still waiting for. Is the full experience. Of
being in the presence of God. For all eternity. For all time.

In the promised land. The Jerusalem above. We've been told about it now. Promised it
now. But. We've got a toe hold.

In it now. If you like. It's kind of like. Abraham's will. And the tree has been planted. If you
like. The cross.

Guaranteeing it. But. It can at times. Seems so remote. So distant. When things around.

Seems so difficult. When there's the heartache. When there's a disappointment. When
there's the financial stress. When there's a frustration. When there's the health problems.
When there's concerns. For the well-being of suffering.

[32 : 51] Of others. If only God would bring about his kingdom. Fully and finally. Now. And I'd have
all the promises now. Wouldn't that be great? Sometimes it's hard to believe it's all true.

And sometimes I give in to temptations along the way. Sometimes my faith is weak. Take
heart. Right. Take heart. It's not the strength of my faith.

That saves me. I'll say it again. It's not the strength of my faith. That saves me. It is the
faithfulness.

Of the one. That I trust in. And his. Ability to keep his promises. That saves me. God is still
in control.

God is working out his plans and purposes. In his time. And we can stand on every
promise. Of his word. We don't look to our own performance. But we look to the
performance.

[33 : 53] Of Abraham's offspring. Not primarily Isaac. But ultimately Jesus. Who sets us free.
From sin. And decay. And bondage. Of this world. And will bring us safely. Home. To the
promised land. Guarantees it for us.
The heavenly. The heavenly. Jerusalem. Above. So let's pray. Our father in heaven.
Thank you.
You are a faithful God. That what you say. Happens. Because you are powerful. To bring
it about. Please help us. Please help us. Please help us. To trust your promises.
Even as this world. Looks shaky around about us. In all kinds of ways. Please help us. To
hold on to the Lord Jesus Christ. The one who was crucified for us.

[34 : 50] Buried. Dead. Raised from the grave. And ascended to glory. And now rules. In the
heavenly Jerusalem above. We long for the day.
When we will be. Fully and finally. In that kingdom. But we thank you. For your mercy. On
the mockers now. The mercy you've had upon us. And we pray. That none of us.
Would fall short. Of entering that glory. We pray it in Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Pete.
Pete. Pete.
O. Pete. Pete. Pete. He. Pete.
Pete. Pete. dew. Pete. Pete. Pete. Pete. Pete. Pete. Pete. Pete. Pete. Pete.

[35 : 47] Pete.