

# Discussion Guide

Week of August 10, 2014

Genesis 23-24

**Passage Overview:** In Genesis 23-27, the torch of God's promise is passed from Abraham to Isaac. In the closing days of Abraham's life, Sarah dies, and Abraham turns his attention to finding a wife for his son Isaac. The story of Abraham continues in the account of Isaac and the birth of his sons, Esau and Jacob. God's promises are reiterated to Isaac, just as they were previously given to Abraham. Isaac not only receives the promises of God to Abraham but also inherits some of the same sinful tendencies, as we see in chapter 26. The big idea of this section of Genesis, however, is that God is preserving an offspring (Gen 3:15) by the promises to Abraham being passed down to the next generation.

## Understanding the Text—Read Genesis 24

- Read Genesis 23:19. What is the significance of the location of Sarah's burial? Consider God's promises found in Genesis 12:1, 7; 13:15; 15:18; 17:8.
- In Genesis 24, how do the details of this story confirm Abraham's confidence that "the Lord, the God of heaven...will send his angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there" (v.7)?

## Living and Applying God's Word

- Genesis 23-24 is a picture of transition. Chapter 23 captures the scene of Sarah's death. Chapter 24 opens with Abraham aging (v.1). He wants his son not to marry a Canaanite woman but a woman from his own country (vv.3-4). Abraham's concern is not ethnic. Why then is the matter of a wife for Isaac such a matter of grave concern for Abraham? What is the danger of intermarriage? Consider these OT examples:
  - Early Israel—Exodus 34:13-16; Deut. 7:3-4
  - During the reign of the judges—Judges 3:6; 14:3
  - The prophets—Malachi 2:11
- Read **2 Corinthians 6:14-18**. Paul insists that Christians should not marry non-Christians. What reason(s) does he give?
  - What are the implications for dating?
  - Is this simply a box that must be checked? (i.e., he says he's a Christian so it's okay for us to marry.)
- God's steadfast love is evident throughout this passage. When the servant looks for a wife for Isaac, he pleads for "steadfast love to my master Abraham" (v.12). When his prayer is answered, he celebrates: "Blessed be the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken his steadfast love and his faithfulness" (v.27).
  - Does Abraham do anything to deserve God's steadfast love? If so, what? If not, why not?
  - What does this tell us about the nature of God's steadfast covenantal love? Read Romans 8:38-39.

**Prayer:** Praise God for his steadfast love: "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end" (Lamentations 3:22).

## Announcements

- Q&A: Proposed SBC Affiliation (August 13, 6:30pm)
- Children's Ministry Basic Training (August 31, 9am; RSVP to nicole@insidecrosspointe.com)
- "One Another" Member Meeting (September 7, 6:00-7:30pm)