



## and that's... **The Gospel Truth!!** with Pat Corn

*a brief message of encouragement to make your day just a little bit brighter*

Let's recap last week's question of why there is such upheaval around the world. It's very simple. It has been destined and has been ongoing for centuries. With the advancements of telecommunications, we hear about every single news item so quickly. Every story becomes sensationalized and is new fodder for the media cows.

I am in no way discounting the importance of the upheaval because it is the natural by-product of centuries of dissension that God foretold from the time of Abraham and Sarah. The Middle East problems shouldn't surprise us at all. IF...we know the full story.

It all began with the birth of a son to Abraham. The child's mother was a maid-servant to Abraham's wife, Sarah. Sarah was barren into her eighties and brought her maid-servant to Abraham that he might have a child. Shortly thereafter, God told them that they would birth a natural son and his name should be Isaac. They were amazed that they would have a child at their age, nonetheless, Isaac was born and the trouble began. One son ordained and sanctioned by God and another whose birth was illegitimate born from desperation.

Genesis 21:8-13 reads "The child grew and was weaned, and on the day Isaac was weaned Abraham held a great feast. But Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was mocking, and she said to Abraham, "Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac. The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son. But God said to him, "Do not be so distressed about the boy and your maidservant. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned. I will make the son of the maidservant into a nation also, because he is your offspring." Hagar and Ishmael were sent away.

Genesis 22 gives the account of God's testing of Abraham. He talks his beloved son the mountains to sacrifice Isaac. His faithfulness to God, even to the point of sacrificing his son, was honored by God and God provided a sacrificial animal to be used instead if Isaac. (This situation was a foreshadowing of God providing a sacrificial lamb for the sins of the world, Jesus, the Lamb of God)

Sarah died at the age of 127 at Hebron in the land of Canaan. Abraham bought a tomb there for her burial.

In the advanced years of Abraham, he was blessed in every way. His chief servant handled his affairs for him. Abraham had him swear that he would not allow Isaac to marry a Canaanite woman, but that he would find him a wife from among their relatives in Abraham's homeland. The account of the chief servant's journey to find Isaac' wife is recounted in Genesis 24. He was successful in his efforts and brought Rebekah back to Isaac in Canaan. He made her his wife "and he loved her".

Abraham lived a hundred and seventy five years and when he died, Genesis 25:5 tells us that, "Abraham left everything he owned to Isaac. But while he was still living, he gave gifts to the sons of his concubines and sent them away from his son Isaac to the land of the east". The land to the east is the key statement here. Isaac and Ishmael buried Abraham with his wife Sarah.

Ishmael had thirteen sons and they all lived near the border of Egypt and were hostile to all.

Isaac and Rebekah had two sons; Jacob and Esau. Genesis 25:21-24 recounts "Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was barren. The LORD answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, "Why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the LORD.

The LORD said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger." Remember that statement. It's very important.

When the time came for her to give birth, there were twin boys in her womb. The first to come out was red, and his whole body was like a hairy garment; so they named him Esau. After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to them.

The boys grew up, and Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was a quiet man, staying among the tents. Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came in from the open country, famished. He said to Jacob, "Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I'm famished!" Jacob replied, "First sell me your birthright." "Look, I am about to die," Esau said. "What good is the birthright to me?" But Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left. So Esau despised his birthright. One's birthright gave authority over the younger siblings and a double portion of inheritance. He sold that birthright for a single meal.

As they grew up Isaac became very powerful and wealthy while Esau and his wife, Judith, were a source of constant grief to Isaac and Rebekah.

As Isaac grew old to the point of death, his sight diminished so dramatically, it set the stage for one of the most insidious plots of deception in history that still affects us today.....

Next week the conclusion....why can't they live in peace in the Middle East? You'll see.....

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