



MOUNTAIN STREAM NEWS

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STRUGGLES WITHIN THE PROMISE

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR



*Genesis 25:21
And Isaac prayed to the Lord
for his wife, because she was
barren. And the Lord granted
his prayer, and Rebekah his
wife conceived.*

When seen in its full context, this is a very curious verse. Isaac was the miracle child specifically given by God to Abraham as the

vehicle through which God would make of Abraham a great nation (Genesis 17:15-19). Rebekah was the woman specifically identified by God to be Isaac's wife and the mother of his children (24:12-21). Yet here we find in Genesis 25:21 that Rebekah could not bear children! How could that be? That just does not make sense, does it? Did Isaac and Rebekah miss something? Did God make a mistake? Of course not. As we will see, this situation opens an important window for us to understand a bit more about how God works.

We generally assume that when we embrace God's promises and live in obedience to Him, everything will go smoothly. Life will unfold in blissful harmony with no challenges whatsoever. Should we encounter any challenges, we immediately become confused and distressed and begin to wrestle with haunting issues about whether we misunderstood God's promises, or whether we did something wrong, or whether we have fallen out of God's favor. We may even begin to question God's character. To Isaac's credit, he avoided this torturous path, and simply went to the Lord and asked Him to intervene. And God did.

There are important lessons here for us to learn. Our walk with God is always a walk of faith. Even when we are living in obedience to Him we will encounter circumstances that force us to grow in our trust in God. When life becomes uncertain, we must turn to God in humble trust. He is faithful. He doesn't break His promises.

These challenges also remind us of the direct link between the promise and the Promise Giver. Because of their initial struggle, Isaac and Rebekah would al-

ways be aware that their children were direct gifts from God – not the products of natural processes. Sometimes when God uses "natural" processes to fulfill His will, we miss the reality that it is still God who is working. We celebrate the natural processes as if they are divine and become at risk of losing sight of God. To protect us, every now and again God manipulates the circumstances to remind us that He is the ultimate Source so that we will maintain a healthy dependence on Him.

So, are you a little confused because life isn't going as you expected? Do you feel God's promises cannot be fulfilled because of prevailing natural obstacles? Don't become frustrated or disillusioned. Go to the Lord and ask Him for His help. His intervention will confirm again that He remains Lord over all our circumstances.

May our struggles within His promises teach us not to depend on "natural" processes, but to trust the supernatural God.

God bless you,
Pastor James

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WHAT'S HAPPENING

CORPORATE PRAYER
TUE @ 7 PM

JAN 17

Join us via Zoom video
Please contact Pastor James
for log on information at
rcantio@gmail.com

YOUTH GROUP
FRI @ 6:45 PM

JAN 20

In-person at church.
For teens
ages 13 and over

EVENING SERVICE
1st & 3rd
SUN @ 6 PM

FEB 5 & FEB 19

Join us in-person
at church

KIDZONE & NURSERY
SUN @ 11 AM

JAN 22

These ministries are
available every Sunday
during the morning service

Kidzone for ages
6-12 yrs. old.

GROWTH GROUPS
THU & FRI @ 7 PM

BEGIN in FEB

Plan to attend one convenient to
you. Sign-up on our
website or the Info. Ctr.

FEB 9 & FEB 10

In-person at church.

WORSHIP SERVICE
SUN @ 11 AM

JAN 22

In-person service & livestream

Livestreaming is only on
Facebook and our
church's website.

- Ladies Meeting Saturday, January 28th at 10:30 am. Ladies, please come with any suggestions you have for 2023.
- Growth Groups begin February 9 & 10 at 7 pm at church. Sign up at the Information Center or online to attend one convenient to you.
- Carmelo Garcia is to be received into membership. If you have any comments, please contact Pastor James.
- Join us on 1st and 3rd Wednesday at 3:15 at the Garden at Stroud as we sing and share the gospel with the residents. Contact Tom for more information.
- Bible Reading plans for 2023 are available at the Information Center. Also, read Pastor Jimmie's daily blog on the readings via the link on our website.
- Calvary School of the Bible (CBS) offers a 3-year program with courses on Christian living, ministries, theology, and Bible book surveys. Check out this link to some uploaded classes www.cbepoconos.org and contact H. Lee Thompson directly at hleet1412@gmail.com for more information.

QUICK TIPS ON WAYS TO GIVE YOUR OFFERING

Traditional during the Sunday morning service, with a check by mail or through our secured website. Please remember to hit "SAVE" after you give if you did not set up an account so the church can have a record of who gave for tax purposes. Thank you!