

ISAAC—THE PLODDER

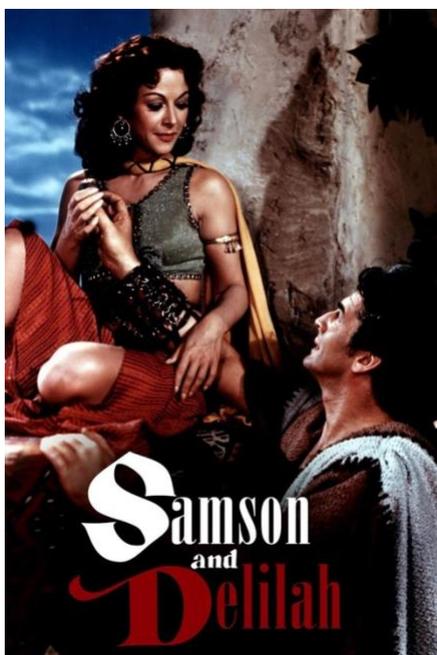
ser5022 Chosen but not Perfect - The Patriarchs

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I. (HOOK) POINT OF INTRIGUE

A. Most movies and books are crafted or written about people whose lives are entertaining.

In many instances, these people's lives are not that of the everyday Joe; they would make for dull entertainment. Whether between the covers or a book or at the box office, bestsellers are built on or around the dramatic. Think about movies produced around Bible characters. It's Moses & The Ten Commandments, Samson &

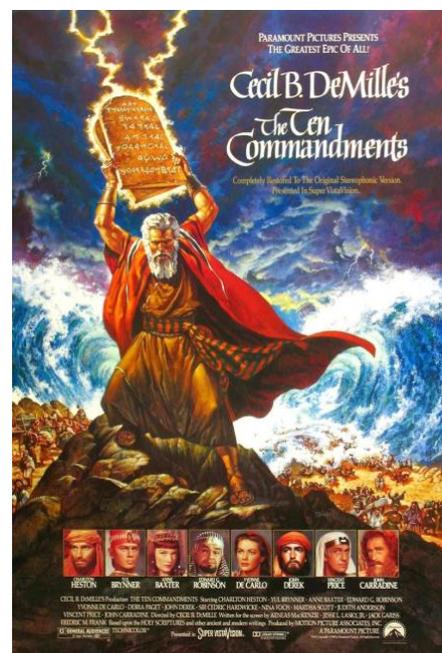


Delilah,
David &
Bathsheba.

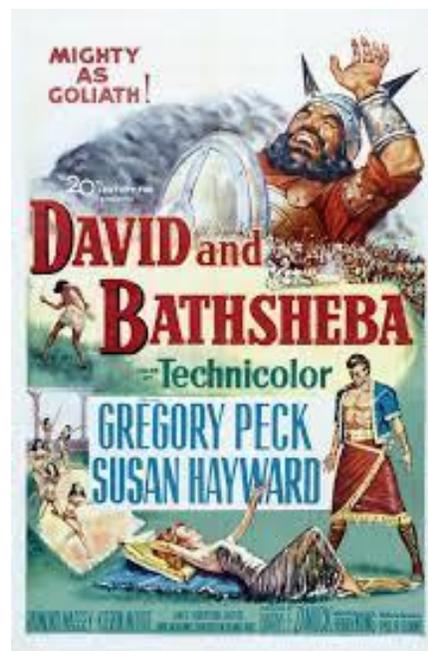
([show photos—2 on this page, one on the next](#)) All action figures. Right?

When has a movie been made around Isaac, son of promise to Abraham and Sarah?

I remember, while in college, one of



my art professors spoke of an interview with the great-grandson of the famous, prolific Flemish painter, Peter Paul Rubens. ([show photo](#)) The journalists asked the grandson why someone had not done a movie about his great-grandfather. Mr. Rubens's great grandson answered, "What is there to write about? My great grandfather got up in the morning, painted and had dinner with his family at night. He got up the next morning, painted and



had dinner with his family at night. He was a family man who lived a normal life and was an artist by profession." (He was also a diplomat for a season but got tired of the political circus.) Mr. Rubens was not an Auguste Rodin, Jackson Pollock, or Pablo Picasso whose lives were dubious in some way or another. He didn't die a tragic death from alcohol or drugs. He was a genius who happened to live an ordinary life.

What is there to write about other than one-thousand quality paintings?

(Well, there is one aspect of his life about which somebody could have made a movie. After his wife, who was the love

of his life, died at the age of 53, he took to wife a 16-year-old, who became the model in most of his paintings. They had five children. He loved his new wife, his kids, and his work—nothing dramatic other than the 37-year age difference. After Mr Rubens death, his second wife married a diplomat. Nothing scandalous. Not much to make a movie about.)

B. Here's where we're going with all of this.

Many people's lives are not comprised of wild stories, sordid affairs, and the like. Isaac was one of those people. Other than being the son of promise, what do we know about Isaac?

1. At the age of 40, Eleazar, servant of Abraham, found Isaac a wife. Some may be familiar with the story, but I suspect many are not.

2. Most remember Isaac by these words, which appears in the Bible 42 times, "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

II. (BOOK) MEET ISAAC

A. We meet Isaac in *Genesis 21*:

1. He is born

2. He is named—his name means "one who laughs" because his mother laughed when she heard she would give birth at 90 years of age, and Isaac brought laughter/rejoicing to Abraham and Sarah in their old age.

3. He is weaned

B. We see something about Isaac's personality and character in *Genesis 22*:

1. He questions his father, Abraham, as to where the lamb will come, but he doesn't argue or contend with his father's answer.

NOTE: *Hebrews 11:16* tells us, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Here, as a young man, Isaac demonstrates "faith."

Let's look at it.

Genesis 22: 5-12

⁵ And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the [a]lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you."

NOTE! The picture we often see of Isaac is that he is a boy, 12-13 years of age. However, the Hebrew word for "lad" is "young man." Jewish tradition holds that Isaac was at least 25 years of age. Whatever the case, Isaac was strong enough to carry a considerable quantity of wood up the mountain, as well as resist his 125-year-old father.

⁶ So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid *it* on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. ⁷ But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!"

And he said, "Here I am, my son."

Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where *is* the [b]lamb for a burnt offering?"

⁸ And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.

⁹ Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. ¹⁰ And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

MAY I BE SO BOLD AS TO SAY, if by faith Abraham offered up Isaac as a living sacrifice believing that Jehovah would provide, by faith Isaac believed the words of his father. Furthermore, Isaac is mentioned in *God's Hall of Fame* (**Hebrews 11:20**).

¹¹ But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!"

So he said, "Here I am."

¹² And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only *son*, from Me."

NOTE! Isaac is in type, a picture of Christ. For just as Christ trusted His Father to raise Him up, so Isaac trusted the word of his father.

C. Where is God asking you to trust Him?

Personal illustration:

I grew up, right or wrong, in a household where nothing trumped Sundays or Wednesday evening. It was ingrained in me that



Church was first on Sundays and Wednesdays. When I was student teaching and applied for a job at Burger Chef, the manager asked me if there were any days I could not work. I responded, "Yes, Sundays." Despite that restriction, I got the job. ([show photo](#))

The shift manager did not like me; he was rude and harsh. Upon finishing my student teaching, I mustered up the courage (I was 21) to ask him why he treated me rudely. His reply was, "When you were hired, the manager started you out at a higher wage than people who had been here for years and gave you Sundays off."

Now, when I applied for the job, the manager didn't know who I was or what kind of worker I'd be. Yet he gave me off on Sundays and paid me a higher wage than others. Why? First, I believe God honored my stance to not work on Sundays, and second, I believe my conviction said something about how the manager perceived my character.

I don't share that illustration to boast. I share it to say **God honors faith**. As we learned in our look at Abraham, the

reason why God can use some imperfect people and not others, is that they have faith. So, there's hope for all of us if we put our faith into action.

Back to Isaac's personality. Most likely, Isaac was phlegmatic. I think if he were choleric, he would have been kicking and screaming all the way to the altar. LOL!

Whether you're a Sanguine (the child who never grows up—Simon Peter), Melancholy (Moses), Choleric (St Paul), or Phlegmatic like Isaac, if you're a person willing to put your faith into action, God can and will use you. No ifs, ands, or buts!

III. (LOOK) THE GIFT TO PLOD

Genesis 26 (selected)

Isaac and Abimelech

1 There was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. ...

2 Then the LORD appeared to him and said: "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land of which I shall tell you. 3 Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; ...

12 Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundredfold, and the LORD blessed him. 13 The man began to prosper, and continued prospering until he became very prosperous; ... So the Philistines envied him. 15 Now the Philistines had stopped up all the wells which his father's servants had

dug in the days of Abraham his father, and they had filled them with earth. 16And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we."

17Then Isaac departed from there and pitched his tent in the Valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

NOTE! As to personality, Isaac is not a Choleric, he's not a Type A personality. He's just the opposite. He doesn't like confrontation.

18And Isaac dug again the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham. He called them by the names which his father had called them.

23Then he went up from there to Beersheba. 24And the LORD appeared to him the same night and said, "I *am* the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I *am* with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham's sake." 25So he built an altar there and called on the name of the LORD, and he pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.

IV. (TOOK) WHAT HAS GOD CALLED YOU TO DO WHICH REQUIRES FAITH?

A. Let's get real.

Isaac was not an ambitious man. He wouldn't be the guy on the team who wanted the last shot. It wasn't his personality. However, when God spoke to him, he listened and obeyed; even if it was something as seemingly small as not going to Egypt when your entire environment said, "Go! There is nothing here."

Really, what BIG things did Isaac do? He didn't part the Red Sea. He didn't fell the walls of Jericho. He didn't slay a giant. He didn't withhold the rain with a prayer. He simply kept plodding, keeping open the wells his father Abraham had dug. Nothing spectacular.

B. Just do what God tells you to do—that's faith.

What is God telling you to do? Just do it! That's faith. And faith pleases God.

V. INVITATION

A. Speaking of faith, to be saved requires faith.

The Bible says in *Romans 10:9-11*,

If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

B. Faith is an action word; put your faith into action by receiving Christ today.

It's as easy as ABC:

Admit – your sins have separated you from God.
(Psa 14:1-3; Rom 3: 23);

Believe – that God did something about your sins through Jesus Christ. (The final Pascal Lamb/Messiah.)
(Lev 17:10; Heb 9: 19-22);

Commit – yourself to His righteousness by confessing Jesus as Lord and Savior. (Isa 53:5; Col 1:22);

Do it today! (Isa 49:8; 2 Cor 6:2).

Father in Heaven, I'm sorry for the things I've done that are wrong: I am a sinner; forgive me. Thank You for loving me and sending your Son, Jesus, to pay the penalty for my sin. Holy Spirit come into my heart; Jesus be my Lord and Savior. I give You my life. Amen.