

Genesis Chapter 25

Verses 1-4

Abraham's sons through Keturah (a concubine, verse 6; 1 Chron. 1:32), a wife of lower status than Sarah, became the progenitors of various Arab tribes to the east of Canaan.

Genesis 25:1 "Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name [was] Keturah."

"Abraham took a wife":

Rather, "had taken"; for Keturah is called Abraham's concubine, or secondary wife.

As for her bearing six sons to him, it is improbable that he married after Sarah's death; and also, as he sent them all out to seek their own independence, during his lifetime.

It is clear that this marriage is related here out of its chronological order, merely to form a proper winding up of the patriarch's history.

"Keturah":

She was a concubine and this suggests that she was alive when Sarah was living.

Many of the names listed have already been identified with Arab tribes, fulfilling God's promise to Abraham that he would be the father of many nations (17:4).

"Keturah":

Means incense.

I cannot believe that a man over 100 years old would even want to marry.

Genesis 25:2 "And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah."

"And she bare him Zimran":

That Keturah should bear children who probably, was a young woman, is not strange; but that Abraham, whose body forty years before this was dead should now have any bore to him, may seem difficult to account for, and only can be attributed to the fresh vigor his body was endowed with at the generation of Isaac.

And which still continued for the fulfillment of the promise to him of the multiplication of his families seed.

"And Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah":

Some think that the first of these is the same with Cahtan, whom the Arabs call the father of their nation; but that Cahtan rather seems to be Joktan the son of Eber (see Genesis 10:25).

Can you believe that Abraham, after the age of 100, had six children?

"Zimran" means antelope.

Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan.

They started the Sabaeans and Dedanites (Arabs).

"Midian" means strife or contention.

The Midianites were, probably, his descendants.

"Ishbak"

Means abandon or set free.

He was the father of some of the northern Arab tribes.

Genesis 25:3 "And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim."

"And Jokshan begat Sheba and Dedan":

Bochart is of opinion, that the posterity of this Sheba are the same with the Sabeans who inhabited at the entrance of Arabia Felix, not far from the Nabathaeans; and who, by Strabo, are mentioned together as near to Syria, and used to make excursions on their neighbors.

Thought to be the same that plundered Job of his cattle, Job 1:15.

From Dedan came the Dedanim or Dedanites, spoken of with the Arabians in (Isaiah 21:13); Junius thinks Adada in Palmyrene of Syria had its name from this man, and in which country is the mountain Aladan or Alladadan.

"And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim":

These names being plural are thought not to be proper names of men, but classifications, descriptive of their places of abode, or of their business.

Hence the Targum of Onkelos represents them as such that dwelt in camps, in tents, and in islands; and the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem call them merchants, artificers and heads of the people.

"Letushim":

This means oppressed.

"Leummim":

This means nations or peoples.

It seemed all three of these sons of Dedan probably were the fathers of Arab nations.

Genesis 25:4 "And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these [were] the children of Keturah."

"Ephah":

This means gloom.

"Epher":

This means gazelle.

"Hanoch":

This means initiated.

"Abidah":

This means father of knowledge.

"Eldaah":

This means God of knowledge.

You can easily see from this, these were the various races of people that God had established through Abraham.

Here again, these were children of the flesh, and not of promise.

These were the fathers of various Arab countries.

Verses 5-6

Conferring gifts upon these other sons, then sending them away and also conferring the estate upon Isaac ensured that Isaac would be considered as the rightful heir without competition or threat from his half-brothers.

The steward, Eliezer, had informed Rebekah's relatives that all of Abraham's estate was Isaac's See (24:36).

Genesis 25:5 "And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac."

The fact that "Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac":

This indicates that Isaac was the principal heir (21:10).

"Cast out this bondwoman and her son" for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac" (17:18; Gal. 4:28-31).

Only if he had legally adopted the sons of the concubine by pronouncing "my son, child" would they have inherited his wealth.

Genesis 25:6 "But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country."

"But unto the sons of the concubines which Abraham had":

These were Hagar and Keturah, though they are both called his wives (Genesis 16:3); yet they were concubines; so Keturah (1 Chronicles 1:32); they were, as some render the word, "concubine wives" they were half wives or secondary ones.

The Jewish writers say that they were espoused, but not by writing, as wives were; they were under the lawful wife, when there were any, and a kind of head servants in the family, and their children did not inherit.

The sons of the concubines of Abraham were Ishmael by Hagar, and the six mentioned above were mentioned by Keturah.

"Abraham gave gifts":

Money, gold and silver, of which he had much.

The Targum of Jonathan calls them substance and movable goods.

By this it appears that though he had sent Ishmael away without anything, yet he afterwards remembered him, and gave him a portion with the rest of the children of his.

"And sent them away from Isaac his son":

That they might not be troublesome to him and his family; and that there, might be no contention among them about inheriting the land of Canaan given to him and his seed.

"While he yet lived":

Or otherwise after his death a separation would not have been easily made; but his authority had weight with them.

"Eastward":

Into the east country; into Arabia, and the parts thereabout, which lay east from the place where Abraham was.

These are the children of the east, mentioned along with the Midianites, who sprung from Keturah (Judges 6:3).

You can easily see preferential treatment to the son of promise.

Even in the spirit, it seems preferential, because the only thing that can get anyone into heaven is through faith in Jesus the Christ.

These sons of the flesh, the same as sons of the flesh today, would be sent away.

Abraham did give them gifts to get them started, but his real blessing was to Isaac.

It is interesting, that he sent them to the eastern countries.

Much of the fallen condition of the churches today is because eastern countries' influence has infiltrated the church.

The flesh and the spirit cannot live together in peace.

These half-brothers of Isaac were sent away so no feuding would occur when Abraham died.

Isaac was not to associate with fleshly people.

Genesis 25:7 "And these [are] the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, a hundred three score and fifteen years."

"And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life, which he lived":

Being about to die, an account is given of his age, which was a hundred threescore and fifteen years (one hundred and seventy five years).

Isaac currently at the time this was written was now seventy five years of age, for he was born when Abraham was a hundred years old.

Jacob and Esau must now be fifteen years of age at this time, since they were born when Isaac was sixty years of age (Genesis 25:26).

Ishmael must be eighty nine years old.

It may be observed that as Abraham was seventy five years old when he went from Haran into the land of Canaan (Genesis 12:4).

He had been just an hundred years a sojourner in this country.

Genesis 25:8 "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full [of years]; and was gathered to his people."

Abraham was then "gathered to his people,":

Which has been interpreted as (1) a euphemism for death; (2) a reference to a multiple burial; or (3) as the majority of commentators assert, a reference to immortality, and also a witness to life after death.

Also, an expression of personal continuance beyond death, which denoted a reunion with previously departed friends (1900 B.C.; Matt. 8:11; Luke 16:22-23).

Verses 9-10

"His sons ... buried him":

Abraham's funeral brought together two sons who would perhaps otherwise have remained somewhat estranged from each other (35:29).

He was buried in the place which he had purchased at Hebron (chapter 23).

Genesis 25:9 "And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which [is] before Mamre;"

"And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah":

Isaac, though the younger brother, is shown first, because he was born of the lawful wife of Abraham, the free woman, whereas Ishmael was born of a concubine and a bondwoman.

Isaac was heir not only to Abraham's temporal estate, but of the promise made concerning the Messiah (not so Ishmael), and was on all accounts the greater man.

It appears from hence, that, though there had been a quarrel between Ishmael and Isaac, and the latter had been persecuted by the former, yet the difference was now made up, and they were reconciled, at least they agreed in this act of showing their last respect to their father.

Though Ishmael had been expelled from his father's house, he was not at any great distance from him, and there was a correspondence between him and his father.

Nor was he forgotten by him, as is clear from (Genesis 25:6); and he retained a devoted affection for him.

"In the field of Ephron":

The son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre (see Genesis 23:8).

Wherefore very false is the tradition of the Mahometans, that Abraham's sepulcher is at Mecca, which they, now show, and stands about twelve paces from the temple there, and it is enclosed with iron rails.

Abraham lived to the ripe old age of 175.

Because of his great faith and strength, God extended his life.

Most people lived to be 120 years old then.

It is interesting to me, that Isaac and Ishmael buried their father.

You remember in a previous lesson, that it said Ishmael would dwell around Isaac.

The other half-brothers had been sent away.

They buried Abraham in the same cave with Sarah.

The cave which Abraham had bought for a burial place, as we read in verse ten.

Genesis 25:10 "The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife."

"The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth":

Of one of them, Ephron, the rest being witnesses of it (Genesis 23:16).

"There was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife":

Sarah had been buried there thirty eight years before, which was the reason why his sons buried him there.

If he died in Beer-sheba, as seems probable (see Genesis 24:62); from thence to Hebron was sixteen miles.

Genesis 25:11 "And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi."

"And it came to pass, after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac":

Yet more and more, both with spiritual and temporal blessings.

Showing that though Abraham was dead, he was not unmindful of his covenant which should be established with Isaac (Genesis 17:19).

"And Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi":

Which was near the wilderness of Beersheba and Paran, where Ishmael dwelt.

So that they were not far from one another (see Genesis 16:14).

This was the same well discussed in a previous lesson.

"Lhai-roi":

Means the well of Him that liveth and seeth me, or the well of the vision of life.

You see, Isaac would be blessed, because of Abraham, and because of his own life, too.

This made it a double blessing.

Isaac was the second of the great Patriarchs, (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob).

Verses 12-18

This gives the account of the sons of Ishmael.

He had been the subject of particular divine promises made to Hagar (16:10-12), and Abraham (17:20; 21:13).

The fulfillment of his descendants is thereby noted before the history of the proceeding Abrahamic kingdom.

"The generations of Ishmael":

With the death of Abraham and the focus shifting to Isaac, the record confirms God's promise of 12 princes to Ishmael (17:20-21).

Genesis 25:12 "Now these [are] the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham:"

"Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son":

Or the genealogy of his posterity; and which is given to show that the LORD was not unmindful of his promise made to Abraham, concerning the multiplication of his seed (Genesis 16:10).

"Whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham" (see Genesis 16:1).

Verses 13-16

Arab tradition has it that these are their earliest ancestors.

Genesis 25:13 "And these [are] the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,"

"And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael":

After mentioned:

"By their names, according to their generations":

Which were imposed upon them at their birth, and are recited according to the order in which they were born.

"The firstborn of Ishmael, "Nebajoth":

Mentioned (in Isaiah 60:7); and from whence a people of the Arabs are called Nabathaeans, and their country Nabataea.

Josephus says that all the country from Euphrates to the Red sea is called the Nabatean country.

The posterity of this man inhabited part of Arabia Desert and of Arabia Petraea, even to the entrance of Arabia Felix.

"And Kedar is the second son of Ishmael":

And the posterity of this man and their country are reckoned in Arabia by Isaiah (Isa. 21:13).

They are so well known to be Arabians that the Arabic language is most frequently, in Jewish writings, called the language of Kedar.

These are the people whom Pliny names Cedrei, and mentions them along with the Nabathaeans, as near unto them, and indeed they dwelt in the same country, Arabia Petraea, and in tents, living by pasturage, hence they are sometimes called Scenites; and mention is made of the tents of Kedar; these are the Scenite Arabs, called Saracens by Ammianus Marcellinus.

“And Adbeel and Mibsam”:

Of whom no mention is made elsewhere, nor are there any traces of their names, unless the Agubeni, placed by Ptolemy near Arabia Felix.

Genesis 25:14 "And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa,"

"And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa":

Of Mishma and Massa, and of their posterity, there is not anything said elsewhere, unless the Masani, Ptolemy places near Arabia Felix, came from Massa.

Dumah seems to be the same Isaiah speaks of in Genesis 21:11; and in Arabia Desert, where some of Ishmael's posterity settled, is a place called Dumaetha, by Ptolemy, which perhaps had its name from this son of his.

The Targum of Jonathan translates these three names "hearing, silence, and patience", which the Jews use as a proverb, when they would signify that there are some things to be heard and not spoken of and to be patiently borne.

If Ishmael had in view to teach such lessons by the names he gave his children, he will seem to be a better man than he is usually thought to be.

Genesis 25:15 "Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah:"

"Hadar and Tema":

From the first of these the city Adra in Arabia Petraea, and from the other the city Themma in Arabia Desert, both mentioned by Ptolemy, may be thought to have their names.

Or the city Adari and the Athritae in Arabia Felix, and the inhabitants of the land of Tema are mentioned as Arabians (Isaiah 21:13).

Pliny speaks of a people who are called Thimaneans, whom he says the ancients had joined to the Nabathaeans.

The troops of Tema mentioned in Job were of this people (Job 6:19); and Eliphaz the Temanite (Job 2:11), is thought by some not to be the descendant of Teman the grandson of Esau, but to be of this man's people and country.

"The two first of these are reckoned among the Hagarites, as the Ishmaelites were sometimes called (1 Chronicles 5:19).

From "Jetur" came the Itureans, whom Pliny places in Coelesyria; and their country Iturea is reckoned by Strabo along with Arabia; and the Ithyreans with Virgil are famous for their bows, as Ishmael and his posterity were for archery in all ages, and still are (see notes on Gen. 21:20).

"Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah":

We have no account elsewhere, nor any traces of their names, unless those of the latter should be meant by the men of the east, or the men of Kedem (Jeremiah 49:28), which is not improbable, since they are mentioned with the posterity of Kedar the second son of Ishmael; and the Nubaeans by Lebanon may be from Naphish.

Genesis 25:16 "These [are] the sons of Ishmael, and these [are] their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations."

"By their towns ... by their castles":

In addition to serving as a testimony to God's promises (17:20), information such as this genealogy helped Israel to understand the origins of both of their neighbors in central and northern Arabia.

You can easily see by this, that Ishmael and his descendants were blessed here on this earth in the flesh.

The twelve sons were twelve princes, and even had castles.

They were wealthy and had much prestige among their nations.

In contrast, Isaac's blessing was spiritual.

These sons had Egyptian ancestry and were Arabs.

"Egypt":

Means of the world.

"Kedar":

Means to be dark, or to be able, mighty.

"Adbeel":

Means servant of God.

"Mibsam":

Means balsom, or sweet odor.

"Mishma":

Means hearing.

"Dumah":

Means silence.

"Massa":

Means burden.

"Hadar":

Means chamber.

Some sons are not traceable; they seem to just drop from Bible history.

Genesis 25:17 "And these [are] the years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people."

"And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty and seven years":

One hundred and thirty seven years old.

So that he lived forty eight years after the death of Abraham (Genesis 25:8); and, though he did not live to be so old as he, yet it was a considerable age that he attained unto (see the note on Genesis 25:7).

"And he gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people":

Some of the same expressions being used of him as of his father (Gen. 25:8), have led some to conclude that he was a penitent and died a good man, and was gathered to the same people.

But these phrases are used both of good and bad men.

Genesis 25:18 "And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that [is] before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria: [and] he died in the presence of all his brethren."

"And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur":

That is, the posterity of Ishmael, whose country reached from one place to the other; not from India to Chaluza, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem.

But the extent is that vast desert of Arabia, which eastward was called the wilderness of Havilah, and westward the wilderness of Shur.

So that they inhabited it from east to west.

"That is before Egypt, as thou goest to Assyria":

Which last place was over against Egypt, and bordered on that part where the way to the land of Assyria lies.

"And he died in the presence of all his brethren":

They being present when he died, or in peace with them, in all prosperity along with them.

As we said before, these were Arabs living in all the Arab countries surrounding Israel.

Verses 25:19 – 35:29

The genealogy of Isaac.

Genesis 25:19 "And these [are] the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac:"

“And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son”:

Moses, having given the genealogy of Ishmael and his posterity, returns to Isaac, the other son of Abraham, with whom and his children the following part of his history is chiefly, if not altogether concerned.

Abraham begat Isaac; for the further confirmation of his being his proper legitimate son this clause is added.

Genesis 25:20 "And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister to Laban the Syrian."

“Padan-aram”:

The “plain of Aram” in upper Mesopotamia near Haran to the north northeast of Canaan.

“The Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister to Laban the Syrian”:

The word Syrian is translated best by “Armenia” and does not refer to the Syria of which Damascus was the capital.

It was called Mesopotamia (in 24:10), and lay north and east of Palestine.

Its chief city was Haran.

Genesis 25:21 "And Isaac entreated the LORD for his wife, because she [was] barren: and the LORD was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived."

“She was barren”:

Confronted by 20 years of his wife’s barrenness (verses 19, 26), Isaac rose to the test and earnestly turned to God in prayer, obviously acknowledging thereby God’s involvement and timing in the seed-promise.

Here we understand that Isaac was forty years old before he married.

He wanted children the same as his parents wanted him.

With Hebrews, it is very important to have a family to carry on the family heritage.

We see here, what prayer can do.

God answers prayers.

God changed her not being able to have children, and she was with child.

Genesis 25:22 "And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If [it be] so, why [am] I thus? And she went to inquire of the LORD."

“And the children struggled together within her” (womb):

The very uncomfortable condition of her pregnancy (“why then am I this way?”) prompted Rebekah, undoubtedly following the example of her husband, to turn earnestly to God in prayer.

She learned directly from the LORD that the sever jostling in her womb prefigured the future antagonism between the two nations to arise from her twin sons (verse 23).

The struggle was typical of the years to follow.

Also, “the elder shall serve the younger”:

See Genesis 25-23 below.

This was a startling revelation; for it went contrary to ancient Near Eastern custom.

This forms the basis for our understanding of the New Testament application of the term firstborn to the Lord Jesus Christ.

It refers to rank, not origin.

Normally, the eldest son was given preferential treatment.

He assumed more responsibility and was rewarded with honor and given two shares in the family inheritance, instead of the single share that each of his younger brothers received.

Occasionally, the eldest fell out of favor and was replaced by a younger son, a brother.

Notice some examples: Jacob replaced Esau; Ephraim replaced Adonijah.

Thus, the younger became the “firstborn,” that is, he attained to first rank.

This term is applied in this sense to the nation of Israel (Exodus 4:22; Amos 3:1-2).

Here again, we see a problem that seems too hard to understand.

It had to be bad for her to realize there was a conflict in her womb.

Genesis 25:23 "And the LORD said unto her, Two nations [are] in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and [the one] people shall be stronger than [the other] people; and the elder shall serve the younger."

“The elder shall serve the younger”:

This was contrary to the custom in patriarchal times when the elder son enjoyed the privileges of precedence in the household and at the father’s death received a double share of the inheritance and became the recognized head of the family (Exodus 22:29; Num. 8:14-17; Deut. 21:17).

Grave offenses could annul such first born rights (Genesis 35:22; 49:3-4; 1 Chronicles 5:1), or the birthright could be sacrificed or legally transferred to another in the family, as in this case (see verses 29-34).

In this case, God declared otherwise since His sovereign elective purposes did not necessarily have to follow custom (Rom. 9:10-14; “Especially in verse 12”).

Genesis 25:24 "And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, [there were] twins in her womb."

“And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled”:

The nine months were up from the time of her conception; or, as the Targum of Jonathan, when the two hundred and seventy days she went with child were completed.

“Behold, there were twins in her womb”:

As was perceived by the midwife; a double mercy was granted, more given than asked for; probably only one child was asked for, but two given.

“Days ... were fulfilled”:

Esau and Jacob were born, 2005 B.C.

Genesis 25:25 "And the first came out red, all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau."

“Red”:

This would be the linguistic basis for calling Esau’s country “Edom” (verse 30).

“Esau” was Jacob’s twin brother and the father of the Edomites.

Though he was the firstborn and his father’s favorite, he lost both his birthright and blessing to Jacob (verses 24-34; 27:1-29).

The later animosity between the descendants of Esau (Edomites), and the descendants of Jacob (Israelites), is well documented in the Old Testament (Num. 20:18-21).

Esau is later used in Scripture as an illustration of the non-elect of God (Rom. 9:13).

The New Testament refers to him as a “profane person” (Heb. 12:16-17).

The Old Testament states that Esau “despised his birthright” (verse 34; see Genesis 25:25-28; Genesis 27:30-40).

Genesis 25:26 "And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac [was] threescore years old when she bare them."

“Jacob” was born clutching the heel of his twin brother, Esau, who was born first.

Jacob eventually obtained Esau’s birthright by taking advantage of his hunger (verses 29-34); and Jacob deceived his father, Isaac, into giving him Esau’s blessing as well (27:1-29).

Jacob fled for his life to Haran, where he married both Leah and Rachel and became the father of the 12 tribes of Israel.

Jacob’s name was changed to Israel when he wrestled with the Angel of the LORD (32:24-32).

He eventually settled in Hebron.

In his old age, he moved his entire family to Egypt at Joseph's invitation.

Jacob died at over 130 years of age and was buried in the cave of Machpelah near Hebron. (Gen 25:26-28; Gen. 28:10-22).

This is very interesting.

Even before their birth, these two sons were warring in Rebekah's womb.

These two boys truly would be opposite, one a wild man, a hunter, and the other a quiet man who stayed home and helped his mother.

The LORD told her of the future, when He said the older shall serve the younger.

These twin boys were opposites.

They did not even look alike.

One was hairy, even from birth.

"Esau" means hairy.

"Jacob" means trickster.

Both names well suited the boys.

Isaac was 60 years old when these boys were born.

Verses 27-28

The difference between the two sons manifested itself in several areas: (1) As progenitors, Esau of Edom and Jacob of Israel; (2) In disposition, Esau a rugged, headstrong hunter preferring the outdoors and Jacob a plain, amiable man preferring the comforts of home; and (3) In parental favoritism, Esau by his father and Jacob by his mother.

These were the ingredients for conflict and heartache!

Genesis 25:27 "And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob [was] a plain man, dwelling in tents."

"And the boys grew":

In stature, became strong and fit for business, and devoted themselves to different employments.

"And Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field":

Whose business lay in tilling and sowing it, which his father Isaac followed sometimes; or rather he chose to range about the field and hunt after beasts and birds, in which he was very expert, and contrived traps and snares to catch them.

This course of life was most agreeable to his temper and disposition, being active, fierce, and cruel; according to the Targum of Jonathan, he was also a hunter and slayer of men, as were Nimrod and Henoch his son.

"And Jacob was a plain man":

An honest plain hearted man, whose heart and tongue went together.

A quiet man, that gave no disturbance to others.

A godly man, sincere, upright, and perfect, that had the truth of grace and holiness in him.

As well as having the perfect righteousness of his Redeemer on him.

"Dwelling in tents":

Keeping at home and attending the business of the family, as we afterwards find him boiling pottage (Genesis 25:29).

Or rather this denotes his pastoral life, being a shepherd; he dwelt in tents, which could be removed from place to place for the convenience of pasturage.

Jarchi's note is "in the tent of Shem and in the tent of Eber".

Agreeably to the Targum of Jonathan; "a minister in the school of Shem, seeking doctrine from the LORD.

He was a student there, where he resided awhile in order to be instructed in the doctrines of truth and righteousness.

Genesis 25:28 "And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of [his] venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob."

"And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison":

Better than Jacob, not only because he was his firstborn, but because he brought him of the flesh of creatures, which he took in hunting, and being dressed, were savory food to him.

It is in the original, "because venison (or what he hunted), was in his mouth", into which he put it, and was very grateful to his taste.

"But Rebekah loved Jacob":

More than Esau, being more at home with her, and of a milder disposition; and more especially being a good man, a partaker of the grace of God, and to whom she knew by the prophecy, the blessing and promise belonged.

This was a very unhealthy situation.

Parents should never pick a favorite and love that child more than the other.

This causes jealousy, and bad things can spring from that.

You can understand the daddy appreciating the outdoor young man.

Men like their boys to be tough, able to withstand problems, not sissies.

Esau killed fresh game, and brought it to Isaac, also.

Genesis 25:29 "And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he [was] faint:"

"And Jacob sod pottage":

Or boiled broth; this he did at a certain time, for this was not his usual employment.

This pottage was made of lentiles, as appears from (Genesis 25:34).

"And Esau came from the field, and he was faint":

For want of food, and weary with hunting, and perhaps more so, having toiled and got nothing.

Genesis 25:30 "And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red [pottage]; for I [am] faint: therefore was his name called Edom."

"Edom":

In a play upon words to forever recall that Esau was born red and hairy (verse 25), and had sold his birthright for red stew, he was also named Edom, i.e., "Red."

Jacob had a garden.

Esau had been out hunting, he was tired, and very hungry.

He begged food of his brother, Jacob.

This had to be something like beef stew.

At any rate, it had the red color.

Esau was to become the father of the Edomites.

Genesis 25:31 "And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright."

“Birthright”:

A double portion of the inheritance (Deut. 21:17) and the right to be family chief and priest (Exodus 4:22).

Genesis 25:32 "And Esau said, Behold, I [am] at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?"

"And Esau said, behold, I am at the point to die":

Or, "going to die", going the way of all flesh; which he might say on account of the common frailty and mortality of man.

And the brevity of life at most, or by reason of the danger of life he was always exposed to in hunting of wild beasts.

"And what profit shall this birthright do to me":

A dying man, or when dead?

In such a case, all the privileges of it in course would transfer to Jacob.

As for the promises of the Messiah, and of the land of Canaan made to Abraham and his seed, these seemed to be at a great distance, and if he died, might never enjoy them.

Therefore, he judged it most advisable to consult his present interest, and have something in hand, than to trust to future; and by thus saying, he signified an entire willingness to part with his birthright on the terms proposed.

Genesis 25:33 "And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob."

“And he sold his birthright unto Jacob”:

He considered the responsibilities and honors unimportant, or he was totally uninterested in them.

The agreement was set by a formal oath (in verse 33).

(Hebrews 12:16), refers to Esau as a “profane person,” which implied something unhallowed, something sacred made common.

He took what God considered sacred and made it common.

Being he was so totally concerned with his temporary and material needs, he gave them priority over his rights as the firstborn son and his responsibilities as heir to the blessing of the Abrahamic covenant.

Every Christian must beware lest he count as unimportant what God considers sacred.

Genesis 25:34 "Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised [his] birthright."

“Despised his birthright”:

The final evaluation of the verbal tussle and bartering which took place between the twins; all of which was indicative of prior discussions or arguments sufficient for Jacob to conclude how little Esau valued it.

He became, therefore, known as irreligious, i.e., “a godless person” (Heb. 12:16).

This transaction would come back to haunt Esau.

This was a place where things of this earth cost him his eternity.

He was so hungry that he actually gave his inheritance for a bowl of soup.

God would frown on this, because Esau did not respect his inheritance at all.

Genesis Chapter 25 Questions

1. After Sarah, what was Abraham's wife's name?
2. How many children did she have by him?
3. What does her name mean?
4. "Zimran" means what?
5. Who was Jokshan the father of?
6. "Midian" means what?

7. "Ishbak" means what?
8. They were, probably, what tribes?
9. Who were the sons of Dedan?
10. What does "Ephah" mean?
11. What does "Epher" mean?
12. All of these children and grandchildren were of what?
13. Who received all of Abraham's wealth?
14. What did Abraham give his other children?
15. What happened to the sons of the flesh?
16. What two things cannot live together in peace?
17. How long did Abraham live?
18. Who buried him?
19. Where was he buried?
20. Where did Isaac dwell after Abraham died?
21. Why was Isaac doubly blessed?
22. Name three great Bible Patriarchs?
23. How many sons did Ishmael have?
24. What were they called?
25. What was the difference in Ishmael's blessing and Isaac's?
26. What is Egypt symbolic of?
27. How long did Ishmael live?
28. How old was Isaac, when he married Rebekah?
29. How old was he, when Jacob and Esau were born?
30. What did Rebekah do, when she did not understand the struggle going on in her womb?
31. What did God say was wrong?

32. What physical difference was there about the first son?
33. What does "Esau" mean?
34. What does "Jacob" mean?
35. Which son was Isaac's favorite? Why?
36. What bargain did Jacob make with Esau, that Esau lived to regret?
37. What angered God about this transaction?