

## ***In the Beginning***

### **Studies in Genesis**

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

Jersey Shore Baptist Church

Pastor Phil Erickson

November 11, 2015 (revised from original Sunday School Series started in January 2008)

#### **Chapter Twenty-Five – The Death of Abraham; The Births of Jacob and Esau**

#### **Memory Verse – 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.*

#### **I The Death of Abraham (vs. 1 – 10)**

#### **II The Descendants of Ishmael (vs. 12 – 18)**

#### **III The Delivery of the Twins (vs. 19 – 26)**

#### **IV The Despising of the Birthright (vs. 27 – 34)**

### **Introduction**

The focus in the Book of Genesis will now shift from Abraham to Isaac. This chapter will briefly explain what happens to Abraham's other children; but then will concentrate on Isaac and his children, Jacob and Esau. Abraham began his pilgrimage with the Lord at the age of 75 when God called him out of Ur of the Chaldees over in Mesopotamia. Now, after walking by faith and living for the Lord for a full century, Abraham finally "gives up the ghost". Many people start out well in their relationship with God; but few finish like Abraham.

#### **I The Death of Abraham (vs. 1 – 10)**

##### **A His Last Wife – Keturah (vs. 1 – 4)**

Not much is revealed in the Scripture regarding Keturah, whose name means *perfume* or *incense*; but she seems to be a picture or type of the nation of Israel restored to her position after the time of the church. Remember in chapter 23, Sarah, who is a type of Israel, passes on; and in chapter 24 we are introduced to Rebekah, who is a type of the church. Her children perhaps represent the Gentile nations that will have a relationship with Israel during the Millennium.

In actual history, we do not learn much of Keturah's children either; but we do know that Midian's children become the enemies of Israel.

B His Last Will (vs. 5 – 6)

1 Isaac receives the entire estate.

2 The sons of "the concubines" receive gifts and are sent away.

Notice "Midian" in v. 4 – Moses father-in-law, Jethro, was a priest of Midian. The Midianites became the enemy of the congregation of Israel when the Israelites fled Egypt (Numbers 22 – 25, 31), and also during the time of the Judges (Judges 6 – 8).

C His Last Wish

1 He dies at 175.

2 Isaac and Ishmael bury him with Sarah.

## II The Descendants of Ishmael (vs. 12 – 18)

In this paragraph, God will quickly explain what happens to Ishmael. He dies at 137 years of age. Though he did not receive the birthright, God fulfilled his promise to Abraham by blessing Ishmael with power and possessions. His name is linked in verse 18 with both Assyria and Egypt. Of course both of these nations would become the enemies of God's people. From Ishmael descends the Arab nations, which continue in their bitter hatred of Israel and Christianity today.

## III The Delivery of the Twins (vs. 19 – 26)

There are some wonderful spiritual truths to think about from this passage. First, let us consider the fact that Rebekah is barren. She could not produce fruit (a child). Isaac interceded for her. We are reminded of the fact that Jesus said, "Without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5) Remember, Rebekah is a picture of the church; but the church without Christ is merely flesh; and "the flesh profiteth nothing" We are nothing without Christ. We can produce neither the fruit of the Spirit or the fruit of winning a soul apart from a relationship with Christ.

Secondly, we see in this passage that Rebekah had a struggle of two natures inside of her. Every believer has the same struggle going on inside of him. We have the battle between the flesh and the Spirit. The nature that we feed will prove to be the one that gets the victory. (Romans 7:15 - 25; Galatians 5:16 & 17)

A The Births Were Miraculous

B The Boys Were Cantankerous

- 1 They struggled in the womb
- 2 They struggled after birth

God explains to Rebekah in verse 23 that there are two very different children in her womb. Jacob, the younger, will be the child of promise. His older brother Esau will serve him. Esau is a picture or type of the flesh as we will soon see.

#### **IV The Despising of the Birthright (vs. 27 – 34; Hebrews 12:15 - 17)**

##### **A The Development of the Boys (v. 27)**

- 1 Esau was a cunning hunter – a man of the field
- 2 Jacob was a plain man – dwelling in tent

##### **B The Division in the Home (v. 28)**

- 1 Isaac loved Esau – because of his venison
- 2 Rebekah loved Jacob – no reason

##### **C The Decision for the Flesh (vs. 29 – 34)**

Esau gives up his birthright simply because of his hunger; his carnal appetite. Now Jacob, whose name means trickster, is willing to take advantage of Esau's fleshly appetite in order to get what God was going to give him anyway. The appetites of the flesh are very powerful. How many times have God's children sacrificed the will of God because of some carnal appetite?

- 1 He sacrificed the eternal on the altar of the temporal.
- 2 He sacrificed the spiritual on the altar of the carnal.

##### **D The Details of the Birthright**

- 1 It contained the right to Isaac's Possessions. The eldest received at least a double portion of the inheritance.
- 2 It contained the right to Isaac's Patriarchy. The eldest son becomes the head of the family. In this case it contained also the seed of the Savior. Christ would be born from the seed of Jacob; not Esau.