

The Book of Genesis

Chapter Twenty Five

The Birthright

Lesson Verse: **Philippians 3:18,19; Titus 3:7**

I. Lesson Introduction

- A. For most people, their god is only their belly
- B. It is seen when the way to a man's heart is through his STOMACH!
- C. God tells us to not love this world, nor the things of the world, but to value the things of God, which are eternal things (2Cor 4:18)
- D. Isaac inherited all that Abraham had. He was the promised seed. Everything was passed from father to promised son. *Titus 3*: In like manner, God the Father passed on all to the Son. As *joint heirs* with Christ we inherit all that God has to offer. As all of us are unworthy to inherit anything, we one day, we will be able to turn around and give the inheritance back to the only One worthy: The Lord Jesus Christ.
- E. Oh that the Lord would keep up from selling *our birthright* as Christians!

II. Lesson Review

A. Basic Events

1. Genesis 1-11 – The Story of Creation
2. Genesis 12 - 24 - The story of Abraham
3. Genesis 24 - 27 - The story of Isaac
4. Genesis 28 - 36 - The story of Jacob/Israel
5. Genesis 37 - 50 - The story of Joseph

B. Chapter Summaries

1. Creation
2. Adam and Eve
3. The Fall
4. Cain and Abel
5. Family History
6. Noah
7. The Flood
8. New Beginning
9. God's Covenant with Noah
10. Noah's Family
11. Babel
12. Call of Abraham
13. Abraham and Lot
14. Abraham's Rescue of Lot
15. God's Covenant with Abraham
16. Abraham's Sins
17. Abraham's Laughter
18. Abraham Intercedes for Lot in Sodom and Gomorrah
19. The Sins and Judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah
20. Abraham the Coward
21. The Birth of Isaac
22. God Tests Abraham's Love
23. Death of Sarah
24. Finding a Wife for Isaac

C. Chapter 25 Review – The Death of Sarah

III. Lesson

A. Abraham's New Wife (25:1)

1. _____ – another concubine (1Chron 1:32)
2. After the death of his real wife – Keturah takes her place

3. Her name means, “_____” – her character smells nice to the heart, instead of being an “odious” woman (Pr 30:21-23; 19:13)

B. Abraham’s Inheritance – passing on a heritage from God (25:2-6)

1. Had six more children
 - a. Zimram
 - b. Jokshan
 - 1) Sheba
 - 2) Dedan
 - a) Asshurim
 - b) Letushim
 - c) Leummim
 - c. Medan
 - d. Midian
 - 1) These are the Midianites.
 - 2) The most prominent of Abraham’s second family. He and his people are mentioned 67 times by name.
 - 3) Moses flees from Egypt and marries the daughter of _____, the Midianite (Ex 2:15,16; 3:1)
 - 4) Gideon defeated these people when they oppressed Israel.
 - 5) Midian has 5 sons listed
 - a) Ephah
 - b) Epher
 - c) Hanoch
 - d) Abidah
 - e) Eldaah
 - e. Ishbak
 - f. Shuah
2. And yet all of Abraham’s inheritance passed to _____ (25:5,6)
 - a. Even though Isaac was not the actual, literal firstborn
 - b. But because he was God’s promise – by God’s command
 - c. This was the importance of the *birthright* – all the blessings of the family passing on down through the generations – not being lost to those who would not value it (as Ishmael, and Esau would have)

C. Abraham’s Death (25:7-10)

1. _____ years old at death
2. He lived until Jacob was _____ years old
3. Shem had lived through the first 75 years of Abraham’s life!
4. He “_____” – first mention
5. Buried by Isaac and Ishmael – family reunion
6. Gathered to his people
 - a. Went to a place where *his people* were
 - b. All in basically the same place – two compartments at the time
 - c. Paradise is referred to as a place where you can rest in Abraham’s bosom (Lk 16:22,23)

D. God begins to bless Isaac – but more about that later (25:11)

E. The Family of Ishmael – produced Twelve _____ (25:12-16)

1. Nebajoth
2. Kedar
3. Abdeel
4. Mibsam
5. Mishma
6. Dumah

7. Massa
8. Hadar
9. Tema
10. Jetur
11. Naphish
12. Kedemah

F. **The Death of Ishmael** (25:17,18)

1. 137 years old
2. Also “_____”
3. His empire reached from Havilah to Shur, in Egypt – the entire Arabian Peninsula from Egypt to the Euphrates River

G. **The Family of Isaac** (25:19-28)

1. His family really began with Abraham – not with Terah, or even Noah
2. Isaac was 40 when he married Rebekah
3. Rebekah was barren for _____ years after marriage
4. Isaac _____ prays for Rebekah to have a child - though God has purposed and promised to do many things for his people, yet he seeks to be sought by them to do them for them!
5. Rebekah is going to have TWINS
6. Struggling with God’s Blessings
 - a. The two children in her strove with each other, as if it was for mastery, or who should get out first before the proper time
 - b. If children are such a blessing, why is she having so much pain?
7. Rebekah’s Search for Answers
 - a. Goes in prayer to God (just as Job did). She did not have a doctor to get advice from, so she inquired of the Lord. What a unique and novel idea: inquire of the Lord!
 - b. Do WE inquire of the Lord?
 - 1) How often do we inquire of the Lord as to *why am I thus?*
 - a) It does not bother us to tell anyone that will listen how bad a hand life has dealt us.
 - b) It does not bother us to carry a grudge around and dump it on anyone that gets in our way.
 - c) However, we seldom inquire of the Lord as to why I am thus.
 - 2) If we would inquire, we would get the answer and the peace we seek. The main reason we do not inquire is because we secretly know there are things in life that we can not change. So, we do not want to hear that those things we can not change, we must accept.
 - 3) That is what God told Paul. The answer satisfied Paul, why not us also, **2 Cor 12:7-10**.
 - c. God explains that:
 - 1) _____ nations are in her womb
 - 2) They are both different even though twins
 - 3) The _____ shall serve the _____ – the opposite of the norm
 - 4) The Edomites, the posterity of Esau, were a very strong people, and had a succession of dukes and kings, before the Israelites, the posterity of Jacob, made any figure in the world, and while they were slaves in Egypt, see Gen 36:1-43; though in later times the Israelites became the stronger
8. The first born son
 - a. Red and hairy all over
 - b. Esau means _____, or rough, like felt. Edom means _____
 - c. A Cunning Hunter – loved the outdoors – a wild man
 - d. Who is the man Esau in type?
 - 1) Spiritually Esau is a type of man that loves the world and lives only for today. He had no vision of spiritual things. Furthermore, he does not desire a spiritual vision. (*Gen 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.* I did it “My Way.”

- 2) The birthright meant nothing to him for he viewed life only through the physical eye. It is here that Esau is a type of the natural lost man. The natural lost man has a big heart full of good intentions.
- e. Rights of birth.
- 1) Because each and every one of us were at one time born, we have a birth right and mark. None of us asked to brought into this world. We are here by the choice of our parents, or by their mistakes. Either way we had no control over their actions. It is not our fault, but it is our problem. God knew this and took steps to correct it in eternity past.
 - 2) What is OUR birth right?
 - a) We have a right to hear the gospel. What we do with it will determine what type of person we are. Will we despise it or will we hold the birth right to be the most cherished possession?
 - b) We have a right to defeat the devil in our lives
 - c) We have a right to access God through a valid sacrifice (Jesus Christ)
 - 3) We also have a birth mark.
 - a) It is the mark of sin.
 - b) It marked us for death the moment we sinned. If it were not for God taking steps to remedy our predicament, we would be lost forever.
9. The second born son, Jacob
- a. Grabbed Esau's heel
 - b. Named Jacob – _____, cheater, defrauder, deceiver, heel catcher, trickster. Hence to day we have the saying, "She is hot on his heels" This is just what Jacob did from his birth. Physically he caught Esau's heel at birth, *Gen. 25:26*, and spiritually he never let go of it until he obtained what he wanted.
 - c. A plain man – a quiet man
 - d. He liked hanging around the tents, home-life
10. Isaac is now _____ years old
11. Playing _____
- a. Isaac loved Esau
 - b. Rebekah loved Jacob
 - c. From the time Esau and Jacob were born until they died, they were at odds with each other. Part of this was their fault and part was the fault of mom and dad. Very early in life, mother picked her child to spoil. Daddy picked his. Little by little the natural bond between parents did not develop because children were in the way. If someone had asked them how long they had been a divided family, none could tell the exact day. It happened slowly over a period of time, unnoticed or cared, till their answer would be: it has always been such.
 - d. Happens today. This happens very often in families. It happens very early in the life of the child: at conception. If the parents are not acutely aware, before they realize what has happened this child takes up time that mom and dad ought to devoted to each other.
 - e. Did it happen overnight?
 - 1) No. Esau did not become the favorite of Isaac overnight. Their relationship developed a little at a time over a period of about 20 years. Isaac had a taste for venison. Esau had a taste for the wild life. Isaac loved Esau because of the meat, v. 28. The same is true for Rebekah and Jacob for the relationship grew over a period of time.
 - 2) When God told Rebekah that the elder would serve the younger, v. 23, scripture does not record that Rebekah passed this information on to Isaac. It is possible that Rebekah held this prophecy in her heart and immediately begin to devise ways to bring it to pass. This supposition gains more re-enforcement as Rebekah saw Isaac leaning more and more to Esau. We have to wonder why Rebekah does not inquire of the Lord and ask how the younger shall over dominion over the elder. It did not bother her to inquire while she was expecting.

H. Esau _____ His Birthright (25:29-34; Heb 12:16)

1. The natural line of the Messiah would have been Adam, Seth, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, *and Esau*. This was his birthright as the first born. However, Esau missed out on being in the direct lineage of Jesus. Instead he fathered a race of people that have been extinct since about 70 A. D., *Unger's Bible Dictionary*.
2. Jacob in the Kitchen - Cooking Pottage
 - a. Bean soup, lentils, and peas
 - b. With garlic and oil
 - c. Chocolate colour, and very delicious evidently
3. Esau starving
 - a. Beggings Jacob for something to eat – there was a famine in the land (26:1)
 - b. Not interested in cooking himself at that moment – just completely worn-out hunting
4. Jacob takes advantage of the moment
 - a. Bargains for the birthright!
 - 1) The Birthright had many privileges connected to it:
 - a) an honour and authority in the family next to parents
 - b) a double portion of inheritance
 - c) the parental blessing, and especially in this the promises of the Messiah, and of inheritance of the land of Canaan, and which was typical of the heavenly inheritance
 - d) all which Rebekah knew by the divine oracle were designed for Jacob
 - 2) This word denotes the special privileges and advantages belonging to the first-born son among the Jews.
 - a) He became the priest of the family. Thus Reuben was the first-born of the patriarchs, and so the priesthood of the tribes belonged to him.
 - b) That honour was, however, transferred by God from Reuben to Levi (Nu 3:12,13 8:18)
 - 3) The first-born son had allotted to him also a double portion of the paternal inheritance (De 21:15-17)
 - a) Reuben was, because of his undutiful conduct, deprived of his birth-right (Ge 49:4 1Ch 5:1)
 - b) Esau transferred his birth-right to Jacob (Ge 25:33)
 - 4) The first-born inherited the judicial authority of his father, whatever it might be (2Ch 21:3) By divine appointment, however, David excluded Adonijah in favour of Solomon.
 - 5) The Jews attached a sacred importance to the rank of "first-born" and "first-begotten" as applied to the Messiah (Ro 8:29 Col 1:18 Heb 1:4-6) As first-born he has an inheritance superior to his brethren, and is the alone true priest.
 - b. Esau doesn't care about birthrights, and birth-orders, and future blessings – he is only thinking about his stomach (Heb 12:16)! Indifference!
 - c. Esau's name gets changed from just Esau – hairy, to EDOM, the Red-loving one. He loved anything that was RED, like himself!
 - d. Esau goes back to following his former course of life, without any remorse of conscience, reflection of mind, or repentance for what he had done;
 - e. Though he afterwards carefully sought again the blessing with tears, yet not until his father was upon his deathbed, (Heb 12:17; Ge 27:34)
5. Our Birthright
 - a. To be kings and priests of God (Rev 1:6)
 - b. To have treasures in heaven
 - c. To be even IN the family of God – by BIRTH, not just by association
 - d. To be victorious over our enemies – the devil and sin – more than conquerors (Rom 8:37)
6. How Christians sell out their birthright
 - a. Thinking the world is more important, and so exchanging God's blessings, for temporary ones
 - b. Not valuing God's presence, and His blessings, and His promises – only out for the here and now

- c. So, they neglect spiritual things in search for the things of this world (1John 2:15-17) and end up losing everything!

I. THE REAPING OF THE WAGES OF SIN, *Gal. 6:7-8*.

1. We must all be careful of what kind of seeds we sow. If we plant seeds of ill-will, deception, hatred, guess what kind of harvest we have? We reap exactly what we sow.
2. Jacob Harvest.
 - a. He is tricked, *Gen. 29:16-28*. His father-in-law, Laban, tricked him also.
 - b. His daughter was raped, *Gen. 34:1-2*. His only daughter was raped by one of the Hivites.
 - c. His sons were wicked and wild, *Gen. 34:3-29*. They killed the men of the city for raping their sister. While protecting her honour was a just thing to do, they lied about their intentions.
 - d. He lost fellowship with his family for 20 years, *Gen. 27:41*.
 - e. He never saw his mother's face again after he fled from his brother.
 - f. He lived in fear, *Gen. 27:42-46*.
 - g. He lived outside the will of God.
3. Esau's Harvest.
 - a. He lost many privileges in life, because he went on "his way" after filling his belly.
 - b. His family and descendants became the enemies of God's people.
 - c. His descendants are now extinct.
4. Rebekah's Harvest.
 - a. Her precious, God promised family became divided.
 - b. She lost her favourite son.
 - c. She never had the position of oneness with Isaac.
 - d. She died of a broken heart.
 - 1) She was weary of life, *Gen. 29:46*. The life she lived was a miserable existence. She longed for death, instead of desiring her husband as God originally commanded.
 - 2) What happened to this woman that so willingly followed the servant from her home and set out to make a new home?
 - a) She seems to have ceased to follow her husband and the Lord, and followed her ideals for her husband and her family.
 - b) Once we forsake following our spouse and the Lord, we end up only following the devil and our own ideas.

J. Parental Points to Ponder:

1. We should not pit one child against the other, *1 Tim. 5:21*.
 - a. We should not tell one child, "Why can't you be more like your sister?" We may mean well when we say this, but unless we communicate what we are thinking, the child only hears, "You do not like me as I am. If I was my sister or someone else you would like me."
 - b. The child could spend the rest of their life trying to be someone they are not.
2. We should not show favouritism, *James 3:17*. As we shall study in future chapters, Jacob did to Joseph and Benjamin what Rebekah did to him.
3. Do not argue in the presence of the children.
 - a. If children see and hear their parents arguing, the children soon realize mom and dad are not one. The children should not know of an argument, especially when the children are the reason.
 - b. An unhappy home life will cause children to stay on the street. Children should want to come home. If there is constant bickering, who would want to remain in such an environment?
4. Children should not come between the relationship of husband and wife.
 - a. This is one thing that is very hard to prevent. Children begin coming between parents at conception and it is a life long battle from there keeping them out of the middle of the marriage.
 - b. How many times have we heard of a man and woman divorcing after 20 years of marriage? One reason for this might just be because the husband and wife made the children the centre of the marriage. When the children are gone, there is nothing on which the parents can cling. They are not accustomed to clinging to each other.
 - c. The same can be true for a job. How many times is it when someone retires after working faithfully for 40 years at one job and then they die after about a year? Why is this? They lived for their jobs. Now that they have no job, they have nothing to live for.

5. Parents must realize each child is different. What motivates one will not move the other.
6. Parents must have home Bible study if they want their children to have God's morals.
 - a. Television should not establish the morals in a home. Television is an entertainment medium.
 - b. Televisions, malls, and Nitendos were not supposed to become baby sitters.
7. Set examples for our children.
 - a. Parents must be adults and act as such. Too many times parents try to be their children's best friends. There should be an honest open relationship.
 - b. However, children must respect and know that there is a difference between a friend and their parents.
8. Let the child be a child.
 - a. That means allow the child to make some mistakes so they can learn. Do not expect immediate perfection. Accent the positive when possible. For example, begin by telling the child to make their bed. Even though it looked better when they got out of it, use their effort as a teaching tool. Where should the emphasis be? On making the bed or making the bed to our standard of perfection? The point to emphasize is each day we make the bed. Make the bed is the goal. Making the bed to our specifications will be learned after they realize that they are not going anywhere or doing anything until the bed is made properly. They will not learn this expectation in one day. It might take a month.
 - b. To obtain the desired results takes discipline. Honour comes through discipline, *Exo 20:12*. Discipline should never be given without love. Too much love without correction is child abuse. Too much correction without love is abuse also. Parents should learn the difference between discipline and punishment. Punishment should be meted out when discipline fails. Teaching our children self-discipline will also teach them that where there is discipline, there is little to even no need for punishment. If parents make discipline a part of their lives, and then teach it to their children, the children honour their parents.
9. Love each child the same.
10. Tell them what God says about sex, love, marriage, and life. Do not let the world tell your children their views about these subjects.

IV. Conclusion and Study Questions