

Pentwater Bible Church

The Birth of Jacob & Esau

Genesis Message Fifty-Five

Genesis 25: 19-34



The Mess of Pottage James Tissot (1836-1902)

Daniel E. Woodhead – Pastor Teacher

Pentwater Bible Church



Announcements

See us on Facebook

Sunday Radio Teaching on WEEH 100.5 FM at 06:00 AM Z95 FM at 9:30 AM; WMOM 102.7 FM at 11:00 AM & 9:00 PM & Internet <http://www.wmom.fm/> 11:00AM

Men's Bible Study and discussion Wednesdays from 7:00 PM to 8:30 Topic: "Israel; The Arabs & Islam." Next Session will focus on founding of Islam.

February 29th Women's ministry teaching through "Living by the Book," 1st Session at Joan's House Reading The Bible for All it is Worth

Potluck Today!

Please continue to pray for John Ferguson, as he is healing from hernia surgery.

Skype our Service at PentwaterBibleChurch

Share Your Church With Others

Sunday Service February 19, 2012

11:00 AM

Introduction Music: Are Not These Which Speak Galileans?

Zola Levitt

Opening Prayer:

Hymn #1: Day is Dying in the West

Mary Lathbury

Communion: Remembering our Lord

Message: The Birth of Jacob & Esau
Genesis Chapter 25: 19-34

Hymn # 2: In Heaven They're Singing

Tillit S. Teddlie

&

Offering:

Benediction:

Closing Music: I Love the Lord
Tillit S. Teddlie

DAY IS DYING IN THE WEST

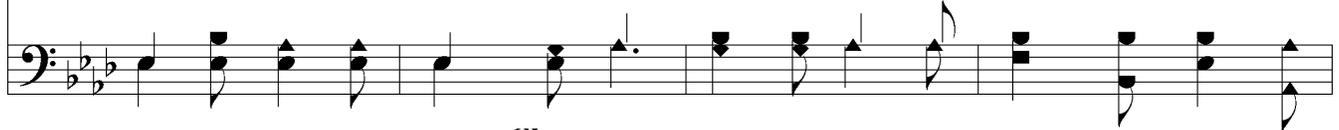
SING Verses 1, 2 & 4



1. Day is dy - ing in the west; Heav'n is touch - ing earth with rest;
2. Lord of life, be - neath the dome Of the u - ni - verse, Thy home,
3. While the deep - 'ning shad - ows fall, Heart of love, en - fold - ing all,
4. When for - ev - er from our sight Pass the stars, the day, the night,



Wait and wor - ship while the night Sets the eve - ning lamps a - light Thru
Gath - er us who seek Thy face To the fold of Thy em - brace, For
Thru the glo - ry and the grace Of the stars that veil Thy face, Our
Lord of an - gels, on our eyes Let e - ter - nal morn - ing rise, And



Chorus



all the sky.
Thou art nigh. Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Lord God of Hosts!
hearts as - cend.
shad - ows end.



Heav'n and earth are full of Thee; Heav'n and earth are prais-ing Thee, O Lord Most High!



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Genesis Message Fifty-Five The Birth of Jacob & Esau

February 19, 2011
Daniel E. Woodhead

Review:

ABRAHAM MARRIES KETURAH

Genesis 25: 1-4

This is the last mention of the chronological activities of Abraham during his life. He lived for 175 years in total and was 137 years old when Sarah died. So from the time Sarah died Abraham would live another thirty-eight years. During that time he married Keturah (Perfume) and had six sons with her. Two of them the text follows into the third and fourth generation-Midian and Jokshan. Some of the medieval Jewish commentators (Rashi) believe that Keturah and Hagar (the sojourner) are the same person. This can only be a fanciful observation since the text does not state this anywhere and the meaning of the two Hebrew names are different. Some have inferred this because Keturah is also called a concubine. The text here calls her his wife Hebrew *isha* אִשָּׁה Further since taking Hagar, as a concubine was not his idea it was Sarah's it is safe to conclude that Keturah was his wife. Now all the sons of Keturah became future Arabian tribes and settled in Northwest Arabia and the Sinai.

The names may still be found among the Arabian tribes, but the most reliable evidence is from the Scripture. *Zimran* is the city west of Mecca, on the Red Sea; of *Jokshan* on the Red Sea or with the Himyaritish tribe of *Jakish* in Southern Arabia; of *Ishbak* with the name *Shobek*, a place in the Edomites country. There is evidence that *Medan* and *Midian* are on the eastern coast of the Gulf of Aqaba, The relationship of these two tribes will explain the fact, that the *Midianim*, Genesis 37:28, are called *Medanim* in Genesis 37: 36. The Midianites were hostile to Israel during the wilderness wanderings; its fertility cult proved to be too much for them to resist their corrupting influence. They engaged in a bloody clash with Israel, and in the time of the Judges, they exerted dominance over the Israelites, who fought a war of liberation under Gideon to rid themselves of them. This record of kinship with Midian was amicable early on though. The story of Moses' flight from Pharaoh to Midian, where he found refuge and intermarried with the priestly family, corroborates the earlier record of amicable relationships between Israel and Midian. Of the sons of Jokshan, *Sheba* was probably connected with the Sabaeans, who are associated in Job 6:19 with *Tema*, are mentioned in Job 1:15 as having stolen Job's oxen and asses, and were neighbors of the Nabataeans in the vicinity of Syria. *Dedan* was probably the trading people mentioned in Jeremiah 25:23 along with *Tema* and *Bus* (Isaiah 21:13; Jeremiah 49:8), in the neighborhood of Edom (Ezekiel 24:15), with whom the tribe of *Banu Dudan*, has been compared. Both settled in Northern Arabia and are mentioned in Isaiah 21: 13. On their relation to the

Cushites of the same name, (Genesis 10:7 and 28), Of the sons of Dedan, the *Asshurim* have been associated with the warlike tribe of the *Asir* to the south of Hejas, the *Letushim* with the *Banu Leits* in Hejas, and the *Leummim* with the tribe of the *Banu Lâm*, which extended even to Babylon and Mesopotamia. Of the descendants of Midian, *Ephah* is mentioned in Isaiah 60:6, in connection with Midian, as a people trading in gold and incense. *Epher* has been compared with the *Banu Gifar* in Hejas; *Hanoch*, with the place called *Hanakye*, three days' journey to the north of Medinah; *Abidah* and *El-daah*, with the tribes of *Abide* and *Vadaa* in the neighborhood of Asir. All this shows that Abraham retained his vitality even into old age and produced many nations. This was in fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham that he would become great (Genesis 12:2) since many nations view him as their ancestor (Genesis 17: 4).

THE BEQUEATHMENT OF THE COVENANT

Genesis 25: 5-6

Previously God had declared that Isaac alone was to be the true heir of The Covenant; here Isaac becomes the major beneficiary of his father's estate as well. Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac. All is a direct reference to the Covenant that God made with him to be passed down to Isaac who was the child of promise. In later times under the Mosaic Covenant (Deuteronomy 21: 15-17) inheritance would be established under the Law and have specific divisions among sons. Isaac was to become a patriarch of the Nation Israel. In order to effect minimal animosity between Isaac and Keturah's sons Abraham he gave them some of the estate and then sent them away to the east region (The Sinai and Arabia) while he was still living. Abraham must have loved all these boys; he gave them gifts. He also sent them away with gifts to make sure that Isaac would get a good start. He knew the prophecies regarding Ishmael who would bring discord to Isaac and the Hebrews so distancing the other Arabs from Isaac had to be accomplished. Although Abraham tried to prevent friction by sending them away it did not prevent trouble in the centuries that followed. It only gave Isaac some peacetime before the troubles began. The division of the inheritance while he yet lived was also geared toward preventing disputes for a term after he died. As we have seen the sons of Keturah then went into the areas of modern day Trans-Jordan and Saudi-Arabian.

THE DEATH OF ABRAHAM

Genesis 25: 7-11

Abraham lived for one hundred and seventy-five years. This was a fulfillment of God's promise to him that he would be buried at *a good old age* (Genesis 15: 15). Isaac was seventy-five years old when Abraham died and passed the Covenant to his heir. Jacob and Esau Isaac's children were fifteen years old at the time of his death so he got to enjoy his grandchildren for that amount of time. Even though the book of Genesis is written chronologically the story of Jacob and Esau does not get told until later in the narrative. The text says that Abraham *was gathered to his people*, which is a clear reference to the after life (OT Sheol). This phrase, peculiar to the Old Testament, is also used of Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Aaron, and Moses. We also see it in Judges 2: 10 as a reunion. Death for us must be looked upon as a transition to Heaven where one is united

with one's ancestors. This interpretation contradicts the unbelievers or atheists beliefs that there is no after live. We will see others that have gone on before us when we get to Heaven and rejoice at the reunion.

Abraham then is buried in the tomb at Machpelah in the cave he purchased where Sarah was buried. The two half-brothers Isaac and Ishmael came together to honor their father at the time of death by burying him. Ishmael although excluded from the blessings of the covenant, was acknowledged by God as the son of Abraham with a distinct blessing (Genesis 17:20), and was thus elevated above the sons of Keturah. The final stage of the transference of the Abrahamic Covenant then took place by God Himself blessing Isaac. After that Isaac continued to live in Beer-lahai-roi.

THE GENERATIONS OF ISHMAEL

Genesis 25: 12-18

Some of these sons are also mentioned in extra biblical sources; others are known only from other biblical texts, while two—Hadad and Kedmah—we can't yet identify.

Some of the names in this chapter are separated out according to Keturah or Ishmael's Toldot, are in other biblical text combined. So for example, Isaiah 60:6–7 has Midian, Ephah, and Sheba—all Keturah tribes—side by side with Kedar and Nebaioth. Jeremiah 25:23 pairs Dedan with Tema, and Ezekiel 27:21 has Kedar with Sheba. The same commingling occurs in the some of the extra biblical sources. For example the “Annals of Tiglath-Pileser III,” which cite Massa, Tema, and the Idiba'ileans who are all Ishmaelites in Genesis, together with Sheba and Ephah, who are descendants of Keturah. This illustrates the comingling of the tribes through intermarriage. The Hebrew term *he abode over against all his brethren* means to *fall upon*. First, it means to live side by side but also to live in a state of hostility. It is used in Deuteronomy 21: 16 and in Job 1: 11, 6: 28, and 21: 31. It is a fulfilment of Genesis 16: 12.

Today's Message:

THE TOLDOT OF ISAAC

Genesis 25: 19-26

¹⁹And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham begat Isaac. ²⁰And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian, to be his wife. ²¹And Isaac entreated Jehovah for his wife, because she was barren. And Jehovah was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. ²²And the children struggled together within her. And she said, If it be so, wherefore do I live? And she went to inquire of Jehovah. ²³And Jehovah said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, And two peoples shall be separated from thy bowels. And the one people shall be stronger than the other people. And the elder shall serve the younger. ²⁴And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. ²⁵And the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment. And they called his name Esau. ²⁶And after that

came forth his brother, and his hand had hold on Esau's heel. And his name was called Jacob. And Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them (ASV 1901).

Isaac eventually married at the age of forty and his wife Rebecca was barren for about twenty years. The prolonged state of barrenness is meaningful because it ended with an act of divine Providence, clearly a sign that the offspring are predestined to be used for God's purposes. Rebecca was apparently not beyond the normal age for childbearing, as her age is not mentioned. Isaac asked Jehovah to intervene and Rebecca finally became pregnant with twin boys. During a difficult pregnancy the two boys were unusually active within her womb. The activity was not natural and it worried Rebecca. She suspected an evil omen. In fact she feared for her life. The expressive language of Hebrew captures this activity with an unusual verb *vy-yitrotsetsu* וַיִּתְרוֹצְצוּ and translated it means "*they crushed and thrust*" one another. This foretold their future hostile relationship. Rebecca inquired of the Lord regarding this and He responded; "*two nations that is, twin progenitors of two nations, were struggling in her womb.*" The Hebrew word for nation is *גוים* *goieem*, which is indicating *both* Jewish and Gentile nations. Common modern Jewish usage of the word *Goy* is to reference the Gentiles. That is not the biblical Hebrew meaning. They became two entirely different people groups. One people would be stronger and the other weaker. He concluded by stating "*the elder shall serve the younger*" (Genesis 25: 23). The first out of the womb was Esau and after him was born Jacob. Esau was of a ruddy, hairy, reddish color. This Hebrew word *'admoni* is used only twice again the Bible of David (I Samuel 16: 12, 17: 42). His personal name was based upon his appearance and so was the nation Edom that he eventually founded. The Jewish Publication Society commentary on Genesis provides insightful historical information about the terrain of the land Edom relative to Esau's name.

This region probably derived its name from the shaggy nature of the terrain. The Jebel section of Edom has a relatively high annual precipitation and also benefits from snowfall on the hilltops. As a result, it was always distinguished for its woods, forests, and brush. It was not until World War I that the region became finally denuded of vegetation. The Turks cut down the forests in order to service the Hejaz Railroad.¹

The text states that "*And after that came forth his brother, and his hand had hold on Esau's heel.*" This is reflected in Hosea 12: 4 "*In the womb he tried to supplant his brother.*" Isaac was sixty years old when the twins were born. The Israelis (Jacob's descendants) and the Edomites (Esau's descendants) have fought continuously. Esau's descendants became additional peoples of the Arab nations. Esau attempting to retaliate against his father Isaac for not becoming the covenant heir married a Canaanite woman against his father's wishes. She was Ishmael's daughter Mahalath that made the Arab alliance against Israel stronger. Jacob received the Abrahamic Covenant from the Lord

¹ Sarna, N. M. (1989). *Genesis*. The JPS Torah commentary (180). Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society.

through his father Isaac (Genesis 28: 13-15). This then is another series of nations that have continuously fought against the Jews.

THE SELLING OF THE BIRTHRIGHT

Genesis 25: 27-34

²⁷And the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field. And Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents. ²⁸Now Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison. And Rebekah loved Jacob. ²⁹And Jacob boiled pottage. And Esau came in from the field, and he was faint. ³⁰And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage. For I am faint. Therefore was his name called Edom. ³¹And Jacob said, Sell me first thy birthright. ³²And Esau said, Behold, I am about to die. And what profit shall the birthright do to me? ³³And Jacob said, Swear to me first. And he swore unto him. And he sold his birthright unto Jacob. ³⁴And Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils. And he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. So Esau despised his birthright (ASV 1901).

As the boys grew they each found their way in life with different occupations reflecting their nature. Hunting as a way of life was held in low esteem in ancient Israel. Esau was a skillful hunter just as Nimrod was a skillful (cunning) hunter (Genesis 10: 8-12). The description of Esau as a hunter and as “one who lives by the sword” (Genesis 27:40) further reveals his destructive manner. This is not a positive attribute in the book of Genesis. Esau was well rehearsed in trapping and trickery, which he was required to exercise in successful hunting. Jacob’s choosing of the profession of shepherding led to him being in a settled state instead of a wanderer. He is characterized as a person laboring within the family unit. He chose to follow the trade of his father and grandfather, shepherding. Many sermons are preached upon an inappropriate rendering of these verses making Jacob out to be the one exercising subterfuge. From God’s point of view it is the other way around. The text clearly says that it was Esau who despised his birthright as the first-born. The Hebrew word for Jacob’s manner translated as a quiet man is *tam*. It should be translated as perfect, whole, complete and without blemish. We tend to have a preconceived notion about Jacob and bring that to the text instead of letting the text speak to us regarding the true nature of these two brothers. Malachi 1: 2-3 says; “*Yet I loved Jacob, but Esau I hated.*” The book of Hebrews declares Esau to be a *profane person* (Hebrews 12; 16-17). It is important that we understand this truth as we move forward in the book of Genesis. It is also crucial that we realize that God is in control of all events and gets His desired outcome to all of the world’s events.

Each parent took one of the children to be a favorite. Rebecca was close to Jacob and Isaac was close to Esau. This alone will bring about animosity between siblings.

The text then moves to the description of the events bringing about the reversal of birthright benefits between the two brothers. Esau came in from the field and said he was faint or hungry. Now it must be pointed out that Isaac had hundreds of men in his employ and there were many meals available for him to partake. Esau asked to be fed with same red pottage, which Jacob had. Jacob then saw an opportunity to exploit his brother’s

attitude in order to gain the birthright. The birthright legal status later was codified in the Mosaic Law resulting in a double portion of the father's inheritance (Deuteronomy 21:17). With the patriarchs it embraced the rule over the brethren and the entire family (Genesis 27:29), and the title to the blessing of the promise (Genesis 27:4, 27–29), which included the future possession of Canaan and of covenant fellowship with Jehovah (Genesis 28:4). Jacob knew this, and it led him to anticipate the purposes of God. Esau also knew it, but didn't care. He valued the Covenant at the level of a bowl of stew. He knew he was giving away, along with the birthright, blessings which, because they were not of a material but of a spiritual nature, had no particular value to him, in his own words: "*Behold I am going to die (to meet death), and what is the birthright to me?*" In order to seal the deal Jacob says, "*Swear to me first.*" Esau's agrees to the transaction. But Jacob does not trust his brother. He wants an oath. In the ancient world an oath was an unqualifiedly sacred act. It means that the deal was consummated and irreversible. It made the transaction irrevocable, even if one party was later disappointed. The only thing of value to Esau was the sensual enjoyment of the present; the spiritual blessings of the future his carnal mind was unable to calculate. In this he showed himself to be a profane man, who cared for nothing but the momentary gratification of sensual desires, who "*did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way, and so despised his birthright*" (v. 34).

The Scriptures judge and condemn the conduct of Esau. Ishmael was also excluded from the promised blessing because he was begotten "*according to the flesh,*" so Esau lost it because his disposition was "*according to the flesh.*" The frivolous nature with which he sold his birthright to his brother for a dish of stew, rendered him unfit to be the heir and possessor of the Covenant. God knew all this in advance. But this did not justify Jacob's conduct in the matter. Though not condemned here, yet in the further course of the history it is shown to have been wrong, by the simple fact that he did not venture to make this transaction the basis of a claim.

Jacob, the second-born, then reversed the birthright. He recognized the spiritual value in the birthright and let his profane brother give it up. Being his mother's favorite she must have shared the oracle (Genesis 25: 23). Jacob had been waiting for this opportunity. Certainly the profane nature of Esau was a warning for Israel. It is wrong to sacrifice spiritual provisions to satisfy one's physical appetites. Esau saw only the temporal; and he did whatever was necessary to get what he wanted. He did just as Eve did with the food on the tree (Genesis 3: 6).

Esau is portrayed as emotional: he was fainting and gasping (famished, Genesis 25:29), gulping (suggested by the Hebrew, v. 34), and then despising (v. 34). In this instance he was not a skillful hunter; he was like an animal trapped with bait. To live on this base level, to satisfy one's appetites, inevitably leads to a despising of spiritual things. He is the one who gave up his birthright; it was not taken from him.

NEXT WEEK: ISAAC SINS

Please Call or e-mail with any questions or comments.

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IN HEAVEN THEY'RE SINGING

1. In heav - en they're sing - ing a won - der - ful song, A theme that shall
2. We read of its beau - ty, but some how we know, Its glo - ry has
3. What mu - sic we'll hear when the ran - somed of earth, Shall en - ter that

nev - er grow old; And glo - ri - fied mil - lions are sing - ing it now,
nev - er been told, But think of the rap - tur - ous sing - ing up there
heav - en - ly fold, When all re - deemed sin - gers shall join in that song

Chorus

In that beau - ti - ful ci - ty of gold. They're sing - ing the songs of sal -

va - tion, A sto - ry that nev - er grows old; And glo - ri - fied

mil - lions are sing - ing it now, In that beau - ti - ful ci - ty of gold.