

Genesis 25: The Promise Passes Down

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This chapter is an example of a highly **disconnected** chronology. Some of the events are impossible to pinpoint on a timeline (e.g., the marriage of Abraham to Keturah; the birth of Keturah's children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren; sending away the children of the concubines; Isaac settling in Beer-lahai-roi; the birth of Ishmael's sons; Ishmael's descendants setting near Assyria; Jacob and Esau "growing up;" Jacob taking Esau's birthright).

This chapter goes back at least as far back as the birth of Isaac and at least as far forward as the death of Ishmael (48 years after the death of Abraham)—a span of about **123** years.

Your teacher's presumption is that Abraham married Keturah **after** Sarah died. None of the sons mentioned here could have **predated** Isaac or Ishmael.

There are **three** generations of Keturah's children listed. Abraham didn't necessarily live to see them all.

What is the significance of Abraham giving gifts to Keturah's children? (Gen 25:6)

The plural form "concubines" may simply refer to Keturah and **Hagar**.

At Abraham's death, Ishmael was **88**, Isaac was **75**, and the twins were **15**.

Abraham's long life was a fulfillment of the promise he received from God after **cutting the covenant**. (Gen 15:15)

Abraham lived long enough to see the **promise** unfolding.

How does the passage of time serve to strengthen our faith? (Think about how far Abraham has progressed in the last 100 years of his life.)

At the moment of his death, Abraham entered the true Promised Land and beheld there the true **Promised Seed**. (Gal 3:16)

The scripture notes for us that Abraham's burial was attended to by **Isaac** and **Ishmael**. This suggests at least a partial **reconciliation**. (Gen 25:9)

After the death of Abraham, the **blessing** passes to Isaac. (Gen 25:11)

"Generations" (*toledoth*) occurs twice in this chapter—vv. 12 and 19. This normally signals the beginning of a new section in the narrative.

The twelve sons of Ishmael point to the fulfillment of God's promises to **Abraham** and to **Hagar**. (Gen 17:20; 21:13, 18)

At Ishmael's death, Isaac was **124** and the twins were **64**.

In this chapter, we learn that Isaac was **40** when he married Rebekah. (Gen 25:20)

Rebekah was described in the previous chapter as a young woman (*na'arah*)—old enough to marry, but perhaps just a **teenager**. We know that **20** years pass before she becomes pregnant.

When the promise of the next generation is delayed, Isaac **prays** for Rebekah (*athar*: plead, entreat, supplicate). (Gen 25:21)

Some time after Rebekah becomes pregnant, she is concerned that something serious is **wrong**. (Gen 25:22)

Rebekah “inquires” (*darash*—seek, consult) of the LORD. What is the prophecy bound up in God’s answer? (Gen 25:23)

The twins are described as two **nations** and two **peoples**. (Gen 25:23)

What can this passage tell us about the way God sees each individual child?

What does this passage teach us about the nature of humanity?

The struggle between the twins is representative of the struggle between the **elect** and the **reprobate**—the seed of the serpent and the Seed of the woman. (Gen 3:15)

Have two twins ever been more distinct? This is a reflection not of **genetics**, but of God’s purposes.

The example of Jacob and Esau is a reminder that not every child of covenant parents is **elect**.

Verse 28 foreshadows the trouble to come as a result of parental **favoritism**.

As firstborn, Esau’s birthright entitled him to **spiritual** and **material** advantages over Jacob.

The picture of Esau is a man both **worldly** and **careless**. After returning from the field, he is only concerned about **food**.

The word translated “despised” (*bazah*) means to consider **worthless** or hold in **contempt**. There is no indication that Esau felt remorse for giving up his birthright.

The scripture paints an unflattering picture of Esau’s character (*bebelos*—profane, ungodly). (Heb 12:16)

In this account, Jacob shows his willingness to **take advantage** of his older brother.