

Genesis Chapter 25 Commentary

1 Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. 2 And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.

From this scripture and previous text, we can discern that Abraham had 8 children total. We know that he had children as follow: (1) Ishmael by Hagar a concubine; (2) Isaac by Sarah his first wife; and by Keturah his concubine; (3) Zimran, (4) Jokshan, (5) Medan, (6) Midian, (7) Ishbak, (8) Shuah.

Some will say that scripture says that Hagar and Keturah were his wives also, and they would be correct that scripture does say that. However, Sarah was his first wife, to whom was born the promised son and heir, Isaac; who was God's promised son to Abraham and to Sarah.

Let's look at some more scripture for explanation. Go to verse 6 below: **Ge 25:6 "But unto the sons of the concubines,"** If we look at this we see that God acknowledges only one wife, and the other two were concubines. A concubine, in those times, was a woman, with whom a man had the same relationship as a wife, but she was not an actual wife. A concubine by definition is; *a paramour*. Paramour by definition means; *an illicit lover, especially of a married person, which is a woman that is hired, or at least acted, to act as a wife in a conjugal relationship.* (Conjugal means; *of, relating to, or characteristic of marriage*)

Matthew Poole's Commentary: Concubines are sometimes called wives, as Ge 16:3; Jg 19:1-3, 29, but their children had no right to the inheritance.

3 And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim. 4 And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.

We see that the scripture continues to give the family tree, first, the ones that are to be mostly forgotten, because they are not in the lineage of Christ, and lastly, we see scripture pick up Isaac's lineage which carries forward until we get to Christ.

5 And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. 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.

Why would Abraham send his other children away? I believe there are 2 reasons in particular that we can observe:

- Isaac was the promised son, which God told Abraham would be the possessor of his inheritance. By sending these other children away, Abraham removed from his household any thought of dispute about to whom his possessions were going.
- Even the very land, upon which Abraham dwelt, was given by promise of God to Abraham and his seed. "His seed" of promise from God was Isaac. Therefore, by sending the other children away, there would be no one there to mar the promise of God to Abraham, and of God to Isaac.

- As pointed out by Matthew Poole in his commentary; these children, that are being sent away, are not to be inheritors of the possessions of Abraham. Abraham, because of his love for them, gives them gifts and sends them away. He does not send them away without provision of life.

There is also a prophetic picture here of both the natural and eternal perspective. Remember that Abraham gave all that he had to his son Isaac. God the Father gave all that he had to God the Son. Remember that Abraham sent all those who were not the chosen seed away. God has reserved for his people here on the earth the church of Salvation by Grace as a possession. Christ Jesus established the church and by promise we are the chosen seed of God to be the possessors of this land of promise. The children of men not included in the promised seed are sent away with the natural gifts that God showers upon all alike, but they are not to be inheritors of the land of promise.

In the eternal perspective; God's chosen seed have the promise of all that the Father has given the Son, in that we shall be in the eternal place that Jesus the Christ has gone to prepare for us. When the end of time comes; we shall be separated; the promised seed will inherit this eternal place, and all that are not of the promised seed will be sent away to their own destined place.

7 And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years.

Abraham was 175 years old when he died.

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. 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; 10 The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife. 11 And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahairoi.

We remember, (from our earlier study in **Ge 24:62 "And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahairoi; for he dwelt in the south country."**) that Lahairoi means; *well of a living (One), my Seer*. We see from this definition, Isaac is holding to the will and way that God has lain down before him. We see that Isaac remains steadfast in carrying forward in faith the promise of God. We see that Isaac is staying near the well of life, which is a picture for us to remain steadfast in our faith and trust in God and live in the church of Jesus Christ. After all; Jesus is our well of living water springing up to eternal life, seen in: **Joh 4:14 "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."**

12 Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham: 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, 14 And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, 15 Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah: 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. 17 And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people. 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.

I believe we have Ishmael's lineage here, to remind us that God fulfilled the promise to Hagar about Ishmael, seen in: **Ge 21:18 "Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation."**

"and he died in the presence of all his brethren" We have here the recorded fulfillment of God's promise to Hagar: **Ge 16:9-12; 9 "And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands. 10 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. 11 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. 12 And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."**

These are evidences to us; when God makes a promise you can trust in it fully, even if you are not of the chosen line, of the children of God.

19 And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac: 20 And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian. 21 And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. 22 And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD. 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.

This brings to mind that God knows the future, and we will see this prophesy fulfilled in the scripture as we read and study on through to Revelation. We see included such minute details as "**the children struggled together within her.**" We shall see this prophetic picture play out in scripture, in the lives of Jacob and Esau.

What does it mean, when God says "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated?" Let's look at it in context: **Ro 9:9-16; 9 "For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son. 10 And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; 11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) 12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. 13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. 14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. 15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."** This is not necessarily talking about the individuals, but speaking definitely of the nations of people that came from each one. Jacob and his lineage are the chosen line that will lead to Christ. God knew that Esau, the Edomites, would turn from him and become an idolatrous people. Idolatry is a thing that God hates.

We also see a picture of the mercy and grace of God displayed in "**Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.**" We understand that all of mankind is fallen in Adam's sin and fall in the Garden of Eden.

How do we see mercy in grace in this phrase? It is only by mercy and grace that God chose to save any of the fallen race of mankind. God was under no obligation to save anyone when Adam fell in sin. However, God in his infinite wisdom, mercy and grace, has chosen to save some of this fallen race of people on the earth. Why would God do this? Because God the Father had a covenant promise with God the Son before the world began. It is God's will and purpose to save unto himself a people to inhabit the eternal place Christ has created. We are taught this in the New Testament in: **2Ti 1:7-11; 7**
"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. 8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; 9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, 10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: 11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles." Praise God for salvation and eternal life in Christ Jesus. Thank God that he chose to save some of the people who he created, even though they were fallen in sin.

This is further made light to us from the scripture in: **Isa 55:6-11; 6** "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: 7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. 8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. 10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: 11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." God's will and purpose to save a people unto himself is manifested in sending forth his Word (his Son) and it has and will accomplish all that God intends. In other words; God sent his Son into the world and Christ has saved all those that the Father gave unto to him. Notice he did not save all mankind but those that the Father gave him.

"and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger"
We know from scripture, God fulfilled his promise to Hagar as we saw earlier in this chapter. The nations, of the lineage of Ishmael and Hagar, who were the oldest, are those who fought against the lineage of Jacob. We see this come to fruition when the king of Edom refused a passage to the Israelites through his territories on their return from Egypt.

The Edomites, lineage of Esau, were for some time the more powerful of the two, there having been dukes and kings in Edom before there was any king in Israel; but King David, lineage of Jacob, entirely conquered the Edomites, slew several thousands of them, and compelled the rest to be servant to Israel.

We also see the prophetic picture of "**the elder shall serve the younger**", How? With Christ fulfilling the sacrificial law, the church of Grace was established by his Word of Truth. Even today, the Israelites must serve and worship God as children of Grace, not servants to the sacrificial law. God will have his way, as he has absolute power, and is able to accomplish his own will.

24 And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. 25 And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. 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. 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. 28 And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

What a wonderful lesson we have here in these verses. Why did Isaac love Esau? Esau was Jacob's first born son. Esau provided meat for the belly, which Isaac loved. This is a picture of man's fleshly nature, which is to love the desires of the flesh, and things of this world.

Why did Rebekah love Jacob? Nothing in this verse tells us this. However, we can discern the answer from the rest of scripture. Rebekah loved Jacob, because God had told her; Jacob would rule over Esau, which meant that God would give to Jacob the right of first born. Also, Jacob is the promised line to Christ. Remember the lessons we learned of Rebekah in the previous chapter, and how she is a picture of the church of grace.

This lesson we learn: We see the prophetic picture of the born again sinner today. How? Esau is a picture of the dead and alienated sinner before the new birth, the fleshly nature. Jacob is a picture of the born again sinner, the spiritual nature; who now possessed of the Holy Spirit, rules over the fleshly nature as seen in: **1Jo 4:4 "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."**

We see these two natures manifested in New Testament scripture in: **1Jo 4:2-8; 2 "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. 4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. 6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. 7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. 8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."**

29 And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: 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. 31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. 32 And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? 33 And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. 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.

In verses 29-34 we have another life lesson for the Christian. We see the picture of a man whose birthright meant nothing to him. Thus, we see a picture of an apostate, one who has a greater love for the things of the world, than for the gift of salvation by the grace of God. We see this demonstrated

and explained by Christ in his explanation of the parable of the sower, found in ***Mt 13:1-23; Mr 4:1-20;*** and ***Lu 8:1-15.***

How careful we need to be about guarding this precious gift of salvation. How we should cherish this gift, and do our best to care for it. We need to nurture the born again heart, mind, and soul. We should endeavor to protect and keep it as we do our own children. Why? Because, salvation, by the grace of God, is a gift that is more precious than life itself.

There is the prophetic picture of the church of grace coming to fruition in the future. How? The Israelites under the sacrificial law did not perceive that grace was needed for salvation. All they understood was works that they could do with which they were satisfied. This is emblematic of the pottage in that it is earthly in nature.

Grace was provided by Christ's life, death, burial and resurrection for the church of grace. This is the emblematic picture of the birthright. You see, at the time of this writing of scripture, the firstborn son was the one who inherited all that the father possessed. We as children of Grace, inherit all that the Father has, as we are joint heirs with Christ, seen in:

- ***Ro 8:17 "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."***
- ***Ga 3:29 "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."***

How careful we ought to be in our Christian life; to worship, to praise, and to adore, our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ for the precious gift of Salvation and Eternal Life.