

Lesson 7 – Genesis 23-27

Text: Genesis 23-27

Main Characters: God, Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Abraham's servant, Abimelech, Esau, Jacob

Key Passages:

- Genesis 26:1-5 – Isaac receives the same promises that were given to his father, Abraham.
- Genesis 27:41 – For stealing the blessing from Isaac, Esau was angry and planned to kill Jacob.

Main Storyline:

When Sarah died at the age of 127, Abraham asked the sons of Heth (also known as the Hittites) to sell him some land to bury her. The Hittites had great respect for Abraham and allowed him to choose any land he wanted. He consulted Ephron, the owner of the cave of Machpelah, and asked for a price for his cave. Ephron initially wanted to give it to him for free, but Abraham insisted on paying, eventually giving 400 shekels of silver for it. The cave became a family burial ground for Abraham.

Abraham decided that his son, Isaac, needed a wife. He sent his oldest, most trusted servant on a mission to find him a wife from his family, not from among the wicked Canaanites. When the servant arrived at the city of Nahor (Abraham's brother) in Mesopotamia, he prayed that God would show him the right woman for Isaac. Before he finished, a woman named Rebekah approached him. By what she said and did, the servant recognized that God had answered him, and he fell down and worshipped God.

Abraham took another wife, Keturah, and had many children with her. However, he still loved Isaac the most, so, before dying, he gave Isaac everything he had. When Abraham died, he also was buried in the Cave of Machpelah (note that he dies at 175, so this actually occurs later in history).

After Isaac prayed for children, Rebekah gave birth to twins, Esau and Jacob. Esau was older, favored by Isaac, and a hunter, while Jacob was younger, favored by Rebekah, and a "mild" man. One day, Esau came back from hunting, and he was very tired. He asked Jacob for some of the stew he had been preparing. Jacob demanded that Esau give him his birthright (half his inheritance) for the soup; Esau agreed and sold it. God repeated His promises to Isaac (land, nation, and blessing).

During a famine, Isaac went down to the land of the Philistines to live. As his father, he decided that he and his wife would lie and say that Rebekah was his sister, not his wife. One day, Abimelech (the king) saw Isaac showing endearment to Rebekah and recognized that clearly Isaac had been lying about her identity. He rebuked Isaac for his lies. Isaac later had some squabbles with the Philistines about some wells that he had been digging, but they were eventually resolved when they made a covenant.

When Isaac was very old and blind, he asked Esau to hunt for game and prepare it for him. Isaac planned that, after eating the meal, that he would give Esau (his favored son) a blessing. Rebekah heard this and wanted Jacob (her favored son) to receive the blessing. Rebekah sent Jacob to Isaac with a meal and goat skin on his arms and neck to trick him into thinking that Jacob was Esau. Isaac gave Jacob the blessing, but, upon hearing the news of what had happened, Esau planned to kill Jacob. To save his life, Rebekah warned Jacob that he needed to run away to her brother (his uncle), Laban.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) When selecting a mate, godliness is the most important quality to consider (Proverbs 31:30).
- 2.) Our prayers to God are heard and answered (James 5:16).
- 3.) When God answers our prayers, we ought to be thankful and worshipful (Colossians 4:2).
- 4.) We must think about the long-term consequences of our actions/sins (Hebrews 11:24-26).
- 5.) Our sins have consequences for others; they do not just affect us (Genesis 12, 20 also).
- 6.) Favoritism in a family (or anywhere else) causes great problems (James 2:1ff).