

INTRO: Last week we learned of the Will of a Father, the Work of A Servant, and **left off** with the Willingness of a Bride. The Servant was ready to return, but Rebekah's family wanted her to stay...

- Someone was wise enough to **Ask Rebekah! (57-60)** – At which, by Faith she unhesitatingly replied “I Will GO!” – Wow, just as Abraham did, Rebekah was willing to leave it all behind for a promised future and a hope! (*As for you and I, the church! We too have never seen our Groom - Jesus Christ*), but **by faith** we are willing to go right now...Amen! – (cf. **1 Pet 1:8-9 NLT**) – At her request, they released her (59), and blessed her (60), with good will and favor.

A. The WELCOME Of A SON (61-67) – Verse (61) tells us that **the Entourage** led by the servant was **en route...** (*here comes the bride!*) – Focus then shifts to Isaac, **the groom** in (62), which is fascinating, because Isaac was last seen coming down from Mt. Moriah after the sacrifice offering (22:13,19).

1. **Now Isaac shows up after visiting** a place named **Beer Lahai Roi**, i.e., *“the God who sees.”* – We are then told in (63a), that **Isaac went into the field to meditate**. – **What** was he meditating on, **what** was he praying for? Possible mourning for his mother, or was it because **he knew** that **his Father made arrangements for his Bride?**

2. **The Encounter (63b- 65)** – Just then, **he lifted his eyes** and all of a sudden, out of nowhere BAM! **There she was**. And as Rebekah rode into her future, **she lifted her eyes** and **BAM! There he was!** *This entire story makes clear that God chose Rebekah for Isaac!*

- When she saw him, **she immediately dismounted** to meet him on foot, but she first **inquired if it was Isaac**, at which point the servant confirmed, **so she veiled her face**.

3. **The Explanation (66)** ...was then provided to Isaac of: the journey, the prayer, the confirmation, and **HOW God directed his path, as he put his Trust in Him!** **This is exactly what happened with Adam!** **“God Saw”** the Void and He knew His desire for Adam, **so God brought Eve to Adam** to be a counter-part...a helper...a companion...a wife! *“He brought her to the man!”*

4. **The Embrace (67)** – The betrothal began back in Nahor (v.53), but **Isaac fell in love with Rebekah ...veil and all!** – It's not clear how long he waited, but when the appropriate time came, Isaac took Rebekah into his mother's tent and loved her even more. This brought him great comfort to Isaac, especially with the passing of his mother Sara.

- The marriage of **Isaac** and **Rebekah** did not begin with the love of the couple, **but with the choice of the father to secure a bride for his beloved son (24:3-4)**.

CLOSING THOUGHTS: This story likewise teaches that **our betrothal** began with **the sovereign choice of God the Father**, to **take a bride for His beloved Son**. – God has sent the Holy Spirit to search for His Bride, ultimately to bring us to Jesus Christ one day.

- If you have placed your hope in Jesus Christ, then WHEN our Bridegroom calls, we will meet Him in the air (**1 Thess 4:17**)
- **Do you Trust in GOD? Are you making yourself ready?**

INTRO: In **Genesis 25** we are told about the lives of **five key men** in the Old Testament. And the **description of each man is like a portrait.**

I. The Portrait of ABRAHAM (1-11) – As seen in (**Gen 11:27-25:11**) and various NT references Abraham was called by God to demonstrate what He desires most...**FAITH!** (*Though not perfect, he walked by faith*).

- A. Abraham Married Keturah (1)**, whose name means **“INCENSE.”** – She was a concubine, which was considered a wife, but of lesser status than Sarah.
- B. Abraham had Six Additional Sons by Keturah (2-4)**, which would become **progenitors** of various eastern Arab tribes such as **Iran and Iraq**.
- C. Abraham’s Gifts (5-6)** – Because Isaac was the **“Son of Promise,”** Abraham bestowed everything he possessed into his son’s care. He also blessed his other sons with **“gifts”** while he was still alive, but specifically directed them eastward, **AWAY from Isaac and the promised land**.
- D. Abraham Dies and is Buried (7-10)** – He lived **“a good old life”** and **“died at age 175!”** – I love the phrase **“Full of Years.”** – **Verse (9-10)** tells us that Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah in Hebron, in the cave of **Machpelah** (*i.e., double-doors*), which he purchase from Ephron the Hittite.
 - 1. Abraham’s Sons Buried Him! (9a)** – Notice first that it mentioned Isaac before Ishmael! Notice secondly that they both came together to lay their father to rest! (*No hostility mentioned*)
 - 2. Abraham not only lived by faith, but he also DIED by faith.** Abraham not only started well, and ran well, he **FINISHED WELL!** **He knew that he was a sojourner...just passing through!**

HIS PORTRAIT: A Man Of **FAITH!** Abraham's life left a profound and wide-ranging influence on the ancient world, and nearly every Eastern country's religious practices contain references to Abraham's life. He is referred to in Scripture as **“the friend of God” (Jam 2:23)**, **“faithful Abraham” (Gal 3:9)**, and **“the father of us all faith” (Rom 4:16)**.

II. The Portrait of ISHMAEL (12-18) – He is first identified in (**v.12**) as **Abraham’s son by his wife Sara’s maidservant Hagar, the Egyptian.** – Ishmael was born out of the **frustration** and **impatience** of Abraham and Sara. In (**Gen 16:11-12**) *we learned that Hagar ran away from Sarah, but the Angel of the Lord found her and told her “...you are with child...You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the Lord has heard your affliction.12 He shall be a wild man; His hand shall be against every man, And every man’s hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.”* (*He became known for harassing and persecuting Isaac – Gal 4:29*)

- A. Ishmael’s Genealogy (13-16)** – Because Ishmael was the firstborn son of Abraham, God exceedingly multiplied Him, as promised (**Gen 16:10**). He had **twelve sons** which became **twelve princes!** The towns in which they lived were named after them.
- B. Ishmael’s Lifespan and Dwelling (17-18)** – **137** years and he breathed his last, in the presence of all his brethren. The combination of being an archer, having twelve sons and living 137 years on earth seems to indicate that **he moved on from his frustrating circumstances**. Yet, his descendants would always be **a thorn in Israel’s side**. – His descendants dwelt from **Havilah** to **Shur**, east of Egypt which is **Saudi Arabia Region**.

HIS PORTRAIT: A Man Of FRUSTRATION! He is commonly regarded by both Jews and Arabs as the progenitor of the Arabs. – Between those who identify Ishmael as their father and those who are descended from Isaac, there is still a tremendous deal of conflict.

III. The Portrait of ISAAC (19-24) – His story is recorded in (Gen 25:19-35:29), and he is also mentioned 18 times in the NT. – After the death of his father (11), God turned his focus to ISAAC, whom *“He blessed.”* Interestingly enough, Isaac then moved to **Beer Lahai Roi** (*i.e., God who sees*) to make his own home closer to a place where he knew God was. A step closer to God!

A. Isaac was the Son of a Famous Father (19), and the father of a famous son (Jacob) – He is *the son that God promised to Abraham and Sarah* in their old age. – His very name means *“laughter,”* because of Sara laughed at the possibility of having a child at her age, but even more so, Isaac was one who brought laughter and joy into their family.

B. Isaac was married to Rebekah at 40 years old (20-24), but did not have his **twin sons UNTIL** he was **60 years old (26)**, because Rebekah was barren (21). **He prayed for 20 years!**

HIS PORTRAIT: Isaac was a **NOT FLASHY** man but is known for **HIS FAITHFULNESS!** His life records his trust in his fathers’ obedience to God (22:7), his communion with God (24:63), and his intercession (25:21) – **Isaac’s life reveals a heart that was submissively surrendered to God’s will!** As a result, God promise to Abraham would be upheld through Isaac and Isaac's son Jacob.

- A.W. Tozer said, *“The essence of surrender is getting out of God's way so that He can do in us what He also wants to do through us.”*
- 1. **Rebekah’s struggle (21-22)** with **Infertility and Pregnancy**, of which she inquired of God, praying... *“Why am I like this?”* (*Even today many women struggle*) – **God revealed that it was for divine purposes according to His Will (Gen 17:3-4,16)**
- 2. God simply announced that **Rebekah will give birth to twins (23-24)**: *“Two nations are in your womb.”* Each would father a country. The younger person would supersede the older person. –

IV. The Portrait of ESAU (25-28) – A Man Of FLESHLY APPETITE (Also detailed in Gen 36:1-29)

A. Esau was the **firstborn son of Isaac, and twin-brother of Jacob (25)**. The name Esau, was given because of the child's unusual appearance at birth *“Red and Hairy.”* – Esau had a **wild and reckless spirit**, as evidenced by **his strong build** and *“rough”* appearance. He became a knowledgeable Bedouin and a *“son of the desert.”* With his younger twin Jacob, there was **sibling rivalry** because the two were polar opposites from the beginning and never got along. **(V.28)** tells us that **Isaac favored Esau over Jacob**. He was obviously his father's heir and was very much adored by him.

B. Esau is known for his **Fleshly Appetite (32)** ...having sold his *“birth right”* for a bowl of Jacob’s savory lentil stew. (*We will expound on this topic next week*) – Later in life, he marries a daughter of Ishmael (28:8-9) and soon after establishes himself in Mount Seir (Edom) or **Idumea**, which is **modern day Jordan**. (Gen 32:3; 36:16, 17, 21; Jer 40:11)

- **For the record, Esau is aka Edom (25:30; 36:8)** – Scripture is filled with accounts of the cruelty and hostility the Edomites and their descendants demonstrated toward Israel. In **(Gen 27:41)**, we'll see Esau's personal hatred and murderous vow against Jacob. Later, **the Amalekites' (Gen 36:12)** attack the Israelites in the wilderness **(Ex 17:8-16)**, and even **Haman the Agagite's attempt to exterminate the Jews in Persia (Esth 3:1, 8-11, 13)**. Beyond these, the Bible offers further instances of Edom's nearly constant antagonism toward Israel, Judah, and God's will.
- In the book of **Obadiah**, God provides the reason for His terrible judgment against Edom! **(Obad 1:10)** *"For **VIOLENCE** against your brother Jacob, shame shall cover your face, and you shall be cut off forever."* **Church...** do you know the what the Hebrew word for violence is? **HAMAS** – which lit. means *violence, wrong, cruelty, injustice*. **Wow!**
- The Palestinian terrorist organization Hamas, in actuality is the acronym for **HAMAS: Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya (Islamic Resistance Movement)**. Along with **Hezbollah**, it has been one of Israel's chief enemy for many years. **It is difficult to see this as a mere coincidence!** – **Their recent attack on Israel (10/7/23)** was atrocious, brutal, wicked, evil, vicious, terrible, appalling!

HIS PORTRAIT: Edom's hatred is the primary consequence of his pride. **(Lev 19:17)** says *"You shall not hate your brother in your heart,"* which concisely describes **the fundamental flaw in Edom...**

HATRED! – Because Esau always felt that he should have received his father's wealth and blessings, he nursed his wounded feelings, and **it boiled over into hatred of his brother**. This flaw became a prime feature of Edomite character... **What can we take away from Esau's life? Don't be an Esau!**

V. The Portrait of JACOB (26-28) – A Man Of FORESIGHT (Detailed in 25:19-35:29) – These few verses reveal only a fraction of Jacob's life, which we will study in detail over the next several chapters, but enough is said about him to form the pattern of his life.

A. Jacob's Life Started Out in Conflict (23,26) – *He struggled for position* with his twin brother Esau in the womb and was delivered holding his brother's heel (26). His very name means *Heel catcher, Supplanter, or Deceiver*, which characterized his early years of life. **Jacob goes on to cheat and trick people to get what he wanted**. After fleeing from his brother's wrath, he relocates to Padan-Aram only to be cheated by his uncle Laban, for his wives and family.

B. Jacobs Later Years: After fleeing from Laban, Jacob had a **life-changing encounter** when he wrestled with the Angel of the Lord (32:28). An **"exhausting struggle"** that left him crippled! It was only after he wrestled with God and ceased his struggling (*in life*), realizing that he could not go on without Him, **that he received God's blessing (Gen 32:29)**. In the end, God re-named Jacob... calling him **ISRAEL, i.e., prince of God or Governed by God**.

- Despite Jacob's shortcomings, God appointed him as the head of a powerful nation that bears his name to this day...**ISRAEL**.

CLOSING THOUGHTS: Looking at these five portraits informs us that there are No perfect people, No perfect marriages, and No perfect families! It reminds us that **this is a temporary place** in which **we must learn to Believe in God and Trust Him for His promises!** – Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Esau and Jacob all had flaws...**Flaws** which can be **Forgiven** and even **Fashioned** into **Faithful Obedience** as we **Surrender all our Struggles to God!** – Yes... God can forgive us and use us for His purposes as well!