

GENESIS 25

Written and compiled by Gary Kukis

Genesis 25:1–34

Abraham and Keturah/Abraham's Death/Ishmael's Sons/
Jacob and Esau

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall be have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God." (John 3:16–18). "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!" (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

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Links to the [word-by-word](#), [verse-by-verse studies](#) of **Genesis** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) (that is what this document is). This incorporates 2 previous studies done in the book of Genesis. However, much of this material was thrown together without careful editing. Therefore, from time to time, there will be concepts and exegetical material which will be repeated, because there was no overall editing done once all of this material was combined.

There is a second, less complete set of weekly lessons of Genesis ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)). Every word of that study can be found in the word-by-word, verse-by-verse studies.

This study makes reference to a wide-range of sources. There are quotations from doctrinal teachers, of course; but from Catholic commentaries and from other sources as well. Wherever I found relevant truth, I quoted from it or was inspired by it. Even though it is clear that some churches have a better concept of our reason for being here, that does not mean that there is no truth to be found anywhere else. So, from time to time, I will quote from John Calvin, even though I do not subscribe to 5-point Calvinism; I will quote from some Catholic sources, even though I believe that they are very wrong regarding Mary, the pope, apostolic succession and other such doctrines. The intention is for this to be the most thorough and accurate study of Genesis available anywhere.

Also, **it is not necessary that you read the grey Hebrew exegesis tables**. They are set apart from the rest of the study so that you can easily skip over them (based upon the suggestion of a friend). However, if you ever doubt the translation of a word, phrase or a verse, these translation tables are then available.

Preface: We look at the descendants of Abraham (primarily his Arabic descendants) as well as the death of Abraham in this chapter followed by the birth of his two grandsons (their birth would have actually preceded his death in time). This chapter ends with Esau trading his birthright to Jacob for a Lentil soup.

J. Vernon McGee: This is another great chapter of the Bible. It records the death of Abraham and the birth of the twins, Esau and Jacob, to Isaac and Rebekah. It gives the generations of Ishmael and also the generations of Isaac. Then there is the incident relative to the birthright. So this is a remarkable chapter, and it covers a great deal of ground. This chapter [also] concludes the account of Abraham's life, but, frankly, his story ended back in chapter 23 when he sent the servant out to get a bride for Isaac.¹

There are many [chapter commentaries](#) on the book of Genesis. This will be the most extensive examination of Genesis 25, where you will be able to examine in depth every word of the original text. Every attempt has been made to make this both a complete and self-contained study. Therefore, all references, vocabulary, and related concepts should be found within this extensive study. Easy access links to more in-depth studies of some vocabulary words, concepts and doctrines are also provided.

Quotations:

Rev. Bruce Goettsche: Abraham took another wife...And...he had other children by Keturah! The text lists six more sons! Can you imagine beginning parenthood again at 140 years old? Can you imagine being surrounded with toddlers when you were 60 much less 160? We can identify with the words of Flip Wilson who said "If I could live my life over again . . . I wouldn't have the energy!"²

Donald Barnhouse: History shows that men prefer illusions to realities, choose time rather than eternity, and the pleasures of sin for a season rather than the joys of God forever. Men will read trash rather than the Word of God, and adhere to a system of priorities that leaves God out of their lives. Multitudes of men spend more time shaving

¹ From https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt (Genesis 25); accessed July 1, 2015.

² From <http://www.unionchurch.com/teaching-resources/sermon-archive/living-inbetween/> accessed July 1, 2015.

than on their souls; and multitudes of women give more minutes to their makeup than to the life of the eternal spirit. Men still sell their birthright for a mess of pottage.³

Dr. Talmage: A young man came to a man of ninety years of age and said to him, "How have you made out to live so long and be so well?" The old man took the youngster to an orchard, and, pointing to some large trees full of apples, said, "I planted these trees when I was a boy, and do you wonder that now I am permitted to gather the fruit of them?" We gather in old age what we plant in our youth. Sow to the wind and we reap the whirlwind. Plant in early life the right kind of a Christian character, and you will eat luscious fruit in old age, and gather these harvest apples in eternity.⁴

Heber Evans: We are as immortal as the angels until our work is done, and, that finished, the best thing that can happen to us is to be called home to rest at once rather than to be here, weak and worthless, in our tents waiting on the plains of Moab.⁵

Matthew 22:31–32 And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living." (ESV)

When Skeptics Ask: Most people wonder sometimes why God too the trouble to write down the names of all those folks in a list like the one in Genesis 10... These lists were not trivial to the people who wrote them... They were the family tree.⁶

Bishop Newton: Who but the Author and Giver of life could foresee that two children in the womb would multiply into two nations?⁷

Gen. 27:36 Esau said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has cheated me these two times. He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing." Then he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" (ESV)

Gen. 27:41 Now Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob." (ESV)

Gen. 36:6–8 Then Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the members of his household, his livestock, all his beasts, and all his property that he had acquired in the land of Canaan. He went into a land away from his brother Jacob. For their possessions were too great for them to dwell together. The land of their sojournings could not support them because of their livestock. So Esau settled in the hill country of Seir. (Esau is Edom.) (ESV)

Rom. 9:13 As it stands written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

Newell: "A woman once said to Mr. Spurgeon, 'I cannot understand why God should say that He hated Esau.' 'That,' Spurgeon replied, 'is not my difficulty, madam. My trouble is to understand how God could love Jacob.'"⁸

³ From <http://www.cmanitowoc.org/index.php/media1/messages/message/genesis-24-25> accessed July 1, 2015.

⁴ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/tbi/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 14, 2015.

⁵ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/tbi/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 14, 2015.

⁶ *When Skeptics Ask*; Geisler and Brooks, ©1990, Victor Books, p. 185.

⁷ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:23.

⁸ *David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; Genesis 25:19–26. Taken from Newell in *Romans, Verse by Verse*.

Kukis: Lack of faith in Jesus Christ is never a matter of being logical or rational; it is always a matter of personal convenience.

Kukis: God knows the end from the beginning. God apprehends all that is within time, and all that is within the borders of space, as He is the inventor of time and space.

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Doctrines Covered or Alluded To			
Abortion	The Abrahamic Covenant	Basic History of Israel	Circumcision
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God-ward and the man-ward sides of the Edification Complex	Human Good	Intercalation	Isaac in his birth was a type of Christ

Doctrines Covered or Alluded To			
Isaac, when offered up by Abraham, was a type of Christ	Jesus is not a liberal	Leadership	Liberation Theology
Marriage Alternatives in the Bible	Messianic Prophecies		Morality
The Offering of Isaac	Parallels between the Birth of Isaac and the Birth of Jesus	Salvation	Slavery

Additional doctrines and links are found in [Definition of Terms](#) below.

Chapters of the Bible Alluded To and/or Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter			
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Genesis 14	Genesis 15	Genesis 17	Genesis 21
Genesis 23	Genesis 24	2Samuel 2	1Chronicles 5

Many who read and study this chapter are 1st or 2nd generation students of R. B. Thieme, Jr., so that much of this vocabulary is second nature. One of Bob's contributions to theology is a fresh vocabulary along with a number of concepts which are theologically new or reworked, yet still orthodox. Therefore, if you are unfamiliar with his work, the definitions below will help you to fully understand all that is being said. Also, I have developed a few new terms and concepts which require definition as well.

In addition, there are other more traditional yet technical theological terms which will be used and therefore defined as well.

Sometimes the terms in the exegesis of this chapter are simply alluded to, without any in-depth explanation of them. Sometimes, these terms are explained in detail and illustrated. A collection of all these terms is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Definition of Terms	
Angelic Conflict	During human history, there is an invisible conflict being played out and tied to human history, which is call the <i>Angelic Conflict</i> . This began with the fall of Satan and has flowed into our own lives since Satan tempted the first woman to sin against God. The two primary objectives of Satan with respect to man are (1) to keep people from believing in Jesus Christ and (2) to keep believers from growing spiritually and participating in the production of divine good. See the Angelic Conflict (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Anthropopathism	An anthropathism is taking an easily understood emotion, thought or action that man has or does and attributing that emotion, thought or action to God, to explain God's thinking and action in language of accommodation. One might view this is somewhat of a shortcut when speaking about God. For more information, see Bible Doctrine Resource .
Cluster Genealogy	A genealogy where the patriarch is named along with several of his sons and several of their sons. Generally, this is only for 3 or 4 generations.

Definition of Terms	
Divine good, the production of	Divine good is the good that we perform when filled with the spiritual. Quality varies from believer to believer, because some apply a great deal of doctrine, and some know little or nothing about their place in God's plan, apart from how to get in and out of fellowship (see <i>rebound</i> below).
Dying Grace	A state of peace and spiritual blessing when the believer is called home to be with the Lord, regardless of the amount of suffering. The peaceful awareness of God in death. BDR.org
Escrow Blessings	God places certain blessings into escrow for us, so that, when we perform certain actions, these blessings are released to us. The parallel is to the of the purchase of a house where everything is placed in escrow until the buyer and seller have performed certain functions, which then transfers the house from the ownership of the seller to the ownership of the buyer. See the Doctrine of Escrow Blessings (Bible Doctrine Resource).
5th Stage of National Discipline	This is the stage of discipline God brings upon Israel when the people are removed from their own land and taken into slavery by some foreign power. Thieme called this the 5 th Cycle of Discipline. The Five Cycles of Discipline (BDR—probably Thieme) (Mark Perkins) (L. G. Merritt).
Line of Promise, The	This is the genealogical line which extends from Abraham down to our Lord Jesus Christ. It is called the line of promise because God, on many occasions, gave promises concerning this line and about the Lord.
Linear Genealogy	A linear genealogy (also called a <i>straight-line genealogy</i>) follows one particular line for 4 or 5 or more generations. Very rarely is more than one son named in any generation.
Rebound (Restoration to fellowship with God)	In the New Testament, this is naming your sins to God, so that you are both restored to temporal fellowship with God and are then filled with the Spirit of God. In the Old Testament, naming your sins to God would result in a restoration of fellowship and, in some cases, the empowerment of the Holy Spirit once again (the Holy Spirit was not given to all Old Testament believers). See the Doctrine of Rebound (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
The Revealed God (or, the Revealed Lord)	We all come to a time of God-consciousness where we understand the concept and possibility of the existence of God. At that point, we face 2 great questions: (1) do we want to know this God and (2) are will willing to believe in God as He has revealed Himself or do we make a god in our own image and worship that?
Type	<i>A type is a preordained representation wherein certain persons, events, and institutions of the O.T. stand for corresponding persons, events, and institutions of the N.T. Types are pictures or object lessons by which God has taught His redemptive plan. They are a shadow of things to come, not the image of those things (Col. 2:17 Heb. 8:5 10:1). The Mosaic system, for example, was a kind of kindergarten in which God's people were trained in divine things and taught to look forward to the realities of things yet to come.</i> ⁹ See Typology (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).

⁹ From [Dake](#), accessed October 15, 2013.

Some of these definitions are taken from

http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=1556

<http://rickhughesministries.org/content/Biblical-Terms.pdf>

<http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d>

<http://www.wordoftruthministries.org/terms-and-definitions/>

<http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics.html>

<http://www.theopedia.com/>

An Introduction to Genesis 25

Introduction: For all intents and purposes, Genesis 25 is 4 chapters in one. At 34 verses, these diverse topics will be combined into one chapter (chapter divisions occurred long after the text of the Old Testament had been established). However, there is a common thread which binds these narratives together—the Arabs: the other lines of Abraham. We begin with the new family of Abraham with Keturah, where Abraham has 6 sons. These sons would be the progenitors of several Arabic groups. Then Abraham dies, and Ishmael enters the picture as his son by Hagar, Sarah’s personal maid. His family line will be given, whose sons make up 12 Arabic tribes. Finally, Isaac will have twin sons, one is a Jew and the other is a gentile; and the gentile son will be the father of another Semitic nation.

When it comes to identifying a nation or a people as Arabic, this is fairly disputed when it comes to ancient history. So, let me tentatively suggest this: the Arabs are the Semitic people who have descended from Abraham, apart from the Jewish line. If this is the understanding, then we have the 3 main lines of the Arabs listed in this chapter: Ishmael, the son of Abraham and Hagar, and his 12 sons; the sons of Abraham and Keturah; and the sons of Esau, Jacob’s twin. Although it is far more difficult to draw a straight line from the peoples listed in this chapter to modern Arabic peoples, let me suggest to you that this chapter contains their true origins as a people.

The word *Arab* only occurs once in the Bible, insofar as I know, and it is the name of one of the cities controlled by Judah (Joshua 15:52). The word *Arabia* is found in 1Kings 10:15 2Chronicles 9:14 17:11 21:16 22:1 26:7 Nehemiah 2:19 4:7 6:1 Isaiah 13:20 21:3 Jer. 3:2 25:24 Ezekiel 27:21 Acts 2:11 Galatians 1:17 4:25. All of these are later passages, all occurring long after the events of this book, with no clear path from those in this book to the references which occur 1000 or more years later.

Properly speaking, the Semitic peoples are those who are descended from Abraham, and therefore, includes both Jews and Arabs. However, often the term *Semitic* is applied to Jews alone.

Genesis 25 is quite an unusual chapter because we pretty much skip over the life of Isaac and go right to his twin children, one of whom is a Jew and one of whom is a gentile. Abraham has been the topic of discussion from Genesis 12–23 (with the exception of a few passages) and he plays a part in Genesis 24. However, we go from the death of Abraham (in the beginning of this chapter) to the birth and early lives of Isaac’s twins. In other words, Isaac, this son upon whom God has promised Abraham for decades, has been born, he grew to be a man, he got married, and now he and his wife are having children. We barely know anything about Isaac, except for his birth and how his wife Rebekah was obtained.

There are four very distinct sections in Genesis 25: Abraham’s second family (vv. 1–6); the death of Abraham (vv. 7–11); a list of the descendants of Ishmael (vv. 12–18) and a section on Isaac’s sons (vv. 19–34). Except for the fact that these sections are very short, each could have been a separate chapter.

God promised Abraham, before Abraham had fathered a single child, “I will make your seed like the dust of the earth, so that if a man can count the dust of the earth, then your seed also will be counted.” (Genesis 13:16). With Genesis 25, we will see the beginnings of God’s fulfilling this promise. We will see Abraham’s second family (vv. 1–6); Ishmael’s descendants (vv. 12–18); and Isaac’s sons (vv. 21–26). These are all descendants of Abraham. Today, almost the entire middle east is populated by the children of Abraham.

Also in this chapter, Abraham will take his last bow before leaving the stage of life. However, in the middle of our study, we will pause partway through this chapter—after Abraham’s death—and see how Abraham is presented in the New Testament (where he is mentioned by name more than 70 times).

Since the Bible often focuses on particular topics (like a genealogy, for instance), there are incidents which can be presented somewhat out of order. For instance, in this chapter, Abraham will die in v. 7 and Isaac and Rebekah’s marriage, her pregnancy and the birth of her children are mentioned in vv. 20–26. Abraham lives about 35 years *after* their marriage. However, topically, we cover Abraham’s marriage to Keturah, their children, their children’s children, and then Abraham’s death. Then we pick up with the descendants of Ishmael. So, as a general rule, when dealing with a genealogy, that might overlap incidents which are recorded later. In general, the book of Genesis is in chronological order; however, there are clear exceptions to this.

It is important to understand what has gone before.

The Prequel of Genesis 25

Abraham, at age 100, has sired Isaac; and in Genesis 22, he offers up his son (or begins to offer up his son) to God. Isaac then grows to a young man, and Abraham sends his most trusted servant east to get a wife for Isaac (Isaac is 40) (Genesis 24). Sarah, Isaac’s mother (and Abraham’s wife) has passed away (Genesis 23).

The writing torch appears to be handed off from Abraham, who recorded a great many personal incidents, to Isaac, who records mostly births and deaths and important events. If this is indeed Isaac’s writing, he will write very few chapters of Genesis (Genesis 25–26).

Genesis 25 will begin with Abraham’s second marriage, his children, and then his death. With that, we move to the next generations, to Isaac and his children.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

We need to know who the people are who populate this chapter.

The Principals of Genesis 25

Characters	Commentary
Abraham	Abraham is the father of the Jews and, apparently, the father of the Arabs as well.
Keturah	Keturah is Abraham’s wife after the death of his wife Sarah (the timing of their marriage will be discussed).
Isaac	Isaac is the son of Abraham and Sarah, and the promises of God will transfer from Abraham to him.
Ishmael	Ishmael is Abraham’s son by Hagar, who was Sarah’s Egyptian handmaid. Ishmael did not inherit the promises of God. His 12 sons will be named in this chapter.
Rebecca	Rebecca is the wife of Isaac, who was brought from her family in the east. See Genesis 24 (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Jacob	Jacob is the 2 nd born of the twins born to Rebecca. The line of promise goes through him.
Esau	Esau is the firstborn of the twins born to Rebecca, and he will reject his birthright, selling it for a <i>mess of pottage</i> .

As you can see, there is a larger number of characters in this narrative than in most chapters. This list leaves out the couple dozen descendants of Abraham who are the basis of all the Arab tribes.

We need to know where this chapter takes place.

The Places of Genesis 25

Place	Description
The cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron	This is the only plot of ground that Abraham owned in the Land of Promise. He bought this cave to bury his wife Sarah in; and then was laid to rest there as well.
Beer-lahai-roi	This is the well spoken of by Hagar (Sarah's personal servant) (Genesis 16:7, 14); and the place where Isaac lived (Genesis 24:62 25:11). This would have been in southern Judah, in the Negev, perhaps 50 miles south of Beersheba. 35 years ¹⁰ fall between the two verses cited, so it is unclear if Isaac lived there throughout that 35 years.
Havilah	We can only guess where this land was; when we get to Genesis 25:18, its location will be discussed.
Shur	This area appears to be south of Canaan, and north of Sinai.
Egypt	Egypt is in northern Africa and is one of the most consequential countries close to Israel.
Padanaram	Where Bethuel lived, with his son and daughter, Laban and Rebekah (the Rebekah who became Isaac's wife). This would have been along the northern portion of the Euphrates River.

Some of the maps in this chapter include:

- [Map of the Location of the Sons of Keturah](#)
- [Map of the Peoples of Arabia \(before Christ\)](#) and
- [Map of the Location of the Tribes of Ishmael](#)

The Patriarchal Timeline for Genesis 25

Legend	
Birth or death	God speaks with Abraham
Historical incidents (most of which are related to Abraham)	
Parenthetical dates (2065 B.C.) simply refer to taking the date assigned by the chronologist and using Scripture to determine the next date.	
The entire Abrahamic Timeline (HTML) (PDF) (WPD). The entire Patriarchal Timeline (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).	

¹⁰ Isaac and Rebekah marry, and 20 years later, they have twins. 15 years later, Isaac's father, Abraham, dies.

Brent MacDonald	Age of Abraham	Reese's Chronology Bible	Scripture	Event/Description
2164 B.C.	0	1967 B.C.	Genesis 11:26–27	Abraham (Terah's son) and Lot (Haran's son) born in Ur of the Chaldeans. Abram would be the 43 rd generation from Adam. Gen 11:26 Terah lived 70 years and fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.
Reese occasionally supplies 2 dates in his Chronological Bible; the first is his and the second is Klassen's.				
		1927 B.C.	Genesis 11:29–30	Marriage of Abram to Sarai
2089 B.C.	75	1892 B.C.	Genesis 12:1–4	Abraham leaves for Promised Land from Haran , after being so instructed by God. Gen 12:4 So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was 75 years old when he left Haran.
2064 B.C.	100		Genesis 21:1–7 1Chronicles 1:34	Isaac born to Abraham. Isaac would be the 44 th generation from Adam. Gen 21:5 Abraham was 100 years old when his son Isaac was born to him.
		1864 B.C.	Genesis 21:8–13	Conflicts arise between Isaac and Ishmael, Abram's two sons.
			Genesis 21:14–21	Hagar and Ishmael are both cast out, and they wander the desert of Beer-sheba (which is at the edge of southern Judah). Later, they move to the desert of Paran .
		1841–1816 B.C.	Genesis 25:12–16 1Chronicles 1:29–25	Ishmael's children.
	137	1830 B.C.	Genesis 23:1–20	The death of Sarah. She dies in Kirjatharba , it is Hebron , in the land of Canaan . Gen 23:1 Now Sarah lived 127 years; these were all the years of her life. She is buried in a cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre ; it is Hebron , in the land of Canaan , purchased by Abraham from the sons of Heth.
			Genesis 24:1–67 Genesis 25:20	Isaac (Abraham's son) and Rebecca. Genesis 25:20 Isaac was 40 years old when he took as his wife Rebekah daughter of Bethuel the Aramæan from Paddan-aram, and sister of Laban the Aramæan. At this time, Isaac is living in the Negev . It is likely that Abraham lived there as well; or near to there.

Brent MacDonald	Age of Abraham	Reese's Chronology Bible	Scripture	Event/Description
		1826 B.C.	Genesis 25:1–4 1Chronicles 1:32–33	Abraham marries Keturah and they have a family. Smith puts the date at 1860 B.C.; and Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge at 1853 B.C.
2004 B.C.	160	1807 B.C.	Genesis 25:19, 21–26	Jacob & Esau born to Isaac. Gen 25:26 <i>After this, his brother came out grasping Esau's heel with his hand. So he was named Jacob. Isaac was 60 years old when they were born.</i> Therefore, Abraham would be 160 years old.
			Genesis 25:5–6	Isaac is the heir of all things that Abraham has (but, most importantly, of the covenant of God with Abraham).
1989 B.C.	175	1792 B.C.	Genesis 25:7–10	Abraham dies. Gen 25:7 <i>This is the length of Abraham's life: 175 years.</i> He is buried in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, in the field of Nephron (this would be with Sarah).
		1788 B.C.	Genesis 25:17	The death of Ishmael. Gen 25:17 <i>This is the length of Ishmael's life: 137 years. He took his last breath and died, and was gathered to his people.</i>
	Eber is 464		Genesis 11:17	Death of Eber.
		1782 B.C.	Genesis 25:27–34	Jacob obtains Esau's birthright by deception.

Bibliography

MacDonald's timeline is from: <http://www.bibleistrue.com/qna/qna63.htm> accessed October 11, 2011.

See <http://www.bibleistrue.com/qna/qna63dating.htm> for his justification of his timeline.

From: http://www.christianshepherd.org/bible_study_guides/abram_to_the_exodus.pdf (Christian shepherd)

The Reese Chronological Bible; KJV translation; Editor: Edward Reese; ©1977 by Edward Reese and Klassen's dating system ©1975 by Frank R. Klassen; ©1980 by Bethany House Publishers, South Minneapolis, MN; pp. 18–19, 54–74.

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[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

I have summarized the chapter several times; so here is Poole's summary of it.

Matthew Poole Provides a Synopsis of Genesis 25

Abraham's sons by Keturah (Genesis 25:1–4). Isaac inherits his father's estate (Genesis 25:5). Provision for the other sons (Genesis 25:6).

Abraham's age (Genesis 25:7); death (Genesis 25:8); burial (Genesis 25:9–10).

Matthew Pools Provides a Synopsis of Genesis 25

God blesses Isaac (Genesis 25:11). The posterity of Ishmael (Genesis 25:12–15). His age and death (Genesis 25:17). Their habitation (Genesis 25:18).

The generations of Isaac (Genesis 25:19). His age when married (Genesis 25:20). He prays for children; God answers (Genesis 25:21). Two children struggle in the womb; Rebekah inquires of the Lord (Genesis 25:22). God gives the reason (Genesis 25:23). She delivered of twins (Genesis 25:24). The first-born red and hairy; his name (Genesis 25:25). His brother takes him by the heel; his name: Isaac's age when they were born (Genesis 25:26). The eldest a cunning hunter; the other a plain man (Genesis 25:27). Isaac loves the eldest; Rebekah the youngest (Genesis 25:28).

The eldest sells his birth right for red pottage, and is called Edom (Genesis 25:30–32). Confirms the sale by an oath (Genesis 25:33). Despising his birthright (Genesis 25:34).

From Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, Genesis 25 chapter introduction (slightly edited).

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Thomas Coke's brief summary: *Abraham takes Keturah to wife: the sons of Keturah. Isaac is confirmed in the inheritance of Abraham's property: Abraham dies. The sons of Ishmael: Ishmael dies. Rebekah brings forth twins: Esau sells his birth-right to Jacob. Before Christ 1853.*¹¹

Several overviews help us to get a bird's eye view of this chapter.

Matthew Henry Outlines Genesis 25

Genesis 25 - The sacred historian, in this chapter,

- I. Takes his leave of Abraham, with an account,
 1. Of his children by another wife (Genesis 25:1–4).
 2. Of his last will and testament (Genesis 25:5, Genesis 25:6).
 3. Of his age, death, and burial (Genesis 25:7–10).
- II. He takes his leave of Ishmael, with a short account,
 1. Of his children (Genesis 25:12–16).
 2. Of his age and death (Genesis 25:17, Genesis 25:18).
- III. He enters upon the history of Isaac.
 1. His prosperity (Genesis 25:11).
 2. The conception and birth of his two sons, with the oracle of God concerning them (Genesis 25:19–26).
 3. Their different characters (Genesis 25:27, Genesis 25:28).
 4. Esau's selling his birthright to Jacob (Genesis 25:29–34).

He, above, appears to be the author.

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Chapter Updates:

I will use this space to indicate any format changes.

Every verse will be hyperlinked from the first page, so that you can easily go to a specific verse in this chapter.

¹¹ From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/tcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 29, 2015.

At the end of the exegesis of every verse, I will make certain that there is a Kukis mostly literal translation and a Kukis paraphrase, both of them marked as such.

I have decided to add spacing between the translation and the commentary.

In the future, I would really like to add a few translations, fill in the translation of this chapter (at the end of this document); and provide additional sources at the end of this document.

I have added H. C. Leupold's translation of Genesis (insofar as I know, it is his original translation).

Introductory Remarks: Chapter 25 is separated into four distinct sections: vv. 1–6: Abraham's second family; vv. 8–11: Abraham's death; vv. 12–18: a brief overview of Ishmael's progeny; and, vv. 19–34: Isaac's twins sons, one of whom is a Jew and the other is a Gentile. Most of Abraham's descendants named in this chapter (apart from Isaac and his son Jacob) make up the Arabic peoples. For that reason, I have called this the Arab Chapter (although there is a lot of good information in this chapter of Genesis).

Unlike Genesis 24, which had a belabored style of writing, Genesis 25 is mostly dry, but not repetitive.

In some ways, this sticks to Isaac's interest in births, marriages, and deaths; however, the final sections give us a lot of information about his sons. What father does not want to talk about his own sons?

One of the things that will strike you concerning Isaac's record is, there is very little material that is recorded about him. He emphasizes marriage, burials and births. There is little else of his life that is recorded. Most of Genesis 12–23 were about Abraham. There will only be 2 chapters actually devoted to Isaac (and some of those are more about his sons vying for the birthright from God, more than they are about Isaac).

There will be a dozen or so chapters also devoted to Jacob; and roughly the same amount to his sons Joseph. At best, we have two chapters on Isaac (Genesis 25–26); or three, if we count Genesis 24 (which was not written by Isaac). So we know almost nothing about Isaac directly.

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Abraham's Second Family

1Chronicles 1:32–33

Wenstrom summarizes the first section: *Genesis 25:1-4 presents the genealogy of Abraham's children by Keturah in order to establish the family relationship between Abraham and the descendants of these children. This segmented genealogy presents sixteen descendants: sons, grandsons and great-grandsons. Keturah bore Abraham six sons (Genesis 25:2) and through Jokshan, Abraham had two grandsons and three great-grandsons (Genesis 25:3), for a total of five children of Jokshan and through Midian, Abraham's fourth son through Keturah, he had five grandsons (Genesis 25:4).*¹²

After Abraham offers up his son Isaac to God, representing God offering up His Son for us (Genesis 22), there is very little discussion about Abraham. We have the death of Sarah in Genesis 23, Abraham sending his most trusted servant to find a wife for Isaac (Genesis 24, where Abraham is barely mentioned) and a small portion of this chapter is devoted to Abraham.

¹² From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

This section primarily shows that God did make Abraham the father of many nations, which is a fulfillment of prophecy.

Slavishly literal:

And so adds Abraham and so he takes a woman and her name [is] Keturah. Genesis 25:1

Moderately literal:

Abraham added and took [another] wife, and her name [is] Keturah.

Paraphrase:

Abraham took another wife whose name was Keturah.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Note: I compare the Hebrew text to English translations of the Latin, Syriac and Greek texts, using the Douay-Rheims translation¹³; George Lamsa's translation, and Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's translation as revised and edited by Paul W. Esposito, respectively. I often update these texts with non-substantive changes (e.g., *you* for *thou*, etc.). I often use the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible instead of Brenton's translation, because it updates the English text.

The Septuagint was the earliest known translation of a book (circa 200 B.C.). Since this translation was made before the textual criticism had been developed into a science and because different books appear to be translated by different men, the Greek translation can sometimes be very uneven.

When there are serious disparities between my translation and Brenton's (or the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible), I look at the Greek text of the Septuagint (the LXX) to see if a substantive difference actually exists (and I reflect these changes in the English rendering of the Greek text). I use the Greek LXX with Strong's numbers and morphology available for e-sword. The only problem with this resource (which is a problem for similar resources) is, there is no way to further explore Greek verbs which are not found in the New Testament. Although I usually quote the Complete Apostles' Bible here, I have begun to make changes in the translation when their translation conflicts with the Greek and note what those changes are.

The Masoretic text is the Hebrew text with all of the vowels (vowel points) inserted (the original Hebrew text lacked vowels). We take the Masoretic text to be the text closest to the original. However, differences between the Masoretic text and the Greek, Latin and Syriac are worth noting and, once in a great while, represent a more accurate text possessed by those other ancient translators.

In general, the Latin text is an outstanding translation from the Hebrew text into Latin and very trustworthy (I say this as a non-Catholic). Unfortunately, I do not read Latin—apart from some very obvious words—so I am dependent upon the English translation of the Latin (principally, the Douay-Rheims translation).

Underlined words indicate differences in the text.

Bracketed portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls are words, letters and phrases lost in the scroll due to various types of damage. Underlined words or phrases are those in the Dead Sea Scrolls but not in the Masoretic text.

¹³ I have begun to doubt my e-sword Douay-Rheims version, so I now use www.latinvulgate.com.

The Targum of Onkelos is actually the Pentateuchal Targumim, which are The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel. On the Pentateuch With The Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum From the Chaldee by J. W. Etheridge, M.A. Taken from <http://targum.info/targumic-texts/pentateuchal-targumim/> and first published in 1862.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so adds Abraham and so he takes a woman and her name [is] Keturah.
Targum of Onkelos	And Abraham added and took a wife, and her name was Keturah; <u>she is Hagar, who had been bound to him from the beginning.</u>
Jerusalem targum	<u>She is Hagar, who had been tied to him from the beginning.</u>
Latin Vulgate	And Abraham married another wife named Cetura.
Peshitta (Syriac)	THEN again Abraham took another wife, and her name was Kenturah.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Abraham again took a wife, whose name was Keturah.
Significant differences:	The targums speak of Keturah as if she is Hagar.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English	Abraham's death, 25:1-11 Abraham married another wife. She was called Keturah.
Easy-to-Read Version	Abraham married again. His new wife was named Keturah.
<i>The Message</i>	Abraham married a second time; his new wife was named Keturah.
NIRV	Abraham Dies Abraham married another woman. Her name was Keturah.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Abraham and Keturah's children Abraham married another wife, named Keturah.
Contemporary English V.	Abraham married Keturah,...
New Century Version	Abraham's Family Abraham married again, and his new wife was Keturah.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then AbraHam married again, and his woman's name was ChetTura.
Beck's American Translation	Abraham Remarries Abraham married again and his wife's name was Keturah.
International Standard V	Abraham Names Isaac to be His Heir Abraham had taken another wife whose name was Keturah.
Today's NIV	The Death of Abraham Abraham had taken another wife, whose name was Keturah.
Translation for Translators	Abraham died and was buried near Sarah Some time after Sarah died, Abraham married another woman, whose name was Keturah.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Abraham took and added a woman named Keturah.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Abraham and Keturah Abraham prospered, and he took a wife whose name was Keturah,...
Lexham English Bible	The Death and Descendants of Abraham Now Abraham again took a wife, and her name [was] Keturah.

NIV, ©2011

The Death of Abraham

Abraham had taken another wife, whose name was Keturah.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah.
 New Advent Bible And Abraham married another wife named Cetura:
 New American Bible (R.E.) *Abraham's Sons by Keturah.*
 Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. [25:1-11] As with the story of Terah in 11:27-32, this section lists all the descendants of Abraham as a means of concluding the story. The Jacob story ends similarly with the listing of the twelve sons (35:22-26), the death of Isaac (35:27-29), and the descendants of Esau (chap. 36). Abraham took another wife: though mentioned here, Abraham's marriage to a "concubine," or wife of secondary rank, is not to be understood as happening chronologically after the events narrated in the preceding chapter. [25:1-4] 1 Chr 1:32-33.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible **ABRAHAM TAKES QETURAH**
 And Abraham adds to take a woman;
 and her name is Qeturah:.
 Kaplan Translation *Abraham's Last Days*
 Abraham married another woman whose name was Keturah. [Keturah is] A concubine (1 Chronicles 1:32). Some sources identify her with Hagar (Targum Yonathan; Bereshith Rabbah 61; Rashi). Others, however, maintain that she was a third wife (Bereshith Rabbah 57; Zohar 1:133b; Ibn Ezra; Rashbam; Ramban on 25:6). One ancient source states that Hagar was already dead at this time (Yov'loth 19:13).
 Orthodox Jewish Bible Then again Avraham took an isha, and her shem was Keturah.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible **Abraham's Family**
 Abraham married again, and his new wife was Keturah [1Chr. 1:32].
 Kretzmann's Commentary **Verses 1-6**
 Abraham's Second Marriage
 Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. This woman was not a concubine during the lifetime of Sarah, but his wife by a second marriage, although she did not hold the status of the mother of the promised Seed, she was not included in the Messianic promise.
 NET Bible® *The Death of Abraham*
 Abraham had taken [Or "took."] [Abraham had taken another wife. These events are not necessarily in chronological order following the events of the preceding chapter. They are listed here to summarize Abraham's other descendants before the narrative of his death.] another [Heb "And Abraham added and took."] wife, named Keturah. When it comes to making an actual material change to the text, the NET Bible® is pretty good about indicating this. Since most of these corrections will be clear in the more literal translations below and within the Hebrew exegesis itself, I will not continue to list every NET Bible® footnote. Some of their notes will be reproduced in the exegesis of the chapter.
 The Voice *In time, Abraham married another woman named Keturah.*

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version English Standard Version	And continuing is Abraham, and taking is he a wife, and her name is Keturah. Abraham's Death and His Descendants Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah.
The Geneva Bible	Then again Abraham took [While Sarah was yet alive.] a wife, and her name [was] Keturah.
Green's Literal Translation Modern KJV	And Abraham added and took a wife, and her name was Keturah. Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah.
New King James Version	Abraham and Keturah Abraham again took a wife, and her name was Keturah.
Third Millennium Bible	Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah.
A Voice in the Wilderness	Then Abraham again took a wife, and her name was Keturah.
Young's Updated ¹⁴ LT	And Abraham adds and takes a wife, and her name is Keturah.

The gist of this verse: Abraham marries another wife and her name is Keturah.

Matthew Henry: *Abraham lived, after the marriage of Isaac, thirty-five years, and all that is recorded concerning him during the time lies here in a very few verses. We hear no more of God's extraordinary appearances to him or trials of him; for all the days, even of the best and greatest saints, are not eminent days, some slide on silently, and neither come nor go with observation; such were these last days of Abraham.*¹⁵ The purpose of what is recorded here is to show that God fulfilled His promises to Abraham.

Genesis 25:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
Nearly every phrase in the Hebrew begins with a wâw consecutive or a wâw conjunction; these do not have to be translated into the English each and every time.			
yâçaph (יָצַף) [pronounced <i>yaw-SAHPH</i>]	<i>to add, to augment, to increase, to multiply; to add to do = to do again; to continue to</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3254 BDB #414
ʾAb ^e râhâm (אַבְרָהָם) [pronounced <i>ahb^{ve}-raw-HAWM</i>]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4

Translation: Abraham added...

This verb, when combined with another verb, appears to have the simple meaning of *another, again*. This does not mean that Abraham adds another wife to his harem, as there is no indication that Abraham has a harem.

The first verb is yâçaph (יָצַף) [pronounced *yaw-SAHPH*], which means *to add, to augment, to increase, to multiply; to add to do = to do again; to continue to*. It is an odd but common verb and often translated like an adverb *again, another*, even though its form is like a normal imperfect verb. Strong's #3254 BDB #414.

¹⁴ Wherever you see the word *updated* (particularly in the lower case) in reference to a translation, it simply means that I ran a WP macro which changes *thou* to *you*; *hath* to *has*; etc. No real change to the text were made except to update the anachronistic words and forms of word.

¹⁵ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:1–10.

Genesis 25:1b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i>]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
ʾîshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAW</i>]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #802 BDB #61

Translation: ...and took [another] wife,...

As mentioned, the verb found in the first phrase often can be translated as *another*.

The second verb is the common Hebrew verb for *to take, to seize*. Often this second verb refers to taking a woman in marriage.

The word often translated *wife* in this verse is simply the word for *woman*. We find out that Keturah was Abraham's mistress in Genesis 25:5–6 and in 1Chronicles 1:32.

So far, we have: [Abraham added and took \[another\] wife](#) [= woman]... Many commentators on the translations point out that this chapter is not necessarily in chronological order, and that Keturah was probably added as a wife to Abraham while Sarah was still alive (she died in Genesis 23). However, they do not give a reason for this. I would assume that they make their assumption based upon his age and not producing children by Sarah. However, when God restored Abraham, this does not mean that God only restored Abraham for just that one night.

My guess is, Abraham has this wife, he has all of these children, and, he is an old man. Remember, when he fathered Isaac, this was a miracle because Abraham was sexually dead. These translators make a mistake at this point. Did God just give Abraham the ability to have sex one time, and it was over? He fathered Isaac and then God shut down Abraham's system? Let me offer a different viewpoint.

When it comes to this second family of Abraham, there are a lot of theories as to when he married this woman and at what point in his life did he father these children.

Let's first look at this question on the basis of the Hebrew. The final verse of Genesis 24 is filled with wâw consecutives and imperfect verbs. Generally speaking, that would suggest that, if what follows is a wâw consecutive and an imperfect verb, then we are observing a set of consecutive actions. Now, when there is a change of scene or a change of subject, this does not necessarily mean that we have consecutive actions. However, it seems to make the most sense that this takes place after Abraham's servant finds a wife for Isaac. There is the distinct possibility that Abraham wanted to get married again, but recognized that his son Isaac had not yet found a wife, and so he took care of this for him back in Genesis 24. This would have given Abraham cover, so to speak, to remarry.

However, with regards to these sets of actions being consecutive, it ought to be clear that we are viewing two very different circumstances when going from Genesis 24 to Genesis 25 (even though there were no chapter divisions in the original Scriptures). Therefore, we cannot conclude on the basis of the Hebrew that Genesis 25 follows chapter 24 in time.

Genesis 24:67 And Isaac brought Rebekah into his mother Sarah's tent, and he took her, and she became his wife. Furthermore, he loved her. And [because of Rebekah], Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

Genesis 25:1 And again, Abraham took a wife, and her name [was] Keturah.

Every single verb in both verses is an imperfect and every single conjunction is a wâw consecutive (until the very final phrase). I bolded these wâw consecutives and the imperfect verbs. Usually, this suggests that we have a consecutive set of actions. However, since there is such a change of scene (and the subject of the verbs changes as well), that is not necessarily the case.

Most commentators do not place this chapter in time where we find it here, after Isaac's marriage, because it is about Abraham having another wife after Sarah and then fathering more children. The main reason commentators object to this is, they assume that Abraham is too old to have children. He is about 140 years old (he will live for 175 years). So, let's crunch some numbers here. Men will notice a lessening of their sperm volume somewhere before 50–70, although they remain potent. Some men who live into their 70's or 80's are still able to produce children throughout 75% (or more) of their life spans. Abraham is 140 and he will live 175 years, so he has lived 80% of his life. Looking at it from that perspective, it is not out of the question for him to be able to have children. When God reinvigorated Abraham, there is no reason to assume that this was a one-shot deal. Quite obviously, he and Sarah had no more children, but that could be a matter of Sarah's reproductive system more than Abraham's (recall that she was, from the very beginning, called *barren*). Furthermore, Isaac was the son of promise, so there was no need for Abraham and Sarah to have another child (there would have been some breakdown in typology if Sarah had more children).

The other option is, Abraham had another wife while he was married to Sarah and other children. This would be problematic in several ways (1) God would not necessarily need to revitalize Abraham if he is having children by another woman; (2) fathering a child by Sarah would not necessarily have been that big of a deal; (3) Sarah is clearly upset over Hagar the Egyptian girl (who was Sarah's idea); but, somehow, she would not be upset over Abraham having another wife? (4) There is no doubt that Abraham doted on his two sons, Ishmael and Isaac. Therefore, there is no reason to think that Abraham needed another family while they are children to fill in the gaps in his life while Isaac was young. Finally, (5) in one previous passage, Abraham complains about going childless and having no natural heirs (Genesis 15:2). He will have 6 children in this passage. That sounds a lot like natural heirs to me. In other words, the preponderance of evidence is, Abraham remarries after Sarah dies and, even though he is an old man, he has children by his new wife.

Therefore, for these reasons, we must assume that Abraham is still potent at age 140 and he still likes women. This is not unusual for a man.

The NET Bible has the following footnote: *Abraham had taken another wife. These events are not necessarily in chronological order following the events of the preceding chapter. They are listed here to summarize Abraham's other descendants before the narrative of his death.*¹⁶ The New American Bible (Revised edition) concurs.

Genesis 25 is correctly placed, chronologically speaking

1. This chapter begins with a wâw consecutive and an imperfect verb. Most of the time, this indicates that we are following a series of events in a chronological order. Now, in the previous chapter, we saw an exception to this, when the subject was changed in a list of wâw consecutives with imperfect verbs. The result was, there were two sets of actions, each set was in chronological order, but these sets of actions overlapped—which point was defined by the change of subject. So, with respect to the verbs, what we find here seems to indicate chronological order. Likely this occurs after Genesis 24:2, which is a wâw consecutive with Abraham as the subject. Here are the verses together: **And brings her Isaac the tentward, Sarah, his mother. And so he takes [in marriage] Rebekah; and she is to him for a wife. And so**

¹⁶ From <http://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen25.htm> accessed February 13, 2013.

Genesis 25 is correctly placed, chronologically speaking

he loves her and so is comforted Isaac after his mother. And so adds Abraham and so he takes a woman and her name [is] Keturah. And so she bears to him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah. (Genesis 24:67–25:2). None of this guarantees that every single event here is in chronological order, because the subjects change. But, time-wise, this all fits together—the previous chapter and this chapter—into a sequential set of actions.

2. Insofar as I can tell, the only reason interpreters say that this cannot have occurred after the death of Sarah is, Abraham is still potent at age 137+ (his age at the death of Sarah). He is still firing bullets. They do not seem to like this, for whatever reason.
3. I want you to recall the narrative of Hagar, Little Egypt, the personal servant of Sarah; who acted as a surrogate for Abraham and Sarah, bearing a child on behalf of Sarah. Do you remember how much trouble that was? Sarah threw this woman out of her house (tent) twice. The second time, she made it stick. Sarah was not pleased with the outcome of Little Egypt bearing a child for Abraham, even though this was all Sarah's idea in the first place.
4. Therefore, logically, how do you think Sarah would have felt about Abraham having another wife on the side by whom he was having a boatload of children? Somehow, I don't think Sarah would have been cool with this idea.
5. It does not matter that polygamy was practiced by some (like King Abimelech) and accepted. That does not mean that Sarah would have tolerated another wife or mistress; particularly one who popped out child after child after child.
6. This leads us to option #2: Abraham is potent at age 137+; he marries after Sarah dies, and he begins to father a whole host of children.
7. We have no reason to think that God blessed Abraham with the ability to procreate, and then He shut it all down. Sarah did not have any more children because that would have confused the issue; but that does not mean that they discontinued conjugal relations after Isaac was born.
8. God promised Abraham that he would be the father of many nations (Genesis 17:4–5); so it makes sense for him to father children other than Isaac and Ishmael. If, at this point, Abraham has already fathered 6 children, this would be a less important promise. This promise has more impact if Abraham is the father of only one child, who is not said to be the child of promise (Genesis 17:18–19).
9. Furthermore, the promise of Genesis 17:4–5 would have been better phrased to suggest that Abraham's sons by Keturah will become many nations, if they had been born by this point in time.
10. Furthermore, do you recall the context of Genesis 17, which is Abraham being circumcised, and the meaning of this? Circumcision is associated with regeneration; Abraham's phallus, which was not functioning, would become functioning again.
11. Now, think back to what Sarah thought when she was told that she and Abraham specifically would have a son. *And Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After my being old, shall there be pleasure to me; my lord also being old?* (Genesis 18:12; Green's Literal translation). This sounds as if there has not been any sex between them for awhile.
12. Josephus, the historian, writes: *At the time of the marriage of Isaac and the transfer of Abraham's wealth to him, the children of Keturah were gone to their remote habitations.*¹ We will see that there is enough time for Abraham's children by Keturah to grow up to adulthood, be given money, and go eastward before Abraham dies.
13. Everything which occurs in this chapter makes perfect sense if taken to be in chronological order; it would actually be much more difficult to make this and the previous chapters overlap. Sarah's attitude toward Hagar does not make sense, if Abraham simply has another wife, by whom he has child after child after child. This would be the case before or after the birth of Isaac.
14. If Abraham marries Keturah after Sarah (and after the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah), then his children by her would be quite young when sent away to the east. Logically, Isaac and Ishmael would have attended Abraham's funeral (they actually saw to all of the arrangements), but his other sons, being much younger and just starting out, would likely not even be there.
15. If Abraham had married Keturah prior to the death of Sarah, then these children would have been older and more likely attendees of Abraham's funeral.
16. The only reason that one might reject the idea that this comes in chronological order is, Abraham would

Genesis 25 is correctly placed, chronologically speaking

be 137+ years old, and he is still fathering children. Or, the approach this from a different angle, when God regenerated Abraham’s potency, it was a one-shot deal, so to speak. Does that approach coincide with your concept of regeneration (which is what circumcision illustrates)?

17. Therefore, unless there is a compelling reason for this chapter to be out of chronological order, I do not see any reason to think that it is.

The strongest argument is twofold: (1) Sarah’s intolerance of Hagar suggests that she would not have tolerated Keturah. (2) The timing of God’s promise to Abraham to make him a father of many nations, thus fulfilling some of God’s promises to him.

It is possible and very reasonable that all of this plays out coterminous with Isaac’s marriage to Rebecca. Keturah may be having these children at the same time that Isaac and Rebecca go childless, a period of 20 years (which will be explained more thoroughly later on in this chapter).

¹ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 30, 2015. Coffman cites *The Life and Works of Flavius Josephus* translated by William Winston.

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Abraham added and took [another] wife... Given the number of children that Abraham fathered, let me suggest that Abraham married this woman out of need as much as from love. When God revitalized Abraham’s sexual life, it apparently was not just a one-time deal (reasonably assuming that this takes place chronologically).

These arguments are mostly taken from both John Calvin, Adam Clarke and James Burton Coffman.

I may be beating a dead horse here, but let me include the actual arguments of other expositors and refute those arguments. The issue at hand is, did Keturah become Abraham’s wife *after* Sarah had died.

The Arguments *Against* Chronological Order

Arguments

Counter Arguments

Abraham is both old and feeble when Isaac is born.

The text does not say that. Abraham is called *old* by Sarah and he was clearly not producing children and they were clearly not having sex prior to this time. However, when God regenerated Abraham’s sexual organs, there is no indication that this was a one-time regeneration.

Paul says that Abraham is key in all of this; and probably could only perform once. Romans 4:19 is often cited: **He [Abraham] did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb.** (ESV)

All of this is related to God fulfilling His promises to Abraham and Abraham’s faith in God’s Word. Prior to that particular night, Abraham was sexually dead; there is no doubt about that. Sarah also had not been producing children. None of this is evidence that Abraham was sexually regenerated for just one time.

Abraham would be acting most foolishly to take another wife after Sarah.

Why?

The Arguments *Against* Chronological Order

Arguments	Counter Arguments
<p>Maybe Moses took Keturah as his wife (or mistress) while married to Sarah. Maybe he made a bad decision because of Hagar?</p>	<p>The Bible indicates that homelife with Sarah and Hagar was not some kind of a paradise. Sarah threw Hagar out of their compound twice. Therefore, it seems unlikely that Moses would think, "This thing with Hagar worked out so well; let me take another wife."</p>
<p>Coffman provides, in my estimation, the best argument that Keturah was Abraham's wife while Sarah was alive: <i>The indication that Keturah was a "secondary wife" could not be true at all had Sarah been dead when he took her. Any marriage contracted by the patriarch AFTER the event would have made her a full wife in the highest sense. She has to be either that, or a concubine elevated to the status of secondary wife, as was Hagar, although Hagar was not a concubine.</i>¹⁷</p> <p>Deffinbaugh makes the same argument: <i>Why would Keturah be called a concubine unless Sarah were still alive and this marriage was of a lesser type?</i>¹⁸</p>	<p>In Genesis 25:1, Keturah is called a <i>wife</i> (literally, a <i>woman</i>). In v. 6, she is called a <i>concubine</i>, when it comes to the treatment of her sons (Abraham gave them money and sent them east, away from the Land of Promise). In God's view, which is similar to our view from 4000 years later, Abraham's true wife is Sarah, and through Sarah, the Seed of Promise would come. Any other woman would be a secondary wife, to God, who perceives all that is in time, and to us, reading this 4000 years later. In time, Keturah is the wife of Abraham (Genesis 25:1); but from a timeless perspective, she is a secondary wife or mistress (1Chronicles 1:32). Therefore, we find her referred to in both ways. Also, note that Genesis is a contemporary history whereas Chronicles is a perspective from hundreds of years later.</p>
<p>Keturah's sons would be 25 or 35; too young to send them out on their own. The tradition was to get married at age 40.</p>	<p>Abraham set them up financially; he sent his son Ishmael out to make it on his own at age 13; and there is simply the example of Isaac marrying at age 40—that does not mean that 40 was the customary age for a man to marry.</p>

God has promised to bless Abraham, that he would be the father of many nations. Most of the Middle East came from Abraham. If God fulfilled His promise to Abraham concerning a son; why is it impossible to imagine that God fulfilled this other promise as well, that Moses would be the father of many nations?

John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentary on the Bible*; 2nd beta version from e-Sword, Genesis 25:1.
 Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:1.
 Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:1–2.

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Genesis 25:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

¹⁷ From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 30, 2015. Coffman makes 10 short arguments in favor of Keturah being a wife while Sarah was alive, and only one of these arguments struck me as reasonable.

¹⁸ From <https://bible.org/seriespage/26-principle-divine-election-genesis-251-34> accessed July 1, 2015.

Genesis 25:1c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
shêm (שׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
Qêṭûwrâh (קְטוּרָה) [pronounced keh-oo-RAW]	<i>perfume; incense, smoke of sacrifice; transliterated Keturah</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #6989 BDB #882

Translation: ...and her name [is] Keturah.

Keturah's name means *incense, perfume*. I would not be surprised if some names in the Bible are as much descriptive as they accurate. Throughout Scripture, we see a variety of plays on words—particularly with names. So, it is not out of the question that this is a play on Keturah's original name.

Keturah's name suggests that she or her sons may have been in the business of trading perfumes and the like. From Wenstrom's notes: *Nahum Sarna has a comment regarding Keturah's name and the trade of her sons, "There was a universal and sustained demand in the ancient world for frankincense, myrrh and other aromatic resins and gums. These were needed for the requirements of the cult, for the manufacture of medicines and in the preparation and preservation of food. The prime source and producer was southern Arabia, especially the Hadramaut region, which is modern Yemen, the most fertile part of the Arabian Peninsula. Because of her name, it is reasonable to assume that the key factor behind the organization of the Keturah tribes was the spice trade—the production, shipment and distribution of this precious commodity. It so happens that both biblical and Assyrian sources mention many of the names here listed as those peoples or localities involved in this particular branch of international commerce. They controlled the trade routes that led from the Arabian Peninsula to the lands of the Fertile Crescent. This accounts for the picture of such widespread geographical diffusion of the Ketureans from southern Arabia to the Middle Euphrates region and northern Syria"*¹⁹

Genesis 25:1 Abraham added and took [another] wife, and her name [is] Keturah. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:1 Abraham took another wife whose name was Keturah. (Kukis paraphrase)

Literally, this would be translated *And so Abraham adds and so he takes a woman. And her name, Keturah.*

Matthew Henry: *He had buried Sarah and married Isaac, the two dear companions of his life, and was now solitary. He wanted a nurse, his family wanted a governess, and it was not good for him to be thus alone. He therefore marries Keturah, probably the chief of his maid-servants, born in his house or bought with money. Marriage is not forbidden to old age. By her he had six sons, in whom the promise made to Abraham concerning the great increase of his posterity was in part fulfilled.*²⁰

This particular question did not concern me, but perhaps you have worried about it? Jamieson, Fausset and Brown simply refer to her as a *secondary wife*.²¹

¹⁹ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015. Wenstrom cites The JPS Torah Commentary, page 171, The Jewish Publication Society.

²⁰ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Matthew 25:1–10.

²¹ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, Genesis 25:1–6.

When Critics Ask: Is Keturah a Wife or Concubine?

GENESIS 25:1 —Why does Genesis 25:1 call Keturah Abraham’s wife, while 1 Chronicles 1:32 calls her his concubine?

PROBLEM: Genesis 25:1 says, “Abraham again took a wife, and her name was Keturah.” However, 1 Chronicles 1:32 states, “Now the sons of Keturah, Abraham’s concubine.” Was Keturah Abraham’s wife, or was she merely one of his concubines?

SOLUTION: The contradiction is only apparent, and the problem can be easily solved by closer consideration.

First, although in Genesis 25:1 the normal Hebrew word for wife (*ishshah*) is used, it is also the normal word for woman. It is not necessary to take the word in this case to mean wife, especially in light of verse 6 and the statement in 1 Chronicles 1:32 that Keturah was his concubine. Genesis 25:1 can be read simply as, “And Abraham took another woman” as his concubine.

Second, although 1Chronicles employs the Hebrew word for concubine (*pilegsh*) in reference to Keturah, Genesis 25:6 uses the same word when referring to the mothers of all his other sons apart from Isaac. This would obviously include Keturah as one of his concubines. Additionally, Genesis 25:1 begins with a Hebrew word (*vayoseph*) which can be translated, “And adding” or “And in addition to .” Since Genesis 24:67 clearly states that Sarah, Abraham’s wife, had died, verse 1 of chapter 25 could not mean that Abraham was adding to his number of wives. It is more reasonable to take this word as indicating that Abraham was adding to his number of concubines by taking another woman (*ishshah*).

Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe, *When Critics Ask*; Victor Books; taken from e-Sword, Genesis 25:1.

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Although a concubine is clearly a secondary wife, we do not know exactly why she holds a lower status. One commentator²² suggests that she was possibly a slave—and if a wife is chosen from among the master’s slaves, that may be a reason she does not hold the same stature as the wife. There could certainly be a variety of reasons (the personal maids of Jacob’s two wives will be called his wives and mistresses).

Some critics assume that Abraham is too old to have children.

When Critics Ask—How can Abraham have more children?

GENESIS 25:1–2 —How could Abraham have children naturally here when years before he needed a miracle to have Isaac?

PROBLEM: As early as Genesis 17 , Abraham “laughed” when God told him he would have a son (Isaac) by Sarah, since he was “a hundred years old” (v. 17). But here in Genesis 25 , many years later, he has children by Keturah, the wife he took after Sarah died (vv. 1–2).

SOLUTION: There are two possibilities here, either one of which would explain this difficulty.

First, the Genesis 17 text does not say Abraham laughed because he knew he was too old to have children, but because Sarah was past childbearing age (cf. 17:17 ; 18:12). There was no sure way for a man in ancient times to know he was no longer fertile, as there was for a woman when her periods ceased. Since Abraham was only 100 here, and he lived to be 175, it is reasonable to assume that he was still fertile. By comparison, men who live till 80 today are still fertile in their 60s.

Second, even if it took a miracle on Abraham (as well as on Sarah) to restore fertility, there is no reason that

²² Peter Pett, from <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/pet/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 17, 2015.

When Critics Ask—How can Abraham have more children?

his fertile state could not have lasted for many years into the future. Once animated, his virile powers could have lasted for decades. After all, he lived 75 more years. In any event, the imagined contradiction here is simply not established.

Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe, *When Critics Ask*; Victor Books; taken from e-Sword, Genesis 25:1.

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Wenstrom: Some Bible commentators believe that Abraham married Keturah and had these six boys by her while Sarah was still alive and before he had Isaac and they cite the advanced age of Abraham to substantiate their argument. But if you recall, God rejuvenated Abraham so that he could procreate with Sarah and it appears that Abraham became prolific as a result of this demonstration of divine power on his behalf. Those who believe Abraham couldn't have fathered these children with Keturah after the death of Sarah cite Romans 4:19 as evidence of this. But Romans 4:19 was written before the Lord gave him and Sarah the ability to procreate and therefore records Abraham's attitude prior to having Isaac. Therefore, these commentators believe that the Lord gave Abraham the ability to procreate at a hundred years of age for the sole purpose of fulfilling His promise to Abraham that he and Sarah would have a child in their advanced age. But this ignores the Lord's promises in Genesis 17:5-6 that Abraham would be a "father of a multitude of nations," which resulted in the change of his name by God to "Abraham." ²³

Genesis 17:4–6 "Behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you." (ESV; capitalized) Through Keturah (and Hagar) this promise is fulfilled. There is no reason to assume that God giving Abraham the ability to procreate was just for one night.

Since Abraham is 10 years older than Sarah, and she dies at age 127, Abraham is 137 then and will live to be 175. This gives him another 38 years during which he could marry Keturah and have sons (see Genesis 17:17 23:1 25:7).

Let's list these as points:

Why Abraham married Keturah after the death of Sarah

1. The Bible makes a very big deal out of the birth of Isaac. Now, if Abraham already had 7 sons (6 by Keturah and 1 by Hagar), this would be less of a big deal.
2. Genesis 25:1 begins with a wāw consecutive and an imperfect verb; this often indicates successive events, suggesting that Genesis 25:1 follows Genesis 24 in time (Sarah's death is mentioned at the end of Genesis 24).
3. The verbs *to add* and *to take* suggest that this occurs after his marriage to Sarah.
4. We have no reason to think that God cures Abraham's sexual death for one night, and then afflicts him after that point.
5. Given Sarah's anger towards Hagar, who bore a son by Abraham because of Sarah's insistence, it seems highly unlikely that she would have accepted Keturah into Abraham's compound.

This simply summarizes a previous doctrine.

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²³ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

Abraham's new wife will bear him 6 children, all of them Arabs, and some of whom would continue to have a relationship/antagonism with Israel even to this day.

Some ancient traditions list Keturah as being the same as Hagar,²⁴ but there is no reason to suppose this. Abraham's secondary wives will also be mentioned in the plural in another passage, so if Keturah = Hagar, then there must be another secondary wife out there. It simply makes more sense to distinguish these women.

There is one question which I did not see raised—what about the idea of not marrying a Canaanite or a Hittite? Did Abraham marry someone outside of his eastern family here? First of all, that was really something related to Isaac, Rebecca and their son Esau. Secondly, there were people of the Land of Promise who believed in the God of Abraham. Thirdly, we do not know Keturah's origins.

James Burton Coffman makes an unusual assertion; insofar as I know, he is the only one to make it:

An Unusual Theory About Abraham's Children

"All that he had unto Isaac ..." In all things of importance, Isaac was the sole heir of Abraham, and Abraham did not wait and leave that inheritance in the form of a bequest, but he transferred the total wealth of his estate to Isaac while he was still living. The gifts to the sons of the concubines were a gesture of good will, as well as some small measure of justice to those in his family of inferior standing.

"The sons of the concubines ..." The word "concubines" (plural) here is of very great importance; and we should not permit "interpreters" to change it. Kline suggested that, "Perhaps the plural is abstract, 'concubinage'." [5] Speiser tells us that the text here is literally, "the sons that Abraham had by concubines," [6] but he then denied that plural should be allowed on the basis that, "only one concubine is mentioned in this context, unless Hagar is included." [7] Such views are in error. A plurality of concubines is the required meaning of the plural here, and we cannot believe that either Keturah or Hagar is included. Right here is the explanation of those 318 men "born in Abraham's house" (Genesis 14:14) who went to war with him in the rescue of the King of Sodom. Both comments cited here are nothing but ingenious denials that the sacred author used the correct word. Of course, he did. Thus it appears that Abraham had three classes of children:

- (1) The highest class was composed of Isaac, the head of the Messianic line after Abraham.
- (2) This second class was made up of the sons of secondary wives such as Hagar was and as we believe Keturah to have been. The singling out of Hagar for so much more attention was due to her having been the personal maid of Sarah through whom Abraham and Sarah had sought to produce the promised seed.
- (3) Then there were the sons of an undetermined number of concubines, unknown, unnamed, and disposed of finally by parting gifts when Abraham sent them away. Any full understanding of the life of Abraham requires recognition of these three classes and their differentiation.

This is certainly an interesting theory; but nothing is ever said of this third class of sons except as implied by Genesis 14:14, which *does not* refer to these men as *Abraham's sons*. The reference to Abraham's house does not mean that Abraham had this massive house, which could accommodate 318 sons and more. Based upon other passages, Abraham lived in a tent. So the word *house* simply refers to the compound that Abraham lived in. This passage does not necessarily mean that these are his children. It just as reasonably suggests that, Abraham had so many slaves and employees that, 318 people were born on his compound during this time. This suggests to me that too much of an assumption is being made by Coffman.

I list this for two reasons: (1) it is an interesting point of view, and Coffman is generally accurate. (2) However, this shows what you can do when you take one or two passages, give it a twist, and then build a theory upon those passages.

²⁴ Sutcliffe and others. <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jsc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 14, 2015.

From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 29, 2015.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

When Skeptics Ask: *Most people wonder sometimes why God too the trouble to write down the names of all those folks in a list like the one in Genesis 10...These lists were not trivial to the people who wrote them...They were the family tree. And you can never tell when something might come to light that makes one of those names really meaningful. For example, one of the names found in the Ebla tablets is Ibrum. There has been some talk about this being Eber, a forefather of Abraham. The names Abraham and Hebrew are derived from this name. It turns out that he was a king of Ebla. That makes him pretty important, and it tells us something of Abraham's social standing. Can't we derive some benefit from knowing that God can move so mightily in the life of a wealthy man of royal lineage who was in the public eye like Abraham? What a dramatic decision it must have been for him to leave the land where his roots were so deep.*²⁵

Furthermore, such lists were inspired by God the Holy Spirit, indicating that many of the people in such lists were believers.

And so she bears to him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah. Genesis 25:2 **She bore to him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah.**

She gave Abraham 6 male children: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so she bears to him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah.
Targum of Onkelos	And she bare to him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midyan, and Yishbak, and Shovack.
Latin Vulgate	Who bore him Zamram, and Jecsan, and Madan, and Madian, and Jesboc, and Sue.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.
Septuagint (Greek)	And she bore to him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.
Significant differences:	None.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	She became the mother of Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah.
Easy English	She had baby sons for him. Their names were Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah.
God's Word™	Keturah gave birth to these sons of Abraham: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.
NIRV	She had Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah by Abraham.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

²⁵ *When Skeptics Ask*; Geisler and Brooks, ©1990, Victor Books, p. 185.

Common English Bible	The children she bore him were Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.
Contemporary English V.	...and they had six sons: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.
New Life Bible	She gave birth to his sons, Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.
New Living Translation	She gave birth to Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	She bore to him Zombran, Jezan, Madal, Midian, Jesboc, and SoYe.
Beck's American Translation	Abraham and Keturah had the following sons: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.
International Standard V	She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.
Translation for Translators	She later gave birth to six sons: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	She begat Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian (Bedouins), Ishbak, and Shuah.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...and she bore him Zimram, and Yokshan, and Midan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuakh.
New Advent Bible	...Who bore him Zamram, and Jecsán, and Madan, and Madian, and Jesboc, and Sue.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

New American Bible (R.E.)	She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. Three of the six names can be identified: the Midianites are a trading people, mentioned in the Bible as dwelling east of the Gulf of Aqaba in northwest Arabia; Ishbak is a north Syrian tribe; Shuah is a city on the right bank of the Middle Euphrates. The other names are probably towns or peoples on the international trade routes.
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Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	She bore him Zimran, Yokshan, Medan, Midyan, Yishbak; and Shuach.
exeGesés companion Bible	...and she births him Zimran and Yoqshan and Medan and Midyan and Yishbaq and Shuach.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And she bore him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Jishbak and Shuah.
Kaplan Translation	She bore him Zimran [See Radak on Jeremiah 25:25. Some identify him with Zabram, a major city between Mecca and Medina mentioned in Ptolemy's Geography. Josephus renders the name Zambran.], Yakshan, Medan [See Genesis 37:36. Possibly associated with Medina.], Midian [A well known nation, living to the northeast of the gulf of Aqaba on the Arabian Peninsula, in what is now southern Jordan. See Genesis 37:28, 36:25. They were often involved with the Israelites; Numbers 22:4, Judges 7:12, 6:1, etc. Most significantly, Moses married a Midianite woman (Exodus 2:16).], Yishbak and Shuach [Job's friend in the land of Utz (Genesis 10:23, 22:21) was Bildad from Shuach (Job 2:11, Ibn Ezra ad loc.). In ancient times there was a nation by the name of Sachia in western Arabia, to the east of Batanaea (Ptolemy, Geography 5:15).].
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And she bore him Zimran, and Yokshan, and Medan, and Midyan, and Yishbak, and Shuach.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	She gave birth to Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian [^c ancestor of the Midianites, the tribe into which Moses married; Ex. 3:1], Ishbak, and Shuah [^c ancestor of the tribe of Job's friend Bildad; Job 2:11].
The Voice	Keturah gave birth to <i>additional children</i> : Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And bearing is she for him Zimran and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuch.
English Standard Version	She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.
Young's Updated LT	And she bears to him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.

The gist of this verse: Abraham fathers 6 children by Keturah.

Genesis 25:2a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i>]	<i>to give birth, to bear, to be born, to bear, to bring forth, to beget</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>lê</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Zim ^e rân (זִמְרָן) [pronounced <i>zihm-RAWN</i>]	musician, musical; transliterated <i>Zimran</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #2175 BDB #275
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Yâq ^e shân (יָקֹשׁ) [pronounced <i>yawk-SHAWN</i>]	<i>insidious; snarer; and is transliterated Jokshan</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3370 BDB #430

Translation: She bore to him Zimran, Jokshan,...

Abraham is said to have 6 male children by Keturah. This does not mean that these are the only children that Keturah had, or even the only male children. However, if I were to guess, I would say these are likely all of Abraham's male children by her.

J. Vernon McGee: *Somebody will raise the question, "I thought that at the time of the birth of Isaac Abraham was dead as far as his capability of bringing a child into the world." Granted, he was. But when God does something, He really does it. This is the reason I believe that anything God does bears His signature. Right here we see that this man Abraham was not only able to bring Isaac into the world, but he now brings in this great family of children.*²⁶

These children would have made up the Arabic tribes, many of whom gave grief to the Jews for many centuries. Now, this brings up the question: was Abraham out of line to have these children? Should he have toughed it out and not remarried? He already had his child of promise; isn't that good enough? Here is the answer: Abraham is responsible for himself and his immediate family. No doubt that his sons by Keturah got the same teaching and were exposed to the same God that Abraham told Isaac about. What they did with this information is another matter. We do not control the volition of our children; we can influence it and train them, but when it comes to the gospel and the importance of the Word of God, we are limited as parents. Furthermore, we do not control the volition of their children or their children's children.

This influence works both ways. I have a friend of mine who is an unbeliever and who is confused that her daughter became a believer in Jesus Christ. She did nothing to encourage this; she did not even expose her daughter to going to church, and yet her daughter believed in Jesus Christ. Like many unbelievers, she simply assumed that people become Christians because their parents brought them up that way.

God told Abraham that he would be the father of many nations. Therefore, there is nothing wrong with him remarrying and having more children.

Furthermore, God has told us, through Adam and Eve, to fill up the earth with children. We do not stop with child #2, saying to ourselves, the great, great grandchildren of #3 and #4 might give the great, great grandchildren of #1 and #2 a hard time. Therefore, there is nothing in Abraham's life and nothing in the promises of God which tell Abraham that he had better not father any more children.

Application: It ought to be clear that Islam is on a collision course with the United States, Israel and believers in Jesus Christ. There is not a lot that we can do to stave this off. If this is not setting the stage for the Tribulation, then this will be the ingredients for the great wars of the 21st century. The Islamic mindset is for world-domination; and what we see in our era, the spreading of Muslims throughout the world is the first stage of this (one could see this as Satan's counterfeit of Jews being spread throughout the world). When Muslims are appeased, it encourages them and strengthens their resolve; when Muslims are opposed, it angers them and strengthens their resolve. My point is, there is no easy solution of appeasement or limited resistance that will stave off this conflict. No politician will have the magic words to take to this or that Islamic state and establish peace between us. This ought to be clear in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict today. Presidents have tried to involve themselves in different ways between these two peoples, and, although peace treaties have been hammered out on occasion, the Palestinians continue to lob rockets into Israel and Israel has come to live with that, responding from time to time with a greater force. What has really kept Israel at peace throughout most of the past 60+ years is, the antagonistic countries surrounding Israel have found out that, if they are aggressors, Israel will respond militarily. This is how it is possible to have 20 or more antagonistic nations surrounding Israel, and yet, Israel enjoys relative peace and quiet most of the time.

Application: We currently have a president who spent time in a Muslim school; he is even accused of being a closet Muslim. However, his relationship with radical Muslims throughout the world is **worse** than George W. Bush's relationship with them, even though he was sold to us as a man who could work with Muslims. Muslims feared and respected Bush; they do not have this same attitude toward our current president. Because of the nature of our own culture, we often do not realize that strength and unpredictability (see **President Reagan**) are our capital in the rest of the world. Not many of these Muslim nations look at our "willingness to talk" as anything to be taken seriously.

²⁶ From https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt (Genesis 25); accessed July 1, 2015.

Application: However, far more important than who is president is, is the spiritual state of our nation. Do you see our churches filled with children and young people eager for the Word of God? Do you see an evangelist like Billy Graham going about the land, gathering crowds in the tens of thousands, desiring a relationship with Jesus Christ? Remember, Billy Graham’s **crusades** used to be broadcast on television (not on some cable channel but on one of the network channels, as there was no cable television back then). It was not unusual, in the 1950’s, to see Billy Graham on prime time, for several nights running, giving the gospel to this or that city. Millions were saved by viewing these broadcasts or going to his meetings. Is that going on today? In all of the various stations that I have seen, I have only seen the gospel of Jesus Christ presented on FoxNews, and that rather infrequently. At the same time, propaganda which favors homosexual activity can be seen virtually every night on broadcast television.

Application: There are a few mega-churches in the United States; and there are a number of doctrinal churches (which, insofar as I know, tend to be small). Although we have religious channels on cable now, we no longer have the gospel of Jesus Christ permeating our society’s consciousness. That is problematic for our country’s future.

Application: Black America is the same way. In my youth, the church was an essential part of the Black culture; and a huge percentage of African Americans believed in Jesus Christ. However, many of their churches turned toward social change in the 1960’s, and the gospel of Jesus Christ was changed for the gospel of activism in many of these churches. Today in many predominantly African-American churches, the exact opposite of the gospel of Jesus Christ is being taught (which would be the gospel of a large, paternal federal government).

Application: Atheism is growing in America; there is evangelism, but not on the scale of the 1950’s. So, how does God get the attention of our nation, a nation which is learning to become more and more dependent upon government and less so upon God? War and economic hardship, as well as the failure of government to provide everything it claims it can provide. A society cannot sustain itself, where half of the people are enslaved to the other half. A society has a difficult time when half pull the wagon and the other half sit in the wagon. There may come a time in the not-to-distant future when not only is our government unable to provide a safety net, which has become a welfare hammock, but it may not be able to provide even the most basic services. We are already seeing today that some cities and states lack the resources to provide law and order within their own borders. Not only does the state of California threaten to let their criminals go; they make good on this threat on a regular basis. And yet, California continues to employ a massive bureaucracy of state workers, who have the need to inspect nearly everything that Californians do; and then charge them for it. Each generation receives the leaders and the environment that they bring to themselves. In other words, we get what we deserve.

Back to Abraham’s children.

Genesis 25:2a And she bore him Zimran, and Jokshan....

Zimran means *singer, musician; music; celebration*. Smith puts his birth around 1855 B.C. We know nothing about his descendants or whether he founded any tribe of people.

Jokshan’s line is given, if only a portion of it, and Fausset²⁷ identifies him with the Cassanitae on the Red Sea, citing Ptolemy 6:7, sec. 6. Other sources did not identify him with any group.

Genesis 25:2b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
w ^e (or v ^e) (1, or 1) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251

²⁷ Andrew Robert Fausset, *Fausset’s Bible Dictionary*; from e-Sword, topic: Jokshan.

Genesis 25:2b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
’êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
M ^e dân (מֵדָן) [pronounced mehd-AWN]	<i>contention</i> ; transliterated <i>Medan</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #4091 BDB #193
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
’êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Mid ^e yân (מִדְיָן) [pronounced mihd-YAWN]	<i>strife</i> ; transliterated <i>Midian, Midjan</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #4080 BDB #193

Translation: ...Medan, Midian,...

The latter tribe is found throughout the Bible.

Fausset²⁸ writes: *[Medan] Identified with Midian in Genesis 37:28, 36. The Keturahites early merged into the Ishmaelite tribes. However, ISBE says: The tribe and its place remain unidentified, and the conjecture that the name may be connected with the Midianites is unlikely from the fact that in the list of the sons of Abraham and Keturah Midian is mentioned alongside of Medan.*²⁹

Medan is only named here and in 1Chronicles 1:32, both genealogies.

Midian, on the other hand, is a better known tribe, being found about 60 times in the Bible. However, there is no clear connection between this man Midian and the tribe of Midian, apart from the name. Fausset, however, does connect this man Midian with the tribe of that name.

J. Vernon McGee: *The interesting thing that we have before us here is the mention of Medan and Midian. The other boys will have nations come from them also, but I can't identify them. I'm not interested in them because they do not cross our pathway in Scripture, but Midian does. We will find later that Moses will go down into the land of Midian and take a wife from there. Remember that the Midianites are in the line of Abraham and so are the Medanites. So we find here the fact that there are other sons of Abraham, but the Lord has said it is through Isaac that Abraham's seed is called - not through any of these other sons. It is not through Ishmael, nor through Midian, nor Medan. All of these were nomads of the desert.*³⁰

The most famous Midian is the woman who married Moses. This is the marriage where Moses got along better with his father-in-law than with his Midianite wife.

²⁸ Andrew Robert Fausset, *Fausset's Bible Dictionary*; from e-Sword, topic: Medan.

²⁹ *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Medan.

³⁰ From https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt (Genesis 25); accessed July 1, 2015.

For about 10 years, I have been meaning to cover this doctrine. Since I have not gotten around to it yet, here is what Fausset³¹ has to say about them.

Fausset on Midian

Midian is Abraham's son by Keturah (Genesis 25:2). His descendants occupied the desert North of Arabia, and southwards the East of the Elanitic gulf of the Red Sea; northwards, along the East of Palestine. The oases of Sinai too were included in their "land," because they had pasturage stations there. As merchants passing through Palestine from Gilead to Egypt, they bought Joseph from his brethren (Genesis 37:28). They are there called Ismaelites, though Ishmael was Hagar's son not Keturah's. But being close neighbors, and related on their common father Abraham's side, and joined in caravans and commercial enterprises, Ishmael, the name of the more powerful tribe, was given as a general name for both and for several smaller associated tribes (compare Judges 8:1 with Judges 8:24). Moses fled to the land of Midian (Exodus 2:15–16, 21 3:1), in the pastures near Horeb, and married a daughter of the priest of Midian.

They were joined with Moab in desiring Balsam to curse Israel (Num. 22:4, 7 25:6, 15, 17–18), and then in tempting Israel at Shittim to whoredom and idolatry with Baal Peor. So, by Jehovah's command, 1,000 warriors of every tribe, 12,000 in all, of Israel "vexed and smote" their five kings (Zur included, father of Cozbi the Midianite woman slain with Zimri by Phinehas in the act of sin) and Balaam the giver of the wicked counsel which brought Jehovah's wrath on Israel for the sin (Num. 31:2–17). Their males and any women that knew man carnally were slain, and their cities and castles burnt. Their inferior position as tributary dependents on Moab accounts for their omission from Balaam's prophecy. (On Israel's oppression by Midian (Judges 6–8), and deliverance, see GIDEON.)

A considerable time must have elapsed to admit of their recovery from the blow inflicted by Moses. Midian by its consanguinity was more likely to corrupt Israel than the abhorred Canaanites. The defeat by Gideon was so decisive that Midian never afterward appears in arms against Israel; symbolizing Messiah's, Israel's, and the final spiritual triumph over the world (Isaiah 9:4; Habbak. 3:7) "[the curtains \(tents\) of Midian tremble.](#)" Though nomadic as the Bedouins they yet settled in the land of Moab, occupying Sihon's "cities" and "goodly castles," which they did not build (probably the more ancient ones in the Lejah are as old as Sihon and Midian), and retaining beeves, sheep, and asses, but not camels, which are needless and unhealthy in a settled state.

In their next raids on Palestine in Gideon's days they appear as nomads with countless camels. The "[gold, silver, brass, iron, tin, and lead](#)" (Num. 31:22) taken by Moses, along with the vast number of cattle and flocks, accord with the picture of their wealth in Judges (Judges 6:4–5 8:21–26), partly pastoral, partly gold, and the metals obtained either by plunder or by traffic with Arabia. (See MINES.) Traces of the name Midian appear in Modiana E. of the Elanitic gulf, mentioned by Ptolemy (vi. 7). Also the Muzeiny Arabs W. of the gulf of Akabah. Moses' entreaty of Hobab illustrates their wandering habits. (See PARAN; KENITE.)

ISBE's treatment of the Midianites can be found here:

<http://www.biblestudytools.com/encyclopedias/isbe/midian-midianites.html>

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Or, if you prefer the point-by-point approach...

Snider on Midian

1. Maintained a spiritual heritage until the time of Moses.
2. Moses married a Midianite. Ex. 2:21
3. Jethro, Moses father in law, acknowledged the true God. Ex. 18:11
4. Though friendly to Moses, they would not join Israel. Num. 10:29
5. Eventually allied themselves with Moab. Num. 22:1-7
6. During the time of the Judges, God used the Midianites to discipline Israel. Jud. 6:1ff

³¹ Andrew Robert Fausset, *Fausset's Bible Dictionary*; from e-Sword, topic: Midian. Edited.

Snider on Midian

7. Gideon eventually killed their kings and routed their army and they were no longer a force to consider. Jud. 8:28

Snider is from <http://makarios-online.org/notes/genesis/gen25.doc> accessed June 16, 2015.

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J. Vernon McGee: *[In any case,] It is the genealogy of Isaac that is followed. You can forget Ishmael and Midian and Medan and all the rest. They will cross paths with the descendants of Isaac time and again, but we will not follow their lines.*³²

Midianites were half-brothers to the Ishmaelites, and from time to time, we will see them interacting. Genesis 37:25, 28

Notice that their names Midian and Medan mean *strife* and *contention*. This foreshadows the relationship between the Jews and Arabs for many years to come. I believe that many of the names found in the Bible are not necessarily the names given to these people, but a derivation of that name which describes them or their relationship with the Jews.

Genesis 25:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Yish ^e bâq (יִשְׁבַּק) [pronounced <i>yihsh-BAWK</i>]	<i>he will leave; he releases; transliterated Jishbak, Yishbak</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3435 BDB #990
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Shûwach (שׁוּחַ) [pronounced <i>SHOO-ahkh</i>]	<i>wealth; pit, ditch; transliterated Shuah, Shuach</i>	proper masculine singular noun	Strong's #7744 BDB #1001

Translation: ...Ishbak and Shuah.

Ishbak and Shuah are only found here and in 1Chronicles 1:32; both are genealogies.

Fausset tells us of Ishbak: *From him sprang the Northern Arabians. There is a valley "Sabak" related to the name. The Keturahites extended from the borders of Palestine to the Persian gulf. Ishbak, as his name implies, left behind his brethren, having gone forth first. His dwelling was probably far away*

³² From https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt (Genesis 25) accessed June 14, 2015.

toward the Persian gulf, and also reaching into the peninsula.³³ ISBE claims³⁴ that this man is not clearly identified with any Arabic tribe.

Genesis 25:2 She bore to him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:2 She gave Abraham 6 male children: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah. (Kukis paraphrase)

Barnes gives³⁵ an entirely different set of meanings to these names; however, I don't know that is very important.

Ishbak, Jokshan, Medan, Shuah and Zimran are not mentioned in the Bible except for this passage and 1Chronicles 1:32. Only the sons of Midian are found again in ancient history. They occupied an area east of Mt. Sinai, on the other side of the gulf of Aqaba. Their relationship to the Jews was good to begin with. Moses fled to their land from the Pharaoh when he killed the Egyptian taskmaster. Moses married a Midianite from that area. After that, as Israel moved toward independence and toward the land that God had given them, their relationship with Midian deteriorated a great deal. They also became a degenerate people to the point where God ordered the execution of their males and married females. The point is that quantity is not quality. The seed of Abraham would be raised up through Isaac. It would not have mattered if Moses married a dozen women and had a dozen sons by each one; still, his seed through Isaac would be prospered.

This gives us a pretty concise rundown on what became of Abraham's children.

Bible Query on, *What happened to Keturah's Sons?*

Q: In Gen 25:2, what happened to Keturah's sons?

A: Abraham and Keturah had six known sons. Zimran is possibly the ancestor to an Arabian tribe, the Zimri in Jeremiah 25:25. Today there is a town of Zambran on the Red Sea west of Mecca.

Jokshan, is never heard of again, except that he was the ancestor of Sheba and Dedan. Sheba was a nation in the southwest corner of the Arabian peninsula. The Dedanim of Isaiah 21:13 were Arabs who probably were descended both from Jokshan and Ham through Cush (Genesis 10:7; 1 Chronicles 1:9). The city of Dedan was 100 miles (160 km) southwest of Tema on the el-'Ula oasis, 175 miles (280 km) north of Medina. Dedan is also mentioned in proto-Arabic Sabeian and Minaean inscriptions.

Medan is possibly mentioned outside of the Bible. The Wycliffe Bible Dictionary p.1093 says that the consonants "m" and "b" are interchanged often in Arabic, so these might be the Bedana tribe, which the Assyrian Tiglath-pileser III conquered.

Midian was a well-known tribe that oppressed the Israelites in Judges 8. Ishbak started a tribe that settled in north Syria and was mentioned in the Assyrian Annals of Shalmaneser III (858-824 B.C.).

Shuah was apparently the tribe from which Bildad the Shuhite came in Job 2:11. See the Wycliffe Bible Dictionary for more info on these names.

Bible Query; March 2006 version. Copyright (c) Christian Debater(tm) 1997-2006.; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:2.

³³ Andrew Robert Fausset, *Fausset's Bible Dictionary*; from e-Sword, topic: Ishbak.

³⁴ *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Ishbak.

³⁵ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:2.

There are some people who appear to show up in the book of Job. That is, their descendants might be found in Job. If that is true, then the book of Job would have taken place while the Jews were in Egypt (which would explain why the Jews or the promised land are never mentioned).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

And Jokshan begot Sheba and Dedan; and sons of Dedan were Asshurim and Letushim and Leummim.

Genesis
25:3

Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan. The sons of Dedan are the Asshurim, the Letushim and the Leummim.

Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. Dedan's sons are the Asshurim, the Letushim and the Leummim.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And Jokshan begot Sheba and Dedan; and sons of Dedan were Asshurim and Letushim and Leummim.
Targum of Onkelos	And Jokshan begat Sheva and Dedan; and the sons of Dedan were merchants, and negotiators, and chiefs of peoples [JERUSALEM. Merchants, and artificers, and chiefs of peoples.].
Latin Vulgate	Jecsan also begot Saba, and Dadan. The children of Dadan were Assurim, and Latusim, and Loomim.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Jokshan begot Sheba and Daran. And the sons of Daran were Asshurim, Letushim, and Ammim.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Jokshan begot Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were the Assurians, the Letushim, and the Leummim.

Significant differences: The targum gives a translation rather than a transliteration for the final 3 sons.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan. And from Dedan came the Asshurim and Letushim and Leummim.
Easy English	Jokshan was Sheba's and Dedan's father. Dedan's sons were Asshurim, Letushim and Leummim.
Easy-to-Read Version	Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. The people of Asshur [Or, "Assyria."], Leum, and Letush were descendants of Dedan.
God's Word™	Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. Dedan's descendants were the Assyrians, the Letushites, and the Leummites.
NIRV	Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. The children of Dedan were the Asshurites, the Letushites and the Leummites.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Later, Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan, and when Dedan grew up, he had three sons: Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim.
New Century Version	Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. Dedan's descendants were the people of Assyria, Letush, and Leum.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Jezean fathered Saba and Dedan. The sons of Dedan were the AsShurites, the Latusians, and the Laomim.
Beck's American Translation	Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. From Dedan came the Assurites, the Letushites, and the Leummites.
International Standard V	Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. Dedan's sons were the Asshurites, Letushites, and Leummites.
Today's NIV	Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan; the descendants of Dedan were the Ashurites, the Letushites and the Leummites.
Translation for Translators	Jokshan became the father of two sons, Sheba and Dedan. The descendants of Dedan were the Asshur people-group, the Letush people-group, and the Leum people-group.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Jokshan begat Sheba and Dedan (<i>oasis</i>). The sons of Dedan were Ashur, Letushim, and Leummim.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	And Yokshan begot Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Ashurim, and Tushim, and Lammim.
NIV – UK	Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan; the descendants of Dedan were the Ashurites, the Letushites and the Leummites.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

New Advent Bible	Jecsan also begot Saba, and Dadan. The children of Dadan were Assurim, and Latusim, and Loomim.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan. The descendants of Dedan were the Asshurim, the Letushim, and the Leummim. Is 21:13.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Yokshan fathered Sh'va and D'dan. The sons of D'dan were Ashurim, L'tushim and L'umim.
exeGesés companion Bible	And Yoqshan births Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan: Ashshuriym and Letushiym and Leummiym.
Kaplan Translation	Yakshan fathered Sheba and Dedan [See Genesis 10:7 and 10:28. The Targum on 1 Chronicles 1:32 translates these as Zmargad and M'zag, the same as on 1 Chronicles 1:9, and Genesis 10:7 (see note there). Since the Targum relates them, the verse may be speaking of groups that lived in specific places, and not individuals. Josephus renders Sheba here as Shabathan.]. The sons of Dedan were the Ashurim [A nation (Rashi; Josephus). See Genesis 2:14, 10:11; note on Genesis 25:18. Possibly associated with Shur or Asir in Yemen. These are omitted in Chronicles. The Targum translates the three names here as, 'caravan drivers, traders and colonists' (cf. Targum Yonathan; Bereshith Rabbah 61; Rashi; see Targum on 46:3).], Letushim and Leumim.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Yokshan fathered Sheva, and Dedan. And the bnei Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Yoqshan brought forth Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Le'ummim.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan [Is. 21:13; Jer. 49:8; Ezek. 27:20]. Dedan's descendants were the people of Assyria, Letush, and Leum.
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NET Bible®

Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan [The names Sheba and Dedan appear in Gen 10:7 as descendants of Ham through Cush and Raamah. Since these two names are usually interpreted to be place names, one plausible suggestion is that some of Abraham's descendants lived in those regions and took names linked with it.]. **The descendants of Dedan were the Asshurites, Letushites, and Leummites.**

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And Jokshan generates Sheba, and Thumun and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan come to be Raguel and Nabdeel and Ashurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.
English Standard Version	Jokshan fathered Sheba and Dedan. The sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim.
World English Bible	Jokshan became the father of Sheba, and Dedan. The sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim.
Young's Updated LT	And Jokshan has begotten Sheba and Dedan; and the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.

The gist of this verse:

Jokshan has Sheba and Dedan as two of his sons; and Dedan has 3 tribes of note who proceeded from him.

Genesis 25:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Yâq ^e shân (יָקָשָׁן) [pronounced <i>yawk-SHAWN</i>]	<i>insidious; snarer; and is transliterated Jokshan</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3370 BDB #430
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i>]	<i>to give birth, to bear, to be born, to bear, to bring forth, to beget</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Sh ^e bâ' (שֶׁבַע) [pronounced <i>sh^{eb}-VAW</i>]	<i>seven; an oath; transliterated Sheba, Sebean</i>	proper singular noun	Strong's #7614 BDB #985
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
D ^e dân (דֶּדָן) [pronounced <i>dehd-AWN</i>]	<i>low country; transliterated Dedan</i>	gentilic singular adjective/location:	Strong's #1719 BDB #186

There is an alternate way of spelling this with an *eh* ending.

Translation: Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan.

This particular pair of sons, Sheba and Dedan, are only found here and in 1Chronicles 1:32. However, there are another pair of brothers with these same names found in the line of Cush (Genesis 10:7 1Chronicles 1:9). There are two possibilities: these are simply two brothers with the same names as two other brothers or these names refers to places or cities, and both sets of sons are associated with these two places or cities.

Clarke believes³⁶ that the Sabean peoples come from Sheba; they were the ones who stole Job's cattle. According to Strabo (xvi. 779), these Sabeans were neighbours of the Nabataeans in the vicinity of Syria.³⁷

Gill notes³⁸ that from Dedan came the Dedanim or Dedanites, who are mentioned with the Arabians in Isaiah 21:13.

Keil and Delitzsch suggest³⁹ that Dedan was father to a family of traders, who lived not far from Edom (Jer. 25:23 Isaiah 21:13 Jer. 49:8 Ezekiel 24:15).

Genesis 25:3b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
D ^e dân (דֶּדָן) [pronounced <i>dehd-AWN</i>]	<i>low country; transliterated Dedan</i>	gentilic singular adjective/location:	Strong's #1719 BDB #186
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
'Ăshûwrîy (אֲשׁוּרִי) [pronounced <i>uhsh-oo-REE</i>]	<i>steps, transliterated Asherite, Asshurites, Asshurim</i>	gentilic singular adjective	Strong's #805 BDB #79

The targum of Jonathan has *merchants* instead. The targum of Onkelos has *those who dwell in camps*.⁴⁰

Translation: [The sons of Dedan are the Asshurim,...](#)

The Asshurim (Asshurites) are only connected with the Dedan and appear to be unrelated to Asshur. However, the morphology of this proper noun suggests a people rather than an individual here.

The Assyrians appear to have been descended directly from Shem, as per Genesis 10:22, rather than Dedan. We have no idea as to the interplay between the two peoples. Given the time frame here, the Assyrians would be a thriving people in the east, at this time.

According to Ancient Cyclopedia History, *In the Old Assyrian period (20th to 15th centuries BCE), Assyria controlled much of Upper Mesopotamia. Assyria grew out of the economically powerful*

³⁶ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:3.

³⁷ Paraphrased from Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:3.

³⁸ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:3.

³⁹ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:3.

⁴⁰ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:3.

city-state of Ashur, which established merchant colonies (called *karum*, Akkadian for "port") in Cappadocia. Ashur was an oligarchical city state, with the power divided between the ruler ("Steward of Ashur"), the assembly of elders, and the high priest. Shamshi-Adad I (1813-1791 BCE) conquered Ashur, made it his capital, and conquered the wealthy kingdom of Mari. His empire now encompassed northern Mesopotamia. Hammurabi (of Ammorite descent) King of Babylon, soon after defeated Shamshi-Adad's successor and made Assyria a vassal state. As the Amorites were thought to have contributed to the destruction of the great empire of Akkad, Hammurabi very purposefully called his region 'Mat Accadi' - the country of Akkad - in an attempt to link his reign to the legendary grandeur of the past.⁴¹

Although the gentilic adjective found here is not found elsewhere; but it is very closely related to the proper noun Assyria which is 'Ashshûwr (אשור) [pronounced *ahsh-SHOOR*]. Strong's #804 & #838 BDB #78. This gives us two sets of people with nearly the same name, essentially. Were the sons of Dedan's son absorbed into the Assyrian kingdom? That is certainly a possibility. This could be why Dedan's son is called *Asshurim*. Keil and Delitzsch offer a completely different option (found in the next section).

There also seem to be a group of people with this same name spoken of in **2Samuel 2:9** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Given the time frame of 2Samuel, this could be these *Asshurim*, Arab ancestors to come from Abraham through Dedan. This would also eliminate any confusion with that passage in 2Samuel 2:9.

Genesis 25:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
L ^e ṭûwshîym (לְטוֹשִׁיִּים) [pronounced <i>leht-oo-SHEEM</i>]	<i>hammered; transliterated Letushim, Letushite, Letushites</i>	adjective singular gentis	Strong's #3912 BDB #538
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
L ^e ûmmîym (לְעֻמִּיִּים) [pronounced <i>leh-oom-MEEM</i>]	<i>peoples, communities, transliterated Leummim, Leummite, Leummites</i>	gentilic singular adjective/noun	Strong's #3817 BDB #522

The targum of Jonathan has *negotiators and chiefs of peoples* instead. The targum of Onkelos has *those who dwell in tents and in islands*.⁴²

Translation: ...the *Letushim* and the *Leummim*.

The *Letushim* and *Leummim* peoples are only found in this passage. ISBE⁴³ associates them with northern Arabic tribes.

Asshurim, *Letushim* and *Leummim* are all plural, suggesting that these are Arabic tribes which are descended from Abraham.

⁴¹ From <http://www.ancient.eu.com/assyria/> accessed February 23, 2013.

⁴² Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:3.

⁴³ *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: *Letushim* and *Leummim*.

Keil and Delitzsch: *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.*⁴⁴

Genesis 25:3 Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan. The sons of Dedan are the Asshurim, the Letushim and the Leummim. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:3 Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. Dedan's sons are the Asshurim, the Letushim and the Leummim. (Kukis paraphrase)

We may reasonably suppose that all of these men are mentioned, along with some of their sons, because they have believed in the **Revealed God**.

And sons of Midian: Ephah and Epher and Hanoch and Abida and Eldaah. All these [are] sons of Keturah.

Genesis
25:4

The sons of Midian [are] Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida and Eldaah. All of these [are] descendants [lit., sons] of Keturah.

The sons of Midian are Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All of sons listed here are descendants of Keturah.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And sons of Midian: Ephah and Epher and Hanoch and Abida and Eldaah. All these [are] sons of Keturah.
Targum of Onkelos	And the sons of Midyan, Eipher, and Ephher, and Honok, and Abida, and Aldaah, all these were the sons of Keturah.
Latin Vulgate	But of Madian was born Epha, and Opher, and Henoch, and Abida, and Eldaa: all these were the children of Cetura.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the sons of Midian were Ephah, Haphar, Hanoch, Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Kenturah.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abidah, and Eldaah; all these were sons of Keturah.

Significant differences: The Latin words this slightly differently, but with the same essential meaning.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And from Midian came Ephah and Epher and Hanoch and Abida and Eldaah. All these were the offspring of Keturah.
Easy English	Midian's sons were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida and Eldaah. All those were Keturah's children.
Easy-to-Read Version	The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these sons came from the marriage of Abraham and Keturah.
<i>The Message</i>	Midian had Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah--all from the line of Keturah.
NIRV	The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida and Eldaah. All of them came from Keturah.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

⁴⁴ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:3.

Contemporary English V. New Living Translation Midian also had five sons: Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. Midian's sons were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. These were all descendants of Abraham through Keturah.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible The sons of Midian were Gephah, Apher, Enoch, Abida, and Eldaga. These were all the sons of ChetTura.

Beck's American Translation The descendants of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were Keturah's descendants.

International Standard V Midian's sons were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All of these were Keturah's descendants.

Translation for Translators The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. They were all descendants of Keturah.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ferar-Fenton Bible And the sons of Midian, Aifah, and Afer, and Hanok, and Abida, and Aldaha, all were descendants from Keturah .

Lexham English Bible And the sons of Midian [were] Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abidah, and Eldaah. All of these [were] the children of Keturah.

NIV – UK The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanok, Abida and Eldaah. All these were descendants of Keturah.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.

New Advent Bible But of Madian was born Epha, and Opher, and Henoch, and Abida, and Eldaa: all these were the children of Cetura.

New American Bible (R.E.) The descendants of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All of these were descendants of Keturah.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible The sons of Midyan were 'Eifah, 'Efer, Hanokh, Avida and Elda'ah. All these were descendants of K'turah.

exeGesés companion Bible And the sons of Midyan; Ephah and Epher and Hanoch and Abi Dah and El Daah. All these are the sons of Qeturah.

Hebrew Names Version The sons of Midyan: `Efah, `Efer, Chanokh, Avida, and Elda`ah. All these were the children of Keturah.

Kaplan Translation The sons of Midian [Midian had five kings, for each of these five nations; Numbers 31:8.] were Ephah [An Arabian tribe mentioned as bringing gold and incense in caravans from Sheba; Isaiah 60:6 (Rashi ad loc.). The Targum on Isaiah 60:6 renders it Halad, while the Targum on 1 Chronicles 1:33 renders it Chavaled.], Epher [From which Africa received its name according to Josephus. He also quotes Alexander Polyhistor (c. 100-40 b.c.e.) that this Epher conquered Libia and gave it his name, Africa (Antiquities 1:15:1).], Enoch [Chanokh in Hebrew. See Genesis 4:17, 5:18.], Avidah and Elda'ah. All these were Keturah's descendants.

Orthodox Jewish Bible And the bnei Midyan; Ephah, and Epher, and Chanoch, and Avida, and Eldaah. All these were the bnei Keturah.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann's Commentary	And the sons of Midian: Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah. The rich blessing of God shows that there was no stain attaching to this second marriage, but that it was entered into in sanctification and honor, for mutual care and assistance and for the procreation of children, the strength of Abraham having been retained in a remarkable manner, even to extreme old age. The children and grandchildren of Keturah, like those of Ishmael, became the forefathers of Arabian tribes, chiefly along the Ailanitic Gulf and northeast of it (Midianites), along the Red Sea, and along the Persian Gulf, most of them commercial nations.
The Voice	Midian's sons were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All of these were Keturah's children and grandchildren.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

World English Bible	The sons of Midian: Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.
Young's Updated LT	And the sons of Midian [are] Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abidah, and Eldaah: all these are sons of Keturah.

The gist of this verse: The sons of Midian are named; and all of these men are descendants of Keturah.

Genesis 25:4a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Mid ^e yân (מִדְיָן) [pronounced <i>mihd-YAWN</i>]	<i>strife; transliterated Midian, Midjan</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #4080 BDB #193
Ēyphâh (עֵפָח) [pronounced <i>gay-FAW</i>]	<i>gloomy, darkness; transliterated Ephah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #5891 BDB #734
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Ēpher (עֵפֶר) [pronounced <i>gay-fer</i>]	<i>a gazelle, a young hart, a stag; a calf; transliterated Epher</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6081 BDB #780
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Chănôwk (חֲנוֹךְ) [pronounced <i>khun-OAK</i>]	<i>dedicated; initiated, initiating; transliterated Enoch, Chanok, Chanoch, Hanoch</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #2585 BDB #335
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Genesis 25:4a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾĂbîydâʿ (אֲבִי־דָעַ) [pronounced ub-ee- DAWḠ]	<i>my father knows, my father took knowledge and is transliterated Abida, Abidah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #28 BDB #4
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾEl ^e dâʿâh (אֱלֹדָעַ) [pronounced ehl-daw- ḠAW]	<i>God of knowledge, God has known; God has called; transliterated Eldaah</i>	masculine singular proper noun:	Strong's #420 BDB #44

Translation: The sons of Midian [are] Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida and Eldaah.

Easton tells us that Ephah is *one of the five sons of Midian, and grandson of Abraham (Genesis 25:4). The city of Ephah, to which he gave his name, is mentioned Isaiah 60:6, Isaiah 60:7. This city, with its surrounding territory, formed part of Midian, on the east shore of the Dead Sea. It abounded in dromedaries and camels (Judges 6:5).*⁴⁵

Ephah is mentioned in associated with Midian in Isaiah 60:6, which could certainly be a reference to the peoples coming from Midian and Ephah.

Epher is the second son of Midian, descended from Abraham by his wife Keturah (Genesis 25:4 1Chronicles 1:33). Poole suggests that the continent of Africa may have come from his name.⁴⁶

There are several men in the Bible with the name Hanoch. This man only occurs here and in 1Chronicles 1:33, which is the parallel genealogy.

Abida is only found here and in 1Chronicles 1:33.

Keil and Delitzsch: *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 neighbourhood of Asir. But all this is very uncertain.*⁴⁷

Like his brothers, Eldaah is only found here and in 1Chronicles 1:33. You will notice that only Eldaah has God referenced in his name.

It has been supposed that these 5 men established kingdoms, which are mentioned in Num. 31:8 (these would not be the kings of that passage, as there are 400+ intervening years between now and then. Trapp⁴⁸ and others make that connection.

⁴⁵ M.G. Easton M.A., D.D., *Illustrated Bible Dictionary*; 1897; from e-Sword, topic: Ephah.

⁴⁶ Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:4.

⁴⁷ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:3–4.

⁴⁸ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jtc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 14, 2015.

Genesis 25:4b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kôl (לָךְ) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'êlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced ALE-leh]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective	Strong's #428 BDB #41
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Q ^o tûwrâh (קְטוּרָה) [pronounced keht-oo-RAW]	<i>perfume; incense, smoke of sacrifice; transliterated Keturah</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #6989 BDB #882

Translation: All of these [are] descendants [lit., sons] of Keturah.

These would be all of the sons born to Abraham through Keturah and some of their descendants who are listed in this passage.

The Pulpit Commentary: *All these were the children of Keturah six sons, seven grandsons, three great grandsons; in all sixteen descendants.*⁴⁹

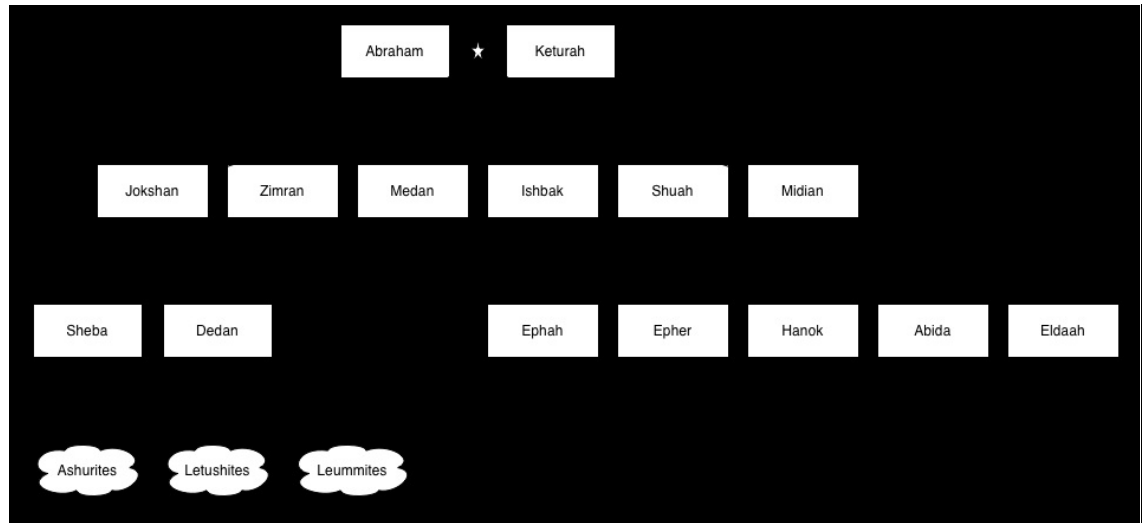
Genesis 25:4 The sons of Midian [are] Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida and Eldaah. All of these [are] descendants [lit., sons] of Keturah. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:4 The sons of Midian are Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All of sons listed here are descendants of Keturah. (Kukis paraphrase)

All of v. 4 reads: The sons of Midian are Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All of sons listed here are descendants of Keturah. It is possible that from these come the 5 kings of Midian found in Num 31:7–8 They [the Israelites] warred against Midian, as the LORD commanded Moses, and killed every male. They killed the kings of Midian with the rest of their slain, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian. And they also killed Balaam the son of Beor with the sword. (ESV)

⁴⁹ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, from e-sword, Genesis 25:4.

Clarke writes: *Of these we know no more than of the preceding; an abundance of conjectures is already furnished by the commentators.*⁵⁰



The Line of Abraham and Keturah (Chart); from [Coat of Many Colors](#); accessed June 15, 2015. This chart might be easier to follow.

In this passage, we have the 6 children of Abraham and Keturah, along with 7 grandchildren; and 3 peoples to come from one of the grandchildren.

Grandsons and great grandsons commentary is all from Wenstrom. Commentary on sons from both Clarke and Wenstrom.

Wenstrom, Snider, Driver, and Clarke on the Descendants of Abraham and Keturah

Hebrew Name	Abraham's...	Meaning/ Transliteration	Commentary
Zim ^o rân (זִמְרָן) [pronounced zihm-RAWN]	son	wild sheep, wild goat; musician, musical; transliterated Zimran	Clarke: Stephanus Byzantinus mentions a city in Arabia Felix called Zadram, which some suppose to have been named from this son of Keturah; but it is more likely, as Calmet observes, that all these sons of Abraham resided in Arabia Deserta; and Pliny, Hist. Nat., lib. vi., c. 28, mentions a people in that country called Zamarenians, who were probably the descendants of this person. Wenstrom: We are not sure of the location where Zimran and his descendants settled but Pliny mentions an Arabian tribe called "Zamareni" (Natural History 6.32.158), while Ptolemaeus (6, 7, 5) mentions a town near Mecca called "Zambran." Snider places the descendants of Zimran in western Arabia, on the coast. Driver suggests that they are associated with Ζαβραμ, which is a city west of Mecca on the Red Sea.

⁵⁰ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:4.

Wenstrom, Snider, Driver, and Clarke on the Descendants of Abraham and Keturah

Hebrew Name	Abraham's...	Meaning/ Transliteration	Commentary
Yâq ^e shân (יָקָשָׁן) [pronounced <i>yawk-SHAWN</i>]	son	<i>snare;</i> <i>insidious;</i> <i>snarer;</i> and is transliterated Jokshan	C: Several learned men have been of opinion that this Jokshan was the same as Kachtan, the father of the Arabs. The testimonies in favor of this opinion see in Dr. Hunt's Oration, De Antiquitate, etc., Linguae Arabicae, p. 4. Calmet supposes that the Cataneans, who inhabited a part of Arabia Deserta, sprang from this. W: He is identified primarily by his two sons Sheba and Dedan.
Sh ^e bâ' (שֶׁבַע) [pronounced <i>sh^{eb}-VAW</i>]	grandson	<i>seven; an oath;</i> transliterated <i>Sheba, Sebean</i>	The first son of Jokshan and first grandson of Abraham and Keturah was Sheba,...whose descendants settled in the southwestern portion of the Arabian Peninsula. Snider: <i>southwestern Arabia</i> . The land of Sheba was known for its gold according to Psalm 72:15 as well as incense and calamus according to Isaiah 60:6 and Jeremiah 6:20.
D ^e dân (דֶּדָן) [pronounced <i>dehd-AWN</i>]	grandson	<i>low country;</i> transliterated <i>Dedan</i>	The second son of Jokshan and second grandson of Abraham and Keturah was Dedan,...whose descendants settled in northwest Arabia and were famous for their role in the caravan trade (Isa. 21:13; Ezek. 27:20). Snider believes Dedan to be reasonably close to Sheba above.
The "Sheba" and "Dedan" mentioned in Genesis 10:7 are not the same "Sheba" and "Dedan" of Genesis 25:3 since the father of the former was "Raamah." The sons of Raamah of Genesis 10:7 were evidently famous since Jokshan names his two boys after them. It is possible, however, that these sons became associated with the territory of the original Sheba and Dedan.			
The names "Asshurim, Letushim" and "Leummim" below are all in the plural indicating that they are not personal names but rather that they are the descendants of the men they are named after. Snider places all of them in northern Arabia.			
ʾĀshûwrîy (אֲשׁוּרִי) [pronounced <i>uhsh-oo-REE</i>]	great grandson or descend- ants	<i>steps,</i> transliterated <i>Asherite,</i> <i>Asshurites,</i> <i>Asshurim</i>	The first son of Dedan and grandson of Jokshan and great grandson of Abraham and Keturah was "Asshuri" (Hebrew: ʾashshuri pronounced ash-shoo-ree) whose descendants are called here "Asshurim." The "Asshurim" settled near Egypt and were known from South Arabian inscriptions.
L ^e ʾûwshîym (לְאוּשִׁיִּים) [pronounced <i>leht-oo-SHEEM</i>]	great grandson or descend- ants	<i>hammered;</i> transliterated <i>Letushim,</i> <i>Letushite,</i> <i>Letushites</i>	The second son of Dedan and grandson of Jokshan and great grandson of Abraham and Keturah was "Letushi,...whose descendants are identified in Genesis 25:3 as the "Letushim" and who settled in Arabia.
L ^e ʾûmmîym (לְאוּמִיִּים) [pronounced <i>leh-oom-MEEM</i>]	great grandson or descend- ants	<i>peoples,</i> <i>communities,</i> transliterated <i>Leummim,</i> <i>Leummite,</i> <i>Leummites</i>	The third son of Dedan and grandson of Jokshan and great grandson of Abraham and Keturah was "Lehummi" (leh-oom-mee) whose descendants are identified here as the "Leummim", the name means, "people" and they settled somewhere in Arabia.

Wenstrom, Snider, Driver, and Clarke on the Descendants of Abraham and Keturah

Hebrew Name	Abraham's...	Meaning/ Transliteration	Commentary
M ^e dân (מִדְאָן) [pronounced <i>mehd-AWN</i>]	son	<i>contention;</i> transliterated Medan	C: (For Medan and Midian) Probably those who peopled that part of Arabia Petraea contiguous to the land of Moab eastward of the Dead Sea. St. Jerome terms the people of this country Madinaeans; and Ptolemy mentions a people called Madianites, who dwelt in the same place. W: His descendants shipped spices from Gilead to Egypt (Gen. 37:36) and are grouped along with the Ishmaelites (Gen. 37:25) and the Midianites (Gen. 37:28) in this trade. Snider place the descendants of Medan along the <i>eastern shore of the Gulf</i> . Driver (referencing Wetzstein) suggests an association with the Wady Medan near Dedan.
Mid ^e yân (מִדְיָאן) [pronounced <i>mihd-YAWN</i>]	son	<i>strife;</i> transliterated Midian, Midjan	W: His descendants were a well-known Arabian tribe east of the Gulf of Aqabah and the Red Sea. They traded in gold and incense according to Isaiah 60:6, Genesis 37:25, 28, and did this from Moab to Sinai and Ephah according to Numbers 22:4, 7, Judges 6-8. The first wife of Moses, Zipporah was a Midianite and her brother Hobab guided Israel through the steppe of Sinai (Num. 10:29-32) and later, Midianites in association with the Moabites fought Israel (Num. 25; 31:1-12) and Gideon drove them out of Israel (Judges 7-8). Snider: <i>they were scattered widely in northwestern Arabia, on Sinai peninsula, even east of Palestine near Moab</i> . Driver: <i>In Ex. ii. 15, iii. 1 they appear also in the neighbourhood of Sinai. ' The nomad branches of the tribe wandered northward along the margin of the desert, making forays into Edom, Moab ^xxxvi. 35 ; cf Nu. xxii. 4, 7), and Gilead, and even pouring across Gilead into Palestine ' TJud. vi.—viii.). Cf ch. xxxvii. 28, 36.</i>
Ellicott suggests ⁵¹ that Medan and Midian <i>coalesced into one tribe</i> ; which was certainly known to have happened (Genesis 34 is an example of where such a coalescence could have occurred).			
Midian's 5 sons live south and east of Canaan (Snider).			
‘Ëyphâh (הַפִּיֵּי) [pronounced <i>gay-FAW</i>]	grandson	<i>gloomy,</i> <i>darkness;</i> transliterated Ephah	The first son of Midian and grandson of Abraham and Keturah was “Ephah,...whose descendants are identified in Assyrian inscriptions as the “Haiappa.” The “Annals of Sargon” (721-705 B.C.E.) list the “Haiappa” together with other Arab tribes whose lived in the region of the Red Sea coast.
‘Ëpher (הַפִּיֵּי) [pronounced <i>GAY-fer</i>]	grandson	<i>a gazelle, a</i> <i>young hart, a</i> <i>stag; a calf;</i> transliterated Epher	The second son of Midian and grandson of Abraham and Keturah was “Epher.” The location of where “Epher” and his descendants settled has not been identified as of yet.

⁵¹ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/ebc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 29, 2015.

Wenstrom, Snider, Driver, and Clarke on the Descendants of Abraham and Keturah

Hebrew Name	Abraham's...	Meaning/ Transliteration	Commentary
Chănôwk (חֲנוֹךְ) [pronounced <i>khun-OAK</i>]	grandson	<i>dedicated; initiated, initiating;</i> transliterated <i>Enoch, Chanok, Chanoch, Hanoch</i>	The third son of Midian and grandson of Abraham and Keturah was “Hanoch.” The location of where “Hanoch” and his descendants settled has not been unidentified as of yet.
ʾĂbîydâʿ (אֲבִידָא) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-DAWĠ</i>]	grandson	<i>my father knows, my father took knowledge and is transliterated</i> Abida, Abidah	The fourth son of Midian and grandson of Abraham and Keturah was “Abida.” We know nothing about “Abida” and his descendants and where they settled at this particular time. Driver says a Minaean inscription might refer to Abida, calling a king of Maʿan (in Southern Arabia) <i>Abî-yadaʿa</i> .
ʾEl̄dâʿâh (אֵלְדָאָה) [pronounced <i>ehl-daw-GAW</i>]	grandson	<i>God of knowledge, God has known; God has called;</i> transliterated Eldaah	The fifth and final son of Midian and who was a grandson of Abraham and Keturah was “Eldaah.”
Yish̄ebâq (יִשְׁבַּק) [pronounced <i>yihsh-BAWK</i>]	son	<i>he will leave; he releases;</i> transliterated Jishbak, Yishbak	C: From this person Calmet supposes the brook Jabbok, which has its source in the mountains of Gilead, and falls into the sea of Tiberias, took its name. W: His descendants are identified as “lasbuq” in a monolith inscription of Shalmaneser III (858-824 B.C.) indicating that his descendants settled in northern Syria.
Shûwach (שׁוּח) [pronounced <i>SHOO-ahkh</i>]	son	<i>wealth; pit, ditch;</i> transliterated Shuah, Shuach	C: From this man the Sacceans, near to Batanla, at the extremity of Arabia Deserta, towards Syria, are supposed to have sprung. Bildad the Shuhite, one of Job’s friends, is supposed to have descended from this son of Abraham. W: descendants settled on the middle Euphrates between Babylon and Mari. Snider: <i>[most place Shuah] somewhere in the Syro-Arabian desert.</i>

Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:2.

Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

Snider is from <http://makarios-online.org/notes/genesis/gen25.doc> accessed June 16, 2015.

Driver is from Driver’s [The Book of Genesis](#); accessed July 1, 2015 (Genesis xxv).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

The Other Sons of Abraham:

So far, we have studied the first 4 verses:

Genesis 25:1–4 Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bore him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And Jokshan fathered Sheba and Dedan. And the

sons of Dedan were Asshurim and Letushim and Leummim. And the sons of Midian: Ephah and Epher and Hanoch and Abida and Eldaah. All these were the sons of Keturah.



Map of the Location of the Sons of Keturah. From [Wikipedia](#); accessed July 3, 2015. Wikipedia: *Apparent and approximate emigration patterns of Abraham's children by Keturah, excepting those about whom not enough is known to draw a conclusion.*⁵²

From Wikipedia: Shuah (Hebrew: שׁוּחַ, pronounced "Shuakh"; "ditch; swimming; humiliation"[1] or "sinks down"[2]) was the sixth son of Abraham, the patriarch of the Israelites, and Keturah whom he wed after the death of Sarah.[3] [YPERLINK"https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shuah"](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shuah)⁴ He was the youngest of Keturah's sons; the others were Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, and Ishbak.[3]

Shuah in Greek is Σωυε, transliterated Soie.[5]

Josephus gave his name as Σοῦος (Sous in Whiston).[6]

Josephus writes of the brothers that "Abraham contrived to settle them in colonies; and they took possession of Troglodytis,[7] and the country of Arabia the Happy, as far as it reaches to the Red Sea." [6] In all probability, Abraham tried to keep them apart from Isaac to avoid conflict while fulfilling God's commission to spread out and inhabit the globe. [8] [9] [citation needed] But unlike his brothers, Shuah seems to have turned northward and travelled into northern Mesopotamia, in what is now the northern region of modern day Syria. As evidenced by cuneiform texts, the land seems to have been named after him, being known as the land of Sûchu which lies to the south of ancient Hittite capital of Carchemish on the Euphrates river.⁵³



Map of the Peoples of Arabia (before Christ); from [Save the True Arabs](#); accessed July 3, 2015. This is somewhat of a questionable site; so I have no idea how accurate this map is. However, on the other hand, there is little reason to distort the locations of these tribes (and, for us today, it is pretty much a best guess scenario anyway). The point being made in the post is likely not true (about the Kushites and the Canaanites being Semitic).

⁵² From <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shuah> accessed July 3, 2015.

⁵³ From <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shuah> accessed July 3, 2015.

Matthew Henry: *These sons of the concubines were sent into the country that lay east from Canaan, and their posterity were called the children of the east, famous for their numbers, Judges 6:5, 33. Their great increase was the fruit of the promise made to Abraham, that God would multiply his seed. God, in dispensing his blessings, does as Abraham did; common blessings he gives to the children of this world, as to the sons of the bond-woman, but covenant-blessings he reserves for the heirs of promise.*⁵⁴

The Bridgeway Bible Commentary: *[S]ince Isaac was the promised heir, only he could remain in Canaan and receive Abraham's inheritance. Abraham therefore gave gifts to his minor wives and their children and sent them off to establish independent lives elsewhere. They became ancestors of various Arab tribes (25:1-6).*⁵⁵

Coffman, paraphrasing Henry Morris: *Through millennia of migrations and intermarriages, it seems likely that all of these peoples, the descendants of Keturah, together with the descendants of Ishmael, Lot, and Esau, along with earlier descendants of Shem, and, in some cases, Ham, have gradually merged and become the modern day Arabic peoples.*⁵⁶

The Bible gives us a clear record of the sons of Jacob and where these tribes lived, and their movements about the land, as well as their dispersion. Some of these Arabic lines are found mentioned here and there, but, as specific lines, they fade from history much sooner. The Arabs continue, but not so that they can be identified as coming from this or that son of Abraham.

These are the descendants of Abraham by Keturah. This is a **cluster genealogy**, and we will not revisit this people to see where their genealogies go. Only the *line of promise* is followed completely throughout the Old Testament, all of the way from Adam to Jesus.⁵⁷ Unless a cluster genealogy is a part of that line, we *never* return to it. I would not be surprised if those named are the believers in that line, and that they are named in Scripture for that reason. These men are not heathen; they are raised by Abraham, who is dedicated to his God. So they would have heard and retained knowledge of God. The name of one child (Eldaah) indicates that his parents thought about God.

Chuck Smith: *And so forth, and the names mean nothing to us and probably never will. As I told you so often, it'll follow a line just for a generation or two and drop them; that's the end of it because this line has nothing to do with Jesus Christ. It'll follow it for a generation or so, and pop, that's it. Whatever happened to them, where they went, who they became, nobody knows. That's just they're not significant to the story. The story's about Jesus Christ.*⁵⁸

As we studied, two of the descendants have familiar names (the Asshurim and Midian). We do not know if there is a relationship or not between them and the Assyrians or Midianites. The Assyrians are already an established people. Midian, although it will not be spoken of as a people until Genesis 36, this is only 100 years later (both mentions are associated with genealogical lines, so putting dates to those mentioned is quite difficult to do). Now, can Midian become a small people in 100 years time? It is certainly possible. It would not be unheard of for there to be in excess of 1000 males in the 4th generation from Midian (although that would indicate unusual growth). So, the Midian here may or may not be related to the Midian people of Genesis 36.

Most of these sons were fathers to various Arab tribes, these founders, for the most part, being lost to history except for these few verses. This Sheba is different from the one found in Genesis 10:7 and 28. Having the same name, being in the same line and/or having a brother with the same name does not make people equal. If I heard

⁵⁴ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:1–10.

⁵⁵ From <http://www.studyLight.org/commentaries/bbc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 30, 2015.

⁵⁶ From <http://www.studyLight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 30, 2015. Coffman cites Henry Morris, *The Genesis Record*, p. 408.

⁵⁷ The only **linear genealogies**, apart from the line of Christ, are found in the first 8 or so chapters of 1Chronicals.

⁵⁸ From <http://www.studyLight.org/commentaries/csc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 14, 2015.

there was a Caucasian family in California with two brothers with names John and David, I would not assume these are my brothers. That's foolishness. Similarly, unless context and time period dictate it, people in the Bible can have the same name, often be in the same line, and not be the same person. It is normal to be named after an uncle, a great grandfather, etc. The country Sheba (now, Yemen) was probably populated by one of the Sheba's found in Genesis 10. The point of these verses is that God had plans and promises for just one person of Abraham's sons and that was Isaac. Isaac was not just regenerated, but he would become a mature believer. We can assume that most of Abraham's children became believers, although at Abraham's advanced age, his ability to raise his children were probably severely hindered.

It is a reasonable question to ask: *why do we have this list of names, most of whom we know little or nothing about?* God promised Abraham that there would be kings and kingdoms which come from him; and these make up some of those kings and kingdoms. This reveals that God keeps His Word. If this was left out, can you imagine the critics, who would crow, "Isaac and Ishmael make up many nations? Pul-leese."

V. 5 is a very short verse, and many translators combine vv. 5–6 into one sentence.

<p>And so gives Abraham all which [is] to him to Isaac, and to sons of the mistresses which [are] to Abraham, gave Abraham gifts [or, bribes]. And so sends them off, Abraham, from with Isaac his son in his yet living eastward unto a land of east.</p>	<p>Genesis 25:5–6</p>	<p>Abraham gave all that [was] his to Isaac; but to the sons of his [lit., the] mistresses, Abraham gave gifts [or, bribes]. Then Abraham sent them away from Isaac his son, while he was yet living [lit., in his yet living], eastward to the land of the east.</p>
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Abraham gave all that was his to Isaac; however, he gave expensive bribes to the sons of his mistresses and then sent them far away from his son Isaac eastward to the land of the east (Abraham did this while he was still alive, of course).

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so gives Abraham all which [is] to him to Isaac, and to sons of the mistresses which [are] to Abraham, gave Abraham gifts [or, bribes]. And so sends them off, Abraham, from with Isaac his son in his yet living eastward unto a land of east.
Targum of Onkelos	And Abraham gave the gift of all he had to Izhak. And to the sons of the concubines of Abraham gave Abraham <u>riches and moveable property</u> as gifts, and sent them away from Izhak his son while he (yet) lived; and they went and dwelt eastward in the land of the orient.
Latin Vulgate	And Abraham gave all his possessions to Isaac: And to the children of the concubines he gave gifts, and separated them from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, to the east country.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Abraham gave everything that he had to Isaac. ⁶ But to the sons of his concubine, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac, his son, eastward to the east country, while he was still alive.
Septuagint (Greek)	But Abraham gave all his possessions to Isaac his son. But to the sons of his concubines Abraham gave gifts, and he sent them away from his son Isaac, while he was yet living, to the country of the east.

Significant differences: The targum adds a few words.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Now Abraham gave all his property to Isaac; But to the sons of his other women he gave offerings, and sent them away, while he was still living, into the east country.
Easy English	Abraham gave everything that he had to Isaac. However, Abraham gave gifts to his *concubines' sons. While Abraham was still alive, he sent those sons away from his son Isaac. He sent those sons towards the country that was in the east.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Abraham left everything he owned to Isaac; but while he was still alive, he gave presents to the sons his other wives had borne him. Then he sent these sons to the land of the East, away from his son Isaac.
<i>The Message</i>	But Abraham gave everything he possessed to Isaac. While he was still living, he gave gifts to the sons he had by his concubines, but then sent them away to the country of the east, putting a good distance between them and his son Isaac.
NIRV	Abraham left everything he owned to Isaac. But while he was still living, he gave gifts to the sons of his concubines. Then he sent them away from his son Isaac. He sent them to the land of the east.
New Simplified Bible	Abraham left everything he owned to Isaac. While Abraham was still alive, he gave gifts to the sons of Hagar and Keturah. He also sent their sons to live in the east far from his son Isaac.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	While Abraham was still alive, he gave gifts to the sons of Hagar and Keturah. He also sent their sons to live in the east far from his son Isaac, and when Abraham died, he left everything to Isaac.
New Berkeley Version	Abraham left all he had to Isaac; but, while still living, Abraham gave presents to the children of his concubines and sent them away eastward to the Kedem country [Where the Lord had shown Hagar and Ishmael a spring when they were thirsty.], out of Isaac's way.
New Century Version	Abraham left everything he owned to Isaac. But before Abraham died, he did give gifts to the sons of his other wives, then sent them to the East to be away from Isaac.
New Life Bible	Abraham gave all he had to Isaac. But while he was still living, Abraham gave gifts to the sons of the women he kept who acted as his wives. And he sent them to the land of the East, away from his son Isaac.
New Living Translation	Abraham gave everything he owned to his son Isaac. But before he died, he gave gifts to the sons of his concubines and sent them off to a land in the east, away from Isaac.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	However, Abraham gave all of his possessions to his son Isaac (he [just] gave gifts to the sons of his concubines). Then (while he was still living) he sent them away from his son Isaac, to an eastern country.
International Standard V	Abraham gave everything he owned to Isaac. While he was still alive, Abraham gave gifts to his concubines [Lit. <i>concubines whom Abraham had.</i>] and sent them to the east country in order to keep them away from his son Isaac.
Translation for Translators	Abraham declared that after he died, Isaac would inherit everything he owned. But while Abraham was still living, he gave gifts to the sons of his «concubines/slaves that he had taken to be his secondary wives», and then he sent them away to live in a land to the east, to keep them far from his son.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Abraham gave all that was his to Isaac. When Abraham still lived, Abraham gave gifts to the concubines' sons. He sent them from Isaac, his son, east into the ancient land.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Abraham left all that was with him to Isaac, but to the sons of his secondary wives that Abraham had, Abraham gave fortunes and sent them from his own son Isaac, during his own life, to the east of the eastern country.
Lexham English Bible	And Abraham gave all he had to Isaac. But to the sons of Abraham's concubines Abraham gave gifts. And while he [was] still living he sent them away eastward, [away] from his son Isaac, to the land of the east.
New Advent Bible	And Abraham gave all his possessions to Isaac: And to the children of the concubines he gave gifts, and separated them from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, to the east country.
NIV – UK	Abraham left everything he owned to Isaac. But while he was still living, he gave gifts to the sons of his concubines and sent them away from his son Isaac to the land of the east.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	Abraham left everything he owned to Isaac. To the sons of his concubines Abraham gave presents, and as long as he lived he sent them away from his son Isaac, to the land of the east.
The Heritage Bible	And Abraham gave all that was his to Isaac. 6 And Abraham gave gifts to the sons of the concubines who were Abraham's, and sent them away from Isaac, his son, eastward, to the east country while he yet lived.
New American Bible	Abraham deeded everything that he owned to his son Isaac. To his sons by concubinage, however, he made grants while he was still living, as he sent them away eastward, to the land of Kedem, away from his son Isaac. The land of Kedem: or "the country of the East," the region inhabited by the Kedemites or Easterners (? Genesis 29:1; ? Judges 6:3, ? 33; ? Job 1:3; ? Isaiah 11:14). The names mentioned in ? Genesis 25:2-4, as far as they can be identified, are those of tribes in the Arabian desert.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Abraham gave everything that he owned to his son Isaac [Amid so many descendants, Abraham takes steps that Isaac will be his favored heir.]. To the sons of his concubines, however, he gave gifts while he was still living, as he sent them away eastward, to the land of Kedem [The land of Kedem: or "the country of the East," the region inhabited by the Kedemites or Easterners (29:1; Jgs 6:3, 33; Jb 1:3; Is 11:14). The names mentioned in vv. 2-4, as far as they can be identified, are those of tribes in the Arabian desert.], away from his son Isaac.
New Jerusalem Bible	Abraham left all his possessions to Isaac. To the sons of his concubines Abraham made grants during his lifetime, sending them away from his son Isaac eastward, to the Land of the East.
Revised English Bible	Abraham had assigned all that he possessed to Isaac; and he had already in his lifetime made gifts to his sons by the concubines and had sent them away eastwards, to a land of the east, out of his son Isaac's way.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Avraham gave everything he owned to Yitz'chak. But to the sons of the concubines he made grants while he was still living and sent them off to the east, to the land of Kedem, away from Yitz'chak his son.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Abraham willed all that he owned to Isaac; but to Abraham's sons by concubines Abraham gave gifts while he was still living, and he sent them away from his son Isaac eastward, to a land of the East.
Kaplan Translation	All these were Keturah's descendants.

Abraham gave all that he owned to Isaac.

To the sons of the concubines that he had taken, Abraham [also] gave gifts. Then, while he was still alive, he sent them to the country of the East [It seems that all these lived in the Arabian peninsula, and Josephus supports this. He also writes that they took over the lands of the Troglodytes, an ancient people living along the Red Sea (Antiquities 1:15:1; see Herodotus 4:183; Didorus 3:31; Strabo 17:771).], away from his son Isaac.

Orthodox Jewish Bible

And Avraham gave all that he had unto Yitzhak.

But unto the bnei hapilageshim (sons of the concubines), which Avraham had, Avraham gave mattanot, and sent them away from Yitzchak bno, while he yet lived, eastward, unto eretz kedem.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible

And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac. But to the sons of his concubines [Hagar and Keturah] Abraham gave gifts, and while he was still living he sent them to the east country, away from Isaac his son [of promise].

The Expanded Bible

Abraham left [gave] everything he owned to Isaac. But before Abraham died [while he was still alive], he did give gifts to the sons of his other wives [concubines], then sent them to the East to be away from Isaac [to prevent rivalry over Abraham's inheritance].

Kretzmann's Commentary

And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. Isaac was the recognized legal heir, who also received the stock of the herds and the essential parts of Abraham's possessions. He was, moreover, the bearer of the Messianic blessing.

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. Although neither Keturah nor even Hagar were concubines in the later sense of the term, yet, in comparison with Sarah, the mistress and mother by special divine interposition, they were of secondary rank. Their children, therefore, could not claim an equal division of the property with Isaac, the heir of the promise, whose inheritance the land of Canaan was to be. Abraham simply established Ishmael and all the sons of Keturah with enough property in small herds and flocks, together with the necessary servants, that they had their maintenance. They moved into the country toward the southeast and east, and there grew up into tribes. Among these descendants of Abraham the knowledge of the true God was found for a long time, their spiritual inheritance thus proving of greater value than the temporal gifts.

NET Bible®

Everything he owned Abraham left to his son Isaac. But while he was still alive, Abraham gave gifts to the sons of his concubines [Heb "the sons of the concubines who [belonged] to Abraham."] and sent them off to the east, away from his son Isaac [Heb "And he sent them away from upon Isaac his son, while he was still living, eastward to the land of the east."].

The Voice

In the end, though, Abraham gave everything he owned to Isaac. 6 To the sons of his concubines, Abraham gave gifts while he was still alive. But then he sent them away to the east, far away from what would now be his son Isaac's household.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

English Standard V. – UK

Abraham gave all he had to Isaac. ⁶ But to the sons of his concubines Abraham gave gifts, and while he was still living he sent them away from his son Isaac, eastwards to the east country.

Leupold

And Abraham gave all he had to Isaac. But to the sons of Abraham's concubines, Abraham gave gifts and sent them away from Isaac his son during his own lifetime, eastward to Kedem (East Country).

NASB	Now Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac; ⁶ but to the sons of his concubines [Lit concubines which belonged to Abraham], Abraham gave gifts while he was still living, and sent them away from his son Isaac eastward, to the land of the east.
Webster's Bible Translation	And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac. But to the sons of the concubines which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son (while he yet lived) eastward, to the east country.
Young's Updated LT	And Abraham gives all that he has to Isaac; and to the sons of the concubines whom Abraham has, Abraham has given gifts, and sends them away from Isaac his son (in his being yet alive) eastward, unto the east country.

The gist of this verse: While Abraham was alive, and at the point that his children reached a majority age, Abraham would send them toward the east with a gift.

Genesis 25:5

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâthan (נתן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i>]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
'Ab ^e râhâm (אברהם) [pronounced <i>ahb^{ve}-raw-HAWM</i>]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]; also kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>all, all things, the whole, totality, the entirety, everything</i>	masculine singular noun without the definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
The sign of the direct object indicates to me that <i>all things</i> is a reasonable rendering.			
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
I could not find any indication that these three words together mean anything other than <i>all that, all things which [that] [is, are]</i> .			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>le</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>le</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Yis ^e châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced <i>yih^s-KHAWK</i>]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850

Translation: Abraham gave all that [was] his to Isaac;...

The bulk of Abraham's considerable fortune was given to Isaac. Despite having this whole other family, Abraham recognizes that Isaac is the heir of promise. He is the one through whom God will bless all mankind. Like most things in the Old Testament, Abraham did not fully appreciate what that meant. Throughout the centuries, more and more information will be revealed about the line of promise and all that it means; Abraham only knows the promises which God has given to him (these will all be **summed up** later in this chapter).

The Bible, Poverty, Inheritance, Wealth, and Spreading the Wealth Around:

By the way, it is legitimate to leave a fortune to your child; the Bible does not speak against it, as long as your focus is right. God never comes to Abraham and says, "You need to start spreading your wealth around; you have too high of a percentage of the wealth." Abraham, through his wealth, employed a great many people—some of them slaves and some of them employees. There is not even the slightest hint that there is something wrong with this. Later, Isaac will inherit this wealth, and at no time does God indicate that there is something wrong with his inherited wealth.

In fact, God does not even encourage Abraham to divide up his money equally. Listen to this, if your parents or grandparents have money or possessions and they choose to pass them on, it is strictly up to them who gets what. Do not contest a will just because you don't think you were treated fairly. Christians should not be taking one another to court. Christians should not be taking family members to court over money.

There are a lot of socialists and communists and people on the left side of the political spectrum who will lecture Christians about the rich young ruler and how Jesus told him to sell everything and follow Him (he was to give the proceeds to the poor; not to the government, by the way). But these same people do not seem to be aware of just how rich Abraham is and how God *never* tells Abraham that he is too rich. Isaac will inherit his wealth, and even the Bible tells us that Isaac was a very rich man. Furthermore, Isaac has many half-brothers, and Abraham clearly gives them less than he gives to Isaac. The Bible does not require equality.

Jacob will inherit Isaac's wealth as well (Jacob will be born later in this chapter). Not only was Job very rich, but, after enduring all the suffering that he endured, God made him quite as wealthy. Jesus has at least two rich friends that we know of, and He never criticizes their wealth.

The Bible is not anti-rich nor does it view the poor as being just a little more noble than the rich. Every person has a sin nature. Some of those who are rich became rich through evil means; and others earned their wealth legitimately. Some people are poor through no fault of their own; others are poor because of the many mistakes that they made in their lives (or because they are lazy).

On the other hand, the Bible does speak of providing for the poor; and, in nearly every case, this requires that the poor do some of the work themselves. For instance, there is an ordinance of the Mosaic Law where farmers are to leave the corners of their land unharvested. The poor were allowed to come in and harvest this food for themselves. The farmers did not deliver this food to the poor.

There is absolutely nothing in the Bible which suggests that a government should encourage their poor to sit at home and wait for a check from the government in the mail; or wait for their newest load on their EBT card. I am not encouraging selfishness here nor am I saying that those who are rich should hoard their wealth. Wealth is a great responsibility, and the wealthy Christian needs to bear that in mind. However, there is nothing in the Bible which suggests that all rich people should immediately divest themselves of all their assets.

Capitalism has been a great force for good in the world, and millions upon millions of poor people have come to the United States and have, through hard work, made themselves financially independent; and some of them have even become wealthy. And for the enterprising immigrant who comes to this country and embraces our values, very often the second generation has a level of wealth which is above average.

There are people who reach a point where they are unable to take care of themselves. Then families should step in; and if there is no family, then private charities and individuals should step in.

I know a person who is retirement age who has been living off the government for sometime now—probably over a decade. Ask her why she is collecting money for disability, and she will spout of a litany of health concerns, none of which actually would prevent her from working. There are millions of people like this in the United States who live off disability insurance; and in nearly every case, when you ask about that, they will give you a list of their physical problems. These same people are able to maintain a residence, they can go shopping, they can make food for themselves, they can see that their lawns are mowed, and many of them have gym memberships. Yet, when pressed, they will portray themselves as nearly helpless and unable to be employed. This is not God's plan for the believer or the unbeliever. We are not designed to live off the hard work of other people, and such a mentality not only is a stain on our nation, but could bring our nation down, both financially and spiritually.

Don't misunderstand me here. There are real cases of people who are very nearly unemployable. They ought to be taken care of—first by family, and then, if necessary, charity; and then, if there is not enough of the former, government. The Bible set up a government where 3 $\frac{1}{3}$ % was set aside each year for the poor. Our federal government **spends about 2/3rds on entitlement programs**, most of which are set up so that they cannot be easily changed.

Whereas, I am not in favor of more government jobs (the government coming in and making work for such people), I am in favor of taxpayers being able to make use of such people. The increasing number of elderly in our country need help, and this population ought to be helping the elderly who live near to them. The person I mentioned is able to see to her own personal needs and to take care of the environment around her (she keeps her lawn mowed, etc.). She is exactly the sort of person, this woman on disability, who ought to be looking for opportunities to help those who are less fortunate. They can be fed, shopped for, kept company, etc. Nearly every person on disability is able to provide these services for others who actually need them.

One program which I think ought to be put into effect on the local level (in cities or counties) is a web page where tax payers can hire tax recipients (welfare and others who live on transfer payments) at a reduced rate (say, \$5/hour, since we already pay taxes to support them). The could be hired to mow lawns, babysit, grandparent sit, shop for food, make meals, etc. All stuff that nearly every person is physically capable of doing. On the website, which would only be a way for both sides to connect, would be comments, along the lines of Amazon, about the employers and the employees. If a tax recipient showed up to work smelling of alcohol or smelling foul; or if their attitude was unpleasant, this should be noted. If a taxpayer was unfair in anyway in their employing a tax recipient, that should be noted as well. An employer with a lot of negative comments would not find it easy to hire people; and an employee with many negative comments would have a difficult time finding work.

Both sides would be exempt from taxes, from providing medical insurance, etc. This would cost the local government next to nothing; and they could freeze or reduce welfare payments, since people could use this webpage to gain more money to live off of. This would both help to reduce local budgets and help to encourage people to work.

Anyway, I have gone far afield, the main point being, God does not hate wealthy people; nor does repudiate such persons—Abraham and Isaac being notable examples of men blessed by God with wealth.

Genesis 25:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or וי) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Genesis 25:6a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
pîylegesh (פְּלִגֶּשׁ) [pronounced <i>pee-LEH-geesh</i>]	<i>mistress, paramour, illicit lover, live-in lover, concubine</i>	feminine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #6370 BDB #811
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾAb̄erâhâm (אֲבִרְחָם) [pronounced <i>ahb^{ve}-raw-HAWM</i>]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i>]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
ʾAb̄erâhâm (אֲבִרְחָם) [pronounced <i>ahb^{ve}-raw-HAWM</i>]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
mattânâh (מַתָּנָה) [pronounced <i>maht-taw-NAW</i>]	<i>gifts, presents; bribes</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #4979 BDB #682

Translation: ...but to the sons of his [lit., *the*] mistresses, Abraham gave gifts [or, *bribes*].

Abraham had at least two mistresses (that is, secondary wives): Hagar and Keturah. It is possible that he took on other mistresses who are not named here (although I doubt that). Although it says that Abraham gave gifts to his sons, this word can also be a bribe; and the gift could be conditional upon these sons, once they reach adulthood, to take whatever Abraham gives them (say, \$10,000) and skedaddle. The idea was, the land in which they are born is promised to Isaac. That is a done deal. Therefore, to keep the family from feuding over his wealth, Abraham would send each of his sons east with a stipend to get them started in life.

The NIV Study Bible: *The law of primogeniture provided that at least a double share of the father's property be given to the firstborn son when the father died (Deut. 21:15–17). Parallels to this practice come from Nuzi, from Larsa in the Old Babylonian period and from Assyria in the Middle Assyrian period. Isaac was Abraham's firstborn son according to the law.*⁵⁹ Obviously, because the Law of Moses has not been given yet, Abraham is not under the Mosaic Law. However, he would be acting according to the promises of God.

This is not a wrong thing; nor are these sons being given the short shrift here. They receive enough money to make it worth their while to get started in the world. Furthermore, what enterprising kid at age 20 or so wouldn't

⁵⁹ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 42 (footnote).

prefer a large initial capital investment as opposed to maybe getting some inheritance another 10 or 20 or 30 years down the line?

Keturah was Abraham's wife, but she is likely referred to here as a concubine (a mistress). It is likely that concubine is in the plural to refer to both Keturah and Hagar (although this does not preclude another mistress). These women are called wives elsewhere (Genesis 16:3 25:1⁶⁰). However, the point of this verse is that Abraham only had one wife, Sarah. This was the only woman for him and his child by her was the child through whom all of God's promises would be fulfilled.

Genesis 25:6b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAKH</i>]	<i>to send, to send off, to send away, to dismiss, to give over, to cast out, to let go, to set free, to shoot forth [branches], to shoot [an arrow]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿim (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
Together, these prepositions mean: <i>from with, beside, from being with, away from, far from, from among, from the possession of, from the custody of, from the house of, from the vicinity of, out of the power of, from the mind of.</i>			
Yis ^e châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced <i>yihse-KHAWK</i>]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

Translation: Then Abraham sent them away from Isaac his son,...

Abraham would send these sons away so that they would be separate from Isaac. Abraham had clearly become a very wealthy man, and if any of these young men remained with him, they could have potentially vied for Isaac's birthright (this will be a theme which plays out with Isaac's twin sons).

The *children* which Abraham sent away were not little children; they were in their 20's or early 30's.⁶¹ God had promised the land to Isaac and Abraham, and not to these children. Allowing them to stay in the land would necessitate that Isaac's progeny eventually drive them out or kill them. It would be easier for Abraham to send them out of the land while they were under his authority.

⁶⁰ The Hebrew word is the same for *wife* and *woman*.

⁶¹ And, they might have been in their teens.

Do not look upon this as cruel or selfish. If a young man has some get up and go, what better than \$10,000 (or whatever) for him to get a business started? Sure, some children would just consume the money, spending it on wine, women and song; but remember, these are Abraham's children, brought up with a sense of responsibility.

Don't confuse Abraham's children with some of the ne'er-do-wells that you may observe in your neighborhood. They are not of the same character.

Genesis 25:6c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿôwd (וּד) [pronounced <i>gohd</i>]	<i>still, yet, again, besides, in addition to, even yet</i>	adverb with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5750 BDB #728
With the bêyth preposition, ʿôwd means <i>while, while yet, while [it is] still; while [it is] yet, in the time that; within.</i>			
chay (חַי) [pronounced <i>KHAH-ee</i>]	<i>living, alive, active, lively, vigorous [used of man or animals]; green [vegetation]; fresh [used of a plant]; flowing [water]; reviving [of the springtime]; raw [flesh]</i>	adjective	Strong's #2416 BDB #311

Translation: ...while he was yet living [lit., in his yet living],...

Abraham did not set up a will, that this or that son would receive an inheritance, and then he must move eastward. Abraham oversaw this process himself. He did this because he believed in the Word of God, which promised a great inheritance to Isaac. He knew what God had promised Isaac, and he was not going to do anything to screw that up.

In the previous lesson, we talked about Abraham having more children, and that the result is, there are millions of people alive today, descended directly from Abraham, who have great animus toward the Jews. Abraham could not foresee this; nor did God require of Abraham to lead some sort of a monkish lifestyle after having one child. The Jews, being God's people, are going to have trouble wherever they are. Germans (some of them; the Nazis were actually a very small percentage of the German population), the sons of Japheth, tried to destroy the Jews in WWII.

All a father can do is properly raise his children. For the children who were not those who would inherit the promises made to Abraham, Abraham no doubt explained the whole thing to them and their future. This is not a big deal to a child who is grace oriented. I am not a Jew; I was not born a Jew. I do not concern myself with that fact. It is a neutral fact to me; it is not great, good or bad. So, a child of Abraham's, who is told about Abraham's God and God's promises to Abraham, can live a great life, in accordance with the plan of God. They can still have a relationship with Abraham's God as well. None of this is rejection; none of this is dereliction on the part of Abraham. Abraham understands God's plan; Abraham understands that the line of promise goes through Isaac, so Abraham does nothing to confuse the issue.

By the way, notice that Abraham acts. God has made promises; and Abraham acts in accordance with those promises. These promises were not fulfilled because Abraham acted as he did; Abraham simply acted in accordance with the Word of God.

Genesis 25:6d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
qêdem (קֵדֶם) [pronounced KAY-dem]	<i>east, antiquity, front, that which is before, aforeside; in front, mount of the East; ancient time, aforeside, ancient, from of old, earliest time; anciently, of old; beginning; eastward, to or toward the east</i>	noun/adverb with the directional hê	Strong's #6924 BDB #870
The hê locale: However, this word, after a verb of motion, has the locale <i>âh</i> (ה) ending. This is called the <i>directive hê</i> or the <i>he locale</i> , which often indicates direction and puts somewhat of an adverbial spin on the noun. Essentially, it answers the question <i>where?</i> The pronunciation of the word does not change. The directional hê indicates the direction in which something moves. It is often used with the noun <i>heaven</i> and the most literal rendering in the English would be <i>heavenward</i> . We can also indicate the existence of the hê directional by supplying the prepositions <i>to</i> or <i>toward</i> .			
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #776 BDB #75
qêdem (קֵדֶם) [pronounced KAY-dem]	<i>east, antiquity, front, that which is before, aforeside; in front, mount of the East; ancient time, aforeside, ancient, from of old, earliest time; anciently, of old; beginning; eastward, to or toward the east</i>	noun/adverb	Strong's #6924 BDB #869 & #870

Translation: ...eastward to the land of the east.

Abraham knew that he had an inheritance that was important to give to Isaac alone. This does not mean that Keturah's children were dispatched to the far, far east, to the region where Abraham was born and raised. Probably, most of them were sent to the other side of the Jordan and the other side of the Dead Sea.

Barnes: The East is a general name for Arabia, which stretched away to the southeast and east of the point where Abraham resided in the south of Palestine. The northern part of Arabia, which lay due east of Palestine, was formerly more fertile and populous than now. The sons of Keturah were probably dismissed before they had any children. Their notable descendants, according to custom, are added here before they are dismissed from the main line of the narrative.⁶²

Although Abraham's descendants through Isaac were to be given a sizeable inheritance of land, that does not mean that Abraham needs to demarcate these boundaries right at this point in time. In the Millennium, Israel will be one of the largest nations on earth (but there will be other nations).

⁶² Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:5–6.

There is something else likely at play. These young men would have had a relationship with the God of Abraham. Therefore, they would have potentially been ancient evangelists for the God of Abraham and Isaac. God must reveal Himself to anyone who has positive volition at the point of God consciousness. If the gospel message would be accepted by any person, regardless of his geographical location, then God's righteousness demands that this person hear about the Revealed God, so that he may believe in Him. As we have studied many times, faith in the Revealed Lord is necessary for salvation, no matter what dispensation one lives in. So, when these men went abroad, as it were, they were also witnesses to the God of Abraham. Some of them may have been evangelists and some of them may even be very prominent in heaven. God may have used them to spread the message of the Revealed God.

Genesis 25:5–6 Abraham gave all that [was] his to Isaac; but to the sons of his [lit., *the*] mistresses, Abraham gave gifts [or, *bribes*]. Then Abraham sent them away from Isaac his son, while he was yet living [lit., *in his yet living*], eastward to the land of the east. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:5–6 Abraham gave all that was his to Isaac; however, he gave expensive bribes to the sons of his mistresses and then sent them far away from his son Isaac eastward to the land of the east (Abraham did this while he was still alive, of course). (Kukis paraphrase)

Genesis 25:6 Abraham gave all that [was] his to Isaac; but to the sons of his mistresses, Abraham gave gifts [or, *bribes*]. Then Abraham sent them away from Isaac his son, while he was yet living [lit., *in his yet living*], eastward to the land of the east.

We actually have some options of how to interpret this entire verse. *Mistresses* is in the plural, and we know of two: Keturah and Hagar. My best guess is, all of their sons were sent away; and most were sent away to the east (Hagar and her son being the exceptions). This could be interpreted that we are speaking of Abraham's mistresses after the death of Sarah, suggesting that Keturah was one of them—that there was at least one more mistress. However, I do not think that is the case, and it is only recorded that Hagar and Keturah are Abraham's mistresses. The Bible does not mention any other children to come from Abraham. I simply believe that their names and a brief history would have been included if there were women besides Keturah and Hagar. After all, that would have been in further fulfillment of God's promises.

There is also that very interesting phrase in this verse, *while he was yet living*. If you understand this, it might put a smile on your face. Abraham sent away his sons to the east with a pocketful of money while he (Abraham) was still alive. This implies that he had one or two sons who were still young that Abraham did not attend to personally in this way, because they were too young. The implication is, Abraham continued to have sons to the last 10 or 15 years of his life. No doubt, God worked out all of the timing.

Benson makes an interesting comment at this point: *How happy would it be if all parents, in the time of health, would take care to settle, by will, the division of their goods among their children! What confusion! what quarrels! what discord! what never to be reconciled animosity among brethren, might this prevent! These sons of the concubines, as they are here called, were sent into the country that lay east of Canaan, and their posterity were termed the children of the east, famous for their number. Their great increase was the fruit of the promise made to Abraham, that God would multiply his seed.*⁶³

Genesis 25:6 But to the sons of his [lit., *the*] mistresses which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts [or, *bribes*]. And he sent them away from Isaac his son while he [Abraham] still lived, eastward to the east country.

The Land of Promise was to be inherited by a particular line of people, which would go through Abraham, Isaac and eventually Jacob. God never made these other children a part of this promise, so Abraham accordingly shipped them out east.

⁶³ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/rbc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 30, 2015.

We know from current history just how much strife and war can result from this plot of ground. Abraham is acting in such a way as to reduce strife.

God's Promises to Abraham:

Before we get to Abraham's death, let's sum up the promises which God made to him.

Let's add to this a summary of the promises that God has made to Abraham.

A Summary of God's Promises to Abraham (from Robert Dean)

- 1) God promised to make a great nation from Abraham. Although there will be many nations the primary focus of the Old Testament is on Israel. Furthermore, when God's people are gathered into a large enough group, as we have in the present nation Israel, there will be problems—not because of anything they do themselves, but simply because they are God's people.
- 2) God promised a specific piece of real estate. The Bible lays out these boundaries, which designate a land much larger than Israel has ever been. Genesis 12:7 13:14–17 15:7–21 17:8.
- 3) God promised that Abraham was to be blessed. This began in Abraham's life immediately. In Genesis 15, Abraham is revealed to be one of the wealthiest men in the world.
- 4) God promised that Abraham's name would be great. Abraham would be famous. More people know Abraham's name today than any name of any king of that same era.
- 5) Those who bless Abraham would themselves be blessed. Those who recognize and appreciate that God has a great future for Abraham's descendants are be blessed. Nations which ally themselves with Israel are blessed.
- 6) Those who curse Abraham [treat him lightly] will be harshly punished. This could have the additional meaning that, treating Abraham lightly would suggest that they treat the God of Abraham lightly as well. As a result, such a person would receive some cursing in time; but clearly cursing in eternity.
- 7) In Abraham all nations will be blessed. This promise is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the seed, according to Galatians 3. Therefore, it is through Abraham that everyone is blessed.
- 8) Abraham is promised that Sarah in particular will have a son. This son of promise would not be by a mistress or by a surrogate. Gen. 15:1–4 17:15–21
- 9) God promised that Abraham's descendants will spend 400 years in bondage in Egypt. Gen. 15:13–15
- 10) God promised that there would be other nations which would come from Abraham, apart from the Jews. Many Arab nations can trace themselves back to Ishmael or Abraham's second wife Keturah (which has been the focus of our study so far in this chapter). Genesis 17:3–6
- 11) God changed Abraham's name from *Abram (Exalted Father)* to *Abraham (father of multitudes)*. This makes Abraham clearly the recipient of these promises. Genesis 17:5
- 12) Sarai's name was changed to *Sarah*, from *My Prince* (which is somewhat of a masculine name) to *Princess*. Gen. 17:15
- 13) The token or sign of the covenant is circumcision. As we have studied previously, circumcision refers to the new birth. Originally, circumcision takes that which is dead and gives it new life. Its later use indicates identification with the God of Abraham (Jews who are circumcised are given this sign of identification with Abraham and with his God).

You will note that, on each occasion that God spoke to Abraham, He either expanded upon His original promises or He gave additional promises. The principles involved are, progressive revelation and doctrine is built upon doctrine. In Genesis 12, God laid out the most basic promises to Abraham, which were, nonetheless, quite important; and then He built upon those promises in each meeting which followed.

This list is from [Dean lesson 067](#), accessed June 11, 2013.

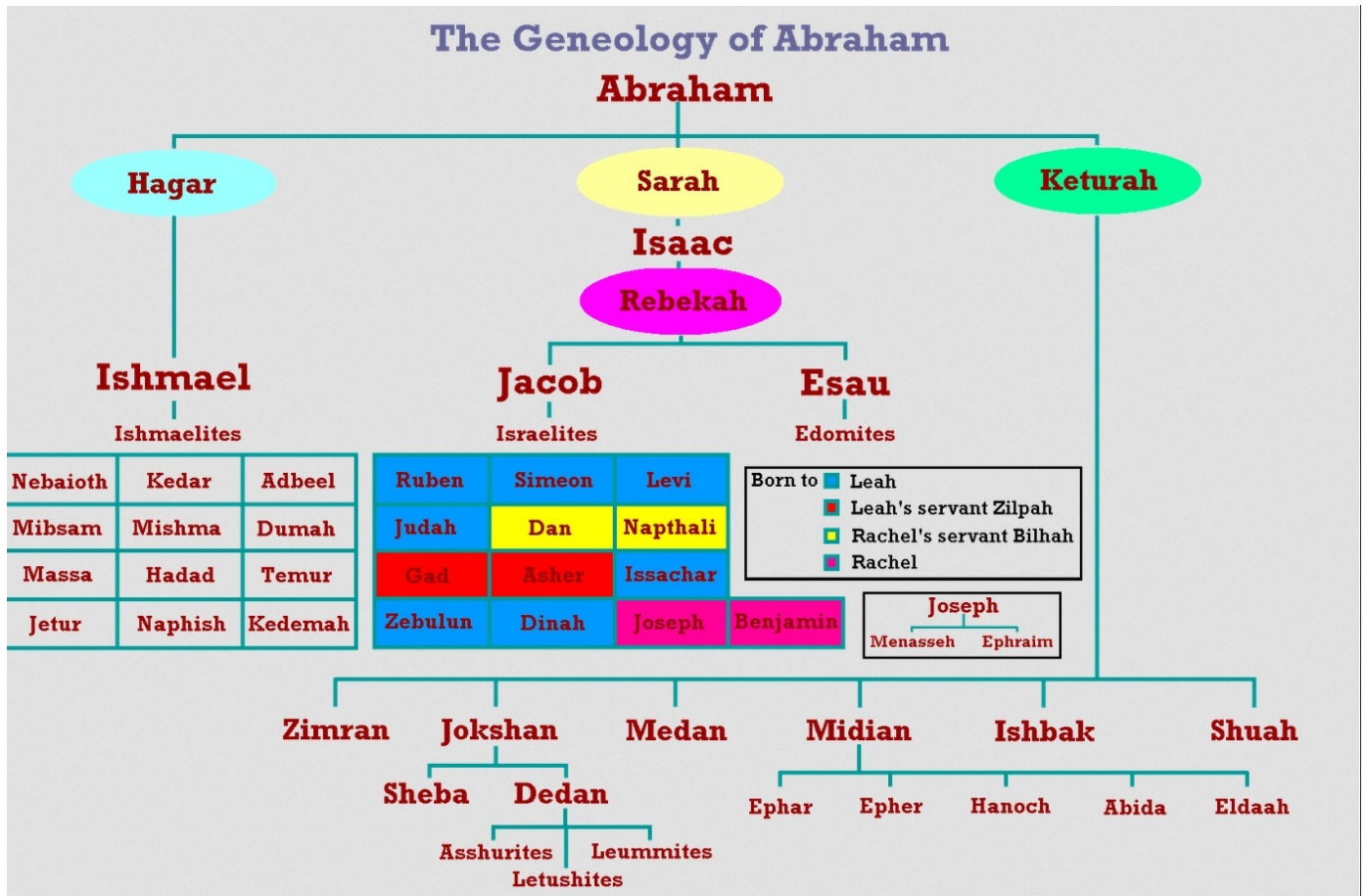
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These first 6 verses read: [Abraham took another wife whose name was Keturah. She gave Abraham 6 male children: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah. Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan.](#)

Dedan’s sons are the Asshurim, the Letushim and the Leummim. The sons of Midian are Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All of sons listed here are descendants of Keturah. Abraham gave all that was his to Isaac; however, he gave expensive bribes to the sons of his mistresses and then sent them far away from his son Isaac eastward to the land of the east (Abraham did this while he was still alive, of course). This is a cluster genealogy—probably a list of all the believers born to Keturah by Abraham. Although they will likely establish various groups of Abraham, they are not a part of the line of promise.

The Genealogy of Abraham (chart); from [Wikimedia](#); accessed June 15, 2015.



Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Vv. 5–6: Abraham gave all that [was] his to Isaac; but to the sons of his [lit., *the*] mistresses, Abraham gave gifts [or, *bribes*]. Then Abraham sent them away from Isaac his son, while he was yet living [lit., *in his yet living*], eastward to the land of the east.

Snider Summarizes Genesis 25:5–6

1. Abraham makes and executes his will while he is still alive, so that there can be no confusion after his
2. Isaac, as the heir, inherited all things, apart from the token gifts which were given to his other sons.3. This included:
 - 1) all economic wealth. Gen. 24:35
 - 2) all spiritual promises and blessings.
 - 3) line of Messiah.
 - 4) priesthood.

Snider Summarizes Genesis 25:5–6

- 5) **Super Grace 3** promises, including, land, innumerable descendants, etc.
- 6) Anti-semitism clause
3. Isaac was blessed by association with his father Abraham. 26:24
4. The adjusted child himself will come under the blessing of God as he adheres to the the doctrine, but an adjusted parent can certainly get him off on the right foot.
5. Of course Isaac had to believe and apply the doctrine in order to excel spiritually, which he would do.
6. There were two other women in the life of Abraham, called concubines by whom Abraham had children.
7. He does not do any disservice to them, but acknowledges them with presents.
8. A concubine was a woman in ancient societies who was, or could be the legal wife of a man, and could enter into legitimate sexual relations with her master.
9. God, as we know tolerated this, but never commanded it, since His plan has always been one man and one woman.
10. The concubine was not free, but could be a slave as in the case of Hagar, or could be exalted to the status of wife. as in the case of Keturah.
11. She did not have the rights or privileges of a free wife, however.
12. Concubines held a place of honor and her children could become co-heirs with a legitimate son.
13. While this may have been the custom, Abraham wanted no misunderstandings and so made all arrangements before his death.
14. While he was still alive, he divided his estate as he chose and sent the children of the concubines out of Canaan.
15. Canaan was to be Isaac's and there were to be no misunderstandings.
16. It is important to note that nothing good ever came from these descendants, which is not to say that some of them did not believe.
17. They were often a snare and enemies of Israel, even though they were descended from Abraham.
18. Typically all other descendants, including Ishmael, occupied the region to the east of Canaan, extending south along the peninsulas.
19. Those who would attempt to advocate this practice today, as some do, have no Biblical support, based on NT revelation. Matt. 19:1ff, ICor. 7:2ff; Eph. 5:22ff; ITim. 3:2,12

From <http://makarios-online.org/notes/genesis/gen25.doc> accessed June 16, 2015.

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Whedon: *Some...think that these tribes subsequently became intermixed by marriage. Midian, Ephah, and Sheba are mentioned together in Isaiah 60:6. These tribes were nomadic, and probably for a time wandered, like Abraham, to and fro in the wide deserts south and east of Palestine. They probably, at a subsequent date, became largely intermingled with the Ishmaelites, and are represented now in the numerous Arab tribes of these same ancient deserts.*⁶⁴ So, we know that these Arabic peoples come from Abraham; but we do not know their exact descent.

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Abraham's Death

And these [are] days of years of lives of Abraham which [he] lives: a hundred a year and seventy a year and five years.

Genesis
25:7

And these are the days of the years of the life of Abraham which [he] lived: 175 years.

⁶⁴ From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/whe/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 30, 2015.

Abraham lived for 175 years.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And these [are] days of years of lives of Abraham which [he] lives: a hundred a year and seventy a year and five years.
Targum of Onkelos	And this is the number of the days of the life of Abraham, who lived a hundred and seventy and five years.
Latin Vulgate	And the days of Abraham's life were a hundred and seventy-five years.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And these are the days of the years of Abrahams life which he lived, a hundred and seventy-five years.
Septuagint (Greek)	And these were the years of the days of the life of Abraham, <u>as many as</u> he lived, one hundred and seventy-five years.

Significant differences: There appears to be some additional words in the LXX; however, all of these ancient texts appear to be in agreement.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Now the years of Abraham's life were a hundred and seventy-five.
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Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Abraham's death Abraham lived to the age of 175.
Contemporary English V.	Abraham died at the ripe old age of one hundred seventy-five.
New Life Bible	Abraham lived 175 years.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

Beck's American Translation	Abraham Dies Abraham was 175 ⁸ when he died. A portion of v. 8 was included for context.
Translation for Translators	Abraham lived until he was 175 years old.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Abraham lived a hundred seventy five years as the days and years of his life.
HCSB	This is the length of Abraham's life: 175 years.
Lexham English Bible	Now these [are] the days of the years of {the life of Abraham}: one hundred and seventy-five years.
Leupold	The whole length of Abraham's life was one hundred and seventy-five years.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, one hundred and seventy-five years.
New American Bible (R.E.)	<i>Death of Abraham.</i> The whole span of Abraham's life was one hundred and seventy-five years.
New Jerusalem Bible	The number of years Abraham lived was a hundred and seventy-five.
New RSV	This is the length of Abraham's life, one hundred and seventy-five years.

Revised English Bible Abraham had lived for a hundred and seventy-five years⁸ when he breathed his last. A portion of v. 8 was included for context.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible This is how long Avraham lived: 175 years.
 JPS (Tanakh—1985) This was the total span of Abraham's life: one hundred and seventy-five years.
 Kaplan Translation This, then, is the account of Abraham's years [Literally, 'These are the days of the years of Abraham's life that he lived;' see Genesis 25:17. We interpret 'days' here as being idiomatic for 'account.']. He lived a total of 175 years [It can easily be seen from the dates given in scripture here that Isaac was 75 years old, and Ishmael 88 when Abraham died. Jacob and Esau were 15; see note on Genesis 25:29.].

Orthodox Jewish Bible And these are the days of the years of Avraham's life which he lived, a hundred threescore and fifteen shanim.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible The days of Abraham's life were 175 years.
 The Expanded Bible Abraham lived to be [These are the days of the years of the life of Abraham] one hundred seventy-five years old.

NET Bible® Abraham lived a total of [Heb "and these are the days of the years of the lifetime of Abraham that he lived." The normal genealogical formula is expanded here due to the importance of the life of Abraham.] 175 years.

Kretzmann's Commentary **Verses 7-11**
 Abraham's Death and Burial
 v. 7. And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years. So he lived fully seventy-five years after the birth of Isaac and saw his grandsons grow up to the age of youths,
 v. 26. That also is a blessing of the Lord, Psa_128:6⁶⁵ [= Indeed, may you see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel!].
 Abraham lived a total of 175 years.

The Voice

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

English Standard Version These are the days of the years of Abraham's life, 175 years.
 New King James Version **Abraham's Death and Burial**
 This is the sum of the years of Abraham's life which he lived: one hundred and seventy-five years.

Third Millennium Bible And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, a hundred threescore and fifteen years.

World English Bible These are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived: one hundred seventy-five years.

Young's Literal Translation These are the days of the years of Abraham's life, 175 years.

The gist of this verse: Abraham lived for 175 years.

⁶⁵ I have no idea why it reads v. 26 here. V. 26 reads *And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau.* For some reason, this particular page in *Study Light* was messtup. It includes vv. 21–28 from another chapter in Genesis for no apparent reason.

Genesis 25:7

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced <i>ALE-leh</i>]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective	Strong's #428 BDB #41
yâmîym (יָמַיִם) [pronounced <i>yaw-MEEM</i>]	<i>days, a set of days; time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
shânîym (שָׁנַיִם) [pronounced <i>shaw-NEEM</i>]	<i>years</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
chayyîym (חַיִּים) [pronounced <i>khay-YEEM</i>]	<i>life, lives, living, being alive, having life, immortality, a long life, sustenance, sustaining life; refreshment; being vigorous; prosperity, welfare, happiness, living prosperously</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #2416 BDB #313
'Ab ^e râhâm (אֲבִרְחָם) [pronounced <i>ahb^{ve}-raw-HAWM</i>]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
chay (חַי) [pronounced <i>KHAH-ee</i>]	<i>living, alive, active, lively, vigorous [used of man or animals]; green [vegetation]; fresh [used of a plant]; flowing [water]; reviving [of the springtime]; raw [flesh]</i>	masculine singular adjective; pausal form	Strong's #2416 BDB #311
mê'âh (מֵאָה) [pronounced <i>may-AW</i>]	<i>one hundred, a hundred, hundred</i>	feminine singular numeral; construct form	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i>]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shib ^e îym (שִׁבְעִים) [pronounced <i>sh^{ve}-GEEM</i>]	<i>seventy</i>	numeral	Strong's #7657 BDB #988
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i>]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Genesis 25:7

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
châmêsh (חַמֵּשׁ) [pronounced <i>khaw-MAYSH</i>]	<i>five</i>	masculine singular numeral	Strong's #2568 BDB #331
shânîym (שָׁנַיִם) [pronounced <i>shaw-NEEM</i>]	<i>years</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040

Translation: And these are the days of the years of the life of Abraham which [he] lived: 175 years.

Abraham lived an additional 38 or 39 years after the death of his wife Sarah. The children which he had by Ketura are evidence that God had rejuvenated him. The Midianites are evidence that he did have children; that these are not just names written down in a book. However, the rest of his children are lost to ancient history with only their general direction alluded to in v. 6. Being gathered to his people, a phrase used here for the first time, indicates that Abraham was resurrected and is with his ancestors and with Sarah.

The phrase *days of the years of the life of Abraham* suggest a long and fulfilled life. This suggests that every day was a day of life. We may know very little about Abraham and this period of time, but the little bit that is written indicates that his life was full, that he enjoyed his new wife and his children; and yet, he was always cognizant of God's promises and acted accordingly. Abraham was not *helping God*; he simply recognized what God had promised and acted within those boundaries.

Barnes does all of the arithmetic for us: *[Abraham] survived Sarah 38 years, and Isaac's marriage 35. His grandfather lived a148 years, his father 205, his son Isaac 180, and his grandson Jacob 147; so that his years were the full average of that period.*⁶⁶

Abraham's life will overlap the life of his grandson, Jacob; although we do not read anything about them meeting. In fact, Esau and Jacob would have been 15 at this time, having been born to Isaac at age 60 (Genesis 25:26).

The Ages of Abraham's Descendants at his Death

Abraham	Isaac	Ishmael	Jacob	Esau
175	75	88–89	15	15

[Chapter Outline](#)

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Genesis 25:7 And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life, which he lived: a hundred seventy-five years.

Genesis 25:7 And these are the days of the years of the life of Abraham which [he] lived: 175 years. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:7 Abraham lived for 175 years. (Kukis paraphrase)

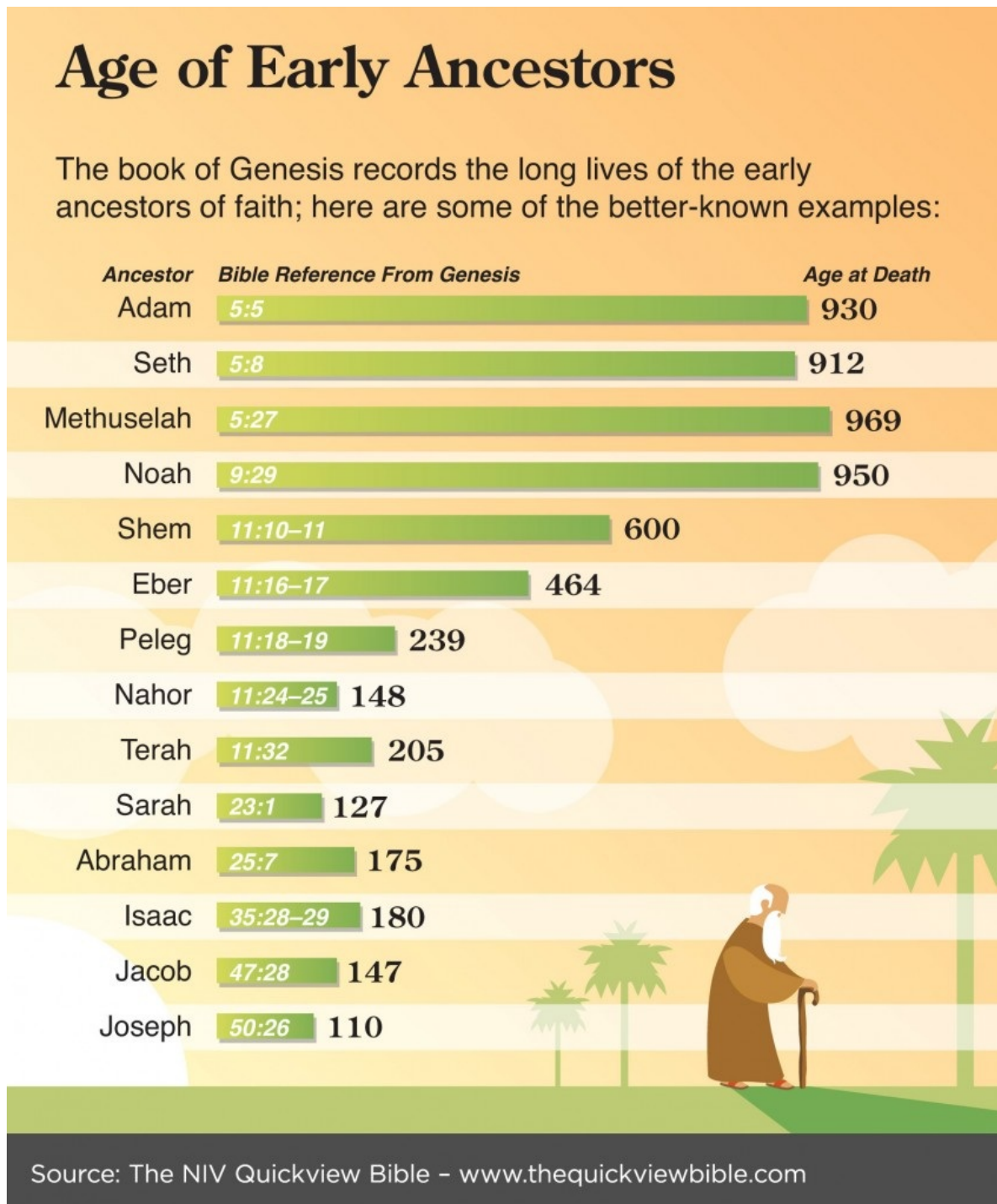
There is almost a sadness in all of this, going through 3 plural constructs to get to Abraham, and then adding in the adjective *chay* a second time at the end. In literature, this simply means that we are drawing out the words to indicate a full life. Abraham had far outlived his two brothers (one of them died when they were all still living in Ur).

⁶⁶ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:7 (slightly edited).

Abraham lived to be 175 years and it was a full life. Most of this life (100 years of it—Genesis 12:4) was spent in the Land of Promise (with the exception of a short visit to Egypt—Genesis 12:10–20). As we studied, even after the death of Sarah, his wife, he still remarried and had more children. So he was active, even as an older man.

Terah, Abraham's father, had lived to be 205. As had been the case with the human race in general, each generation lived successively a shorter lifespan than the previous, where, at one point almost every ancestor died off at the same time.

The Age of Our Early Ancestors; from Bibleversesabout.org; accessed July 3, 2015. The original source is apparently The Quick View Bible.



Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

And so he is perishing and so dies Abraham in an old age [that is] good; elderly and satisfied. And so he is gathered unto his people.

Genesis
25:8

Abraham [lit., *he*] draws his last breath and he dies in a good old age. [He is both] elderly and satisfied [with his life]. Therefore, he is gathered to his people.

He drew his last breath and died at a good age, being both elderly and satisfied with his life. Therefore, he is gathered to his people.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so he is perishing and so dies Abraham in an old age [that is] good; elderly and satisfied. And so he is gathered unto his people.
Targum of Onkelos	And Abraham expired, and died in a good old age, aged and satisfied <u>with all good</u> . (Also <u>Ishmael wrought repentance in his days</u> , and <u>afterwards</u> was gathered to his people.)
Latin Vulgate	And <u>decaying</u> he died in a good old age, and having lived a long time, and being full of <u>days</u> : and was gathered to his people.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then Abraham <u>became sick</u> , and died in a good old age, an old man satisfied <u>with his days</u> ; and was gathered to his people.
Septuagint (Greek)	Then Abraham breathed his last, and died in a good old age, an old man and full of <u>days</u> , and was added to his people.

Significant differences: The words *decaying* and *sick* (Latin and Syriac) may not accurately describe Abraham's final days or hours. The word *satisfied* is translated *full of days* and *full of years* in the KJV. Although this is not the meaning assigned to it by BDB, it might be an accurate understanding of that word. In any case, there is not the following noun *days* or *years* in the Hebrew.

The targum adds additional phrases.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And Abraham came to his death, an old man, full of years; and he was put to rest with his people.
Easy English	Then he breathed his last breath. He died when he was an old man. His life had been good and he had lived happily as an old man. Then he died and he went to be with his *ancestors.
God's Word™	Then he took his last breath, and died at a very old age. After a long and full life, he joined his ancestors in death.
NIRV	He took his last breath and died when he was very old. He had lived a very long time. Then he joined the members of his family who had already died.
New Simplified Bible	Then he took his last breath and died at a very old age. After a long and full life, he joined his ancestors in death.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Abraham took his last breath and died after a good long life, a content old man, and he was placed with his ancestors.
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New Berkeley Version	Abraham's life span was 175 years; ⁸ then at a ripe old age, after a long and full life, Abraham expired. He was gathered to his people, ⁹ and his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the Machpelah cave, fronting Mamre, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zohard the Hittite,... Vv. 7 and 9 were included for context.
New Century Version	He breathed his last breath and died at an old age, after a long and satisfying life.
New Life Bible	Then Abraham breathed his last and died, after living a long and full life of many good years, and was buried with his people.
New Living Translation	Abraham lived for 175 years, ⁸ and he died at a ripe old age, having lived a long and satisfying life. He breathed his last and joined his ancestors in death. V. 7 was included for context.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	But AbraHam [eventually found himself in] failing health and he died at a ripe old age. an old man whose days were full. Then he was [buried] with his family.
Beck's American Translation	...when he died. He died at a ripe old age after a long and full life and was laid away with his people.
International Standard V	Abraham lived for 175 years [Lit. These are the days of Abraham's years: 175 years], then passed away, dying at a ripe old age, having lived a full life, and joined his ancestors [Lit. and he was gathered to his people]. V. 7 is included for context.
Translation for Translators	He died at a very old age, and joined his ancestors who had died previously [DOU].

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Abraham expired and died a good greyhead, a satisfied elder gathered into his people.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...so Abraham expired and died, a fine grey-headed old man, and satisfied, and they placed him with his people;...
HCSB	He took his last breath and died at a ripe old age, old and contented, and he was gathered to his people.
Lexham English Bible	And Abraham passed away and died in a good old age, old and full of years. And he was gathered to his people.
Leupold	And Abraham expired and died at a good age, an old man and having had his fill (of days), and he was gathered to his people.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And Abraham breathed out, and died in a good old age, aged, and satisfied, and was gathered to his people.
New Advent Bible	And decaying he died in a good old age, and having lived a long time, and being full of days: and was gathered to his people.
New American Bible	Then he breathed his last, dying at a ripe old age, grown old after a full life; and he was taken to his kinsmen.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Then he breathed his last, dying at a ripe old age, grown old after a full life; and he was gathered to his people.
Revised English Bible	...when he breathed his last. He died at a great age, a full span of years, and was gathered to his forefathers.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible	...and Abraham expires and dies in a good grayness - aged and satisfied - gathered to his people.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	And Abraham breathed his last, dying at a good ripe age, old and contented; and he was gathered to his kin.

Kaplan Translation	Abraham breathed his last and died at a good age, old and satisfied, and he was gathered to his people [A clear indication of immortality of the soul. See Genesis 15:15.].
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Then Avraham breathed his last, and died in a good old age, a zaken, full of years; and was gathered to his people.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Then Abraham's spirit was released, and he died at a good (ample, full) old age, an old man, satisfied <i>and</i> satiated, and was gathered [This often repeated expression forms a remarkable testimony to the Old Testament belief in a life beyond the grave and to our recognition and fellowship with our loved ones there.] to his people.
The Expanded Bible	He ·breathed his last breath [expired] and died at an old age, ·after a long and satisfying life [“an old man and full of years; he was gathered to his people/relatives; °buried in the family plot, though may imply joining his ancestors in the afterlife].
Kretzmann's Commentary	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. Though Abraham did not live as long as his forefathers before him, yet he had had his fill of this world, both in length of life and in its misery and tribulation. His strength failed, he died, he was added to his people; his soul was received into heaven, to join the number of those that had died in the faith of the Messiah. Note that the Bible here plainly teaches the continued existence of the soul after death and implies a state of bliss.
NET Bible®	Then Abraham breathed his last and died at a good old age, an old man who had lived a full life [Heb "old and full."]. He joined his ancestors [Heb "And he was gathered to his people." In the ancient Israelite view he joined his deceased ancestors in Sheol, the land of the dead.].
Syndein	Then Abraham 'exhaled his last breathe' {gava`}, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years and was gathered to his people.
The Voice	By the time Abraham took his last breath and joined his ancestors in death, he had reached a ripe old age and had lived a full life.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And expiring is Abraham, and dying in a good grey-haired age, old and satisfied with days. And gathered is he to his people.
Context Group Version	And Abraham breathed out [a final time], and died in a good old age, old and satisfied, and was gathered to his people.
Darby Translation	And Abraham expired and died in a good old age, old and full [of days]; and was gathered to his peoples.
English Standard Version	Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people.
LTHB	And Abraham expired and died in a good old age, aged and satisfied, and was gathered to his people.
NASB	Abraham breathed his last and died in a ripe [Lit good] old age, an old man and satisfied <i>with life</i> ; and he was gathered to his people.
World English Bible	Abraham gave up the spirit, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and was gathered to his people.
Young's Updated LT	And Abraham expires, and dies in a good old age, aged and satisfied, and is gathered unto his people.

The gist of this verse: Abraham died at a full age, having had a full and complete life, and he was gathered to his people in eternity.

Genesis 25:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
gâva' (גָּוַע) [pronounced gaw-VAHG]	to expire, to perish, to die, to be about to die	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1478 BDB #157

There seems to be the sense here of taking one's last breath.

The Bible Query: "give up the ghost"...is a rough translation of the Hebrew word *gâva'*, which literally means "to breathe out" or "to expire." A more precise translation would be "breathed his last"⁶⁷

Clarke gives us a list of passages with this phrase in them: Genesis 25:8, 17 35:29 44:33 Job 3:11 10:18 11:20 13:19 14:10 Lam. 1:19.

Translation: Abraham [lit., he] draws his last breath...

I made some minor changes to the translation. I put Abraham's name here rather than with the next phrase, where it is found.

When we die, it is generally by taking a final breath; and then we are gone. When Jesus died, He exhaled His breath and died. In the first case, God no longer gives us breath; in the second case, Jesus willingly ended His life because His work was done.

Clarke has some interesting comments.

Clarke on Jesus Breathing His Last

Every man since the fall has not only been liable to death, but has deserved it, as all have forfeited their lives because of sin. Jesus Christ, as born immaculate, and having never sinned, had not forfeited His life, and therefore may be considered as naturally and properly immortal. [Jesus said] "No man takes my life from Me, but I lay it down of Myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again: therefore the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I might take it again." (John 10:17–18). Hence we rightly translate Matthew 27:50, ἀφῆκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *He dismissed his spirit* that He might die for the sin of the world. The Evangelist St. John 19:30, makes use of an expression to the same import, which we translate in the same way, παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *He delivered up his spirit*. We translate Mark 15:37, and Luke 23:46 *He breathed his last*, or expired, or, *He gave up His spirit*; because the word in both these places is very different, ἐξεπνευσε, though in the latter place (Luke 23:46) there is an equivalent expression, Ὁ Θεός, εἰς τὰς χεῖρας σου παρατίθει τὸ πνεῦμα μου, *I commit my spirit*, i.e., I place my soul in Your hand; proving that the act was His own, that no man could take His life away from Him, that He did not die by the perfidy of His disciple, or the malice of the Jews, but by His Own free act. Thus *He laid down his life for the sheep*.

Of Ananias and Sapphira, (Acts 5:5, 10), and of Herod, Acts 12:23, our translation says they gave up the ghost; but the word in both places is ἐξεψυξε, which simply means *to breathe out, to expire, or die*; but in no case, either by the Septuagint in the Old or any of the sacred writers in the New Testament, is ἀφῆκε τὸ πνεῦμα or παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *he dismissed his spirit or delivered up his spirit*, spoken of any person but Christ. Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, etc., breathed their last; Ananias, Sapphira, and Herod expired; but none, Jesus Christ excepted, *dismissed, or delivered up His own spirit*, and was consequently free among the dead

⁶⁷ Bible Query; March 2006 version. Copyright (c) Christian Debater(tm) 1997-2006.; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:8 (slightly edited).

Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:8 (edited).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Chuck Smith: *A hundred and seventy-five years old and Abraham died; that is, he gave up his spirit. In reality what happened is that his spirit moved out of this old tent, because this old tent just couldn't manage it anymore. It was worn out. Once a tent is worn out and has no more value, doesn't keep out the rain or wind, rips and it just constantly needs patching and repairing, it's time to move out of the tent. And so Abraham moved out of his tent.*⁶⁸

Chuck Smith: *That's why Paul said, "we who are in this body, do often groan, earnestly desiring to move out. It's not that we would be unembodied spirits but that we might clothed upon with the body which is from heaven" (2 Corinthians 5:2). For we know that as long as we are in this body, in this tent, that we are absent from the Lord, but we would choose rather to be absent from this body and to be present with the Lord.*⁶⁹

Dr. S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.: *One might wonder...how the work of God would do after Abraham died. This is the kind of thinking that no doubt went through the Apostles' minds too when the Lord Jesus was crucified. How will this work go on? But as someone has said, "God buries his workmen and carries on his work." There is no indispensable man in the work of the Lord. It is sometimes rather sad and humbling for us to realize that as individuals, but nevertheless it is true. There is no indispensable man in Believers Chapel either so far as that goes because God does bury his workmen and carry on his work. And He will always do that.*⁷⁰

Genesis 25:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mûwth (תּוּמ) [pronounced mooth]	<i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
ʾAb ^e râhâm (אֲבִרָאם) [pronounced ahb ^{ve} -raw-HAWM]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
sêybâh (שֵׂבַח) [pronounced say ^b -VAW]	<i>age, old age, gray hair</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #7872 BDB #966
ʔôwb (אוֹב) [pronounced toh ^b v]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i>	masculine feminine singular adjective which can act like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373

⁶⁸ From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/csc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 14, 2015.

⁶⁹ From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/csc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 14, 2015.

⁷⁰ From <http://slj.institute.net/pentateuch/genesis/last-of-abraham-first-of-jacob/> accessed July 2, 2015.

Translation: ...and he dies in a good old age.

After breathing his last, Abraham died. Abraham had a wonderful life; he lived to a good old age. He had lived a fulfilling, enjoyable life. He enjoyed **dying grace**.

Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge on dying grace: Genesis 15:15 35:28–29 47:8, Genesis 47:9 49:29
Judges 8:32 1Chronicles 29:28 Job. 5:26 42:17 Proverbs 20:29 Jer. 6:11.⁷¹

Genesis 25:8c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
zâqên (זָקֵן) [pronounced zav-KANE]	<i>old, elderly, aged</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #2205 BDB #278
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sâbêa' (שָׂבְעָה) [pronounced saw ^b -VAY-ahj]	<i>sated, satisfied, surfeited, filled, full of; abounding</i>	adjective	Strong's #7649 BDB #960
Many translate this <i>and full of years</i> ; following the lead of the KJV.			
The Vulgate, Samaritan, Chaldean, Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic all add <i>of days</i> . ⁷²			
Clarke: <i>one hundred and seventy–five, the youngest of all the patriarchs; and full of years. The word years is not in the text; but as our translators saw that some word was necessary to fill up the text, they added this in italics. It is probable that the true word is יָמִים yamim, days, as in Genesis 35:29; and this reading is found in several of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS., in the Samaritan text, Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Chaldee. On these authorities it might be safely admitted into the text.</i> ⁷³			
<i>Full of days</i> : Genesis 35:29 1Chronicles 23:1 29:28 Job. 42:17.			

Translation: [He is both] elderly and satisfied [with his life].

Abraham's life was long and he was satisfied with his life; his life was full. Even if the reading is *full of days*, we may take the same meaning from this.

This is actually a very tricky thing and why dying grace is necessary. There are many believers who have a wonderful life; and it is hard to imagine leaving this life, given all of the ways that God has blessed us.

What it means for Abraham to die in a good old age, full of years.

Commentators on, Abraham living to a good old age, full of years

Commentator	Commentary
Kukis	Abraham had a wonderful life; he lived to a good old age. He had lived a fulfilling, enjoyable life. He enjoyed dying grace.

⁷¹ *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, Genesis 25:8.

⁷² From <http://www.study-light.org/commentaries/hcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 18, 2015.

⁷³ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:8.

Commentators on, *Abraham living to a good old age, full of years*

Commentator	Commentary
The Bible Illustrator	"Full of years" is not a mere synonym for longevity. The expression is by no means a usual one. It is applied to Isaac at the close of his calm, contemplative life, to David at the end of his stormy and adventurous career, to the high priest Jehoiada, and to the patriarch Job. We shall understand its meaning better if, instead of "full of years," we read "satisfied with years." The words point to a calm close, with all desires granted, with hot wishes stilled, and a willingness to let life go, because all which it could give had been attained. We have two main things to consider.
The Bible Illustrator continued	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The tranquil close of life. 2. Consider the glimpse of the joyful society beyond, which is given us in that other remarkable expression of the text, "He was gathered to his people." The words contain a dim intimation of something beyond this present life.⁷⁴
Matthew Poole	<i>His soul was not required of him, as it was of that fool (Luke 12:20). [His soul was] not forced from him by sharp and violent diseases, but was quietly, easily, and cheerfully yielded up by him into the hands of his merciful God and Father, as the word intimates, in a good old age; good, both graciously, his hoary head being found in the way of righteousness; and naturally, free from the manifold infirmities and calamities of old age. Of which see Ecc. 12:1ff.⁷⁵</i>
The Pulpit Commentary	<i>Abraham died in the hope of a better country, even a heavenly. (Hebrews 11:13–16 = These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.—ESV).⁷⁶</i>
Sermon Bible Commentary	<i>The expression "a good old age" is only used of three individuals in the Scripture—Abraham, Gideon, and David. It forms the epitaph recorded by the Spirit on their tombs.⁷⁷</i>

These are quite illustrative of what is meant. The Sermon Bible Commentary made an interesting observation; but I am not certain of its significance.

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Because of the verbiage we find here, Gill suggests (and I concur) that Abraham came to his old age and death *not attended with those inconveniences and disadvantages with which old age generally is*.⁷⁸ There is nothing to be found that suggests an illness, discomfort, a difficult end or even a loss of normal faculties. Bear in mind that Abraham was having children at a very advanced age, even for that period of time.

The Pulpit Commentary: *Then Abraham...breathed out the breath of life, and died in a good old age, and full of years. Literally, and satiated, i.e. satisfied not merely with life and all its blessings, but with living. The three clauses give an elevated conception of the patriarch's life as that of one who had*

⁷⁴ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/tbi/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 14, 2015.

⁷⁵ Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:8 (slightly edited).

⁷⁶ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, from e-sword, Genesis 25:8.

⁷⁷ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/sbc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 18, 2015.

⁷⁸ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:8.

*tasted all the sweets and realized all the ends of a mundane existence, and who accordingly was ripe and ready for transition to a higher sphere.*⁷⁹

A reasonable topic, since we are dealing with the death of Moses...

Links to the Doctrine of Dying Grace

R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s booklet can be ordered here (it is free):

<http://rbthieme.org/Publications/dyinggrace.html>

R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s Doctrine of Dying Grace online:

<http://www.dictionaryofdoctrine.com/Dying-Grace.html>

This appears to be identical to the Makarios Church link:

http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=689

Makarios website and the doctrine of Dying Grace:

<http://makarios-online.org/notes/pdf/Dying%20Grace%201-09.pdf>

Ron Adema on Dying Grace with respect to the life of Josiah:

<http://www.doctrinalstudies.com/pdf/D040915.pdf>

Several doctrines on death:

<http://www.bibleteacher.org/DEATHOUT.htm>

Heber Evans: *We are as immortal as the angels until our work is done, and, that finished, the best thing that can happen to us is to be called home to rest at once rather than to be here, weak and worthless, in our tents waiting on the plains of Moab.*⁸⁰

Heber Evans: *When Dr. Bees preached last in North Wales a friend said to him--one of those who are always reminding people that they are getting old--"You are whitening fast, Dr. Bees." The old gentleman did not say anything then; but when he got to the pulpit he referred to it, and said, "There is a wee white flower that comes up through the earth at this season of the year--sometimes it comes up through the snow and frost; but we are all glad to see the snowdrop, because it proclaims that the winter is over and that the summer is at hand. A friend reminded me last night that I was whitening fast. But heed not that, brother; it is to me a proof that my winter will soon be over, that I shall have done presently with the cold and east winds and the frosts of earth, and that my summer--my eternal summer--is at hand."*⁸¹

Although these pastors have similarities and differences in their approach to dying grace, most of the doctrines above are probably based up the doctrine originally developed by R. B. Thieme, Jr.

If, for some reason or another, you are not getting this teaching in your church, God did not design you to go it alone. Here are a list of churches which may be in your geographical area or, at least, have online access to their sermons:

<http://kukis.org/Links/thelist.htm>

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A personal note—I just completed Deut. 34 (which is about the death of Moses) and am now writing about the death of Abraham. I hope that this is not some kind of a sign. :)

⁷⁹ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, from e-sword, Genesis 25:8.

⁸⁰ From <http://www.studyLight.org/commentaries/tbi/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 14, 2015.

⁸¹ From <http://www.studyLight.org/commentaries/tbi/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 14, 2015.

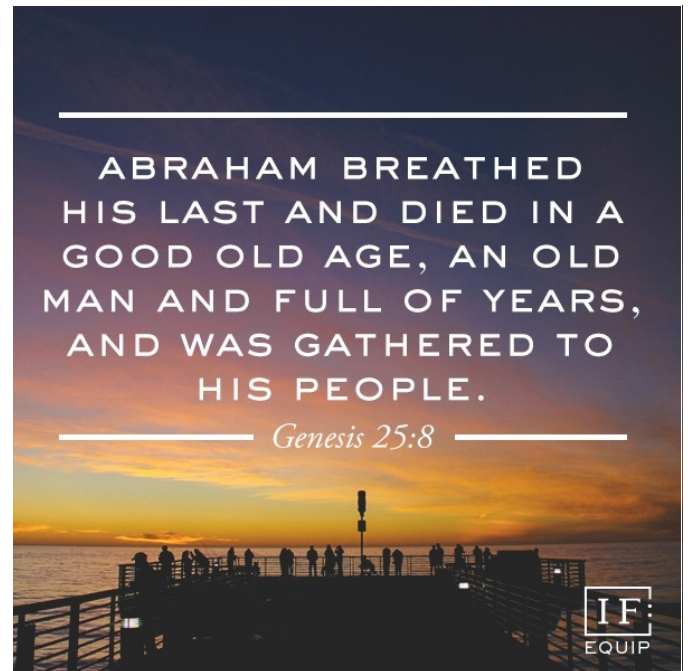
Genesis 25:8d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âçaph (אָפַח) [pronounced aw-SAHF]	to be assembled, to be gathered, to assemble, to gather	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #622 BDB #62
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'am (אָם) [pronounced gahm]	people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]	masculine singular collective noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: Therefore, he is gathered to his people.

From the earliest time, there was a concept of people having an eternal future, which involved the other members of their family. These would have been Abraham's parents, grandparents, great grandparents, and further back. To 10 generations back, to Shem, there was overlap with Abraham's life. However, pretty much during his lifetime, all of these men died, from all of these 10 generations, all during Abraham's time, unless we have some missing generations. This likely missing generation was discussed back in **Genesis 11** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)), which suggests that there was one additional generation who dropped out of the Hebrew manuscripts. However, that would still have allowed for these men to die during Abraham's lifetime.

Genesis 25:8 Abraham [lit., he] draws his last breath and he dies in a good old age. [He is both] elderly and satisfied [with his life]. Therefore, he is gathered to his people. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:8 He drew his last breath and died at a good age, being both elderly and satisfied with his life. Therefore, he is gathered to his people. (Kukis paraphrase)



Genesis 25:8 (a graphic); from [ifequip.com](#); accessed July 3, 2015.

Barnes: *To be gathered* is not to cease to exist, but to continue existing in another sphere. His peoples, the departed families, from whom he is descended, are still in being in another not less real world. This, and the like expression in the passage quoted, give the first fact in the history of the soul after death, as the burial is the first step in that of the body.⁸²

⁸² Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:7–11.

Keil and Delitzsch: *Abraham died at the good old age of 175, and was “gathered to his people.” This expression, which is synonymous with “going to his fathers” (Genesis 15:15), or “being gathered to his fathers” (Judges 2:10), but is constantly distinguished from departing this life and being buried, denotes the reunion in Sheol with friends who have gone before, and therefore presupposes faith in the personal continuance of a man after death, as a presentiment which the promises of God had exalted in the case of the patriarchs into a firm assurance of faith (Hebrews 11:13).*⁸³

At death, Abraham was gathered to his ancestors for eternity.

Arno Gaebelein: *The phrase “gathered to his people” is used only of six persons. Of Abraham (Genesis 25:8); Ishmael (Genesis 25:17); Isaac (Genesis 35:29); Jacob (Genesis 49:29-33); Aaron (Numbers 20:24); and Moses (Deuteronomy 32:50).*⁸⁴ Interestingly enough, this phrase is only found in the Pentateuch.

Gill: *[This] is to be understood not of his interment, there being only the body of Sarah in the sepulchre in which he was laid; but of the admission of his soul into the heavenly state upon its separation from the body, when it was at once associated with the spirits of just men made perfect.*⁸⁵

When Critics Ask, on the Hebrews early understanding of life after death

GENESIS 25:8 —Did the Hebrews have a concept of life after death at such an early point in their history?

PROBLEM: Critical scholars assert that the early Hebrews had a very rudimentary religion that over the centuries would undergo great evolutionary development before ultimately arriving at a concept of life after death. However, this phrase implies that the Hebrews had a concept of immortality at a very early stage in the development of the nation.

SOLUTION: First of all, this criticism is based on the highly problematic premise that there is an evolutionary development of religion, with highly developed monotheism being very late. Recent archaeological findings at Ebla, however, contradict such speculation showing that monotheism was a very early belief (even before 2000 B.C.). Furthermore, the expression “gathered to his people” certainly seems to indicate more than merely being buried close to his kinsmen. In fact, since Abraham had left his homeland in Ur of the Chaldees to go to the land which God promised him, it would be contrary to Abraham’s life to have his body returned to the land of his father’s house for burial. The idea that the soul continued to live after the death of the body was a belief held by many peoples in the time of Abraham, including the Sumerians, the Babylonians, the Egyptians, and others.

In addition, this is not the only early reference to the concept of life after death. The Book of Job is probably the oldest book of the OT, with the events of the book dating back to the time of Abraham and the patriarchs of Israel. Yet, as early as Job, we find not only the concept of life after death, but also the concept of a bodily resurrection. In Job 19:25–27 (*For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!*—ESV; capitalized) we find Job expressing his confidence that, though he may not see his personal vindication in this life, he knew that God would ultimately make things right. This confidence moved him to express his conviction that he would indeed stand before God even after his physical demise; “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God.” This verse shows that the concept of life after death was a very early conviction, and that the people of God also believed in the resurrection of the body.

⁸³ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:7–8.

⁸⁴ From <http://www.study-light.org/commentaries/gab/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 18, 2015.

⁸⁵ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:8.

The problem with critics is, they automatically throw out the notion of revealed truth, the supernatural power of God, and anything in the Bible which smacks of the miraculous. Besides this, they layer on top of their view of history, an incorrect notion of man coming to know God. Therefore, it is natural for some to doubt this early understanding of eternal life.

What the early Hebrews understood was quite amazing. I did a study on the Essence of God, as found in the Pentateuch and the book of Job. Essentially everything that we understand about God is taught in those 5 books. See **Essence of God in the Pentateuch** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). I would not be surprised that a similar study could be done, confined simply to the book of Genesis.⁸⁶

Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe, *When Critics Ask*; Victor Books; taken from e-Sword, Genesis 25:8 (slightly edited).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

The writer of Hebrews, who ought to be the final say on Abraham's view of eternity, writes this: **By faith he [Abraham] went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore. These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. **But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one.** Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city. (Heb 11:9–16; ESV; emphasis mine)**

Wenstrom briefly covers the concept of Sheol (where Abraham would go at death).

Wenstrom's Brief Doctrine of Sheol (Hades)

- I. Hades (NT) or Sheol (OT) contains four compartments:
 1. Paradise: the place of the departed souls of believers before the resurrection of Christ (Lk. 23:39-43; Eph. 4:8-9) who were transferred to heaven after the resurrection and ascension of Christ (Ephesians 4:10). The statement "**gathered to his people**" refers to his life after death with those who before him died in faith such as Adam, Abel, Enoch, and Noah in a compartment of Hades called "Paradise," which the Lord Jesus Christ referred to as "Abraham's bosom" in Luke 16.
 2. Torments: the temporary fire for the souls of unbelievers from all dispensations (Lk. 16:19-31) who will be transferred to the Great White Throne Judgment that concludes human history and from there will be cast in the Lake of Fire forever (Rev. 20:11-15).
 3. Tartarus: the abode of the fallen angels of Genesis 6 who had sex with woman in order to corrupt the human race and prevent the incarnation of the Son of God (1Peter 3:18-22 2 Peter 4 Jude 6).
 4. The Abyss: the place of imprisonment for the demons who violated certain rules for angelic creation and will be released during the Tribulation (Lk. 8:30-31 Rom. 10:7 Rev. 20:1-3).
- II. Prior to the resurrection, ascension and session of the Lord Jesus Christ, Old Testament saints when they died did not go to the third heaven but rather to Paradise. These Old Testament saints such as Abraham ascended with Jesus Christ into heaven as part of our Lord's triumphal procession as victor in the **angelic conflict** and were part of the booty from our Lord's victory that was accomplished through His death and resurrection. Ephesians 4:8, **Therefore it says, 'When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men.'**

Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015 (slightly edited).

⁸⁶ In my study of Genesis, I have found references to nearly all of the fundamental doctrines of the worship of God. Quite obviously, we do not find the Church Age in Genesis; but references to the fundamental doctrines abound.

This appears to be another good approach:

Free Bible on the Dead, Where Are They? (Sheol/Hades, Gehenna, Tartarus)

- I. Old Testament
 - A. All humans go to Sheol (there are no cognate roots and the etymology is uncertain, BDB 982, KB 1368), which was a way of referring to the place where the dead live or the grave, mostly in Wisdom Literature and Isaiah. In the OT it was a shadowy, conscious, but joyless existence (cf. Job 10:21-22; 38:17)
 - B. Sheol characterized
 1. associated with God's judgment (fire), Deut. 32:22
 2. a prison with gates, Job 38:17; Ps. 9:13; 107:18
 3. a land of no return, Job 7:9 (an Akkadian title for death)
 4. a land/realm of darkness, Job 10:21-22; 17:13; 18:18
 5. a place of silence, Ps. 28:1; 31:17; 94:17; 115:17; Isa. 47:5
 6. associated with punishment even before Judgment Day, Ps. 18:4-5
 7. associated with abaddon (destruction; see Special Topic: Abaddon. . . Apollyon), in which God is also present, Job 26:6; Ps. 139:8; Amos 9:2
 8. associated with "the Pit" (grave), Ps. 16:10; 88:304; Isa. 14:15; Ezek. 31:15-17
 9. wicked descend alive into Sheol, Num. 16:30,33; Job 7:9; Ps. 55:15
 10. personified often as an animal with a large mouth, Num. 16:30; Pro. 1:12; Isa. 5:14; Hab. 2:5
 11. people there called Repha'im (i.e., "spirits of the dead"). Job 26:5; Pro. 2:18; 21:16; 26:14
Isaiah 14:9-11
 12. however, YHWH is present even here, Job 26:6; Ps. 139:8; Pro. 15:11
- II. New Testament
 - A. The Hebrew Sheol is translated by the Greek Hades (the unseen world)
 - B. Hades characterized (much like Sheol)
 1. refers to death, Matt. 16:18
 2. linked to death, Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13-14
 3. often analogous to the place of permanent punishment (Gehenna), Matt. 11:23 (OT quote); Luke 10:15; 16:23-24
 4. often analogous to the grave, Luke 16:23
 - C. Possibly divided (rabbis)
 1. The righteous part called Paradise (really another name for heaven, cf. 2 Cor. 12:4; Rev. 2:7), Luke 23:43
 2. The wicked part called Tartarus, a holding place far below Hades, 2 Peter 2:4, where it is a holding place for evil angels (cf. Genesis 6; I Enoch). It is associated with the "Abyss," Luke 8:31; Rom. 10:7; Rev. 9:1-2,11; 11:7; 17:18; 20:1,3
 - D. Gehenna.
 1. Reflects the OT phrase, "the valley of the sons of Hinnom," (south of Jerusalem). It was the place where the Phoenician fire god, Molech (BDB 574, KB 591), was worshiped by child sacrifice (cf. 2 Kgs. 16:3; 21:6; 2 Chr. 28:3; 33:6), which was forbidden in Lev. 18:21; 20:2-5.
 2. Jeremiah changed it from a place of pagan worship into a site of YHWH's judgment (cf. Jer. 7:32; 19:6-7). It became the place of fiery, eternal judgment in I Enoch 90:26-27 and Sib.
 3. The Jews of Jesus' day were so appalled by their ancestors' participation in pagan worship by child sacrifice, that they turned this area into the garbage dump for Jerusalem. Many of Jesus' metaphors for eternal judgment came from this landfill (fire, smoke, worms, stench, cf. Mark 9:44,46). The term Gehenna is used only by Jesus (except in James 3:6).
 4. Jesus' usage of Gehenna
 - a. fire, Matt. 5:22; 18:9; Mark 9:43
 - b. permanent, Mark 9:48 (Matt. 25:46)

Free Bible on the Dead, Where Are They? (Sheol/Hades, Gehenna, Tartarus)

- c. place of destruction (both soul and body), Matt. 10:28
 - d. paralleled to Sheol, Matt. 5:29-30; 18:9
 - e. characterizes the wicked as "son of hell," Matt. 23:15
 - f. result of judicial sentence, Matt. 23:33; Luke 12:5
 - g. the concept of Gehenna is parallel to the second death (cf. Rev. 2:11; 20:6,14) or the lake of fire (cf. Matt. 13:42,50; Rev. 19:20; 20:10,14-15; 21:8). It is possible the lake of fire becomes the permanent dwelling place of humans (from Sheol) and evil angels (from Tartarus, 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 1:6 or the abyss, cf. Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:1-11; 20:1,3).
 - h. it was not designed for humans, but for Satan and his angels, Matt. 25:41
- E. It is possible, because of the overlap of Sheol, Hades, and Gehenna that
- 1. originally all humans went to Sheol/Hades
 - 2. their experience there (good/bad) is exacerbated after Judgment Day, but the place of the wicked remains the same (this is why the KJV translated hades (grave) as gehenna (hell).
 - 3. the only NT text to mention torment before Judgment is the parable of Luke 16:19-31 (Lazarus and the Rich Man). Sheol is also described as a place of punishment now (cf. Deut. 32:22; Ps. 18:1-5). However, one cannot establish a doctrine on a parable.
- III. Intermediate state between death and resurrection
- A. The NT does not teach the "immortality of the soul," which is one of several ancient views of the after life, which asserts that
- 1. human souls exist before their physical life
 - 2. human souls are eternal before and after physical death
 - 3. often the physical body is seen as a prison and death as release back to pre-existent state
- B. The NT hints at a disembodied state between death and resurrection
- 1. Jesus speaks of a division between body and soul, Matt. 10:28
 - 2. Abraham may already have a body, Mark 12:26-27; Luke 16:23
 - 3. Moses and Elijah have a physical body at the transfiguration, Matthew 17
 - 4. Paul asserts that at the Second Coming the believers with Christ will get their new bodies first, 1 Thess. 4:13-18
 - 5. Paul asserts that believers get their new spiritual bodies on Resurrection Day, 1 Cor. 15:23,52
 - 6. Paul asserts that believers do not go to Hades, but at death are with Jesus, 2 Cor. 5:6,8; Phil. 1:23. Jesus overcame death and took the righteous to heaven with Him, 1 Pet. 3:18-22.
- IV. Heaven
- A. This term is used in three senses in the Bible.
- 1. the atmosphere above the earth, Gen. 1:1,8; Isa. 42:5; 45:18
 - 2. the starry heavens, Gen. 1:14; Deut. 10:14; Ps. 148:4; Heb. 4:14; 7:26
 - 3. the place of God's throne, Deut. 10:14; 1 Kgs. 8:27; Ps. 148:4; Eph. 4:10; Heb. 9:24 (third heaven, 2 Cor. 12:2)
- B. The Bible does not reveal much about the afterlife, probably because fallen humans have no way or capacity to understand (cf. 1 Cor. 2:9).
- C. Heaven is both a place (cf. John 14:2-3) and a person (cf. 2 Cor. 5:6,8). Heaven may be a restored Garden of Eden (Genesis 1-2; Revelation 21-22). The earth will be cleansed and restored (cf. Acts 3:21; Rom. 8:21; 2 Pet. 3:10). The image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) is restored in Christ. Now the intimate fellowship of the Garden of Eden is possible again.
- D. However, this may be metaphorical (heaven as a huge, cubed city of Rev. 21:9-27) and not literal. 1 Corinthians 15 describes the difference between the physical body and the spiritual body as the seed to the mature plant. Again, 1 Cor. 2:9 (a quote from Isa. 64:4 and 65:17) is a great promise and hope! I know that when we see Him we will be like Him (cf. 1 John 3:2).

From http://www.freebiblecommentary.org/special_topics/dead_where_are_they.html Copyright 2014 Bible Lessons International; accessed July 1, 2015.

v. 8 reads: [Abraham \[lit., he\] draws his last breath and he dies in a good old age. \[He is both\] elderly and satisfied \[with his life\]. Therefore, he is gathered to his people.](#) This describes a full and good life, following by dying grace, which every believer ought to find to be a comfort. There is much to be noted in this verse.

Summarizing the Death of Abraham

1. There is a lot to be found in this one verse: [Abraham \[lit., he\] draws his last breath and he dies in a good old age. \[He is both\] elderly and satisfied \[with his life\]. Therefore, he is gathered to his people.](#)
2. Abraham drawing his final breath marks the end of his physical life. All believers and unbelievers have one final breath, and then death.
3. Abraham dies, which is what happens after taking the final breath.
4. His [good old age](#) indicates that Abraham had a long, solid life. This means that he enjoyed a great quality of life, much of which we have studied.
5. Being [elderly](#) indicates that Abraham enjoyed a long life.
6. Being [satisfied](#) suggests that he had come to the end of his life, and everything that he had intended to do had been done. He does not need another day to tie up loose ends.
7. Being [gathered to his people](#) indicates that Abraham goes from human life into eternity, and that he would be with those who had died before him, including friends and family members.
8. One might reasonably say that these are all of the requirements necessary for enjoying dying grace.

Each phrase is significant in some way.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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This fact suggests that the testimony of Y^{ehowah} God must be continued, but in a different way. For a very long time after the flood, there were witnesses to the flood and there were the immediate descendants of the witnesses to the flood. Therefore, there was a fairly lengthy period of time when everyone on earth potentially could have known Shem, Ham or Japheth, witnesses to the flood. For many generations, evangelism could have been closely related to the flood, and that, by faith in the God of the Flood, salvation was gained. In this way, these generations would have spoken of the Revealed God.

From Adam to the flood, Adam, who knew God, live through much of that time period and he was a witness to God. After the flood, we have 3 men (Noah's sons) who were witnesses to God's wrath and to the flood. They described this event to each of their children and to their children's children on many occasions. No one doubts what Shem says, because Japheth tells the same exact story. So, from the time of the floor until this point in time, nearly all of the sons of Shem, Ham and Japheth are alive; and their sons; and their sons' sons; and so on. They have all been told, either directly from Shem, Ham and Japheth, or from their sons, all about the flood; and about the pre-flood people. So, pretty much everyone in the world has heard—at least second-hand or third-hand—about God's wrath; about the flood; and about God's directives—so they are all bound together by a common experience. But suddenly, they are all dying out, all in the same generation.

However, at this point in time, we have almost come to the point where those people who knew Shem, Ham and Japheth had died out. Almost all at once, these men and their children and children's children all died out—and, interestingly enough, nearly all of them died our during Abraham's lifetime. So God developed a new program by which man would be evangelized—the line of Abraham would be God's witness. Before, God was revealed by the Great Flood, testified to by several generations of men whose generations overlapped. However, during the time of Abraham, this witness ends. The witness of the Revealed God, revealed through the great flood, has come to a close, and God will now be revealed through Abraham and his descendants. And the line of Abraham would become nation Israel.

My point here is, there is a logical change in God's program here. All of the patriarchs who either saw the flood firsthand or heard about the flood from an actual witness will all die out during Abraham's lifetime. Therefore, it is reasonable that God will need to institute a new program.

Who Died When (a Chart); from [Daron Fraley](#); accessed June 4, 2015.

In this imperfect chart (I don't know what the first 0 and 100 refer to in the Abraham row; and, if memory serves, there is one person left out of this line), if you look under the blue column—the one marked *Abraham Dies*, you will see that nearly all of his ancestors die out during his lifetime. My point is, Abraham is not simply some arbitrary guy who comes along whenever, and God speaks to him and guides him; but Abraham comes along at the exact right time. God will use Abraham in part, because this is the exact right time for a change in God's program.

Total Age		Noah Born	Noah Ordained by Methuselah	Japheth Born	Shem Born	Ham Born	Flood	Arphaxad Born	Salah Born	Eber Born	Peleg Born	Reu Born	Serug Born	Nahor Born	Terah Born	Abram Born	Nahor Dies	Noah Dies	Abraham Leaves Haran	Abraham Dies	Shem Dies
950	Noah	0	10	450	492	500	600	602	637	667	701	731	763	793	822	892	941	950	Dead	Dead	Dead
	Sons of Noah:																				
	Japheth			0	42	50	150	152	187	217	251	281	313	343	372	442	491	500	504	617	652
610	Shem				0	8	108	110	145	175	209	239	271	301	330	400	449	458	462	575	610
	Ham					0	100	102	137	167	201	231	263	293	322	392	441	450	454	567	602
	Descendants of Shem																				
438	Arphaxad							0	35	65	99	129	161	191	220	290	339	348	352	Dead	Dead
433	Salah								0	30	64	94	126	156	185	255	304	313	317	Dead	Dead
464	Eber									0	34	64	96	126	155	225	274	283	287	400	435
239	Peleg										0	30	62	92	121	191	Dead	Dead	Dead	Dead	Dead
239	Reu											0	32	62	91	161	210	219	223	Dead	Dead
230	Serug												0	30	59	129	178	187	191	Dead	Dead
148	Nahor													0	29	99	148	Dead	Dead	Dead	Dead
205	Terah														0	70	119	128	132	Dead	Dead
175	Abram					0	100									0	49	58	62	175	Dead

Daron D. Fraley - <http://daronfraley.net> - Creative Commons License: BY-NC-ND

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

The book of Genesis covers the time before the flood and the time before Abraham rather briefly. Abraham begins his journey west in Genesis 12; and 2 chapters are given over the creation and life before sin; 3 chapters are devoted to the flood itself; so what constituted the spiritual life is not fully revealed to us after the Fall and after the Flood. How much of right and wrong was in the souls of those before the Flood? Remember that Cain killed Abel; there were other killings that took place; and then, right before the flood, the world was filled with violence. There is nearly a 1000 years which follows the floor, before Abraham get's going to Canaan; and we know very little of that time. What we do know is, God has the same character and essence in both time periods; God does reveal Himself to mankind; and that we can trust God to be just and righteous then as He is now.

During this period of time, God reveals Himself in many ways—as the Creator of all mankind; as the Destroyer of those who rebelled against Him; and now, He becomes known as the God of Promise, the God Who made a covenant with Abraham. In these 3 time periods, God is revealed in a unique way, even though salvation is by means of the same method—believe in the Revealed God, and you are saved. However, when Jesus revealed Himself in His public ministry, this changed everything. Whereas, in much of the Old Testament, people were saved by believing in the God of the Jews; we are saved by believing in Jesus Christ, the God of the Universe. He is the same God. He created the universe and all mankind; He also destroyed corrupted flesh with the flood; and now He revealed Himself as the God of Promise and the God of the Covenant, beginning through Abraham.

This is a brief overview; but there is so much more to it than this.

Robbie Dean on Abraham's Spiritual and Historical Impact

- 1) It is God's provision for the human race, through the Abrahamic covenant. He makes specific promises to Abraham and the seed related to the land and that the blessing is going to come through his seed. Paul picks that up in Galatians chapter three and applies it to the Lord Jesus Christ, but ultimately there will be a blessing to all mankind through Abraham.
- 2) Election: God's choice or selection of Abraham and the Jews in the Old Testament becomes the picture

Robbie Dean on Abraham's Spiritual and Historical Impact

- for understanding what Paul discusses on election in the New Testament.
- 3) Justification by faith alone when the believer understands the gospel and puts his faith alone in Christ alone. This is what we refer to as phase one salvation, the first stage of salvation. It is instant and complete. Cf. Genesis 15:6.
 - 4) Another kind of justification is given in James chapter two, and this is a vindication before man and before the angels.
 - 5) We have the principles of spiritual growth and spiritual advance illustrated in Hebrews 11:9-19, "By faith Abraham." So Abraham is a picture of how to be saved-justification by faith alone; he is the picture of mature justification-vindication before man and angels; and in Hebrews 11 he is the picture of how to get from spiritual birth to spiritual maturity. This is indicated through the process of testing, and the classic test in Abraham's life is Genesis chapter twenty-two.
 - 6) Abraham is the basis for missions because it is through the seed of Abraham that all the nations will be blessed. So when we understand the Abrahamic covenant it drives us straight to the cross, and then the cross almost acts like a blessing prism and spreads it out for all the nations. So the responsibility of church age believers is to promote the expansion of the gospel throughout all the nations of the earth.

From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen108.htm> accessed December 13, 2014.

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And so buried him Isaac and Ishmael, his sons, unto a cave of the Machpelah unto a field of Ephron a son of Zophar the Hittite which [is] upon faces of Mamre—the field which acquired Abraham from with sons of the Hittite. There-ward was buried Abraham and Sarah his wife.

Genesis
25:9–10

Isaac and Ishmael, Abraham's [lit., his] sons, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zophar the Hittite, which [is] facing [or, overlooking] Mamre—the [same] field that Abraham acquired from the Hittites. There, Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried.

Isaac and Ishmael, Abraham's sons, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zophar the Hittite, which cave is facing Mamre—this is the same field that Abraham purchased from the Hittites. It was there that Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so buried him Isaac and Ishmael, his sons, unto a cave of the Machpelah unto a field of Ephron a son of Zophar the Hittite which [is] upon faces of Mamre—the field which acquired Abraham from with sons of the Hittite. There-ward was buried Abraham and Sarah his wife.
Targum of Onkelos	And Izhak and Ishmael his sons buried him in the double cavern, at the field of Ephran bar Zochar, the Hittite, which is before Mamre; the field that Abraham purchased of the sons of Hittah: there was Abraham buried and Sarah his wife.
Latin Vulgate	And Isaac and Ismael his sons buried him in the double cave, which was situated in the field of Ephron the son of Seor the Hethite, over against Mambre, which he had bought of the children of Heth: there was he buried, and Sara his wife.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the double cave, (Machpelah) which is in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre; ¹⁰ The field which Abraham purchased from the sons of Heth, as a possession for a burial ground. There was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.

Brenton's Septuagint And Isaac and Ismael his sons buried him in the double cave, in the field of Ephron the son of Saar the Chettite, which is over against Mambre: even the field and the cave which Abraam bought of the sons of Chet; there they buried Abraam and Sarrha his wife.

Significant differences: *Machpelah* means *double*.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English Abraham's sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave in Machpelah. Abraham had bought the cave and field from Ephron, the son of Zohar, who was from Heth's family. The field was east from Mamre. Abraham's sons buried him there, where he had buried Sarah his wife.

Good News Bible (TEV) His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in Machpelah Cave, in the field east of Mamre that had belonged to Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite. It was the field that Abraham had bought from the Hittites; both Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried there.

NIRV Abraham's sons Isaac and Ishmael buried his body. They put it in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre. It was in the field of Ephron, the son of Zohar the Hittite. Abraham had bought it from the Hittites. He was buried there with his wife Sarah.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Bible in Basic English And Isaac and Ishmael, his sons, put him to rest in the hollow rock of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zohar the Hittite, near Mamre; The same field which Abraham got from the children of Heth: there Abraham was put to rest with Sarah, his wife.

Common English Bible His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave in Machpelah, which is in the field of Zohar's son Ephron the Hittite, near Mamre. ¹⁰ Thus Abraham and his wife Sarah were both buried in the field Abraham had purchased from the Hittites.

Contemporary English V. His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him east of Hebron in Machpelah Cave that was part of the field Abraham had bought from Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite. Abraham was buried there beside his wife Sarah.

New Century Version His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah in the field of Ephron east of Mamre. (Ephron was the son of Zohar the Hittite.) ¹⁰ So Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah in the same field that he had bought from the Hittites.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible IsaAc and IshmaEl, his sons, buried him in the double cave that was in the field of EphRon (the son of SaAr the Chettite), which is across from Mamre. ¹⁰ [So they buried] AbraHam and his woman Sarah in the field, inside the cave that AbraHam bought from the sons of Chet.

International Standard V His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, in the field that used to belong to Zohar the Hittite's son Ephron. This was the same field that Abraham had bought from the son of Heth, where Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried.

Translation for Translators His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried his body in the cave at Machpelah area, near Mamre, in the field that *Abraham had bought from* Ephron, one of the descendants of Heth. That was the field that Abraham previously bought there. Isaac and Ishmael buried his body there, where Abraham previously buried the body of his wife Sarah.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him at the cave of Machpelah, at the field of Ephron, the son of Zohar of Central-Syria, in front of Mamre, the field which Abraham bought from the sons of Heth. Abraham was buried there with Sarah his woman.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...and his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Makphelah on the estate of Ephron the son of Zohar the Khivite, which is before Mamrah; the field which Abraham bought from the sons of Heth; there Abraham was buried with Sarah his wife.
Lexham English Bible	And Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, son of Zohar the Hittite, that [was] east of Mamre, the field that Abraham had bought from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried and Sarah his wife.
Leupold	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 was over against Mamre, the field which Abraham bought from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried with Sarah, his wife.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	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 the face of Mamre, Abraham was buried there, and Sarah, his wife, in the field which Abraham set up from the sons of Heth.
New Advent Bible	And Isaac and Ismael his sons buried him in the double cave, which was situated in the field of Ephron the son of Seor the Hethite, over against Mambre, ¹⁰ which he had bought of the children of Heth: there was he buried, and Sara his wife.
New American Bible (R.E.)	His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, son of Zohar the Hittite, which faces Mamre [Gn 23:3-20.], the field that Abraham had bought from the Hittites; there he was buried next to his wife Sarah.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Yitz'chak and Yishma'el his sons buried him in the cave of Makhpelah, in the field of 'Efron the son of Tzochar the Hitti, by Mamre, the field which Avraham purchased from the sons of Het. Avraham was buried there with Sarah his wife.
exeGeses companion Bible	And his sons Yischaq and Yishma El entomb him in the cave of Machpelah in the field of Ephron the son of Sochar the Hethiy at the face of Mamre; in the field Abraham chatteded of the sons of Heth: there they entomb Abraham and Sarah his woman.
Kaplan Translation	His sons, Isaac and Ishmael, buried him in Makhpelah Cave, in the field of Ephron son of Tzohar the Hittite, which borders Mamre. The field that Abraham purchased from the children of Heth is thus where Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And his banim Yitzchak and Yishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the sadeh of Ephron ben Tzochar the Chitti, which is near Mamre; The sadeh which Avraham purchased of the bnei Chet, there was Avraham buried, and Sarah his wife.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And his sons Yitsh̄aq and Yishma'ēl buried him in the cave of Maḳpēlah, which is before Mamrē, in the field of Ephron son of Tsoḥar the Ḥittite, the field which Aḇraham purchased from the sons of Ḥēth. There Aḇraham was buried with Sarah his wife.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah in the field of Ephron east of Mamre. (Ephron was the son of Zohar the Hittite.) So Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah in the same field that he had bought from the Hittites [23:1-20].
Kretzmann's Commentary	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; the field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth; there was Abraham buried and Sarah, his wife . Ishmael, having been notified of the death of his father, came at once to show him the final honors by the side of Isaac. Naturally the burial-place which Abraham himself had purchased with such elaborate ceremonies from Ephron, the Hittite, was the only one that could come into consideration. There the two sons laid the weary body of their father to rest beside the body of Sarah, his wife, where their dust is awaiting the final resurrection. Such a burial, in which the tomb is regarded as a sleeping-chamber, agrees well with the Christian faith in the resurrection of the body.
NET Bible®	His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah [The cave of Machpelah was the place Abraham had purchased as a burial place for his wife Sarah (Gen 23:17-18).] near Mamre, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar, the Hethite. This was the field Abraham had purchased from the sons of Heth. [Some translate the Hebrew term "Heth" as "Hittites" here (also in vv. 5, 7, 10, 16, 18, 20), but this gives the impression that these people were the classical Hittites of Anatolia. However, there is no known connection between these sons of Heth, apparently a Canaanite group (see Gen 10:15), and the Hittites of Asia Minor. See H. A. Hoffner, Jr., "Hittites," Peoples of the Old Testament World, 152-53.] There Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah.
The Voice	His sons, Isaac and Ishmael, buried him in the cave of Machpelah in the field of Ephron (the son of Zohar the Hittite) to the east of Mamre. This was the field Abraham had purchased from the Hittites. Here he was buried with his wife Sarah <i>by his side</i> .

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And entombing him are his sons, Isaac and Ishmael, in the double cave in the field of Ephron, the son of Zohar, the Hittite, which is adjoining Mamre, the field and the cave which Abraham bought from the sons of Heth. There is made a tomb for Abraham, and Sarah, his wife.
New King James Version	And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, the field which Abraham purchased from the sons of Heth. There Abraham was buried, and Sarah his wife.
Third Millennium Bible	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, the field which Abraham purchased from the sons of Heth. There was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.
Young's Updated LT	And Isaac and Ishmael his sons bury him at the cave of Machpelah, at the field of Ephron, son of Zoar the Hittite, which is before Mamre—the field which Abraham bought from the sons of Heth—there has Abraham been buried, and Sarah his wife.

The gist of this verse: Abraham was buried in the cave that he purchased from the Hittites, and placed next to his wife Sarah.

Genesis 25:9a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâbar (קָבַר) [pronounced <i>kaw-BAHR</i>]	<i>to bury, to heap up a mound</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6912 BDB #868
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>him; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to, toward</i>	affixed to a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Yis ^e châq (יָשַׁח) [pronounced <i>yihse-KHAWK</i>]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Yish ^e mâ'êl (יִשְׁמָעֵל) [pronounced <i>yish-maw-GALE</i>]	<i>whom God hears; God is hearing and is transliterated Ishmael</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3458 BDB #1035
bânîym (בָּנָיִם) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

Translation: Isaac and Ishmael, Abraham's [lit., his] sons, buried him...

As we know, Ishmael was not sent far away; he and his mother were simply sent away from Abraham and his family when Isaac was an infant. As we found out in the previous chapter, Isaac actually lived quite near to the well where Ishmael and his mother were about to die, after being sent out of the Abrahamic compound. This was possibly the very same well that God showed to Hagar, Ishmael's mother, so that they could survive. This all took place in **Genesis 21** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

At this point, both Isaac and Ishmael are grown adults—older men, in fact—and they get together on this. It appears as if they do not live too far apart, although there is not much in the Bible about their paths crossing, except for this passage. There is a lot left unspoken about their relationship as adults, apart from agreeing to this. These verses, along with the recording of Ishmael's line in this chapter suggests that there was at least some limited reconciliation between them. We know this because there is a cluster genealogy of Ishmael recorded in this chapter (and much of Genesis was likely recorded by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob).

Wenstrom: *Isaac and Ishmael buried their father indicating that the two officiated at their father's funeral. The presence of Ishmael at the funeral indicates also that whatever animosity if any there was between the two was over.*⁸⁷

Dr. S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.: *And Isaac and Ishmael unite in the burying of Abraham. Now Ishmael was excluded from the covenantal blessings in the sense that he was rejected for Isaac so far as the seed was concerned, but he was given distinctive blessings. It was said that Ishmael should have twelve princes and that he would become a great nation. So God did bless him. Furthermore, we shall read in a moment that Ishmael was gathered to his people as well, and it's entirely possible in the light of*

⁸⁷ Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

the statement in verse 17. "These are the years of the life of Ishmael 137 years and he breathed his last and died and was gathered to his people, but even though Ishmael was rejected as the one through whom the seed would come, but nevertheless he did have a definite faith in the Triune God and may well be numbered among those who are the saved."⁸⁸

John Calvin: Hence it appears, that although Ishmael had long ago been dismissed, he was not utterly alienated from his father, because he performed the office of a son in celebrating the obsequies of his deceased parent.⁸⁹

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown: Death often puts an end to strife, reconciles those who have been alienated, and brings rival relations, as in this instance, to mingle tears over a father's grave.⁹⁰

Keil and Delitzsch: The burial of the patriarch in the cave of Machpelah was attended to by Isaac and Ishmael; since the latter, although excluded from the blessings of the covenant, was acknowledged by God as the son of Abraham by a distinct blessing (Genesis 17:20), and was thus elevated above the sons of Keturah.⁹¹

Poole: Ishmael, though banished from his father's house, lived in a place not very far from him; and as no doubt he received many favours from his father after his departure, which is implied here, (Genesis 25:6), though it be not mentioned elsewhere; so it is probable that he had a true respect and affection to his father, which he here expresses.⁹²

Although living elsewhere, Ishmael heard about Abraham's death. It was likely that Isaac sent out a servant to find Ishmael. There was certainly a greater closeness between Abraham and Ishmael than there was between Abraham and the sons of Ketura. Therefore, he came to bury his father, but the sons of Ketura were probably not here for his funeral. Nothing is actually said about Abraham's children by Keturah. However, being young and being scattered, it is possible that none of them came to mourn their father.

Had Keturah been a wife of Abraham's while Abraham was married to Sarah, and produced children at that time, then some of these children would have been old enough and established enough to travel west to celebrate the life of Abraham at his funeral. However, no mention is made of these young men, which would be in keeping with Abraham being married late in life to Keturah, sending his sons away at young ages. They would have just been getting established at the time of Abraham's death, and not as easily able to simply come west for his funeral.

Genesis 25:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'el (אֵל) [pronounced eh]	unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
m ^{ec} ârâh (מְעָרָה) [pronounced m ^e -ġaw-RAW]	cave, den, hole	feminine plural construct	Strong's #4631 BDB #792

⁸⁸ From <http://sljinstitute.net/pentateuch/genesis/last-of-abraham-first-of-jacob/> accessed July 2, 2015.

⁸⁹ John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentary on the Bible*; 2nd beta version from e-Sword, Genesis 25:9.

⁹⁰ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, Genesis 25:9–10.

⁹¹ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:9–10.

⁹² Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:9 (slightly edited).

Genesis 25:9b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Mak ^e phêlâh (הַלְפָּתָה) [pronounced mahk-pay-LAW]	<i>double portion, the double;</i> transliterated <i>Machpelah</i>	proper singular noun/location with the definite article	Strong's #4375 BDB #495
'el (אֵל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to;</i> <i>against; concerning, regarding;</i> <i>besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
sâdeh (שָׂדֵה) [pronounced saw-DEH]	<i>field, land, country, open field,</i> <i>open country</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7704 BDB #961
'Eph ^e rôwn (עֹפְרָת) [pronounced éef-ROHN]	<i>fawn-like; transliterated Ephron</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6085 BDB #780
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Tsôchar (צוֹחַר) [pronounced TSOH- khahr]	<i>reddish-gray, tawny;</i> transliterated <i>Zohar</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6714 BDB #850
Chittîy (חִיטִּי) [pronounced khiht-TEE]	a descendant of Heth; transliterated <i>Hittite</i>	gentilic adjective; with the definite article	Strong's #2850 BDB #366

Translation: ...in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zophar the Hittite,...

This seems to be nearly the exact same description of this cave that is found in Genesis 23:19. There are a few minor differences, but this suggests that the writer of this portion of Genesis was well-familiar with the property that Abraham had purchased.

We studied about the purchase of this cave back in **Genesis 23** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Wenstrom on the Cave of Machpelah

Genesis 23 records that for four hundred shekels of silver, Abraham purchased from Ephron the Hittite "the cave of Machpelah" as a burial plot for Sarah, himself and his descendants.

The name "Machpelah" means, "double" or "split cave." "Machpelah" is located west of modern Hebron on the outskirts and the city is situated on the eastern slope of a narrow valley, which runs north and south and is surrounded by rocky hills.

Hebron was located nineteen miles southwest of Jerusalem, on the way to Beersheba and was 3,040 feet above sea level, dominating a beautiful and fruitful area and ancient oaks (terebinths) filled the area.

The cave itself was located at the end of a field and Josephus mentioned a "monument of the patriarchs," which stood in Hebron in the days of Jesus. The cave of Machpelah is the world's most ancient Jewish site and the second holiest place for the Jewish people, after Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

The double cave, a mystery of thousands of years, was uncovered several years ago beneath the massive building, revealing artifacts from the Early Israelite Period (some 30 centuries ago). The structure was built during the Second Temple Period (about two thousand years ago) by Herod, King of Judea, providing a place

Wenstrom on the Cave of Machpelah

for gatherings and Jewish prayers at the graves of the Patriarchs. This uniquely impressive building is the only one that stands intact and still fulfills its original function after thousands of years.

Foreign conquerors and invaders used the site for their own purposes, depending on their religious orientation: the Byzantines and Crusaders transformed it into a church and the Muslims rendered it a mosque.

About 700 years ago, the Muslim Mamelukes conquered Hebron, declared the structure a mosque and forbade entry to Jews, who were not allowed past the seventh step on a staircase outside the building.

Upon the liberation of Hebron in 1967, the Chief Rabbi of the Israel Defense Forces, the late Major-General Rabbi Shlomo Goren, was the first Jew to enter the cave of Machpelah. Since then, Jews have been struggling to regain their prayer rights at the site, still run by the Muslim Waqf (Religious Trust) that took control during the Arab conquest.

Many restrictions are imposed on Jewish prayers and customs at the Tomb of the Patriarchs despite the site's significance, primacy and sanctity in Jewish heritage and history.

Over 300,000 people visit the cave annually and is divided into three rooms and presently Jews have no access to the largest room, with the exception of ten days a year.

With this purchase of the cave in the field of Machpelah facing Mamre in Hebron in the land of Canaan, Abraham was renouncing Paddan Aram, that is, northwest Mesopotamia (cf. 25:20), which was brought to the readers attention indirectly by mentioning the relatives of Abraham in Genesis 22:20-24.

Abraham bought this gravesite in the land of Canaan in the confident expectation of God fulfilling His promise to give the land of Canaan to himself and his descendants as a permanent possession.

Not only was Sarah buried at this site but so also were Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob and Leah were buried there as well (See Genesis 25:9; 35:27, 29, 49:31; 50:13) and all of these demonstrated their faith in God's promises by being buried with Sarah.

This little piece of land gives promise of the whole land and makes clear that Abraham and Sarah were aliens and strangers seeking a homeland, which they will receive at the resurrection of Old Testament believers. With this purchase of land in Hebron facing Mamre, Abraham wanted his descendants to know that he had believed in the Lord's promises.

The presence of the grave site among his descendants in later years would be mute but eloquent testimony to them all that Abraham was sure that God would fulfill His promises.

Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

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Genesis 25:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
'al (עַל) [pronounced gah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

Genesis 25:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, 'âl and pânîym mean <i>upon the face of, facing, in front of, before (as in preference to), in addition to, overlooking</i> .			
Mam ^e rê' (מַמְרֵ) [pronounced mahm-RAY]	<i>strength; fatness; transliterated Mamre</i>	proper singular noun/location	Strong's #4471 BDB #577

Translation: ...which [is] facing [or, overlooking] Mamre...

This represents the slightest of changes; in Genesis 23:17, there is a lâmed preposition instead of 'al (אֵל) [pronounced *gah*]. It is things like this which help us to establish the meanings of these prepositions.

It is also in this cave, Isaac and Rebekah were buried, as well as Leah and Jacob. Genesis 49:29–32 50:12–14

Genesis 25:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
sâdeh (שָׂדֶה) [pronounced saw-DEH]	<i>field, land, country, open field, open country</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7704 BDB #961
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
qânâh (קָנָה) [pronounced kaw-NAWH]	<i>to get, acquire, obtain; [of God] to found, to originate, to create; to possess; to redeem [His people]; [of Eve] to acquire; to acquire [knowledge, wisdom]; to buy [purchase, redeem]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7069 BDB #888
'Ab ^e râhâm (אֲבִרָאם) [pronounced ahb ^{ve} -raw-HAWM]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85

Together, min 'êth mean *from proximity with, from with, from close proximity to, to proceed from someone*. A good up-to-date rendering might be *directly from*. The idea is, the person that these prepositions refer to is supposed to directly be involved in the action or in whatever is being requested.

Genesis 25:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Chittîy (חִיטִּי) [pronounced <i>khiht-TEE</i>]	a descendant of Heth; transliterated <i>Hittite</i>	gentilic adjective; with the definite article	Strong's #2850 BDB #366

Translation:...—the [same] field that Abraham acquired from the Hittites.

Nearly 40 years earlier, Abraham purchased this field from the Hittites.

Recall that when Isaac was born, they were not living in Mamre, but on the land of the Philistines.

The plan of God always goes forward, from one generation to the next. However, Abraham will remain an important person, even though gone from this earth, for at least 2000 more years.

Genesis 25:9–10a *Isaac and Ishmael, Abraham's [lit., his] sons, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zophar the Hittite, which [is] facing [or, overlooking] Mamre—the [same] field that Abraham acquired from the Hittites.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced <i>shawm</i>]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb with the directional hê	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
This simply means <i>there</i> ; hê acts almost like a demonstrative.			
qâbar (קָבַר) [pronounced <i>kaw-BAHR</i>]	<i>to be buried</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Pual perfect	Strong's #6912 BDB #868
ʾAb ^e râhâm (אֲבִרָאם) [pronounced <i>ahb^{ve}-raw-HAWM</i>]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Sârâh (סָרָה) [pronounced <i>saw-RAW</i>]	<i>princess, noble woman; transliterated Sarah</i>	proper noun; feminine singular	Strong's #8283 BDB #979
ʾishshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAW</i>]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #802 BDB #61

Translation: *There, Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried.*

Despite having had at least two other mistresses, Abraham would be buried with his wife Sarah. There seems to be an agreement even among Isaac and Ishmael on this (although no details are really supplied here). This would make sense, as Abraham remained with Sarah all of their lives; but Hagar was cast out when Isaac was weaned.

Genesis 25:10b There, Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:9–10 Isaac and Ishmael, Abraham's [lit., *his*] sons, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zophar the Hittite, which [is] facing [or, *overlooking*] Mamre—the [same] field that Abraham acquired from the Hittites. There, Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:9–10 Isaac and Ishmael, Abraham's sons, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zophar the Hittite, which cave is facing Mamre—this is the same field that Abraham purchased from the Hittites. It was there that Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried. (Kukis paraphrase)

Paying Homage to Abraham

For quite a number of pages, we are going to look at Abraham's life from many perspectives. Primarily, we will examine where his name comes up in the New Testament. Nearly 100 pages are going to be devoted to this.

Normally I do not include a quotation as extensive as this.

Clarke's Homage to Abraham

The death of Abraham, recorded in this chapter, naturally calls to mind the virtues and excellences of this extraordinary man. His obedience to the call of God, and faith in his promises, stand super-eminent. No wonders, signs, or miraculous displays of the great and terrible God, as Israel required in Egypt, were used or were necessary to cause Abraham to believe and obey. He left his own land, not knowing where he was going, or for what purpose God had called him to remove. Exposed to various hardships, in danger of losing his life, and of witnessing the violation of his wife, he still obeyed and went on; courageous, humane, and disinterested, he cheerfully risked his life for the welfare of others; and, contented with having rescued the captives and avenged the oppressed, he refused to accept even the spoils he had taken from the enemy whom his skill and valor had vanquished. At the same time he considers the excellency of the power to be of God, and acknowledges this by giving to him the tenth of those spoils of which he would reserve nothing for his private use. His obedience to God, in offering up his son Isaac, we have already seen and admired; together with the generosity of his temper, and that respectful decency of conduct towards superiors and inferiors for which he was so peculiarly remarkable; see on Genesis 23 (note). Without disputing with his Maker, or doubting in his heart, he credited every thing that God had spoken; hence he always walked in a plain way. The authority of God was always sufficient for Abraham; he did not weary himself to find reasons for any line of conduct which he knew God had prescribed; it was his duty to obey; the success and the event he left with God. His obedience was as prompt as it was complete. As soon as he hears the voice of God, he girds himself to his work! Not a moment is lost! How rare is such conduct! But should not we do likewise? The present moment and its duties are ours; every past moment was once present; every future will be present; and, while we are thinking on the subject, the present is past, for life is made up of the past and the present. Are our past moments the cause of deep regret and humiliation? Then let us use the present so as not to increase this lamentable cause of our distresses. In other words, let us now believe-love-obey. Regardless of all consequences, let us, like Abraham, follow the directions of God's word, and the openings of his providence, and leave all events to Him who doth all things well.

See to what a state of moral excellence the grace of God can exalt a character, when there is simple, implicit faith, and prompt obedience! Abraham walked before God, and Abraham was perfect. Perhaps no human being ever exhibited a fairer, fuller portrait of the perfect man than Abraham. The more I consider the character of this most amiable patriarch, the more I think the saying of Calmet justifiable: "In the life of Abraham," says he, "we find an epitome of the whole law of nature, of the written law, and of the Gospel of Christ. He has manifested in his own person those virtues, for which reason and philosophy could scarcely find out names, when striving to sketch the character of their sophist - wise or perfect man. St. Ambrose very properly observes that 'philosophy itself could not equal, in its descriptions and wishes, what was exemplified by this great man in the whole of his conduct.' Magnus plane vir, quem votis suis philosophia non potuit aequare; denique minus est quod illa finxit quam quod ille gessit. The Law which God gave to Moses, and in which he has proposed the

Clarke's Homage to Abraham

great duties of the law of nature, seems to be a copy of the life of Abraham. This patriarch, without being under the law, has performed the most essential duties it requires; and as to the Gospel, its grand object was that on which he had fixed his eye - that Jesus Whose day he rejoiced to see; and as to its spirit and design, they were wondrously exemplified in that faith which was imputed to him for righteousness, receiving that grace which conformed his whole heart and life to the will of his Maker, and enabled him to persevere unto death. 'Abraham,' says the writer of Ecclesiasticus, 44:20, etc., 'was a great father of many people: in glory was there none like unto him, who kept the law of the Most high, and was in covenant with him. He established the covenant in his flesh, and when he was tried he was found faithful.'"

As a son, as a husband, as a father, as a neighbor, as a sovereign, and above all as a man of God, he stands unrivalled; so that under the most exalted and perfect of all dispensations, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, he is proposed and recommended as the model and pattern according to which the faith, obedience, and perseverance of the followers of the Messiah are to be formed. Reader, while you admire the man, do not forget the God that made him so great, so good, and so useful. Even Abraham had nothing but what he had received; from the free unmerited mercy of God proceeded all his excellences; but he was a worker together with God, and therefore did not receive the grace of God in vain. Go thou, believe, love, obey, and persevere in like manner.

Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:34.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Abraham, an overview; from [Four Orders](#) by Tony Samuel. Accessed July 3, 2015. This is a graphic that I need to improve upon.

Israel Order

1. God the Father started this order.
2. Abraham was called and his name was changed.
3. Jacob chosen to form a nation and his name was also changed as Israel.
4. Israel was shadow of Kingdom of God.
5. Judges and many Kings ruled the nation.
6. David was anointed and chosen to establish a Kingdom.
7. Jesus was born from David's line.
8. Salvation for mankind came through Jews.
9. This order came up to John the Baptist. It ended on the Cross.
10. Jew or Gentile, Jesus is the only way to Kingdom of God and to Heaven.

"Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away". 2 Corinthians 3:15-16

About Abraham:

Father: Terah (Gen. 11:26)

Spouses: Sarah, Hagar, and Keturah (Gen. 11:29; 16:3; 25:1)

Sons: From Hagar: Ishmael. From Sarah: Isaac. From Keturah: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah (Gen. 25:2)

Brothers: Nahor and Haran (Gen. 11:26)

Sisters: Half sister was Sarah (Gen. 20:12)

Meaning of his name: Abram, meaning "exalted father," to that of Abraham, meaning "father of a multitude" (Gen. 17:5-6).

Frequency of his name: Referred to 307 times

Occupation: Patriarch

Place of birth: Ur of the Chaldees (Gen. 11:31)

Place of death: Near Hebron in Canaan (Gen. 23:19; 25:9)

Age at death: 175 (Gen. 25:7)

Important fact about his life: He was the father of the Hebrew nation and the ultimate role model for faith

28 June 2011

Four Orders

10

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Abraham in the New Testament:

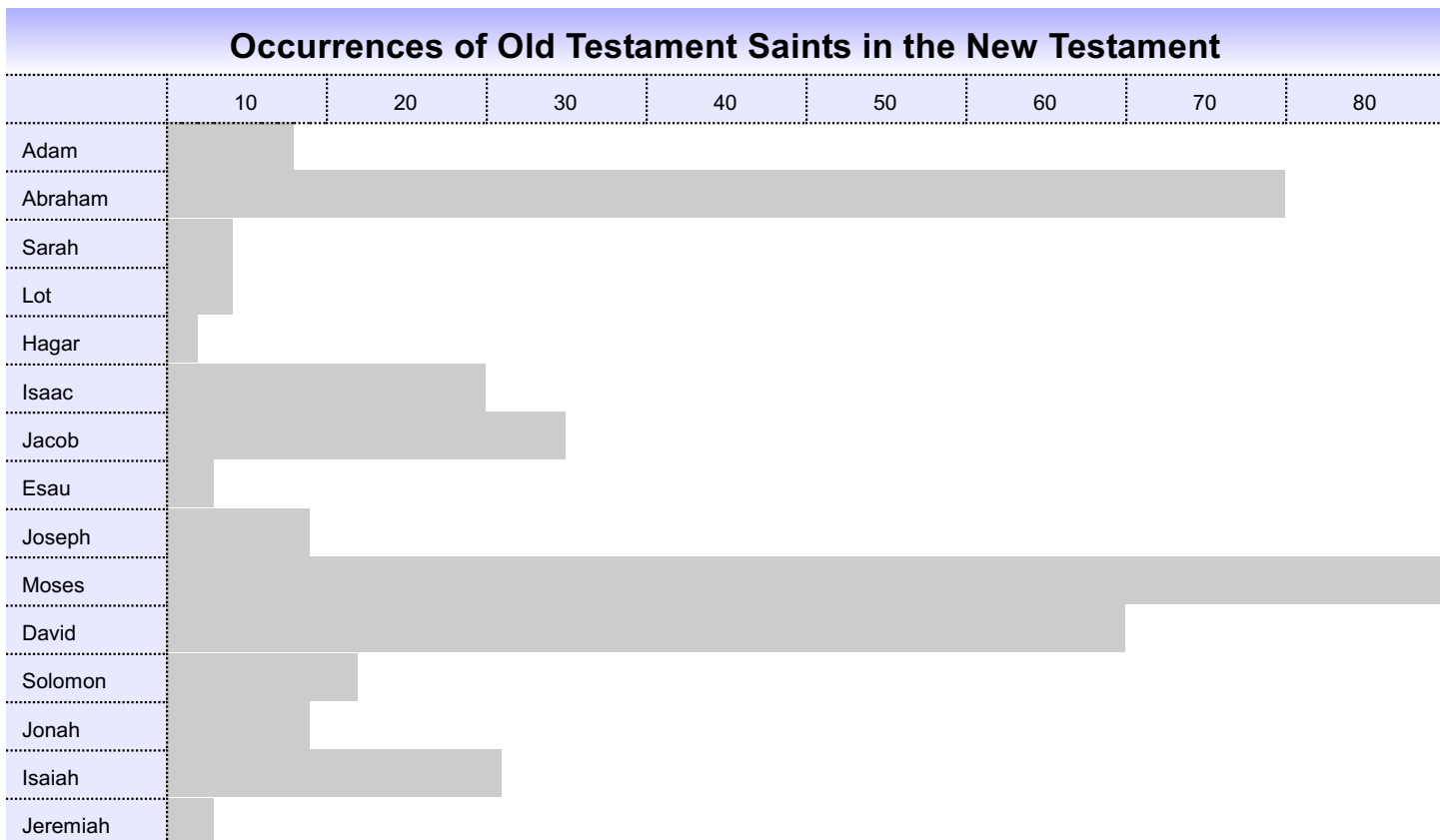
Adam is the father of mankind; Abraham is the father of the Jews. As the father of the Jews, Abraham represents the father of those who believe in the Revealed God (Jesus Christ in our dispensation).

Given that Abraham is found 70 times in the New Testament, it is only appropriate that we go there to see how his person is referenced. Only Moses, from the Old Testament, is mentioned as many times (80x for Moses).

Part I: Abraham in the Synoptic Gospels

The Synoptic Gospels are the first 3 gospels of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark and Luke. They are very similar in their approach to the life of Jesus. We will examine Abraham's name each time that it occurs in the Synoptic Gospels.

Abraham's name occurs around 70 times in the New Testament. By comparison, Moses' name is found nearly 80 times, David nearly 60 times, Jacob 25 times, Isaiah 21 times, Isaac nearly 20 times, Solomon 12 times, Joseph (the son of Jacob) 9 times, Jonah 9 times, Adam 8 times, Sarah 4 times, Lot 4 times, Esau 3 times, Jeremiah 3 times, and Hagar twice. Ishmael is never mentioned in the New Testament.



The saints are listed in chronological order.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Since we have come to the end of Abraham’s life, we need to see just how his life impacts the New Testament writings. Even though both the gospels and the epistles reveal a turning of God from the Jews to the gentiles (but the Jews have not been wholly abandoned nor have they *morphed* into the church); it ought to be a matter of interest as to how often Abraham is spoken of in the New Testament, and what is said. In the epistles, which are essentially Church Age documents, Abraham’s name still occurs many times (30–33 times, depending upon the translation).

These next few lessons will be longer than previously given. These lessons will allow for the covering of a great many passages with only a limited amount of exposition. The idea is, you will see how your knowledge of Abraham now provides a much greater context for and a better understanding of these passages which you may have quickly read over before.

Abraham in the Gospels/The Coniah Curse/The Types of Baptisms in the Bible

In the previous study we have come to the end of Abraham’s life. However, Abraham shows up in the New Testament on numerous occasions. We find his name 70–75 times⁹³ in the New Testament (although usually spoken of in an incidental way); however, we must understand who Abraham was, in order to understand all of the references to him.

God does not set aside the Old Testament; the Old Testament is not old fashioned nor is the Old Testament supplanted by the New. The Old Testament is the foundation for all that we believe. The Old Testament is a narrative of God’s interaction with mankind; however, the New Testament adds another dimension to this

⁹³ Depending upon which Bible you are using.

relationship. In the New Testament, God has come and lived among us. As a result, much of what is in the Old Testament has greater meaning and depth.

In Matthew 1, we have the **legal** line of Jesus. This is the line that goes from Abraham to Jesus, including the royal line which goes through David the king. This line ends with Joseph, the husband of Mary, the legal father of Jesus, but not the genetic father of Jesus.

Matthew 1:1–2, 17 Luke 3:34

The Genealogies of Jesus

Matt. 1:1 **The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.**

Notice to whom Jesus is connected to by birth: David, the greatest king of Israel; and to Abraham, father of the Jewish race. Note who Jesus is not genetically connected to: Moses, who is associated with the Law. We are saved by grace, not by the Law. We are saved because of God's promise, not because of anything which we have done. Abraham represents the promises made by God, which promises are fulfilled in Jesus Christ. David represents being saved by grace—few men understood or exploited grace any more than David did. But Jesus is *not* descended from Moses, who represents the Law. We are condemned by God's Law; we are not saved by it.

We will find this same thing illustrated in the book of Deuteronomy as well. Moses, who is closely associated with the Law, will not lead his people into the Land of Promise; who does lead the people into the land? Joshua, whose name is the Old Testament version of *Jesus*. What do those names mean? *Savior*.

Matthew has more Old Testament references than the other gospel writers. Although he was a tax collector and shunned by other Jews because of his vocation, he had a thorough knowledge of the Old Testament, and over and over again, he pulled together parallels between the Old Testament and to what he saw and heard when he was with the Lord.

It is not clear how much knowledge of the Old Testament Matthew had as a disciple of Jesus. He may have studied the Old Testament much more after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. It is very possible that he had a reasonable understanding of the Old Testament before he was called by Jesus, which study would not have been distorted by the pharisees, as Matthew would have been *persona non grata* with the religious crowd.

Because Matthew was a Jew and because he was very knowledgeable about the Old Testament, it is logical that he would begin his genealogy with Abraham, the father of the Jewish race.

Matt. 1:2 **Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers**

Abraham had a brother (Nahor) and a nephew (Lot); however, the line of the Jews went through Abraham. Abraham had two sons of prominence, one by Hagar and one by Sarah: Isaac, the son by Sarah is the Jew; Ishmael, the son by Hagar, is a gentile (an Arabic gentile).

Isaac had twin sons, one was a Jew and the other a gentile; Jacob is the Jew and Esau is the gentile. Jacob has 12 sons and they are all Jews. Esau is not a Jew and none of his sons are Jews.

The genetic line of Jesus—the line that goes to Mary—is given in Luke 3, and it is presented in the tradition of the Greeks. It starts with Jesus and works backward, one generation at a time, all the way back to Adam. This is because this line presents Jesus as a man Who will die for the sins of all mankind. Therefore, this line emphasizes the humanity of Jesus (the book of Luke is often titled the *Son of Man*).

The woman does not pass along the sin nature. You may have your mother's eyes, her hair color and her body type, but you do not get your sin nature from your mother. The woman has a sin nature; but she does not transmit it genetically. This is why Jesus is continually spoken of as the seed of the woman, the son of the virgin. Jesus

is born without a sin nature because His Father is the Holy Spirit. These exact mechanics are not made known to us. In this way, Jesus is fully divine and fully human, and born without inheriting the sin nature.

Luke 3:34 ...the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of **Abraham**, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,...

The Jewish line above begins with Abraham; but since Luke, a gentile, emphasizes the humanity of Jesus, his line reaches further back than Abraham, going all the way back to Adam.

Many of the mentions of Abraham are incidental as in the passage below.

Matt. 1:17 So all the generations from **Abraham** to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

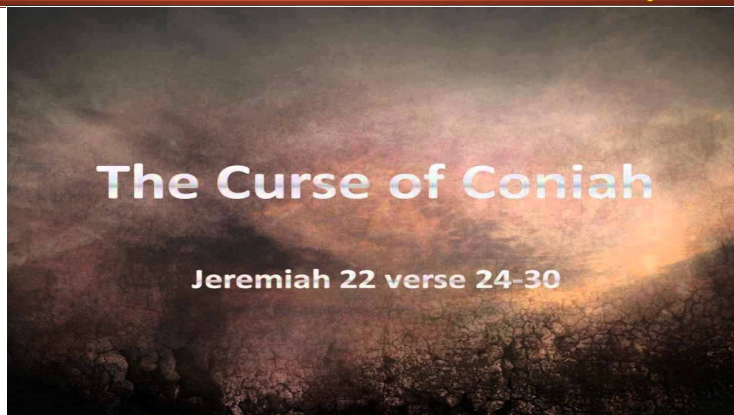
We have gone as far as Abraham in our study of the Bible (although we have made many excursions into books other than Genesis in this study). Matthew, the presumed author of the book of Matthew, shows the symmetry in the line from Abraham to Christ. 14 generations from Abraham to David, and then 14 generations to the deportation (the **5th stage of national discipline**)—the king at that time was Coniah, and he was so bad as a king and the people were so bad, that God allowed a foreign military to defeat them and then He allowed the physical removal of the Jews from the Land of Promise. God allowed the people of Israel to be taken into slavery.

The Lineage of Jesus; His Legal Line and the Line of His Humanity (a graphic); from [Creation Revolution.com](http://CreationRevolution.com); accessed December 11, 2013.

Very likely, dividing these names into groups made it easier to learn them, as Bibles were not as abundant in those days as today.

In the first grouping, with Abraham as the first and David as the last, we have 14 generations. In the second grouping, there are 14 generations from David to Josiah, which is about the time of the captivity (they actually went into captivity with his son, Jeconiah). Josiah was the last chance the Jews had for national repentance (turning away from false gods and turning toward the True God). Once Jeconiah became king, their fate was sealed. They had chosen their pathway. Josiah to Joseph is 14 generations as well.

Although the Jews are returned to the Land of Promise after the captivity, they never have full autonomy, as they had previously has as a nation (see the **Basic History of Israel HTML PDF**; with



no links⁹⁴: [PDF](#)). They had rejected their God, and so He rejected them. "You have rejected me," declares the LORD. "You keep on backsliding. So I will reach out and destroy you; I am tired of holding back." (Jer. 15:6; NIV). And so the people were disciplined with the 5th stage of national discipline, which is their removal from their homeland.

The Coniah Curse (a graphic) from [TheNey03 on YouTube](#); accessed December 11, 2013.

The sin nature is passed along by the human father; and this is illustrated by the Coniah curse. Throughout the Bible there are a number of real things which also are illustrative. Coniah is a real person, and he illustrates a real thing (the sin nature).

The Coniah Curse

1. God made many promises to Abraham which were continued to David; David was promised that a King from his line would sit on the throne of Israel forever (this is known as the Davidic Covenant). Psalm 89
2. This Eternal King is Jesus Christ, also called the Son of David. Matthew 1:1 9:27
3. However, in David's line there was a king so horrible and God cursed him for all time. This is Jeconiah, also known as Coniah. Jer. 22:24–30 "As I live," says the LORD, "though you, Coniah son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, were a signet ring on My right hand, I would tear you from it. In fact, I will hand you over to those you dread, who want to take your life, to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the Chaldeans. I will hurl you and the mother who gave birth to you into another land, where neither of you were born, and there you will both die. They will never return to the land they long to return to." Is this man Coniah a despised, shattered pot, a jar no one wants? Why are he and his descendants hurled out and cast into a land they have not known? Earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD! This is what the LORD says: Record this man as childless, a man who will not be successful in his lifetime. **None of his descendants will succeed in sitting on the throne of David or ruling again in Judah.** (HCSB; emphasis mine)
4. So, we have Coniah, in the line of David, and in the line of Christ in Matthew 1:11. At first, that would seem problematic, as God certainly made it sound as though he is cut out of the Davidic Covenant.
5. So, how is this man kept out of the line of Christ? Matthew 1:11 is the legal line of Christ, going from Abraham to Joseph. Joseph is Jesus' legal father, but not His genetic father. Jesus is not actually descended from Coniah, even though His legal father, Joseph, was.
6. Coniah represents the sin nature. The sin nature cannot be in the line of Christ. Jesus cannot inherit a sin nature. No one with a sin nature can die for our sins.
7. Therefore, Joseph, in the line of Coniah, is not the genetic father of Jesus. Matthew 1:18–19
8. The genetic line of Jesus does not proceed through David and his son Solomon to Jesus; but through David and his son Nathan and eventually to Jesus. Compare Matthew 1:6 with Luke 3:31.
9. So Coniah, representative of the sin nature, is kept out of the genetic line of Jesus Christ; just as the sin nature is not passed along to Jesus, because there was no contribution from a human father. It is the human father who passes down the sin nature.
10. Adam sinned knowingly; but his wife sinned because she was deceived. So they are both fallen, but the nature of their original sins is different. 1Timothy 2:13–15
11. Thus the importance of the virgin birth, which is more than a sign. The virgin birth is the means by which Jesus is born without an indwelling sin nature. Isaiah 7:14 Matthew 1:23 Luke 1:35 John 1:14 Hebrews 4:15 7:26 1John 3:5
12. This is also why Jesus is known as the *Seed of the Woman*. Genesis 3:15
13. Therefore, Jesus is born without a sin nature and outside of the line of Coniah, who represents the passing along of the human sin nature.

⁹⁴ So that you can print this out and keep it with your Bible.

For those who like to speculate, if the humanity of Jesus sinned, then there could be no salvation. At that point, Jesus could only die for His Own sins. No idea how the Hypostatic Union could have held together, had He sinned, being perfect humanity coupled with true Deity. However, as noted above, Jesus was without sin—He did not have a sin nature nor did He personally sin—and therefore He could take upon Himself our sins.

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Luke 1:46–55

The Song (Magnificat) of Mary

There are several Mary's in Scripture; this is Mary, the mother of the humanity of Jesus.

Luke 1:46 **And Mary said, "My soul magnifies [extols, celebrates] the Lord,**

This song appears to be the New Testament counterpart to the song of Hannah in 1Samuel 2:1–10.

This song is spoken by Mary to Elizabeth, her cousin; and Elizabeth is pregnant with John the Baptizer. Mary has received promises that she will bear the Savior.

Luke 1:47 **and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,...**

The Old Testament Jews viewed God as their Savior. They saw God as delivering them out of troubles; but Jesus presents a slightly different view of this, where we are delivered by Jesus from God's judgment. The God of the Jews Who saved them from trouble and national destruction illustrates Jesus, the Savior, Who saves us all from God's judgment.

The soul is the part of our unseen humanity which interacts with people; and the spirit is the part of our unseen humanity which interacts with God. Mary's spirit rejoices in God her Savior.

Luke 1:48 **...for He has looked on the humble estate of His servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;...**

Mary is blessed (made happy) in her pregnancy. She sees herself as God's servant.

Luke 1:49 **...for He Who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name.**

These are obviously references to God, and God has blessed Mary in her life; and this pregnancy is a great blessing to her. God's name is His reputation and His essence; His name being holy refers to God's righteous and justice (= the principle and the execution of God's integrity).

Luke 1:50 **And His mercy is for those who fear Him from generation to generation.**

In the Old Testament, *fearing God* meant that you understood God's power, that God can remove us at any time, and that our concentration is upon Him.

Let's say, you are afraid of snakes, and a snake has gotten into your house, but has slipped away from you, but you are not sure where. What are you thinking about all the time? That helps to illustrate the concept of fear of the Lord. See the **Doctrine of the Fear of the Lord in the Old Testament** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

In order to fear the Lord, you must first believe in Him.

Luke 1:51 **He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the arrogant in the thoughts of their hearts;...**

Sin always begins in the soul; evil always begins in the soul. One of the great conflicts on this earth is between the humble (grace oriented) and the arrogant.

Luke 1:52 ...He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and He has exalted those of humble estate;...

This is seen in two ways. We will have the example of Joseph (in the book of Genesis) who will rise up from being a lowly slave to becoming prime minister of Egypt. There is also the example of Jeconiah (Coniah) who was king over Israel and he became a slave because of the evil in his thinking.

Also in view here are the saints of God in general, who will be exalted above the angels in the end. We will judge the angels (1Corinthians 6:2–3). Jesus is above the angels (Ephesians 1:20–23 Hebrews 1:10), and therefore, we, being in Christ, are positionally above them; and we will eventually be placed above them (2Timothy 2:12 Hebrews 1:14).

Luke 1:53 ...He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty.

The hungry are those who are hungry for salvation and God's Word; the rich are those who believe that they have everything that they need. This is not a diatribe against rich people and somehow implying that being poor is somehow innately superior. The hungry person recognizes his need for Jesus; the rich person (the person who has all of his material needs met) does not.

The person who believes in Jesus Christ is accepting that he is not good enough to earn his way into God's approval; and that we must stand upon Jesus Christ. We have no hope apart from Jesus.

Luke 1:54 He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy,...

God has been with the nation Israel from the time of Abraham. Many times, because of the evil acts and thinking of Israel, God has been merciful towards them.

Luke 1:55 ...as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever."

Abraham is the first Jew, and it is to Abraham that God made all of the promises which we have studied. It is from Abraham that the nation Israel came.

Also, we have studied the categories of Abraham's offspring: (1) saved Jews (those who have believed in the Revealed Lord; (2) racial Jews who did not believe in the Revealed Lord (and later did not believe in Jesus); (3) the many Arabic races who are related to Abraham through Ishmael, Esau or through Abraham's other children by Keturah; (4) believers in the Church Age, who are Abraham's spiritual children. At some point, I will put together a chart of Abraham's offspring and show how the Bible connects each of these 4 groups to Abraham.

The passage above refers to the saved Jews and gentiles as Abraham's offspring.

Luke 1:67–80

Zechariah's Song

Zechariah (also spelled Zacharias in some Bibles⁹⁵) is the father of John the Baptizer; and he said this after the birth of John.

Luke 1:67 And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,...

To prophesy does not simply refer to future events; it means to speak truth; it means to speak the Word of God.

⁹⁵ There is no *h* in the Greek. So, when *Zachariah* from the Hebrew is brought into the Greek, since there is no *h*, an *s* is added at the end instead. If we transliterate from the Greek, we have *Zacharias*.

Luke 1:68 "Praised is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people..."

The birth of John (not the apostle) is a sign that God has visited His people and has redeemed (purchased) them.

The word used here is the adjective *eulogêtos* (εὐλογητός) [pronounced *yoō-log-ay-TOSS*], which means, *blessed, praised*. Thayer definitions only. Strong's #2128. So, when it is used where God is the subject and man is the object, it means *to bless*; but when man is the subject and God is the object, it means *to praise*.

God visiting His people means that Jesus Christ has come (John the Baptizer will be the herald of the Messiah). Jesus will purchase His people by dying for their sins (and dying for ours as well).

Luke 1:69 ...and has raised up a horn of salvation [= deliverance] for us in the house of his servant David,...

Horn, in the Bible, is a symbol of strength, power or authority. God has the power and the authority to deliver all Israel. This will be done in a temporal way, when God intervenes in the Battle of Armageddon. Also, this will be done in an eternal way, so that all those who put their trust in Him are delivered eternally.

Most think of a physical deliverance from an enemy—and that is applicable—but we will be delivered from Satan in Christ.

Luke 1:70 ...as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old,...

Believers in the time of our Lord's birth understood that the prophet spoke the truth of God, which truth we know as Bible doctrine. God spoke through these men.

Also, the ancient prophets spoke of the coming of God's Messiah.

Luke 1:71 ...that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us;...

There would be temporal deliverance for all of Israel. We have seen almost inexplicable hate directed toward the nation Israel—because they are God's people and God will keep them alive as a people until the end. Because of this, the Jewish race will be hated by many.

Luke 1:72 ...to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant [= contract],...

God made promises to Abraham, to David, and throughout the history of Israel to eventually redeem His people and exalt them. This is the covenant which he has made with all of redeemed Israel.

Luke 1:73 ...the oath that He swore to our father **Abraham**, to grant us...

We have studied the oath of God to Abraham in Genesis 22:16 (see also Hebrews 6:13–14).

Luke 1:74 ...that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear,...

This is true, and this is what many in Israel believed. But they saw the Messiah primarily as being political; and there will be an ultimate national deliverance in the Tribulation. However, the cross must precede the crown. There cannot be ultimate national redemption until the people of Israel are personally redeemed. Just being a Jew or simply attempting to follow the Law of Moses does not redeem anyone. We can only be purchased by Jesus.

Luke 1:75 ...in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.

Holiness refers to being set apart to God; and righteousness is the principle of God's integrity.

The righteousness which we possess comes from imputation. God imputed righteousness to Abraham and it has been imputed to us as well—we who have believed in Jesus Christ. Just like Abraham, we have been credited with righteousness which we did not earn or deserve. This method of salvation is universal across all dispensations.

Luke 1:76 *And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare His ways,...*

John the Baptizer, who is an infant at this point, would go before Jesus as His herald.

Luke 1:77 *...to give knowledge of salvation to His people in the forgiveness of their sins,...*

Salvation refers both to a military deliverance as well as to the soul being saved. All of this is based upon the forgiveness of sins.

Salvation is based upon knowledge. We must hear and understand the gospel (to some limited degree) in order to be saved.

Luke 1:78–79 *...because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."*

The sun represents truth, as all things are seen in light. So this refers to the revealing of all things.

On earth, we are in darkness, as this is the devil's world. However, Jesus has overcome the world, so that we escape darkness and death by being in Him.

The way of peace refers to peace with God; not world peace. Many times we read about peace in terms of peace with surrounding nations, but this is often the promise of false prophets (Jer. 6:14 8:11). Many people try to distort the word *peace* in the Bible, and act as if Jesus is some prophet of disarmament. This is a misrepresentation of the Word of God by people who denigrate Christianity and Christians. Furthermore, this view is evil.

Peace in the Bible refers both to peace with surrounding nations and peace with God (the latter use being found the most often). This passage in Luke refers to peace with God.

Matthew 3:1–11

John the Baptizer

Now we turn to the public ministry of John the Baptizer for the next mention of Abraham.



Matt. 3:1 *In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea,...*

John did not go where crowds of people were. He went out into the wilderness—to the unpopulated forested areas of Judæa—and the people were drawn to him.

John the Baptizer out in the Wilderness (a graphic); from [Free Bible Images](#); accessed December 11, 2013.

Matt. 3:2 *"Repent [= change your mind; change your thinking], for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

Repentance has to do with a *change of mind*; the Jews were trapped by their legalistic traditions, which is a religion based upon merit rather than upon God's grace. They needed to turn away from that religion of merit to Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the King promised to David; Jesus is David's Greater Son, who would sit on David's throne forever (Psalm 89). Since John was the herald to the king, he was proclaiming that the King was here; and the King would offer Himself to His people.

Matt. 3:3 For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight.'" (Isaiah 40:3)

When a king arrives to a city, his passageway must be made clear; all obstructions must be moved out of his way. A king cannot be led down Main Street, yet, when he gets to the middle of the street, there is a broken carriage and he cannot go past this carriage. Those who go before the great king must see that there is nothing which would stop this procession. Kings don't do traffic jams. This is the case for the Savior, except these obstructions are in our thinking and in the actions of those who reject Him.

Matt. 3:4 Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey.

John was baptizing men at the Jordan river out in the unpopulated areas. So, based upon this description, John stood out, whether in a crowd or alone. John was a very unusual man. Therefore, he was an easy man to describe. "How do I know that I have found this John the Baptizer fellow?" "He will be wearing a garment made of camel's hair, a leather belt, and he eats grasshoppers and honey. You can't miss him."

Matt. 3:5–6 Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

John is out in the desert-wilderness, and the people were drawn to him, much as potential believers are drawn to Jesus Christ.

This is the baptism of repentance at the hand of John.

There are at least 7 baptisms in Scripture.

Baptisms in the Bible

1. The word "baptize" (from the Greek baptidzo—βαπτίζω), which means *to identify with, to be made one with*. In early Greek, the word had both religious and secular meanings. In general, it refers to the act of identifying one thing with another thing in such a way that its nature or character is changed, or it represents the idea that a real change has already taken place.
2. There are at least 4 real baptisms—real identifications which take place—which are *dry* baptisms.
 - 1) The Baptism of Moses: where 2 million believers were identified with Moses, as a type of Christ, and with the revealed Lord, which was a cloud above them. The Jews therefore crossed over the Sea of Reeds completely dry. They Egyptian army, who did not identify themselves with Moses, or with the God of Moses, were drown by the water. Therefore, all of the people who were *immersed* here were unbelievers. 1Corinthians 10:1–2 Exodus 14:19–22
 - 2) The Baptism of the Cross (or Cup). Jesus would become identified with our sins; God the Father would pour our sins out on God the Son, and He would take upon Himself the punishment for our sins. Luke 12:50 Mark 10:38
 - 3) The Baptism of the Holy Spirit. All believers are baptized by the Holy Spirit; this is the instantaneous identification of the believer with Jesus Christ. We are placed into Christ. This is not something that we feel and it occurs at the moment of salvation. Acts 1:5 11:16 1Corinthians 12:13 Galatians 3:26–27

Baptisms in the Bible

- 4) The Baptism of Fire. All unbelievers will be identified with the judgment of God at the end of the Tribulation. Matthew 3:11–12 Luke 3:16–17 2Thessalonians 1:7–9
3. There are at least 3 ritual baptisms in Scripture, where the baptism represents something else. These are baptisms which involve water and they are symbolic, unlike the baptisms listed above, which are real.
 - 1) The Baptism of John. This is the baptism of repentance, where the participants are rejecting the religion of merit and identifying with John as herald of the king. Matthew 3:1–10 Mark 1:4–5 John 1:25–33 Acts 13:24
 - 2) The Baptism of Jesus. Jesus' baptism by John was unique, where the baptism represents full and complete identification with the plan of God. Mark 1:9–11 Matthew 3:13–17 Luke 3:21–23 cp. Lk.12:50
 - 3) The Baptism of the Christian Believer. We as believers are identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. Matthew 28:16–20 Acts 2:38 Romans 6:3–4 Colossians 2:12
 - (1) As an aside, it is debatable whether this ritual of baptism survives the 1st century as a part of the Christian experience.
 - (2) Clearly, no one is ever saved by water baptism.
 - (3) Clearly, there are deathbed conversions and people who are saved who are never baptized (the thief on the cross, for one).
 - (4) And clearly, there have been great divisions among churches as to the time, manner and meaning of ritual baptism.
 - (5) If a church chooses to baptize, then it is incumbent upon the pastor to explain exactly what is being taught by this ritual.
 - (6) The Eucharist (the Lord's Supper) is the only ritual which is mandated for the entirety of the Church Age. Even here, it is incumbent upon the pastor to teach the meaning of the Eucharist when it is observed. Otherwise, it is a meaningless ritual.

Sources:

<http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics/baptism.html>

<http://www.versebyverse.org/doctrine/baptisms.html> both accessed June 4, 2013.

Matt. 3:7 **But when he [John the Baptizer] saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"**

This is interesting, that John the Baptizer recognized even then the corruptness of the religious class. This is because they taught a salvation of merit; a religion of works.

These religious types came out to see John, not to be baptized and to reject their own religion of merit, but to see what was going on and who this John character was.

Matt. 3:8 **Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.**

Bearing fruit is Christian production. That is what comes from being filled with the Spirit and applying Bible doctrine. Bible doctrine works through the soul of the believer and produces divine good. Here, believers are mandated to bear fruit which is consistent with them changing their mind about dead works (good deeds done in the energy of the flesh). You cannot simultaneously perform dead works and bear fruit (that is, produce divine good). These things are mutually exclusive.

Matt. 3:9 **And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.**

The Jews believed that their genetic relationship to Abraham was the key. **"Abraham is our father."** But the key is to have faith in Abraham's God. God is able to raise up better children from the stones than those who believe in a religion of merit or a religion based upon a genetic line.

Matt. 3:10 Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

Jews who are not regenerated (John 3) are the trees which do not bear good fruit. They are thrown into the fire. These trees are producing bad fruit (dead works); and they will be chopped up and thrown into fire (= judgment). This is the baptism of fire spoken about previously.

Matt. 3:11 I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

John the Baptizer baptized with water to represent a change of mind about the religion based upon works and tradition.

When Jesus comes, for Whom John is herald, He will baptize believers with the Holy Spirit and He will throw unbelievers into Lake of Fire, which is the baptism of fire. The **baptism of fire** is the judgment of unbelievers and fallen angels, where they will all be thrown into the Lake of Fire.

Abraham is also mentioned in the parallel passage in Luke 3.

We are briefly examining all of the places where Abraham is mentioned in the Synoptic gospels.

Matthew 8:5–13

Jesus and the Roman Soldier Who Understands Authority

This next is a fascinating narrative, where Abraham is mentioned; but many things are taught.

Matt. 8:5 When He [Jesus] entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to Him, appealing to Him,...

A centurion is a Roman soldier; a gentile. Although we associate this word with 100, he might have a company of anywhere between 200 and 1000 men.⁹⁶

Matt. 8:6 "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly."

A servant is the same thing as a slave in the ancient world; and there were legitimate forms of slavery and illegitimate forms of slavery in the ancient world (we practiced one of the illegitimate forms in the United States). See the **Doctrine of Slavery** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Because of our own notions about slavery, it might be that the designation *servant* is more accurate, as there are fewer negative connotations with that word.

Matt. 8:7 And He said to him, "I will come and heal him."

Jesus of course knows what this centurion is thinking. However, He says this for the benefit of those who are with Him. Jesus had a very short public ministry; therefore He used each and every incident as an opportunity to teach the truth.

Jesus could have easily snapped His fingers and the servant is healed; end of story. He could have said, "Done" and the centurion would have been pleased. However, Jesus does not do that. He offers to come heal the servant in person.

Matt. 8:8 But the centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy to have You come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed."

⁹⁶ From <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centurion> accessed November 25, 2013.

This centurion knows that power that Jesus has. He has faith in this Messiah from God. It does not matter that he is a Roman; anyone could exercise faith in Jesus. The Roman understood this.

Matt. 8:9 **For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."**

A centurion is a Roman soldier with a high rank; many other soldiers are under him. He can give orders and these orders are obeyed. He understands authority; and he also understands the authority which Jesus has.

This centurion also has a number of servants—some private slaves at his home and some by virtue of his office (a Senator today might have a staff for his office and also a maid service for his own home, to give a modern-day example of this).

The Centurion (a graphic) from [Pastor Greg's Blog](#); accessed December 11, 2013.

It is worth noting the centurion's attitude toward his own servant. Obviously, if this servant was no good to him, he could manumit him and obtain another servant. However, the centurion has real concern for his servant; enough concern to search out Jesus to make a request.



The centurion recognizes that Jesus does not have to go to his home and touch the servant in order to heal him. He knows that Jesus can give the order, and his servant will be made well.

Matt. 8:10 **When Jesus heard this, He marveled and said to those who followed Him, "Truly [=point of doctrine; true fact], I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith.**

Many people have the mistaken notion that Jesus is anti-war in every way. However, this is a high-ranking soldier to whom Jesus is speaking and Jesus does not tell this soldier to put down his sword, become a pacifist, and to follow Him. Instead, Jesus praises this man. He praises him above all others, in fact, for his great faith.

Matt. 8:11 **I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven,...**

Herein, Jesus teaches that, Jews are not the only ones who will be saved. Those who come from the east and the west to recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are those who will also be redeemed. This means that gentiles will come into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Matt. 8:12 **...while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."**

Sons of the kingdom refer to those who are Jews, but who have rejected Jesus Christ. Outer darkness means that they will be separated from God. Their weeping and the gnashing of teeth mean that they know that they were offered a relationship with God through Jesus Christ and they rejected it out of arrogance.

Matt. 8:13 **And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; let it be done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.**

Jesus nearly always made *faith* an issue when it came to healing. Not because the individual needed enough faith to be healed, but because faith is intimately associated with the ultimate healing of the body and soul, which is eternal salvation, which is appropriated by means of faith in Jesus Christ. Physical healing was illustrative of spiritual healing.

Matthew 22:23–33

The Sadducees' Question about Marriage in the Resurrection

Abraham is mentioned in another narrative about Jesus.

Matt. 22:23 The same day sadducees came to Him (the sadducees say that there is no resurrection); and they asked him a question,...

This is actually quite humorous. The sadducees do not believe in the resurrection from the dead; but one of them thought of a great question about the resurrection that they could use to ask Jesus, in order to give Him a question that He could not answer. These men were not interested in the truth; they were interested in tripping up our Lord. They wanted to make a point by making Jesus look foolish.

Let me give a contemporary illustration of this. How many liberals have you heard that say, "Clinton gave Bush a balanced budget and Bush spent us to oblivion"? Or words to that effect. However, these exact same people, who sound as if fiscal responsibility is important to them, will say nothing critical about President Obama and his spending, which was 3x and 4x the deficits of President Bush (in fact, the highest deficits of Obama are about 10x the average deficits of Bush). What sense does it make for a liberal to praise President Clinton for a balanced budget when this is not really a concern of the liberal? A Sadducee with a burning question about the resurrection is like a liberal who sounds overly concerned about the deficits in the Bush administration.

These sadducees do not believe in the resurrection. However, they think that they have come up with a great question which involves the resurrection, which they think will confuse Jesus. So they are suddenly concerned about ramifications of the resurrection, which they don't believe in.

Matt. 22:24 ...saying, "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies having no children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up children for his brother.' (Deut. 25:5)

These men set up a preposterous situation. A man dies, has no son; so his brother marries the wife, in order to raise up seed (a child) on his behalf; but that brother dies, so the next brother is brought in; and so on and so forth. This was an ancient tradition, and apparently common even before the Bible speaks of it. These pharisees take it to the extreme, but they do this because they are trying to make Jesus appear ridiculous.

Matt. 22:25–28 Now there were seven brothers among us. The first married and died, and having no children left his wife to his brother. So too the second and third, down to the seventh. After them all, the woman died. In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be? For they all had her."

This is a goofy question because the person asking this of Jesus does not even believe in the resurrection. On top of this, they propose a ridiculous scenario. They are not seeking information; they ask this because they think this question will stump the Lord. They know that, on earth, there is a clear mandate for one man to marry one woman for life. They know that this mandate is from God. However, there is also a tradition, which is recognized and even codified in the Bible, where a close relative can raise up a child by a bereaved widow in the name of her deceased husband (and this close relative would marry her as well). Therefore, what about this particular marriage in heaven? Will God approve of a marriage between 7 men and 1 woman in heaven?

I see this all of the time on the internet. People will argue points of doctrine and the interpretation of this or that passage, when they do not even believe in the Bible in the first place. I see that a lot of gay-marriage proponents who will, on the one hand, argue about the silliness of the Bible with all of its silly rules and regulations; but on the other hand, take all of the passages on homosexuality and attempt to show by a "careful" exegesis that these

passages are really not about homosexuality but about some weird practice from that day and time. Truth is, these people don't care what is in the Bible. They are not going to study those passages on homosexuality, finally admit that it does refer to homosexuality, and then change their ways. They don't believe in the Bible in the first place; yet they still want to use it in an argument. They don't know anything about the Hebrew language, but then, somehow, they have come to a keen understanding of several key words used in a passage about homosexuality—which understanding has eluded all other Hebrew scholars until this day and time (many of whom have dedicated much of their lives to apprehending the Hebrew language)—and they make the argument—often after a few hours study or after reading it somewhere on the internet—and in opposition to actual Hebrew scholars—that the words found in these passages do not refer to homosexual behavior, but to something else.

In case you are not aware of this, homosexual groups have taken every passage in the Bible dealing with homosexuality and have reinterpreted every one of those passages to mean something different, through their twisting the truth of the passages, and through their newly found scholarship in the Hebrew language. Peter wrote of such people in 2Peter 3:16 **He [the Apostle Paul] spoke about these things [the end times] in all of his letters, which contain some parts that are difficult to understand. [Because of this], ignorant and unstable people twist [his writings], just as they also do to the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.** (AUV–NT)

I don't believe in the Koran, so I am not going to spend even 3 minutes of my life arguing about this or that passage in the Koran, and its true meaning. I may quote a passage which seems clear; but I certainly would not spend time exegeting that passage. I might as well be exegeting *Alice in Wonderland*. I believe that the Bible is the Word of God, so I therefore spend much of my life trying to interpret and explain the Bible. Trying to extrapolate truth from the Koran or from *Alice in Wonderland* is like squeezing blood out of a rock. It can't be did.

So Jesus fires back at the sadducees, who tried to make Jesus and the things which He believed seem foolish.

Matt. 22:29 **But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God.**

Notice Jesus' answer: **"You are wrong."** They ask Him a question, and rather than go to the answer, Jesus tells them from the very beginning that they are wrong.

The sadducees rejected the Scriptures and the power of God, because they rejected the end-time resurrection. But they still want to trip up the Lord Jesus by using the Bible. It is exactly like the gay marriage proponents who do not believe in the Bible, but they will certainly use the Bible to attempt to trip up believers in Jesus Christ.

One example of this is a graphic which has been posted all over the internet, which offers up weird marriages in the Bible, with the implied conclusion, "How can you Bible believers accept these goofy marriages in the Bible, but not accept gay marriage?" In most cases, the types of marriages they took from the Bible are not advocated by Scripture; and in other cases, they put the worst possible spin in a passage, interpreting one passage to mean a rapist can pay the father of his rape victim a specified sum of money and then take that victim as a wife (which is a distortion of the actual text). All of this is covered in **Marriage Alternatives in the Bible** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). These gay marriage advocates could care less about what is really in the Bible. They do not believe the Bible. But, they want to make arguments from the Bible. They could be shown that their spin on these marriages is false, and they would never remove their graphic (they might remove all of your comments disputing the graphic, however). Their interest is not in the truth; their interest is pushing their own propaganda.

The communists did the exact same thing in South and Central America. There, Catholicism had a strong hold on the people, so that they would not reject it for communism (a window sticker which I saw in several homes here was "Christianity Sí, Communism No" —or words to that effect). When it became clear to the communists that they could not destroy the people's faith in Jesus Christ and in the Bible, they studied the Bible to find passages which appeared to support communism. They did not believe in the Bible; they simply sought to use the Bible for their own evil purposes. Furthermore, at that time, understanding the Bible thoroughly was not a part of Catholicism (they have improved in this area somewhat), so many people, seeing a few passages of their own Bible distorted, began to support communism. This was the Liberation Theology movement, which became Black

Liberation Theology in the United States (both movements distort the Bible considerably). Communists did not believe in the Bible. But they used the Bible as a means to an end. Their minions do that same thing today; they take a passage like Jesus telling the rich young ruler to sell all he has and follow Him, and somehow put a socialist spin on that narrative. See **Liberation Theology** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

So here we have people arguing with Jesus Christ about Bible doctrine from the Old Testament, but they don't believe in it themselves—they are just trying to trip Him up, as in the examples given above. So Jesus tells them what their problem is: **But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God."**

Then He explains:

Matt. 22:30 **For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.**

Which indicates that, in heaven, there will be no special till-death-do-you-part relationship in life like marriage (apart from our relationship with God). As Church Age believers, we will be married to the Lord. 2Corinthians 11:2–3. This is an extension of the union we are in right now. We are in union with Jesus Christ (we are *in Christ*), and therefore, we receive the benefits of this relationship.

Matt. 22:31 **And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God:**

It appears that the Sadducees would pick and choose which Scriptures that they liked (much like liberals, who really have little use for the Bible, but they will quote certain passages from time to time that they believe support their liberal causes, which they claim are the poor and the downtrodden, but their solution is always more government and more taxes for people who make more money than they do).

Matt. 22:32 **'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living.** (Exodus 3:6)

Jesus goes to the heart of one of the beliefs held by the Sadducees—that they did not believe in the resurrection. If Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not alive, then how could Y^ehowah be their God? God is not God of the dead; He is God of the living.

It is illogical for Sadducees to believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob if these men are dead and gone.

Matt. 22:33 **And when the crowd heard it, they were astonished at his teaching.**

Jesus taught with authority and He knew what He was teaching. This set Him apart from all of the religious types of that day and time (they would teach, "In the opinion of this rabbi, this is thought to be what this law means; and in the opinion of another rabbi, this is what he thought about this law.")

Interestingly enough, the narrative above is the only time Abraham is mentioned in the gospel of Mark (Mark 12:18–27). This narrative is also paralleled in Luke 20:27–38

Luke 13:10–16

Jesus Heals on the Sabbath

Luke 13:10 **Now Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.**

On Saturday, the Jews set aside this day to worship God, and this included the reading and the teaching of the Word of God (which was the Old Testament) in the local synagogue.

Luke 13:11 **And there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not fully straighten herself.**

Although this woman came to hear Jesus, she did not apparently come forward and ask for healing.

Luke 13:12–13 **When Jesus saw her, He called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your disability." And He laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God.**

The healing of this woman is an illustration of us being healed in salvation, which will result in ultimate sanctification (where we are freed of the sin nature). Healing in Scripture had two main purposes: (1) they showed Jesus Christ to be from God; and (2) these healings illustrated salvation. We are made whole by faith in Jesus Christ.

Suffering was, of course, alleviated, but Jesus did not alleviate all suffering on earth; nor did He even alleviate all suffering in His immediate geographical area. There are some healings that, if you read them carefully, Jesus heals one person, but there is no indication that He heals those sickly people around Him on every occasion. However, so that there is no misunderstanding, Jesus healed *everyone* who came to Him. That illustrates salvation and the power of God. **"Any man who comes to Me, I will in no way cast out."** is a statement about salvation, but we may apply this to healing as well. Since healing illustrates salvation, anyone who came to Jesus to be healed would be healed.

Luke 13:14 **But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days in which work ought to be done. Come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day."**

It appears as if this man quotes straight out of the Bible, but this passage is not found in the Bible. What the man says takes portions of the Old Testament and interprets them. Exodus 20:8–10 **Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy; six days you shall labor and do all your work; and the seventh day is a sabbath to Jehovah your God; you shall not do any work, you, and your son, and your daughter, your male slave and your slave-girl, and your livestock, and your stranger who is in your gates.** (Green's literal translation)

So the ruler of the synagogue first says that **"There are six days in which work ought to be done;"** and that is in keeping with the Old Testament. What he says after that is not a part of any OT passage. Furthermore, all that Jesus did was lay hands on this woman and she is healed. The head of the synagogue is saying that this works—that Jesus has violated the Sabbath by healing because He must have worked to heal her.

Luke 13:15 **Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it?"**

It takes far more work for Jesus' accusers to water their animals, which they all apparently did on the Sabbath—which was right for them to do, by the way.

Luke 13:16 **And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?"**

Jesus is saying, "You hypocrites; you will water your own animals on the Sabbath, but you object to this woman being healed on the Sabbath."

We will confine this study to the Sabbath of the 4th commandment.

The Doctrine of the Sabbath Day

1. The fourth commandment reads: (God is speaking to His people) **"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the**

The Doctrine of the Sabbath Day

LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.” (Exodus 20:8–11; ESV)

2. The Sabbath is Saturday, the 7th day of the week. Although there were several *Sabbath*'s in the Law of Moses, this is the only one that God instituted a commandment for.
3. The Sabbath is not to be confused with Sunday, which is the first day of the week. Matthew 28:1 John 20:1 Acts 20:7
4. The Sabbath for the Jews commemorates creation. God created all things necessary for human life in 6 days, and then He rested on the 7th. God did not rest because He was tired; He rested because He was finished. At that time, God blessed the 7th day and set it apart from the other days (Genesis 2:1–3). In this way, the 7th day represents a recognition and an appreciation for what God has done for us.
5. There is no clear observation of the Sabbath day prior to the establishment of the Mosaic Law. All we are told is, God set this day apart and sanctified it.
6. Some try to trace observance of the Sabbath back to Babylonia, because the word occurs in some Babylonian inscriptions; however it was not a seventh day observance (the Babylonians had a 5 day week); and it did not refer to a day of rest.
7. God did not stop work on the 7th day because He was tired. He did not get up at 5 am on the 8th day, make Himself a pot of coffee, and then go back to work on the earth and the universe. He was done on day 6; there was nothing left for Him to do (until man sinned).
8. Although the sanctifying of the 7th day is mentioned early on, legal requirements concerning this day did not occur until Exodus 16:26, where God provided manna for the children of Israel. They were to gather manna 6 days a week, but on the 6th, gather up a double portion to cover them for the 7th day, when they were not supposed to go searching for manna. This is the first passage where we have the word for *Sabbath* (our word is a transliteration from the Hebrew word). Exodus 16:22–30
9. This was codified in the Ten Commandments, as quoted above.
10. The Sabbath was seen as a specific sign between the Jews and God. Exodus 31:12–17
11. However, even though the Sabbath day was not codified until perhaps 2000 years after creation, the 7-day week is nearly universal. There are so many reasons to prefer a 6-day or an 8-day week (or even 9-day or 10-day week). But men throughout the world mostly kept to a 7-day week. The reason for the 7-day week is the creation and restoration of the earth. People who do not believe in the Bible have decided that there are 5 visible planets, + the sun + the moon, so that makes 7, and so ancient man decided on a 7-day week for that **reason**. Interestingly enough, even though there are a variety of civilizations have had a week of 4–10 days, these pretty much stand out as the **exceptions**. The Soviets had a 7-day week, then changed it to a 5-day week (1929) and later to a 6-day week (1931); and then eventually returned to the 7-day week (1940). Although my **source** for this did not mention religious (or anti-religious) precepts as being the reason for these changes, I suspect that was at the heart of their thinking.
12. Keeping the Sabbath was a Law from the Ten Commandments; but it is not applicable to Christians in the Church Age. The legalistic Jews had distorted the Sabbath and had developed **hundreds of regulations** concerning the Sabbath. What I recall from my Jewish history course is, if you were walking along the street on the Sabbath, and a coach went by you and splashed mud on your outfit, then you were allowed to wait for the mud to dry, and then take it in your fist and squeeze it one time in order to remove the dried mud on the Sabbath. Colossians 2:16
13. The Sabbath day was provided for man to lay aside the burden of his daily work and to be able to enjoy a day of worship and a day of rest. This was distorted by the rabbis over the years to an onerous burden of regulation following. Jesus called this **a heavy burden**.
14. The idea behind the Sabbath is grace. God has provided all that we need in 6 days; and we celebrate this and His provision by resting on the 7th day. The Jewish religious hierarchy transformed this into legalism.
15. The rest for all people is to enter into the rest offered by Jesus, to believe in Him and take His offer of rest. Matthew 11:28–29 John 6:37 7:37
16. There is a passage in Hebrews which is misapplied by Sabbath-keeping Christians.

The Doctrine of the Sabbath Day

<p>Heb. 4:1 Therefore, let us fear lest perhaps a promise having been left to enter into His rest, that any of you may seem to come short.</p>	<p>There are three <i>rests</i> which a person can enter into. (1) A person can believe in Jesus, entering into the rest of salvation. (2) The believer can enter into faith-rest, where they claim promises and principles of grace in time. (3) In death, the believer enters into an eternal rest.</p>
<p>Heb. 4:2 For, indeed, we have had the gospel preached to us, even as they also; but the Word did not profit those hearing it, not having been mixed with faith in the ones who heard.</p>	<p>The key is hearing the word of truth and then believing it. There are those who have heard the word of truth, but did not mix that truth with faith. Academic knowledge about the Bible is not enough.</p>
<p>Heb. 4:3 For we, the ones believing, enter into the rest, even as He said, "As I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter into My rest," though the works had come into being from the foundation of the world. LXX-Psalm 94:11; MT-Psalm 95:11</p>	<p>The Exodus generation (specifically, Gen X) heard the words of truth, and yet rejected them time and time again, so that they never entered into the rest God had promised them. Although the Exodus generation believed in the Revealed Lord, they did not enter into the life of faith-rest after their salvation.</p>
<p>Heb. 4:4 For He has spoken somewhere about the seventh day this way, "And God rested from all His works in the seventh day." Gen. 2:2</p>	<p>For salvation, we are to enter into a rest analogous to the rest which God entered into. We stop all of our striving and believe in Him Who died for us. We rest from our own works, because salvation is not based upon our works.</p>
<p>Heb. 4:5 And in this again, "They shall not enter into My rest." MT-Psalm 95:11</p>	<p>Although Gen X did believe in the Revealed Lord, they did not exercise faith in God's direction for them after that. Because they did not exercise faith in God's leading, they did not enter into His rest (which would have been illustrated by entering into the Land of Promise).</p>
<p>Heb. 4:6 Therefore, since it remains for some to enter into it [the rest], and those who formerly had the gospel preached did not enter in on account of disobedience,</p>	<p>Some have had the gospel (good news) proclaimed to them, but they did not obey the mandate (believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved).</p>
<p>Heb. 4:7 He again marks out a certain day, saying in David, Today (after so long a time, according as He has said), "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." MT-Psalm 95:7, 8</p>	<p>When you hear the word of truth, do not reject it. Do not harden your hearts against the truth.</p> <p>When it comes to faith in the truth, this is, for the unbeliever, salvation; and for the believer, the spiritual life.</p>
<p>Heb. 4:8 For if Joshua gave them rest, then He would not have afterwards spoken about another day.</p>	<p>Joshua brought the people into the land, but this is not the final rest. Entering into the Land of Promise was illustrative of the rest provided by God.</p>
<p>Heb. 4:9 So, then, there remains a sabbath rest to the people of God.</p>	<p>There is a sabbath rest for believers in the Church Age. That is, there is both faith-rest after salvation and the eternal rest at the end of life. Salvation is not the be-all, end-all. In time, we need to enter into God's rest, which is His plan for our lives.</p>

The Doctrine of the Sabbath Day

Heb. 4:10 **For he entering into His rest, he himself also rested from his works, as God had rested from His own.** LXX-Psalm 95:11; Gen. 2:2

In salvation we rest from our works and in the Christian life, we rest from our works as well. Only divine good is important in the Christian life. No amount of human good leads us into salvation; and no amount of human good does anything for us as believers in Jesus.

Heb. 4:11 **Therefore, let us exert ourselves to enter into that rest, that not anyone fall in the same example of disobedience.** (Green's literal translation throughout, a few notes added; and emphasis mine)

Since Hebrews was written mostly to Hebrews (believers and unbelievers both), this message is both evangelistic and an encouragement to the faith-rest life. See the Doctrine of **Faith-rest**. ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). This is also found in **Genesis 12** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

17. Believers will observe the Sabbath in the Millennium. Isaiah 66:22–23
18. Closing summary points on the Sabbath for believers in the Church Age:
 - 1) Observance of the Sabbath was abolished at the death and resurrection of Christ.
 - 2) The church has never been under the Sabbath.
 - 3) We can help ourselves and others to understand the purpose of the Sabbath in Bible history.
 - 4) We have a spiritual rest, or spiritual Sabbath, when we believe God's promises to us; and to trust in the principles of the Word of God in time.

See also:

The Westbank Bible Church [Doctrine of the Sabbath](#).

Tod Kennedy's [Sabbath Summary Doctrine](#).

Cherreguine Bible Doctrine Ministries [Lessons from The Sabbath](#).

Some points were taken directly from these studies.

Back to our text:

Luke 13:16 **And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?"**

Healing represents salvation. People can be saved by God on any day. These legalists had completely lost the concept of the Sabbath (to which we, as believers of the Church Age, are not bound). The concept of the Sabbath day was that God has provided all that man needed, and so He rested, because there was nothing more for Him to do. God did not rest because He was tired. And the Sabbath was not designed to be a day of a multitude of regulations.

These religious types would rather have seen this woman suffer another day rather than to allow Jesus to heal her on the Sabbath.

Luke 13:22–30

Gentiles Will Be Saved Instead of Jews

This is another narrative, where Abraham is mentioned, but only incidentally. The focus should always be on Jesus Christ, and not upon any man.

Luke 13:22 **Jesus went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem.**

Although Jesus was always on the move, His ministry took place in a very small area and over a very short time frame. He came to reveal Who He is, and then to die for our sins. He revealed Himself to enough men who would

carry the gospel message throughout the world. Jesus did not have to do any more. Besides, He preferred that other men witnessed of Him, supported by the Holy Spirit.

If Jesus were just a man, then we would have never heard of Him. His ministry was simply too short and confined to a very small piece of land.

Luke 13:23a **And someone said to Him, "Lord, will those who are saved be few?"**

Jesus received all kinds of questions—legitimate and those designed to trip Him up. This appears to be a legitimate one.

Luke 13:23b–24 **And He said to them, "Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.**

The narrow door is Jesus. We do not enter into a relationship with God except through Jesus. You do not enter into a relationship with God through Confucius or through Mohammed or through Buddha. You do not enter into a relationship with God by meditating or by doing works. You do not find God by looking deep within yourself. You *enter* in through the narrow gate, which is Jesus. He is the one and only gate; He is the narrow door. He said, **"I am the way, the truth, and the life. NO MAN comes to the Father except through Me."** He said, **"I am the gate. Those who enter the sheep pen through me will be saved. They will go in and out of the sheep pen and find food."** (John10:9; God's Word®)

Luke 13:25 **From the time the Master of the house shall have risen up, and He shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. And answering, He will say to you, I do not know you, from where you are.** (Green's Literal translation)

Jesus teaches this concept with a parable. The *master of the house* here is Jesus. The master hears them outside and He says that He does not know them.

Luke 13:26 **Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.'**

Just as Jews believe that they have a relationship to God through Abraham, here, some believe that they have a relationship with God because they saw Jesus. They must exercise faith in Jesus Christ in order to be cleansed.

The modern-day equivalent are people today who make Jesus out in their own image. Some liberals try to sell Him as being a long-haired hippie who demonstrated against war and gave away free healthcare. All aspects of this description are inaccurate and misleading. A liberal who presents Jesus like this will not have a place in heaven (unless they have placed their faith in Jesus Christ—the True Jesus).

Luke 13:27 **And He will say, I tell you I do not know you, from where you are. "Stand back from Me all workers of unrighteousness!"** (Green's Literal translation)

Those who do not believe in Jesus Christ as He presented Himself—the Son of God and the Savior of man—will not be saved. Someone from today who looks back at Jesus as being a great advocate of world peace will not be saved, and Jesus here calls such a one a worker of unrighteousness. The person who thinks that Jesus is the first long-haired community organizer proclaiming socialism, Jesus will say to him, **"I don't know you."**

Luke 13:28 **In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out.**

We are not saved by means of human relationship. Jews will not be in heaven because they are descended of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

On several occasions, Jesus speaks of the ability of the unsaved to see those who are saved. We do not know this for all dispensations, but this is spoken of particularly with unsaved Jews. These who think that they are righteous because they are descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will see these men, but only from afar. They will not be with them.

Luke 13:29 **And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God.**

This simply indicates that gentiles will believe in Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is not a genetic relationship to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob which saves, but a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Luke 13:30 **And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last."**

There will be a hierarchy in heaven—and physical proximity to Jesus on earth does not give anyone an edge in this future inequality.

Luke 16:19–31

Lazarus and the Rich Man

Although many teach the following narrative as a parable or some sort of a religious tale. However, the assigning of names suggests that this is real.

Luke 16:19 **"There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day.**

The Bible is not anti-rich. When money is your primary focus in life, that is problematic. If you would compromise your ethics for money, that is problematic. If you set aside Bible class in order to make more money, that is problematic. However, replace “making money” with “being actively involved in liberal causes”, “skirt chasing”, “drinking” or even “playing sports” and you understand the teaching of the Bible. It is legitimate to work for a living; in fact, this is required by Scripture; but it should not supplant learning divine viewpoint. There are even times when it is legitimate to work on Sunday. However, your time to learn Bible doctrine must be made up.

Luke 16:20–21 **And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores.**

The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (a graphic), painting by Bartholomeus van Bassen, ca. 1620-30. From FatherYoung.com, accessed December 11, 2013.

We have two men: one who has enjoyed all of the great pleasures of life; and one whose life has been horrible.

Luke 16:22 **The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried,...**



First of all, being carried to *Abraham's bosom* suggests close contact with Abraham. We know that Abraham is with God at this point in time, so that this man would also be with God. The poor man was not carried to Abraham's bosom because he had a lousy life; he was taken to Abraham's bosom because he had believed in the God of Abraham (Genesis 15:6). I know that is not said here; but *nowhere* does the Bible tell us that poor

people are saved and rich people are damned. We make our interpretations so that they are consistent with the rest of Scripture. However, Jesus does tell us that it is more difficult for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven if his mind is on his money all of the time. That is, you can be so preoccupied with material things that you do not have any interest in God. Sometimes the suffering of being poor causes some to look to God for help.

Luke 16:23 ...and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw **Abraham** far off and Lazarus at his side.

The rich man, being in torment, could look up and see Abraham, and he could see Lazarus as well.

Luke 16:24 And he called out, 'Father **Abraham**, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.'

This is quite interesting. This rich man did not have any photographs of Abraham; there were no statues of Abraham. He knew who Abraham was, historically, but had never seen any image of Abraham. However, he is able to recognize Abraham in heaven. So, even though I have never seen any actual likeness of Abraham or of David or of Joshua, in eternity, I will be able to recognize these men.

As an aside, no one spoke more of hell and the anguish of hell than Jesus Christ.

Luke 16:25 But **Abraham** said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish.'

In Scripture, we do have a responsibility toward those who have fallen upon hard times, and we should not turn from such. This is not the same as saying, we should have a socialist government. Some of the greatest poverty and cruelty known to mankind is found in communist and socialist countries. Soviet Russia and China are infamous for killing more dissidents during peacetime than men who are killed in war. They also made great attempts to crush Christianity, which they discovered was futile.

Luke 16:26 And besides all this, between us and you [there has been] a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.'

Abraham is explaining that there is a great chasm between the saved and the unsaved, and that there is no way that one may pass from one side to the other. Once we have died, our end is determined; there is no off ramp from hell. In this, we know the finality of our end.

Luke 16:27 And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house—for I have five brothers--so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.'

The rich man now speaks to Abraham, calling him *father*, and asking that Lazarus be sent to his family and to warn them.

The rich man is in torment and he worries for his 5 brothers. He does not desire for them to come into this place of torment.

Luke 16:29 But **Abraham** said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.'

Abraham answers that his brothers have *Moses and the Prophets*, indicating that they had access to the teaching of the Word of God, and through this teaching, they could find eternal life.

The gospel message is found throughout the Old Testament.

Luke 16:30 And he said, 'No, father **Abraham**, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent [= change their minds].'

The rich man pleads for Lazarus to be returned to life, as risen from the dead, to speak to them—to speak to his brothers. If that happens, they will change their minds, he says.

Luke 16:31 He [Jesus] said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.' "

This would be proven when Jesus rises from the dead after His crucifixion. Some would believe and some would not. Many unbelievers were aware that Jesus was not held by the tomb. The disciples and at least 500 others saw Jesus after His resurrection, which is what gave them the great boldness with which they spoke, proclaiming the name of Jesus despite the great persecution (you may recall that, when Jesus was crucified, the disciples all ran or denied Him—with the lone exception of John).

Luke 19:1–10

Jesus and the Rich Tax Collector

My guess is that, when some of you read this title, you thought, “What?” That is because this is a narrative which is not often taught or cited.

Luke, who presents the most thorough biography of Jesus and His public ministry, speaks of Jesus going into Jericho. Jericho is a city just west of the Jordan River, the first city conquered by the children of Israel when they entered the land under the command of Joshua.

Jericho was on the border of Benjamin and Ephraim throughout the history of Israel.

Luke 19:1 He entered Jericho and was passing through.

People have distorted the previous narrative of Lazarus and the rich man, to indicate that there is something noble about being poor and something evil about being rich; and so the rich man goes to torments, but the poor man goes to Abraham's bosom. So, in this narrative, Jesus goes to the home of Zacchaeus, who was a tax collector and he was rich and successful. And he was short.

Luke 19:2 And there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich.

So that we are not confused and think that monetary possessions determine our future, we have this historical incident. Interestingly enough, even though liberals love the story of the rich young ruler, or of the rich man and Lazarus, they don't often mention this narrative (my guess is, never).

Luke 19:3 And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small of stature.

Zacchaeus was small man, but he wanted to see Jesus. This indicates positive volition.

As an aside, this is not a narrative telling us how good it is to be short; and how evil it is to be tall. I realize that sounds like a ridiculously obvious thing to say, but bear in mind, people do that which the rich young ruler. They make that story all about being rich and how bad that is.

Luke 19:4 So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was about to pass that way.



The Tree of Zacchaeus (a graphic) from [The Potter's Jar](#); accessed December 11, 2013.

He figured out the route that Jesus was going to take, and Jesus was surrounded by so many people, that Zacchaeus would not be able to see Him. Therefore, he determined a vantage point from which he might see the Lord as He passed by.

This actually tells us a great deal about Zacchaeus. He was able to look ahead; he was able to anticipate; and he was able to act decisively on future events which he could logically predict. This suggests that he may have also invested his money in many successful ventures. This is what an investor does. He makes an attempt to determine what is in the future, and then invests money accordingly.

Luke 19:5 **And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today."**

And then the most amazing thing happened—Zacchaeus is in the tree, having found a place from which he could see Jesus, and then Jesus looks up to him and says, "I am bunking at your home today."

Luke 19:6 **So he hurried and came down and received Him joyfully.**

Zacchaeus is happy about this, and receiving Him joyfully means that he welcomed Jesus into his home. Obviously Zack has believed in Jesus and understands this to be a great honor to welcome into his home.

Luke 19:7 **And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner."**

People of that era hated tax collectors, even though it was a legitimate profession, and they grumbled about Zacchaeus, calling him a *sinner*. I will admit that IRS agents are not my favorite people in the world; but this is just as if Jesus found a righteous IRS agent and went to his home to stay. There are honorable people who work for the government and for the IRS.

Luke 19:8 **And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold."**

Zacchaeus was not a liberal who voted to make rich Charley Brown to give his excess monies to supplement the income of poor Lucy Van Pelt. Zack gave his own money to the poor; and under most systems of government, there are a great many poor in the land.

Now, why does God allow some place like the United States, with all of our degeneracy, to have very few truly destitute people; and other places like Africa to have millions of destitute people? Liberals often moan and groan about the poor and about how the rich just aren't doing enough (while they, the liberals, do almost nothing). But, in reality, those whom we designate as poor in the United States live like rich people compared to the poor in other countries. Our welfare poor and working poor usually live in a home, own a car, a large television, DVD's, have a phone or two, have electricity and water and sewage, and a refrigerator filled with food. My guess is, about 80%⁹⁷ of the world does not have any of this. So, why does God allow this inequity to occur?

In the United States, many people believe in Jesus Christ. About 80% of Americans believe in God, and a huge percentage of those believe in Jesus Christ. Now, I am not prepared to tell you just how many Mormons or Catholics or Jehovah's Witnesses are saved, only that, those who have placed their trust in Jesus Christ are saved and they cannot lose that salvation, regardless of what church they attend. What happens after they have believed is something else entirely.

We do not have these kinds of percentages elsewhere. Europe, at one time, did. At one time, there were many believers in England, in Spain and in Germany. Even in parts of Africa, there have been great periods of revival,

⁹⁷ I don't know the actual percentages.

where many have turned to Jesus. However, as a country's spiritual impact is reduced, so is the blessing that country receives. This is why being poor in the United States is much different than being poor in Mexico or Zimbabwe or Venezuela. The key is response to the gospel and then, once a person is saved, response to the teaching of the Word of God (and not all believers respond favorably to the teaching of the Word of God, even though it is in the same Bible which contains the gospel).

And one thing about the United States—a poor person does not have to remain poor.

Luke 19:9 **And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham.**

Jesus is salvation. We are saved through faith in Christ. Zacchaeus had believed in Jesus or would believe in Him, and so would those in his household.

Essentially, in the days of Jesus, they used the phrase *son of Abraham* where we might use the words *Jew, Jewish, Hebrew*.

Zacchaeus represents the believing Jew that Jesus came to save. The Jews should have recognized Jesus and how He matched up with their Scriptures, and believed in Him. Therefore, Jesus came to the house of such Jews, which indicates fellowship. Unfortunately, this was not the response of all Jews during this time.

Luke 19:10 **For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."**

Jesus went to the home of Zacchaeus either because he or some in his home were lost, and meeting Jesus would cause them to believe in Him. Jesus does not say, "Listen, Zack, the problem is, you are too rich. You start spreading that wealth around, and then I will come to your house." Wealth is not an issue with Zacchaeus. He is positive toward the gospel and toward Bible doctrine; and there are those in his house who are positive toward the Lord Jesus Christ.

God provides the gospel message for anyone who has indicated an interest in God in his soul some point in time after God consciousness. Because God is perfect justice, we know that each person will receive such an opportunity.

Remember in the previous narrative, that the rich man wanted Lazarus, the poor man, to return from the dead and speak to his family, and Abraham told him, "They have Moses and the Prophets." So, actually meeting Jesus is not necessary for salvation. Thousands of people saw Jesus and saw Him perform miracles and healings, but they did not believe.

You may wonder how you would have reacted to Jesus, had you lived in that day and time. That is easy to determine. Your response to the gospel and your response to the teaching of the Word of God is how you would have responded to Jesus and His teaching at that time. Our positive volition is the same, no matter what period of time we happen to find ourselves in.

However, personally, I am glad to be alive right now, in this time period, despite the potentials for great political unrest as well as a potential loss of freedom. God has an exact purpose for every one of us at this time in this place. The more that you know about the Word of God, the more that you understand what God has for you. It is a day-by-day discovery where your focus should always be upon the truth.

Part II: Abraham in the Gospel of John

Next, we will examine the gospel of John, and take a look at the one passage where Abraham's name is invoked.

John 8:20–59

Jesus' Message in the Treasury

The only example is a narrative where both Jesus and the Jews who question Him speak about Abraham quite a number of times.

Jesus is speaking in the treasury, which was a section of the Temple (Mark 12:41).

The Temple, like the tabernacle, spoke of Jesus. In fact, that is a nice historical analogy. The tabernacle was a temporary place of worship which moved around from city to city. The tabernacle and its furniture (particularly the Ark of the Covenant) spoke of Jesus Christ. The Temple was a permanent structure built in Jerusalem which had the same furniture and also represented Jesus to come.

Interestingly enough, the tabernacle was designed by God and He required the Jews to construct it and to use it. King David thought about building a permanent house for the Lord, as the land of Israel was fully occupied by the Jews. This was an original idea, which God approved, but God said that David's son, Solomon, would build this temple. This is because David represented Jesus Christ in His 1st and 2nd advents. Therefore, he would be analogous to the Tabernacle, which was a temporary structure. David was a man of war, and Jesus, in His 1st and 2nd advents comes to a world beset by war. In fact, in the 2nd advent, Jesus will return and destroy the armies moving into Jerusalem; and then He will destroy all of the unbelievers on this earth.

Solomon was analogous to Jesus Christ in his reign over this earth in the Millennium, which is like a permanent reign (Jesus will reign on the earth for 1000 years of peace and prosperity). Therefore, God associates Solomon, who reigned in peace and prosperity, with Jesus in the Millennium; and with the permanent structure, the Temple (Solomon ruled in peace and prosperity because his father David subdued all the evil nations around them). David is associated with Jesus when He first came as a man in our midst and when He returns to destroy the forces of evil (as David did as the Commander-in-Chief of Israel). David, when young, had nothing about him which suggested royalty or leadership (1 Samuel 16); and Jesus was also quite unassuming in appearance (**For He grew up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: He has no form nor majesty; and when we see him, there is no appearance that we should desire Him.**—Isaiah 53:2, Updated Bible version 2.11; capitalized). His visage is never described as kingly (He is *never* physically described, except in His glorified state); and after a 3 year public ministry, even the pharisees could not distinguish Him from His disciples.

Compared to the Temple, the tabernacle is also quite unassuming.

So Jesus is speaking in the treasury which is in the Temple:

John 8:20 These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; but no one arrested Him, because His hour had not yet come.



Jesus was not yet arrested, so He continued to teach, even in places where the religious crowd opposed Him. There would be a confluence of events much later on which would take Him to the cross. But, at this point, Jesus was free to teach, although He was challenged on many occasions.

John 8:21 So He said to them again, "I am going away, and you will seek Me, and you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come."

In the Temple treasury, Jesus was speaking to the unbeliever. Dying in one's sins means that one dies without exercising faith in Christ. Exercising unbelief for all one's life means that

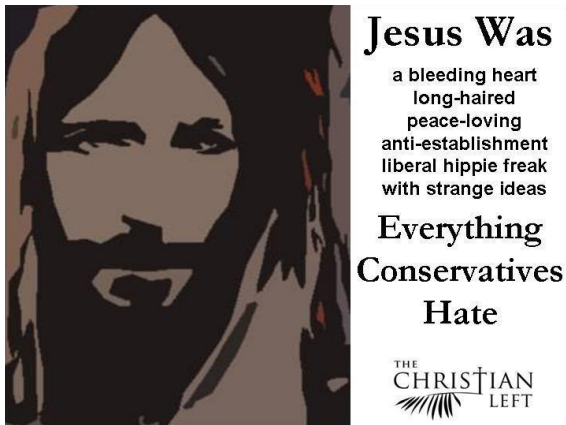
the unbeliever will not spend anytime in fellowship with God in eternity, so that they will not be able to go where Jesus will go.

Jesus Speaking in the Treasury (a graphic); an opaque watercolor over graphite on gray wove paper by James Tissot circa 1890; from [Wikimedia](#); accessed December 11, 2013.

John 8:22 **So the Jews said, "Will he kill himself, since He says, 'Where I am going, you cannot come?'"**

Those who did not have faith in Him often misunderstood what He taught. The unbeliever is unable to gather up spiritual information and put it all together. Even the gospel is outside of the unbeliever's grasp. One of the things which we find in the gospels is, Jesus will say something, and then someone will give their [wrong] interpretation of what Jesus said.

This should not be surprising, as we find this today, where liberals portray Jesus as a long-haired, sandal-wearing, redistributionist who gave away free healthcare to all. The only thing which is true in that description is, Jesus did wear sandals. For those who doubt this, read **Jesus is not a liberal (HTML) (PDF) (WPD)**. I see graphics by liberals all of the time trying to tie Jesus to some aspect of liberalism as well as graphics by liberal atheists which attack something that Jesus said or did. In both cases, whatever Jesus said or did is inevitably misunderstood.



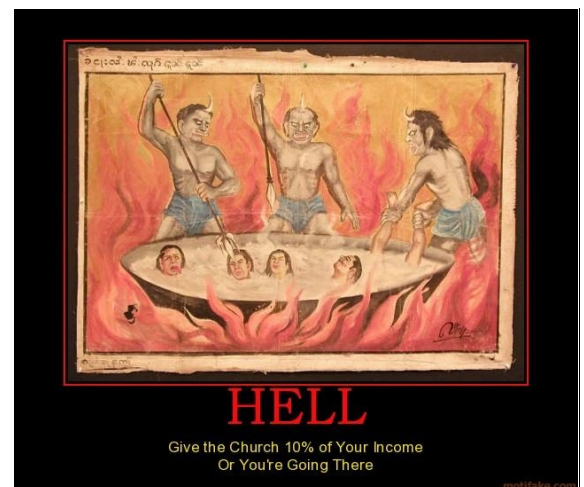
Jesus was a liberal (a graphic) is a typical graphic and represents the sentiments of many liberals (those who believe that Jesus existed). Graphic from [Religion against the ropes blog](#), accessed January 1, 2014. It is not unusual for liberals who do not believe in God to post things like this.

This graphic is typical of the liberal who believes that Jesus really existed; and they somehow think that Jesus would today participate in union demonstrations, would be pro-abortion, would favor increasing the size and scope of government, so that free healthcare can abound to all.

Atheists, most of whom are liberal, cannot use Jesus are emulating their ideas, as they mostly believe that He did not exist. Therefore, they have their own graphics, many of which cannot get even the concept of salvation right.

Graphic about hell. This was taken from [TN Valley talk](#), which appears to be a Christian website (accessed January 1, 2014). If that is the case, the graphic (like most graphics) is not really original with them. This graphic is an example of atheists who make the complaint that you will go to hell if you do not tithe, something which is not taught in the Bible and probably not by any church either.

Now, I mentioned how spiritual information is not understood by unbelievers; so, how does the unbeliever become a believer if he cannot understand even the gospel? The problem is, the unbeliever does not have a human spirit (where information about God is stored and fellowship with God takes place). 1Corinthians 2:14 **But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.** The unbeliever has a human soul of course, but no human spirit. We are born physically alive but spiritually dead. So, when God calls us, the Holy Spirit fills in for our human spirit; and the gospel is understood by means of the Holy Spirit.



We will study both the **human spirit** and the **human soul** in this chapter.

Based upon what we read in the gospels, we should expect people to misunderstand and/or misrepresent what Jesus taught. This is because this is spiritual information and it is spiritually discerned.

Back to the narrative. The Jews listening are confused. They do not know what Jesus means.

John 8:22 **So the Jews said, "Will he kill himself, since He says, 'Where I am going, you cannot come?'"**

So, in this context, those listening to Jesus either misinterpreted what He said, or just did not understand what He said.

John 8:23–24 **He said to them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am He you will die in your sins."**

And then Jesus explains, differentiating between the saved and unsaved, those who die in their sins and those who believe in Him.

John 8:25a **So they said to him, "Who are You?"**

So they outright ask Him, "Who are You that we should believe in You?" This is actually a reasonable question. My guess, based upon the context, is, the person asking this question was not eliciting information, but saying this in a sarcastic way; but Jesus will eventually give them a clear answer.

John 8:25b–26 **Jesus said to them, "Just what I have been telling you from the beginning. I have much to say about you and much to judge, but He who sent Me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from Him."**

After a person has believed in Jesus Christ, the key to the Christian life is knowledge and positive volition toward this knowledge. What Jesus said comes from God the Father. Jesus declares the Father's words to the world

John 8:27 **They did not understand that he had been speaking to them about the Father.**

As was often the case, what Jesus said was not understood. They did not realize that Jesus was speaking of God the Father.

John 8:28 **So Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing on My Own authority, but I speak just as the Father taught Me.**

At many points in Jesus' very short ministry, He spoke of the cross, and this is what He is speaking of here. When He speaks of being lifted up, this is Him being placed on the cross. He will do this in obedience to God the Father.

John 8:29 **And He who sent Me is with Me. He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him."**

Jesus *doing the things which are pleasing to the Father* simply means that God the Father has the plan and God the Son executes this plan.

John 8:30 **As He was saying these things, many believed in Him.**

Despite not fully understanding all that Jesus was saying, many believed on Him at this time. When it comes to the gospel, we do not have a complete picture of Jesus or what He has done on our behalf when we believe. Surely, none of the people there fully understood that He was speaking of the cross, as none of them understood that was an event that would occur in their future. However, some of the men there still put their trust in Jesus, knowing very little about Him.

Ideally speaking, after salvation, the believer learns much more about what he has done by believing in Jesus. Ideally, the new believer discovers, after awhile, just what it is that he has signed himself up for. Given this narrative, it is clear that many there did not fully understand what Jesus is saying; and yet, many believed in Him.

Personally, at the time that I believed in Jesus Christ, I did not fully understand that He had been resurrected. I did not know where He was after the crucifixion. And this is after attending many Easter services and similar celebrations, as well as Easter egg hunts. Whatever I heard as an unbeliever, I either did not take in or I forgot it immediately.

Now, Jesus explains that, to truly be His disciple, they need to learn Bible doctrine. They have believed in Him and they are eternally saved from this point on, but to follow Him means they need to understand His Word.

John 8:31 **So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, "If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples,..."**

The word *abide* is aorist active subjunctive of ménô (μένω) [pronounced *MEH-noh*], which means *to remain, to abide, to dwell, to live*. The Thayer definitions are as follows: 1) *to remain, abide*; 1a) *in reference to place*; 1a1) *to sojourn, tarry*; 1a2) *not to depart*; 1a2a) *to continue to be present*; 1a2b) *to be held, kept, continually*; 1b) *in reference to time*; 1b1) *to continue to be, not to perish, to last, endure*; 1b1a) *of persons, to survive, live*; 1c) *in reference to state or condition*; 1c1) *to remain as one, not to become another or different*; 2) *to wait for, await one*. Strong's #3306. The aorist tense, although it usually refers to a past action or to a completed action; it can also refer to successive and discrete acts (that is the iterative aorist). Abiding in the Word refers to the periods of time when a person is in fellowship and he is learning Bible doctrine. It also refers to the times in a person's life where they think Bible doctrine (much of the time, this is learning Bible doctrine when in church).

Abiding in Christ's word is the key to the Christian life. We are all saved through faith in Him. But we advance in the Christian life by living (abiding) in the Word. What that means is, we simply expose ourselves to the teaching of the Word of God, perhaps an hour each day; we believe that Word (which is, in part, entering into His rest); and we think divine viewpoint. When we are out of fellowship, we are not abiding in the Word.

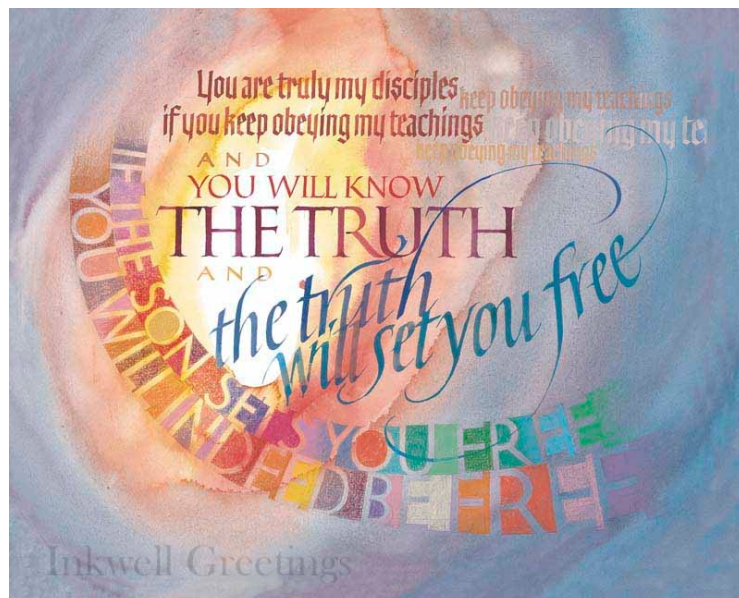
John 8:32 **...and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."**

The Truth Will Set You Free (a graphic); from **Sweetened Condensed Milk**; accessed December 11, 2013.

When Jesus spoke, the truth was what He said. Today, truth is found in the Bible. The Bible is the mind of Christ (1Corinthians 2:16). Understanding the truth of the Word of God and the mechanics of the Christian life is what gives us true freedom—even occasional freedom from the sin nature (when we are filled with the Spirit).

John 8:33 **They answered Him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?"**

This statement ought to give you an idea as to the pride of these people. They were under Roman rule and they had been so for some time. They were not enslaved to the Romans, but Israel was not a free and independent state; and it had not been for over 400 years.



Furthermore, they did not understand the true nature of the bondage that they were under. Jesus is speaking of a spiritual bondage, both to the sin nature and to the thinking of Satan (the thinking of Satan is *evil*). He is not talking about freedom in the political sense.

His audience somehow connects their freedom to Abraham, but they do not know exactly how that comes about. Therefore, Jesus will explain what spiritual slavery is.

Abraham's name will occur 11 times in this passage.

John 8:34 **Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin.**

Jesus gives them the most elementary lesson on slavery. If you commit sin, you are a slave to sin. Obviously, we have all committed sins. When you have committed a sin, then you are out of fellowship. That makes you a slave to your sin nature (which is often the meaning of the word *sin* in the singular). Until you name your sin to God (1John 1:9), you will remain out of fellowship, a slave to your sin nature.

John 8:35 **The slave does not remain in the house forever; the Son remains forever.**

Legitimate servitude has an endpoint; unless the slave agrees to be a permanent slave. We are slaves to the sin nature; but we will either be freed of this positionally through faith in Christ, or we will leave this life, dying in our sins. In either case, the Son remains forever. Remember the Greek word *ménô* (μένω) [pronounced *MEH-noh*] from above? That is the Greek word behind *remains*. The Son is our escape; it is through Him we are freed from sin, but positionally and potentially for periods of time in time (while we are in fellowship).

Who are the slaves about whom Jesus is speaking? The people to whom He is speaking. They are slaves to their sin natures.

John 8:36 **So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.**

The freedom that Jesus offers is freedom from sin—and after salvation, this occurs intermittently (as we are filled with the Spirit); and in eternity, we live in a state of non-sin without the sin nature.

If you have ever tried to imagine that, what it might be like to live without a sin nature; you may be concerned that you will sin. There is an analogous situation which we can relate to—there are sins which do not tempt us. You may not be tempted to do drugs, to get drunk, to chase women, to gossip, to be jealous of others—there are a set of sins of some sort which do not really tempt you. That is what life will be like without a sin nature. We will retain our free will; but we will no longer be tempted by any sin. The sin which besets us the most today will be just like the sin which tempts us not at all today.

John 8:37 **I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill Me because My Word finds no place in you.**

There are two groups of people listening to Jesus. There are those who have believed in Him; and there are the unbelieving skeptics. These two groups were often present whenever He spoke (there are exceptions to this in the Bible, however).

The people questioning Jesus want to see Him killed, even though they are genetically descended from Abraham. The problem is, Jesus teaches truth, and they have rejected truth; consequently, they have rejected Him. Being genetically related to Abraham is not good enough. They must exercise faith in Abraham's God, Who is Jesus. He is the key to their true freedom.

I have seen this sort of anger in a religious context and in a political context. If a person proselytizes for Jesus Christ in a Muslim country, they may find themselves subject to imprisonment or death or persecution, by the state and by individuals.

In a political context, I have seen people—usually liberals (but not always)—when faced with a different point of view (particularly a point of view which they cannot answer), they can become quite angry and abusive. I have seen political discussions on line, when one person wishes harm or death upon another, simply because they disagree about a politician, a point of view or some political program. At the very least, I have seen a silencing of the opposition viewpoint as a desired outcome.

For Jesus, it could not be more of a contrast. The religious hierarchy taught a religion of merit and traditions, and Jesus taught a relationship based upon grace and upon Him. If this seems farfetched to you, imagine a person carrying a sign, "I believe in Jesus" (written in Farsi) in Iran. Such a person would not last an hour on a busy street there. He would be imprisoned, censored, or possibly killed on the spot.

Repentance, by the way, was changing your mind about your own personal merit; repentance was changing your mind about impressing God with your good works; repentance was turning away from the false religion of the pharisees to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

John 8:38 I speak of what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have heard from your father."

These people operated on the value system which they chose; but that value system has come from Satan. They operated from the thinking of Satan, their father. The thinking of Satan is evil.

With regards to the concept of evil, I have not covered this concept specifically yet in this study of Genesis, but I will. The short version is, *evil* is the policy, plan and thinking of Satan. Evil can contain within it human good. Human good is that which is produced by the flesh; and many times, human good is evil. Giving money to some organizations can be extremely evil; giving money to some political candidates can be evil.

John 8:39a They answered Him, "**Abraham** is our father."

The Jews base their relationship to God on their being descended from Abraham; they do not want to have a relationship with the true God.

You have seen the word *repent* over and over in the gospels; and in some of the epistles. This word means to change their mind. The Jews think that they have a relationship to God through Abraham. They don't. Abraham is a **type**; and Jesus is the **antitype**. Jews have a relationship to God through Jesus Christ. This is what they need to change their minds about. Being born a Jew does not give them an automatic in with God. It gives them a model or a type; but they have to follow through with faith in Jesus.

In this way, Abraham is a *type*; genetically, the Jews have a relationship to God through Abraham; but spiritually, Jews have a relationship to God through Jesus Christ.

John 8:39b–41a Jesus said to them, "If you were **Abraham's** children, you would be doing the works **Abraham** did, but now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what **Abraham** did. You are doing the works your father did."

Jesus is telling them that they are of their father, the devil. Satan's objective is to kill Jesus, and this is what they want to do (I do not believe that the genius Satan understood that the cross would be the event which breaks his back).

Abraham desired fellowship with the Revealed God, Who is the Preincarnate Christ. That is not what some of the people in this crowd want.

John 8:41b They said to him, "We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father--even God."

Once again, they do not understand what Jesus is saying, which has been true throughout this discourse. Jesus questions who their true father is; and they are reaffirming their relationship to Abraham (they are not bastards;

they are not half-breeds; they are not born of incest); and their true Father is God. Jesus is not telling them that they are bastards or half-breeds or born out of incest. That is not His point at all.

John 8:42–43 **Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of My own accord, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear My word.**

Jesus says they reveal their nature, because they reject Him and they reject His Word. If they were of God, then they would believe Him because He teaches what He knows from God.

John 8:44–45 **You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.**

Jesus lays it on pretty heavy at this point; He says that these religious types are of their father the devil. He specifically states this, which He had not stated so clearly before.

John 8:46 **Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?**

Truth is Bible doctrine. And these men, who have watched Jesus intently, know that He has not sinned. They have been trying to catch Him committing any sin, that they might have an excuse to bring Him to the Romans for execution. They are looking for a misstep or a misstatement; anything that they can use against Him.

John 8:47 **Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God."**

Jesus tells them that their problem is, they reject Him because they reject the True God. They do not understand the Word of God because they have rejected God's Son.

This is so common today. People may not reject Jesus outright; but they make Jesus in their own image. They proclaim that he is pro-gay rights, or that He came to make sure that we are all tolerant (regarding anyone except Christians, of course); or that He taught that the rich are bad people and that the government should take more of their money. They reject Jesus for Who He really is; and then make up something about Him and proclaim that as His true message. In other words, they make God into their own image.

Lack of faith in Jesus Christ is never a matter of being logical or rational; it is always a matter of personal convenience

Unbelievers often try to present themselves as being logical and rational, and that they have rejected God because of logic. However, when you ask them who is Jesus, often they will suggest that He does not exist—that He is just a legend—despite the fact that there is more written evidence for the existence of Jesus Christ than any other person of that era, give or take a thousand years. When someone denies the existence of Jesus Christ, they are really stating what they want to believe. In denying Jesus existence, they are giving a conclusion that they have come to without any research, thought or logic at all. Their lack of faith in Jesus Christ is never a matter of being logical or rational; it is always a matter of personal convenience.

John 8:48 **The Jews answered him, "Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?"**

It is not clear whether this was the latest rumor or whether these men thought of this right on the spot. However, they have to explain why Jesus is Who He is. How can He perform miracles—which many of the unbelievers have seen with their own eyes—and how can He sound so wise? In the thinking of these Jews, Jesus cannot be a fellow Jew (Samaritan's are half-Jewish); and He must have a demon guiding Him. This is their thinking, despite

knowing that Jesus has not committed any sins; He has explained the Law better than any pharisee, and He has performed miracles.

Do you see how they have come to this conclusion, not on the basis of logic, but because by stating such nonsense, they can then avoid considering what He has to say.

John 8:49–50 Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon, but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. Yet I do not seek My Own glory; there is One who seeks it, and He is the judge.

Jesus does not seek to glorify Himself, but to glorify God the Father, Who is judge over all.

John 8:51 Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word, he will never see death."

Keeping Jesus' word means to first believe in Him.

John 8:52–53 The Jews said to him, "Now we know that you have a demon! **Abraham** died, as did the prophets, yet You say, 'If anyone keeps My word, he will never taste death.' Are You greater than our father **Abraham**, who died? And the prophets died! Who do You make Yourself out to be?"

The Jews believe that they have Jesus. They know that all of the prophets have died; they know that Abraham has died. How can Jesus claim that keeping His Word means that such a one will never taste death (Jesus is referring to eternal death; eternal separation from God). His critics are making a logical argument; but Jesus first answers their final question.

John 8:54 Jesus answered, "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing. It is My Father Who glorifies Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God.'

Jesus glorifies God the Father; God the Father glorifies Him. The Jews before Jesus claim that this is their God. His Father is the One these Jews claim that they worship.

John 8:55 But you have not known Him. I know Him. If I were to say that I do not know Him, I would be a liar like you, but I do know Him and I keep His word.

Jesus tells these religious types that they do not know God. Jesus, however, does.

Keeping the word of His Father was to remain within the plan of God throughout His life, which included the cross. He had to claim an intimate relationship with God, because saying anything else would be false.

John 8:56 Your father **Abraham** rejoiced that he would see My day. He saw it and was glad."

You will recall the promises which God made to Abraham. Some were immediate, to having a son; but there was also going to be a son of Abraham Who would fulfill all of God's promises to Abraham. That is Jesus. Therefore, Abraham would rejoice to see this day. Abraham saw this prophetically (although it is debatable just how much he understood of his Son Who would inherit all); and, apparently, Abraham is able to see, to some degree, what is going on now. What Abraham sees makes him glad.

As an aside, it is questionable just how much the patriarchs and the prophets understood of the promises made to them and the prophecies that they themselves spoke. Whereas, today, you can go on the internet and find hundreds of interpretations of the end times, with a great deal of specificity, we do not find that with the ancient traditions of the Jews. In fact, Jesus, as Messiah, confused them. They did not believe in Him; and therefore, they could not make a clear association between the Messianic prophecies and Jesus.

John 8:57 So the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen **Abraham**?"

The Jews listening to Jesus do not quite get it. Obviously, Jesus has never spoken to Abraham, because He is not even 50 years old. How can He know what Abraham thinks? Asking Jesus if He has seen Abraham is intended to be understood as an insult.

John 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before **Abraham** was, I am."

Or, to put this in language that we might understand: "**Before Abraham, came into existence, I existed eternally.**"

We first have the adverb *prin* (πρίν) [pronounced *prihn*], which means, *before, formerly*. Thayer definition only. Strong's #4250. The verb attached to Abraham is the aorist middle infinitive of *gínomai* (γίνομαι) [pronounced *GIN-oh-my*], which means *to become, to come into existence, to come to pass, to be*. Strong's #1096. The aorist tense is a point of time, generally in the past. This is a deponent verb, so context and not form determines whether the meaning is active, passive or middle.

The verb Jesus associates with Himself is the present indicative of *eimi* (εἶμι) [pronounced *eye-ME*], which means *to be, is, was, will be; am; to exist; to stay; to take place, to occur; to be present [available]*. Strong's #1510. So, Abraham comes into existence at a specific point in time (aorist tense), but before that, Jesus is continually in existence (present tense, which is generally continuous or durative action in the present; but the beginning adverb starts this action before Abraham). The word *eternally* is not found, but since the present tense indicates continuous action, which suggests eternal existence—an existence which predates Abraham. So Jesus, the man standing before this hostile crowd, tells them that he existed before Abraham.

Because Jesus spoke Greek and the Jews listening to Him spoke Greek, they understood what He was saying. People today—particularly those who know nothing about the Greek—may argue about what Jesus is saying; but these Jews fully understand what He means. Here, He is saying that He existed before Abraham; making Him God.

John 8:59 **So they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out.**

Although many people act as though Jesus never proclaimed Himself to be God, here He did and the people listening to Him understood it and took up stones to kill Him for blasphemy (it would be blasphemy if He was lying). Jesus claimed to exist before Abraham. By that assertion, He is saying that He is God.

We are continuing with a New Testament perspective of Abraham, whose name occurs about 75 times in the New Testament. Most of the mentions are incidental, but our knowledge of Abraham helps to increase our understanding of these passages.

Abraham in the book of Acts:

Abraham's name is invoked throughout the Bible. He will be mentioned in 3 sermons given in the book of Acts. At this point, you ought to have a much better idea of what is meant when his name comes up.

Bear in mind that the message that Jesus has risen from the dead, and that He is God Who walked among us as the Promised Messiah—this message went out to the Jewish population first. When Abraham's name was mentioned, nearly all of the audience would have a frame of reference.

This first sermon is given by Peter after he makes whole a lame man—a man who had been lame since birth, and was known to everyone there, as he laid daily at a gate to the Temple, asking for a personal offering.

Acts 3:12 **And when Peter saw it he addressed the people: "Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk? (ESV)**

Peter is speaking to a crowd and he has just performed a miracle. Curing this lame beggar caused quite a stir, which is the *it* that Peter sees. Peter had just called for this man to walk. When someone is lame for any period

of time, their leg muscles atrophy. There is no reason for the muscles of their legs to work. Even if such a person has restored feeling in his legs, he is still looking at months, if not years, of physical therapy, to be able to walk again. However, when this lame man was cured, he sprung to his feet and started walking all over. So this cure was completely and totally miraculous. This healing defies the laws of nature. The muscles in his legs were immediately restored. He does not go in for physical therapy to make up for a lifetime of never using his legs.

People are amazed to see this, and they run to see Peter and John in Solomon's Temple. So Peter asks them, "Do you think we cured this man from our own power or because we are really, really religious?" The answer to both of those questions is, *no*.

The Healing of the Lame Man (a graphic) by Raphael 1483 - 1520 (bodycolour on paper on canvas c. 1516). From ArtBible.info. Accessed December 30, 2013.

Acts 3:13 **The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His servant Jesus, Whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him.** (ESV, capitalized)



God glorified Jesus. Notice how Peter immediately diverts their attention away from the miracle and toward Jesus. The ability to perform miracles was the credit card of the Apostles, until they had established their identities and their authority as speaking from God. The purpose of these miracles was to gain a hearing. It is not the miracles which are important, but the message of the Apostles which follows the miracle. But the miracle indicates where God's power is.

Understand that there was no reason for anyone to listen to the message of the Apostles. Insofar as many were concerned, their Leader was dead, executed by the Romans as demanded by the Jews. Therefore, whatever this movement was that Jesus began—it should be dead. Yet, these Apostles are speaking boldly of the Risen Lord. Although many had seen the risen Lord (500+ people), that is not enough to convince the millions of people who did not. So the Apostles perform amazing miracles, and afterwards, speak of Jesus. It is the miracles which draws the people to them.

This particular miracle was quite amazing, because everyone in this area knew this lame beggar. Men carried this beggar to his station by one of the gates to the Temple, so everyone walked by him for years and years. They all knew his face, they all knew his condition, they have probably seen his weak, muscle-less legs (that would have brought him more donations than having them covered up). And in one instant, he has full and complete use of his legs, as if there had never been anything wrong with them. He stands up and walks around, which is impossible.

Miracles like this were not done to alleviate suffering. They were illustrative—the man was weak and helpless, unable to cure himself—and he is here healed by God. This illustrates the salvation of the soul. Secondly, miracles were done to show that God had given power and authority to these Apostles. Who do you give a hearing to? The so-called theological scholars who have been distorting the Old Testament Scriptures for years, or these Apostles who could undeniably cure people for whom there was no cure.

As soon as the authority of the Apostles was clearly established (which took decades), then these miraculous abilities faded away. Paul, for instance, did not call for a healer to come in and to heal Timothy's upset stomach, but recommended taking a little wine for his stomach's sake (1Timothy 5:23). Later, Paul had to leave behind another disciple because he was too sick to travel (2Timothy 4:20). These epistles were written near the end of Paul's earthly ministry and suggest that he did not have the gift of healing near the end of his ministry. By that

time, his authority was well-established and accepted by the early church. He no longer had to heal someone in order to get a hearing. When he sent an epistle to the church at Corinth, where he rips half the congregation apart for their behavior and actions outside the Spirit, the Corinthians accepted and listened to the correction which he sent, and they took action to cure the problems Paul spoke of. Paul's authority with them had been established. Paul did not need to go to Corinth and perform a miracle in order to get them to listen to him.

This passage in Acts is at the very beginning of the ministry of the Apostles. They are just beginning to establish their authority; and therefore, they are in full possession of all the sign gifts. What these gifts do is give them a hearing; these gifts give them credibility as coming from God. How can anyone there argue with a miracle like this? Everyone there at the Temple knows this man; they see him every day that they go to the Temple; and suddenly he is healed, and Peter is the conduit through whom God worked this miracle.

What happened here was none of this is hokey like you see in little holy roller churches today. None of this is like the false charismatic churches that we find today, where the onus for healing is placed upon the person being healed ("Do you *really* have faith; because if you don't, God won't heal you"). The healings done by the Apostles could not be denied; they were every bit as amazing as the healings done by Jesus. And none of their healings failed because the recipient did not have enough faith.

If no one is performing great miracles anymore, then what is there to draw people? What is the basis for their power and authority? The book of Hebrews tells us: **the Word of God is alive and powerful**. Billy Graham in his crusades in the 1950's and 1960's drew tens of thousands of people to each event, and millions witnessed these events on television. He did not heal anyone. He did not speak in tongues. He did not perform any miracles. He simply spoke the Word of God in the power of the Spirit. I have seen an evangelist speak to about 1200 hungry Freshmen kids, and that lunch bell rang, and he said, "Just give me 5 more minutes, will you?" And there was not a peep out of any of those kids. Now, that was a damn miracle which I saw with my own eyes. They were transfixed and listening carefully to what he said, because he spoke the truth, and they knew what he said was important to their own lives. It was the power of the Holy Spirit.

Peter has the attention of the crowd. They knew that no one could have cured this man unless the power of God is with him. But Peter focuses their attention not on the miracle, but on Jesus Christ. The miracle is not important; Jesus is important.

Acts 3:14–15 **But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and you killed the Author of life, Whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.** (ESV, capitalized)

Peter is speaking to the Jews about Jesus being given a potential pardon by Pilate, but the Jews demanded that a murderer instead be released. Pilate, trying to figure out how to get out of the spot he was in, said, that he would free either Jesus or this gangster thug, Barabbas. Pilate figured that this would be easy. Offer the people of Israel a pardon for a gangster versus a pardon for an innocent man—Pilate was certain the crowd would pick Jesus to be pardoned, because He had done nothing wrong. However, on the contrary, the people called for the release of Barabbas. Killing Jesus was an act of volition which the people fully participated in. They called for His death.

The crucifixion itself fulfilled Exodus 12:6b, which reads, literally: **And all the assembly of the congregation of Israel will kill [plural verb] him [masculine singular suffix] between the evenings**. Your Bible may not be translated at all like this, but this is all about the first Passover. For all intents and purpose, the plural verb has a singular subject (*Israel*); whereas, what is killed, a number of male lambs, one for each household, is designated by a masculine singular suffix.

Peter continues with his sermon:

Acts 3:16 **And His name--by faith in His name--has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all.** (ESV, capitalized)

Peter again reminds his audience of what they have just seen. He is not bragging here; he is pointing out something which they have never seen before (unless they witnessed some healings of Jesus). Peter is teaching his audience some doctrine; and he can tell that some of them are becoming angry, so he brings them back to the miracle that they just witnessed, a miracle which they cannot deny. This shows that Peter has become an excellent public speaker, as he is able to look at his audience, figure out what they are thinking, and then he gets them to refocus.

It is Jesus who restored health to the man that Peter healed. Peter properly gives the credit for this healing to Jesus, and reminds the people that they know this man and they can see with their own eyes that he has been miraculously restored to health.

Furthermore, this healing is illustrative, just as the healings of Jesus were illustrative. The person healed came to the Apostles with faith and this faith was parlayed into being healed. We all have and exercise faith daily. But the key is the direction of that faith; and the faith of that lame man is in the Name of Jesus Christ; his faith is not directed toward Peter. So this healing illustrated to everyone, *believe in Jesus' name and you will be healed*. That was the salvation message. **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."**

Acts 3:17 **"And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers.** (ESV)

Peter allows that they acted in ignorance. He allows that there might even be people standing before him that day who called for the killing of Jesus. *Their rulers* is a reference to the Romans who controlled Judæa.

Despite their sin in calling for the death of Jesus, God, in His mercy, will allow them the chance to believe in Jesus. Jesus has historically died for their sins and God has raised Him from the dead. Many of the Jews thought that Christ was dead; dispensed with; and yet, now before them is this *little-Christ* who also can perform miracles and who powerfully speaks the Word of God to them. The religious Jews thought they got rid of Jesus Christ; but now, all over the place, His followers will emerge and add more to their ranks.

Peter continues:

Acts 3:18 **But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ [= Messiah] would suffer, He thus fulfilled.** (ESV, capitalized with insertion)

Christ means *Messiah*. It was foretold that Jesus would suffer as Messiah. This was revealed most graphically in Isaiah 53, but Psalm 22 also presents a parallel picture of Jesus on the cross. We have already studied in Genesis 22 Abraham offering up his son Isaac, and how this represented Jesus dying for our sins. What Abraham did is called a *type*; and when Jesus offered up Himself for our sins, that is known as an *antitype*.

The fact of the suffering of the Messiah is found in the Old Testament; but it was not being taught, nor did the religious types of Jesus' day take it into consideration.

Acts 3:19 **Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out,...** (ESV)

Repent means *change your minds*; and they are supposed to change their minds about Jesus. People today are also called upon to change their minds. The unbeliever has all kinds of ideas about Jesus—just Who He is. Some think He is a good man saying a lot of really nice things. Some think that He is a sandal-wearing, long-haired hippie pacifist dispensing free healthcare. Some think that He never existed; that somehow, a few people just decided to just make up His existence, and even people of His era were fooled into believing that He existed. In that crowd, there were people who believed Jesus to be a heretic; and many there believed that His era was over with. Peter calls upon people who believe these incorrect things about Jesus to change their minds about Him.

The word translated *to turn again* is *epistrephō* (ἐπιστρέφω) [pronounced *ep-ee-STREF-o*], which means, 1) *transitively*; 1a) *to turn to*; 1a1) *to the worship of the true God*; 1b) *to cause to return, to bring back*; 1b1) *to the love and obedience of God*; 1b2) *to the love for the children*; 1b3) *to love wisdom and righteousness*;

2) *intransitively*; 2a) *to turn to one's self*; 2b) *to turn one's self about, turn back*; 2c) *to return, turn back, come back*. Thayer definitions only. Strong's #1994.

Repentance and turning again are essentially the same thing as believing in Jesus Christ. They are the other side of the same coin. One side of the coin says, "Believe in Jesus Christ and you will be saved." The obverse reads, "Change your mind about Jesus and about your dead works." When they change their minds about Jesus and believe in Him, the end result is, their sins are blotted out.

Acts 3:20 ...that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send the Christ [Messiah] appointed for you, Jesus,... (ESV, capitalized)

The times of refreshing refers to when Jesus had walked the earth. And personally, the times of refreshing is a person being reborn.

Acts 3:21 ...Whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets long ago. (ESV)

This would be the 2nd advent of Jesus Christ, which is when He will return as a conquering Hero. This return is known as the *time for restoring*.

Jesus must be received in the heavens. The restoration of all things would be the removal of sin from the world, as predicted by the prophets. This would return the earth to a perfect environment.

Now let's put these verses together, with the slight change of taking the portion which is parenthetical and putting that into parentheses:

Acts 3:17–21 "And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ [= *Messiah*] would suffer, He thus fulfilled (Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out); that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send the Christ [Messiah] appointed for you, Jesus, Whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets long ago.

Now let's remove the parenthetical portion:

Acts 3:17–18, 20–21 "And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ [= *Messiah*] would suffer, He thus fulfilled; that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send the Christ [Messiah] appointed for you, Jesus, Whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets long ago.

So, what Peter has done is something which is found many times in the Old Testament; he takes the 1st and 2nd advents of our Lord and throws them together as if one event. For Peter, at that point in time, the 1st advent was past and the 2nd advent was future; but he presents them together. The Old Testament Bible taught two advents, but they were not always separated in Scripture. So we have instance after instance of the 1st and 2nd advents of Jesus presented as one event, but intercalated between these events is the Church Age. See the **Doctrine of Intercalation** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). (This is an amazing doctrine, if you are unaware of it). Peter presents the gospel of Jesus Christ in the same framework here, and in the middle of these advents calls for his listeners to *Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out*.

Acts 3:22–23 *Moses said, 'The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to Him in whatever He tells you. And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that Prophet shall be destroyed from the people.'* (ESV, capitalized; Deut. 18:15–16, 19)

The Prophet that Moses spoke of was Jesus being brought before the people.

It would come to pass that those who did not listen to the prophet; who did not hear Jesus; they would be destroyed. This prophecy has a dual fulfillment: the Jews in the time of Christ who rejected Him would be destroyed, along with the city of Jerusalem; and not listening to that Prophet indicates negative volition, which results in eternal separation from God.

Some people choose eternal separation from God. They spend every waking moment on this earth pushing away the God Who saved them; Who sent His Son; Who requires perfect righteousness. We live in a world where it is easy to have some understanding of love and hate, righteousness and unrighteousness, and justice and injustice, even perfection and imperfection. These concepts are fundamental to life and we can all relate to them. In fact, there are studies of infants unable to walk who appear to have an innate understanding of these concepts. I have been to many web pages by atheists, and they all have some understanding of these concepts. Those who reject Jesus (and they must reject Jesus for every waking moment of their lives) logically reject a God of love, righteousness, justice and perfection. Such a person often worships the creation over the Creator (that is, they become overly concerned about global warming, about man-made justice, even animals).

Salvation means that, you have spent at least a few seconds of your life believing in Jesus Christ. In order for you to be damned, your rejection of God must continue throughout every moment of your entire life; and it is logical that if you reject God for every second of your 60 or 70 years; that you will not suddenly, at death, decide, "Oh yes, I really want to spent the rest of eternity with God." It is not just a matter of, *you had your chance and you threw it away*; it is a matter of your volition and the application of your volition with regards to God and His Son, Jesus. Your rejection of the Person of Jesus Christ, whether you are religious or a heathen, carries over from life into eternity. Rejecting Jesus for every moment of your life, means that you have rejected His love, His righteousness, His justice and His perfection.

Furthermore, every atheist and every person who has rejected Jesus understands these concepts and often brings these things to the forefront in their attacks of Jesus or of Christianity or of Christians. How many times have you heard, "Would a God of love allow this to happen?" And then have a graphic of something which is truly sad and heart-wrenching—victims of war, of vicious attacks, of malnutrition—completely ignoring man's volition in these matters. And many times, these same people refuse to admit to a single personal fault, or recognize their own personal need. Nevertheless, Jesus is the very embodiment of God's love and righteousness and justice and perfection.

This is exactly the same Jesus who is testified to throughout the Old Testament.

Acts 3:24 **And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these days.**

Samuel also proclaimed the Messiah and the days of restoration, as did all the other prophets. The restoration of this earth can be found in the writings of many of the prophets.

Acts 3:25 **You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.'** (ESV; Genesis 22:18)

Abraham's *Offspring* is Jesus. This is where his line would lead to. It is through Jesus that all people would be blessed. This is one of the many amazing things about the Old Testament. Many people understood that the blessing of the world would come by the descendants from Abraham; and, in a sense, that is true. But, as this relates to the Messiah, the way that Peter is teaching this same passage, the *Offspring* (*Seed, Descendant*) refers to Jesus. Paul teaches the same thing. That which would bless the world is Abraham's Seed, Who is Jesus.

There are many things understood in the Old Testament in a particular way, that find a new understanding in the New Testament. The way these things were understood in the Old Testament is not rejected or abandoned, but are given a new dimension of truth.

New Testament truth does not overwrite Old Testament truth; New Testament truth does not deny or replace Old Testament truth. New Testament truth often provides a new dimension of meaning and understanding to what we found in the Old Testament.

There are people and events in the Old Testament who were always understood in a particular way. However, once we come to the New Testament, the understanding of these people and events is altered and shaped by the New Testament. Nothing in the Old Testament is false or historically inaccurate or incorrectly interpreted by Old Testament standards; it is just that the New Testament adds a new dimension to old truths.

Insofar as I know, this is an original doctrine.

Reinterpreting Old Testament Truths

Old Testament	New Testament
Abraham offering up his son Isaac as a sacrifice to God is seen in the Old Testament as the proof of Abraham's obedience to God.	After the cross, it is clear that this act of obedience looks forward to the offering by God the Father of His Son Jesus on the cross.
The Passover was presented as a ritual, that, because the people of Israel were obedient to this ritual, God did not kill their firstborn. In fact, if anyone, even Egyptian families, followed this ritual, their own firstborn would not die.	The Passover—and the first Passover in particular—is representative of the offering of Jesus. God sees the slaughtered lamb—that we place ourselves under the slaughtered lamb—and He passes over us, and does not impute to us the judgment we so deserve.
The people in the Exodus generation partook of unleavened bread, because they did not have time to wait for the bread to rise.	Leavened bread in the New Testament illustrates the corruption of false teaching, which corrupts everything.
Moses is refused entry into the Land of Promise because of one act of disobedience to God. It is as if all that he did in obedience to God, for 40 years, are set aside because of one sin.	The key is, Moses, who is closely associated with the Law, cannot bring his people into the Land of Promise. The Law cannot save (Galatians 3:24). The one who brings them into the Land of Promise is Joshua, whose name means <i>savior</i> , and which is translated into the Greek as <i>Jesus</i> .
Although David has the idea to build a permanent residence for God (the Temple), God tells him that he would not build this Temple because of all the blood on his hands. However, his son Solomon would build the Temple.	David is associated with Jesus in His 1 st and 2 nd advents, where Jesus will return and kill millions of people. But Solomon is associated with Jesus when He rules over New Israel from Mount Zion, in a time of great peace and prosperity (the Millennium). Therefore, Solomon is associated with the Temple of God.

These are 5 examples. There are many more. The way in which Moses disobeyed God in the Old Testament comes off as a simple act of disobedience. However, when it is related to the illustration of salvation by the cross; so it becomes obvious why Moses' act of disobedience was so wrong.

The way that Isaac is born is another example. It is presented in the Old Testament as being the result of a life of faith, and God finally rewards Abraham for his great faith. But, in the New Testament, suddenly we see all of these parallels between the birth of Isaac and the birth of Jesus. Isaac's birth, in retrospect, takes on a whole new dimension.

The point is, there are many things in the Old Testament which are understood in a particular way. However, once we get to the New Testament and particularly to the cross of Christ, these Old Testament people and events can be seen in a completely new light. This does not negate the way these events were previously understood; but it adds a new dimension of understanding to them.

Let me give you an example from your life. When you first heard about the healings that Jesus did, you were probably an unbeliever and understood that He healed these people out of compassion because they were suffering (assuming that you thought these miracles to be true). However, at some point after becoming a believer in Jesus Christ, you have begun to understand that this miracles are representative—they illustrate God's ultimate healing which is offered to every single one of us, which healing is attained by faith in Christ. You understood the miracles of Jesus in one way; and then later, when you learned some Bible doctrine, you saw them in a different light. The way that you understood miracles before was not wrong, but you did not have the full story. You got that through the teaching of the Word of God.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Back to Peter's sermon:

Acts 3:25 **You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.'** (ESV; Genesis 22:18)

Peter, for the second time, quotes the Old Testament. The Old Testament was his Bible.

Those who were listening to Peter speak, they are called *sons of the prophets*, not because they were literally descended from the prophets, but they understood the divine nature of the writings of the prophets—this was essential to their culture as Jews. They knew that their prophets spoke the truth.

Acts 3:26 **God, having raised up His Servant, sent Him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness."** (ESV, capitalized)

Jesus was sent to the Jews first; and then to all the world. The wickedness of the Jews was nothing like the sins that we observe in the United States today. For the most part, the Jews were very moral and upright. They did sin, of course, and they were rebellious and hard-headed, but, for the most part, they were moral and honest. Their wickedness included sin, but it included their self-righteousness as well. Their wickedness was summed up in their religion of merit.

You all know people who think that they deserve what they have, when they really don't. Perhaps they are born rich and they feel as if it is theirs and they deserve it; or a woman is born extremely beautiful, and she believes that she deserves the best because of her physical beauty; or a welfare recipient believes that they deserve the handout that they get and should not have to work for it. For most of you, you understand at least one of those illustrations, and you think to yourself, when you meet such a person, "You don't deserve that. You haven't done anything worthwhile to deserve what you have." This is the wickedness of the Jews. They believed that they deserved a relationship with God because they are descendants of Abraham and Peter is telling them to turn away from that wickedness.

God, having raised up His Servant, sent Him to you [Jews] first. The Jews, as a whole, rejected Jesus. As a result, He turned to the gentiles. His Apostles would do the same. Paul, who said he would give his own life for his people the Jews, if they would only believe (Romans 9:3–4), became known as the Apostle to the gentiles (Romans 11:13).

As a result of the overall national rejection of Jesus Christ, the Jewish nation of Judæa would then face the 5th Stage of National Discipline (this is where a greater power—Rome, in this case—would dispossess them of their land). These various stages of national discipline were taught to the Jews back in Leviticus 26, before they even had entered the Land of Promise.

We are continuing to look at all of the references made to Abraham in the New Testament; and specifically in the book of Acts.

Saint Stephen was doing signs and wonders among the people, and then, once he had an audience, he would proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. For this, he was hauled before the council and people lied about what he had said, claiming that he had said that Jesus would return and destroy that place and deliver them from the traditions of Moses. Acts 6:8–15.

Therefore, the high priest asks this question.

Acts 7:1 **And the high priest said, "Are these things so?"** (ESV)

Stephen had been brought before the high priest, accused of speaking blasphemous words, and the high priest asks him directly if this is true. "Have you really said these things that you are accused of saying?" the priest asks. This questioning takes place in a very public forum.

Quite obviously, the narrative of the end of Acts 6 is really a part of Acts 7. The chapter divisions and verse divisions were added to the inspired text long after the inspired text had been written. Therefore, there is nothing inspired about the chapter and verse divisions in the Bible (the Greek and Hebrew was written without punctuation, capitalization, and spaces between words, even).

Acts 7:2 **And Stephen said: "Brothers and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran,..."** (ESV)

Stephen begins to make a public proclamation before all the people. He is going to take the history of the Jewish people and show how this is related to Jesus of Nazareth. However, he does not tell his audience that. He does begin giving them the big picture; he begins with a history that they cannot argue with.

Stephen provides a timeline which is not completely clear to us in the book of Genesis. God appears to Abraham when he was living in Mesopotamia with all of his family. We will assume that Stephen is inspired by God the Holy Spirit, so that what he is teaching is accurate.

You may not recall, but there was some question as to when God appeared to Abraham. Here, Stephen says that God first appeared to Abraham when he was living in Mesopotamia, which was down where the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers meet, not too far from Babylon.

Acts 7:3 **...and [God] said to him, 'Go out from your land and from your kindred and go into the land that I will show you.'** (ESV; Genesis 12:1)

We have already studied this in great detail. God came to Abraham and told him to leave his land and his family and go to a land that He would show to him.

So Abraham left Mesopotamia and moved to Charan (Haran); which is about halfway to where God wanted him to go. Furthermore, Abraham did not separate from his father, and it appears as if other members of his family went with him as well, even though God told him to separate from them. Abraham had not gone to the land of Canaan; he got halfway there and stopped—probably influenced by his family who are with him (which is why Abraham was supposed to separate from them in the first place).

Acts 7:4 **Then he went out from the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living.** (ESV)

As long as Abraham's father was alive, Abraham seemed to be unable to leave Charan (Haran). Once his father died, then Abraham went to the land that God had originally directed him to. You will recall that we have studied this.

Abraham's Journey from Ur to Haran (a graphic) is from Bible-history.com; accessed December 30, 2013.

From Charan, one could either go north, up along the Euphrates River and away from the land of promise; or go west (actually, southwest), leaving the Euphrates River, traveling toward the land of promise. You may not realize it, but leaving the Euphrates River is a great act of faith. Abraham, Sarah and Lot went west, away from an easy and certain water source.

Acts 7:5 Yet God did not give Abraham an inheritance in the land, not even a foot's length, but He had promised to give it to him as a possession and to his offspring after him, though he had no child.

God never gave Abraham any portion of the Land of Promise. He lived in many places throughout the land, and often under the auspices or sponsorship of someone else; but the only land he purchased was a plot of ground for his wife's burial (Abraham and other patriarchs would be buried there as well).

Why didn't God give this land to Abraham right then and there? There is the human reason and the divine reason. The human reason is, although Abraham eventually built up a powerful group of servants, God knew that He was going to take Abraham's descendants out of Canaan and move them temporarily to Egypt. So, owning any significant plot of land in Canaan would be meaningless, if the Jews would be outside of the land for 400 years. God would bring back the descendants of Abraham, 2 million strong, to take the land of Canaan. Had Abraham lived in the land of Canaan, and then all of his descendants after him, there would have been the potential for centuries of war, as Abraham's descendants slowly acquired more and more land as the people of the land became more and more degenerate. So, it makes more sense for the descendants of Abraham to come and take the land all at once.

Then there is the spiritual view. We are not given all that God has put aside for us the moment that we believe in Jesus Christ. At that moment, we are all potential, but nothing else. God blesses us in our Christian life as we grow (assuming that we grow at all spiritually); and then in eternity, God gives us blessings beyond what we could ever think or imagine. We studied these blessings, which are both temporal and eternal, previously [when we studied Ephesians 1](#), which R. B. Thieme, Jr. calls **escrow blessings**. Just as we are all about potential at the moment of salvation, so are our blessings. They are in the hands of the chief executive escrow officer (Jesus Christ), Who will dispense them at the proper time.

The same is true of Abraham and his seed. There will be a proper time for his seed to receive all of the blessings which God has designed for them. So, God giving the land of Canaan to Abraham and his seed parallels the life of the believer.



The Seed of Abraham and the Life of the Believer	
Abraham and his Descendants	The Life of the Believer
First, Abraham believes in the Revealed God. This sets up the potential for blessing. Genesis 12:1–3 15:4–6	We first believe in the Revealed God, Jesus Christ. This sets up the potential for blessing. Psalm 2:12 84:12
Abraham is exposed to the blessings which would come from God. Genesis 12:1–3	We are exposed through Bible teaching the potential blessings which would come from God. John 13:17
Abraham begins to enjoy temporal blessings. Genesis 13:2	As we grow spiritually, we begin to enjoy temporal blessings. Luke 11:28
When the time is proper, God delivers great blessings over to the descendants of Abraham. They are given the Land of Promise. Genesis 15:4–5, 7–8	When the time is proper, God begins to pour blessings into the life of the believer. Psalm 1:1
The nation which they came out of (Egypt) would be judged by God. Acts 7:7	The place we come out of (the earth) will also be judged by God. Psalm 98:9 Acts 17:31
However, these blessings are nothing compared to the Land of Promise in the Millennium. 2Samuel 7:29	The blessings which we receive in time are nothing compared to the blessings which we will receive in eternity. Ephesians 3:20–21 Revelation 22:14
Notice in both columns that this is all about potential.	
First a person believes in the Revealed God; then he is exposed to the great potential of the life of the believer; and then, when he reaches maturity, he is able to take that which God has given him. Furthermore, in eternity, there are even greater blessings which await us.	
Chapter Outline	Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Stephen continues speaking:

Acts 7:6 **And God spoke to this effect—that his offspring [lit., seed] would be [temporary] sojourners in a land belonging to others, who would enslave them and afflict them four hundred years.** (ESV)

Abraham’s great grandson, Joseph, became prime minister of Egypt; and, because of a drought (possibly caused by global warming), the family of Jacob (Abraham’s grandson) had to go to Egypt in order to get food. When the sons of Jacob first came to Egypt, they did not know that this prime minister of Egypt was Joseph their brother, whom they had sold into slavery. They meet the prime minister decades later. Joseph knows who they are; they do not know who Joseph is. When it was revealed who Joseph was, they all moved to Egypt.

A later dynasty in Egypt, after Joseph died, enslaved the Jews. For that reason, God would judge them harshly.

God, in Genesis 15:3, told Abraham that this would happen. **And Y^ehowah said to Abram, “Knowing you must know that your seed shall be an alien in a land not theirs; and they shall serve them. And they shall afflict them four hundred years; and I also will judge that nation whom they shall serve; and afterward they shall come out with great substance. And in the fourth generation they shall come here again; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.”** (Genesis 15:13–14, 16).

The term *Amorite* is often used as representative of all those who lived in the land of promise. Their degeneracy had not yet reached a point where God would be willing to wipe them out. Throughout the life of Abraham in the land, his dealings with others in the land was generally quite congenial.

Acts 7:7 'But I will judge the nation that they serve,' said God, 'and after that they shall come out and worship Me in this place.' (ESV; Gen. 15:14; Ex. 3:12)

The Jews would serve Egypt as slaves, but God would judge Egypt. After these series of judgments (described in the book of Exodus), the Jews would come out of Egypt and worship God in the Land of Promise.

Then Stephen suddenly backtracks and speaks of circumcision. He realizes that he jumped too far ahead in this story, so he backs up a few generations.

Acts 7:8 And He [God] gave him [Abraham] the covenant of circumcision. And so **Abraham** became the father of Isaac, and he circumcised him on the eighth day, and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob [became the father] of the twelve patriarchs. (ESV)

Recall the circumcision represents salvation; it represents regeneration. It represents life where previously there was no life. Circumcision represents a restoration of life. See the **Doctrine of Circumcision** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Circumcision—what it represents—is the key to their relationship with God and our relationship with God. We have a relationship with God because we are circumcised of heart (Deut. 10:16 30:6 Romans 2:28–29).

Acts 7:9 "And the patriarchs, jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt; but God was with him... (ESV)

The patriarchs are the other 11 sons of Jacob. They are jealous of Joseph and the fact that his father favors him, so they sell him into slavery, and he ends up in Egypt. However, all of this was a part of God's overarching plan. This is the plan where God works all things for good to those who love Him. Although that is a verse in Romans, this is true of all dispensations. Joseph explained this very principle to his brothers: "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today." (Genesis 50:20; ESV) Despite the evil plans of his brothers, God took these evil plans and turned them into good, as He works together all things for good (Romans 8:28).

Acts 7:10 ...and [God] rescued him out of all his afflictions and gave him grace and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who made him ruler over Egypt and over all his household. (ESV)

What happened to Joseph was actually more complex than this, but this is the general idea. This is something that we will study in the future in Genesis.

Acts 7:11 Now there came a famine throughout all Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction, and our fathers could find no food. (ESV)

A famine in the ancient world is very much the same as a depression in today's world. The *fathers* here refer to Jacob and his 11 remaining sons. So Jacob and his sons found themselves in the midst of an economic depression, and there was nowhere to turn but to Egypt, where they had prepared for such an event.

Obviously, Stephen is giving a history/theology lesson to those who are supposed to know these things. So far, those with any background are nodding their heads up and down, agreeing with Stephen—waiting to hear something with which they disagree.

Acts 7:12 But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers [some of Jacob's remaining 11 sons] on their first visit. (ESV; insert added)

Jacob is the son of Isaac, the grandson of Abraham. This is the Jewish line. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and Jacob's 12 sons are the patriarchs (*fathers*) of Israel.

When Jacob's family began to run low on grain, Jacob sent some of his sons to Egypt. Egypt, because of Joseph, who had anticipated this drought based on a revelation from God, and he saw to it that grain was set aside for the 7 years of drought. Setting aside this grain was beneficial to Egypt as well as to nations which traded with Egypt.

The state government in Texas and other states imperfectly follow this plan, and set aside a rainy day fund—a state bank account set aside for emergencies, unforeseen events, or unanticipated expenses.

Acts 7:13 **And on the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh.** (ESV)

When the sons of Jacob returned to Egypt, Joseph let his brothers know who he was. Joseph's actual position is a little tricky. R. B. Thieme, Jr. simply refers to him as the prime minister of Egypt. He is not referred to as Pharaoh, so he was not the highest position in the land.

Acts 7:14 **And Joseph sent and summoned Jacob his father and all his kindred, seventy-five persons in all.** (ESV)

Joseph asked for his father and all of his brothers to be brought to Egypt to him. As a result of what Joseph did for Egypt in anticipation of this drought, he was able to keep his family and millions of others alive.

Acts 7:15–16 **And Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, he and our fathers, and they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.** (ESV)

Joseph and all his brothers and his father all died when living in Egypt. God chose for this to happen, and God allowed the slavery which took place afterwards.

Remember the famous cave that Abraham bought to bury his wife in? This would serve as a burial place for Joseph who only wanted his bones to be buried in the land of Canaan, the land which God gave to the sons of Israel. He understood that this land would be given to his people as a gift from God forever, and he wanted to be buried there.

Acts 7:17 **"But as the time of the promise drew near, which God had granted to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt..."** (ESV)

The descendants of Abraham, around 75 people, grew to 2 million over a period of 400 years. This growth rate is actually very possible; but it would be unusual under the conditions of slavery. It suggests very strong, and healthy family lives, despite the great oppression. This indicates the importance of faith and family under stressful conditions.

Acts 7:18 **...until there arose over Egypt another king who did not know Joseph.** (ESV)

After a few short years, someone arose to power who did not know Joseph or anything about Joseph, or his family. His family were the Jews who were growing and multiplying in the land of Egypt over all these years. It was clear that these were a different people. Egyptians are descended from Ham; and Israelites are descended from Shem. This suggests that there were clear, recognizable racial differences between these groups of people.

Acts 7:19 **He dealt fraudulently with our race and forced our fathers to expose their infants, so that they would not be kept alive.**

The first verb is the aorist middle participle of Verb *katasophizomai* (κατασοφίζομαι) [pronounced *kaht-as-of-IHD-zom-ahee*], which means, *to circumvent by artifice or fraud, conquer by subtle devices; to outwit; overreach; to deal craftily with*. Thayer definitions only. Strong's #2686. This word only occurs here, which explains why there are so many different translations for it.

This particular ruler to whom Stephen refers is not the ruler who put the Jews into slavery. He is several generations removed from that. He grew up in a time where Jews were slaves to the Egyptians, and had been slaves for some time.

It was likely that few Egyptians knew the history of Joseph and what he had done for Egypt. In fact, we have seen this occur throughout history, where a true account of events is changed, obscured or somehow removed from public knowledge, with the result that a culture is acting upon a false history. We have seen this in our public schools today, where history has been teaching that our founding fathers were mostly deists (they were not; they were mostly born again believers); and that FDR saved us from the Great Depression (also not true; the United States was the only major country⁹⁸ at that time to suffer a *great* depression). Today, many of our students are being taught that America is an evil, greedy, imperialistic nation; and that socialism is the cure for all of our ills.

Many future historians will recount President George W. Bush as being a profligate spender of public money and present President Barack Obama as fiscally responsible, who dramatically reduced the deficit. The groundwork for this has been laid already. So these statements can be made, a reference to a mixed-up economist who blames the first year of Obama's spending on George Bush (ignoring the fact that President Obama pushed for and passed a nearly trillion dollar Stimulus package, and that there was a great deal of Obama-specific spending in Obama's first year in office). Both presidents spent too much money, and both were far too involved in social programs; and President Obama spent in 4 years what Bush spent in 8. But, I can guarantee you that, wherever there is enough space to delve into the two presidencies, in many cases, this is the way that they will be misrepresented. You will not read of Obama's debt; but you will read about how he brought the deficit down. You will not read of the overall prosperity of the Bush years; his legacy historically will only be defined by the sudden fall of the stock market and the recession at the end of his term.

Many historians have a point of view. If the facts of history are at odds with their point of view, then they massage the facts of history. No child today would graduate high school or college as a socialist if they were taught accurate history about socialism and where it has been tried and what the actual results were. Most people graduate from high school and college thinking that European socialism is a panacea for all of our ills. They will never be taught about the massive taxation of the European countries, or the inability of the individual to ever get ahead in those countries.

Real history properly interpreted is important to every generation. Moses, before sending the children of Abraham over into the Land of Promise, spends about an hour teaching them about their own recent history (Deut. 1–4). He teaches them history which most of them had just experienced. Accurate and objective history helps a society develop a cohesive and sensible dynamic. Inaccurate and subjective history causes a society to throw off good traditional norms and standards and to pursue silly utopian ideals which have never worked and never will work.

Here, the fairly recent history of the Jews coming to Egypt was changed so that the Jews could be made into slaves. Did some people actually know the truth about their background? I suspect that some of them did. I have known people who know various truths about their own history, and that they themselves slant these facts or change them entirely to be in accordance with their political philosophy. I know people who will argue that President Obama is **fiscally conservative**⁹⁹; and that President Reagan ruined our country with **overtaxing**.¹⁰⁰

So that there is no misunderstanding, I am not trying to sway anyone's politics; I am just taking what we study in the Bible and give it a modern application. The Egyptians enslaved the Jews because the history of their relationship was distorted. The people standing before Stephen also have a warped view of their own history (despite having a very good historical record). Stephen, herein, is explaining and properly interpreting their history to them.

Therefore, if the good that Joseph did for Egypt was removed from Egyptian history, then it is much easier to enslave the Jews. The people cannot be taught that having a Jew in high places in Egypt was good for Egypt.

⁹⁸ Germany was also in economic throes, but because they had lost WWI.

⁹⁹ And in case you do not understand how this story has been falsified, it is based upon *annual growth in real per capita spending*. In other words, President Bush spent too much money (particularly in his last two years), and President Obama spent more, but we simply look at the *growth* from Bush to Obama. So, to the unlearned, it appears that Obama spent less than Bush, but that is not true and that is not what the graph shows.

¹⁰⁰ As an aside, **here** is the real story. Furthermore, such an over-simplification ignores that Reagan primarily worked with a Democratic Congress (he did, however, have a Republican majority in the Senate for 6 years).

If they know that, then it is much more difficult for them to hate the Jews. We will study Joseph in Egypt near the end of the book of Genesis.

If the Jews in the book of Acts were not properly taught their own history, then it was easier for them to reject the Lord Jesus Christ.

The history of the United States, the greatest country on the face of this earth, is so often misrepresented and our past inaccurately recounted. The Word of God was quite important to the founding of our country. The book quoted from most often in discussing the Constitution of the United States was the Bible. Our forefathers sought wisdom from the Scriptures in order to organize our government. Our forefathers sought the actual guidance and wisdom of God in order to form a more perfect union.

David Barton, one of the great Christian historians of our time, has unearthed a great deal of the history of the founding of our country that has been ignored and even distorted by our current history books. He put out a great set of DVD's called the **American Heritage Series**, about our country's history and how intertwined it was with the Word of God.

Acts 7:20 **At this time Moses was born; and he was beautiful in God's sight. And he was brought up for three months in his father's house,...** (ESV)

God knows the end from the beginning, and He knew what to expect with Moses. Moses was beautiful because of what he would do in the plan of God.

Acts 7:21 **...and when he was exposed, Pharaoh's daughter adopted him and brought him up as her own son.** (ESV)

For any of us who have a daughter, this should be something that we can understand. Even if the pharaoh has sent out an order to kill all of the babies of the Jews (because they were multiplying too fast), when his own daughter finds a Jewish baby and loves him, a father cannot just ignore this and kill the child. That a daughter can have quite an impact and influence on her father is well-known to any father and daughter. So, what this young woman required, with respect to this one child, was granted by her father. And so Moses was saved.

Acts 7:22 **And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and deeds.** (ESV)

Moses was brought up to be the next pharaoh. He would have been instructed in law, in geography, in history, in politics and in warfare. He would have been knowledgeable and skillful. We do not know the deeds which he engaged in, when a young man; but we can rest assured that he had the best education and training that any person of that era could have had.

There was a recent television series on the Bible (called **The Bible The Epic Miniseries**), and it portrayed Moses as a total nutjob. Moses was pretty much exactly the opposite of how he was portrayed. He was regal, brilliant, strong, learned and a great leader of men. He was not a nutcase and no one ever thought of him as a nutcase.

If you think that Moses was lost in the desert and that he could not lead his people out of it, that is simply wrong. Moses knew exactly where he was at all times in the desert, and there are many passages in the books of Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy which bear this out. He knew the geography of the land and he knew who lived where, and he knew what their history was. Over and over again, it is clear that Moses acts based upon a knowledge of the people of the land. Moses' training as a young man is key to his leadership role in Israel.

Part of the reason that Moses was able to lead the people of Israel was, he was brought up to be a leader. This was ingrained in him from his youth up. Notice that he was *mighty in words*. Moses could address a group of people as a leader and motivate them. This is a skill that very few people have. This was a necessary skill, because the people of Israel tended to drag their feet a lot when being led by Moses.

Application: As an aside, if you are a man and you are married, then you have the leadership position. You must lead, guide and inspire—your wife and your children. If that sound daunting, then you need to study the **Biblical Doctrine of Leadership** (**Military and Leadership**—and other **leadership doctrines**—the MP3's must be ordered from **R. B. Thieme, Jr. Ministries**) (**Angelfire**).

Acts 7:23 "When he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the children of Israel. (ESV)

For this, and a few other reasons, I believe that Moses had access to the book of Genesis and that he knew that he was a Jew. My guess is, Moses had access to the greatest library of the ancient world, the Library of the Egyptian Pharaohs; and that he spent a great deal of time in that library furthering his education. This would have been part of his education, alluded to here. Why would the book of Genesis be there? Because Jews populated Egypt. Therefore, it is only logical that, at some point in time, their literature (Genesis and Job) found their way into the royal library. This does not mean that all Egyptians would be aware of this history.

The Jewish people in slavery had to have a working knowledge of Genesis as well. Otherwise, just Who exactly did they call upon to take them out of bondage?

As an aside, you should be able to recognize at this point the parallels suggested by the Jews being enslaved in Egypt, looking to God to save them, and then being delivered out of bondage into freedom by Moses. Eventually, their *savior* (Joshua—his name means *savior*) would lead them into the Land of Promise.

There would have been a physical difference between Moses and other Egyptians; and there is every indication that he had been circumcised (whereas the men of Israel before taking the Land of Promise were circumcised, Moses is never spoken of as needing to be circumcised). His adopted mother, the daughter of the pharaoh, who loved him, would have seen this immediately. She knew that she would be raising a son of the Jews. However, seeing this baby tugged at her heart.

Moses' nanny was his actual mother, a Jewess. His natural mother would have steered him toward that sort of reading; or she would have read to him as a child from the Scriptures. My guess has been that Genesis was passed down verbally and memorized. For this reason, I would assume that Moses understood what was going on—that he was by birth a Jew. His adopted mother named him a name which specifically spoke of her taking him out of the water. At some point in his life, Moses would have been made aware of this and what it meant for him to be a Jew. So, one day, Moses decided to visit the Jewish slaves—his brothers—because he knew he was a Jew.

Acts 7:23–24 "When he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the children of Israel. And seeing one of them being wronged, he defended the oppressed man and avenged him by striking down the Egyptian. (ESV)

When Moses was about 40, we went out to see his people, who were slaves, and what was going on with them. It says that *it came into his heart to visit his brothers*; so he knew that he was a Jew long before this. When he decided to see his people, observed an Egyptian striking a Jewish slave, so Moses killed the Egyptian and buried him.

Acts 7:25 He assumed that his brothers [that is, Jewish slaves] would understand that God was giving them salvation [or, deliverance] by his hand, but they did not understand. (ESV; insert added)

Do you see the parallel? Moses first goes to the people, and he is one of them; but they do not recognize that he is the salvation for which they have been praying. At first, they reject him. They do not realize that this is how God would deliver them. Of Jesus, the Apostle John writes: **The real light, which shines on everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into existence through him. Yet, the world didn't recognize Him. He went to His Own people, and His Own people didn't accept Him.** (John 1:9–11; God's Word™; capitalized).

Their lack of understanding is quite fascinating, because when I became a believer in Jesus Christ, and then discovered Bible doctrine, I assumed this is what all other believers would be interested in (the study of God's Word). It was the next logical step. Believe in Jesus Christ; and then find out what it was that you did. Find out what you just got yourself into. However, much to my surprise as a young Christian, not many people were really interested in word-by-word and even verse-by-verse studies of the Bible.

Moses assumed that, he presents himself before the Jews as their leader-savior, and they will follow him. It did not work out that way.

Acts 7:26 **And on the following day he appeared to them as they were quarreling and tried to reconcile them, saying, 'Men, you are brothers. Why do you wrong each other?'** (ESV)

The next day, Moses goes out again among his people; the slaves of Egypt. When he sees two brothers arguing, he tries to settle matters. Little does Moses know that is going to be his vocation for about 40 years—mostly settling disputes between people.

Acts 7:27 **But the man who was wronging his neighbor thrust him aside, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?'** (ESV)

Essentially, the strongest man looked at Moses and said, “And just who the hell do you think you are?”

Acts 7:28 **Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?'** (ESV)

Then it became clear that, not only was Moses known, but what he had done the day before was also known throughout the camp of Israelites. This worried Moses greatly.

Acts 7:29 **At this retort Moses fled and became an exile in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.** (ESV)

At this, Moses left Egypt, a fugitive. He would remain gone from Egypt for about 40 years. He would marry, have two sons, and, interestingly enough, have a better relationship with his father-in-law than with his wife.

Acts 7:30 **"Now when forty years had passed, an Angel [= messenger] appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush.** (ESV; capitalized)

Then Jesus Christ, in preincarnate form, came to Moses. Jesus is the Revealed Member of the Trinity. We know Him as Jesus; but He revealed Himself in many ways to many people prior to His incarnation as the God-man.

Acts 7:31 **When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight, and as he drew near to look, there came the voice of the Lord:..** (ESV)

This was quite an amazing thing for Moses to see. This clearly tells us that God is speaking to Moses from the burning bush.

Acts 7:32 **'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob.'** And Moses trembled and did not dare to look. (Exodus 3:5) (ESV)

God identifies himself to Moses as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, this would certainly suggest that Moses understood that statement. That fact again suggests that Moses knows the book of Genesis. Moses does not stop God and say, “Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Who are those guys?” Moses cannot know who these men are without having some knowledge of the book of Genesis.

Since he understood that the Jews were his people, my guess is, he was exposed both to his own personal history and to the book of Genesis before he became a fugitive from Egypt. His interaction with the two fighting Jews suggests that he knew more than just his own personal history.

After Moses leaves Egypt, he will have a wonderful relationship with his father-in-law; and it appears in the book of Exodus that this is based in part on their worship of the same God. I would suggest that during this time, Moses also had access to the books of Genesis and Job—possibly through his father-in-law and possibly through the Royal Egyptian Library originally. There is no reason to think that these books could only be accessed from one or two sources.

On the other hand, we do not find a surfeit of quotations from Genesis in Moses' writings. This could be simply because most of what he writes comes directly from the mouth of God; and it could be that what he was writing, unlike the gospels, for instance, did not require justification. However, what we do find in a number of instances is awareness of the book of Genesis—Moses seemed to be fully aware of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for instance. Abraham's name, for instance, occurs 18 times in the 4 books of Moses—principally in Exodus and Deuteronomy. The latter book is Moses' own words (half of Exodus and much of Leviticus are quotations from God). In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses speaks of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as if his people know who their ancestors are (Deut. 1:8 6:10 9:5). Therefore, the people of Israel understood their background; they knew Who their God was, and they even called out to their God in the book of Exodus while in slavery to the Egyptians (Exodus 2:23). My point is, they had a fundamental understanding of their own history—of the book of Genesis; and it is reasonable to assume that this comes from the book of Genesis (I am one of the few people who does not believe in the Mosaic authorship of Genesis; at most, he acted as an editor for that book).

How is it that they understand this history, but the Egyptians do not? We have this sort of thing occurring right now, today, in the United States. There are many people who have taken a renewed interest in the founders of this country and their philosophies and their words, as well as their faiths. Such people, often associated with the TEA party movement in the United States, have learned a great deal of true history about our founders, whereas, much of what is being taught in our school system today about our founders is false (or simply left out of the history books altogether). So it is quite possible to have two sets of people living in the same land, who have completely different understandings of our nation as founded.

The remainder of Acts 7 goes into the history of Moses, which is outside the scope of this study. I am most concerned with tying what we have learned to mentions of Abraham in the book of Acts.

What we have been doing for a number of lessons is looking at every instance of Abraham's name being used in the New Testament. Now that we have a full and complete understanding of who he is, many of these verses become easier to comprehend. This gives us some context for these passages.

Acts 13:23–30

Paul's Speech

The Apostle Paul spoke to a difficult mostly Jewish crowd in Acts 13. We pick up his speech in the middle:

Act 13:23 **Of this man's offspring** [contextually, this would be King David's offspring] **God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, [just] as He** [God] **promised.** (ESV; capitalized with added insertions)

King David is descended from Abraham and he is a *type* of Christ (as were Abraham, Isaac, Moses, Samuel, and many others).

As the books of Matthew and Luke attest to, Jesus is linked to King David on the side of His legal father and on the side of His natural mother. David is about midway through the line of Jesus from Abraham. We studied those genealogies **earlier in this chapter**.

Acts 13:24 **Before His coming, John had proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.** (ESV)

This is before the coming of Jesus. *Repentance* refers to a change of mind; not to some emotional swing. The pharisees taught a religion of merit; and John told them that they needed to change their mind about this. They would also need to change their minds about Who the Messiah is.

Although the word *repent* is found two dozen times in the New Testament, the phrase *repent of your sins* as related to salvation (or anything like it) is *not* found anywhere in the New Testament. A person is not saved by regretting his sins or even by changing one's mind about one's sins.

One of the problems today is, we are slowly transitioning away from the King James Bible, where there are a great many archaic words like *repentance*, which most people either do not know or do not have a correct understanding of. Many people believe that regretting your sins and promising God you will never commit those sins again is a part of your salvation. It is not. Those are good intentions, and when exercised as an unbeliever, they are energy of the flesh.

Repentance of Sins in the Bible

1. As an aside, this particular topic certainly bears some discussion. The closest that we have to the phrase *repent of your sins* is the phrase, **"For I did not come to call righteous ones, but sinners to repentance,"** which Jesus said in Matthew 9:13b. All men are sinners; and those who recognize their state of sin, Jesus calls upon them to change their minds about a religion of merit. However, they are not to change their mind about being sinners (or even about sin); they are to change their minds about Jesus Christ. They are to change their minds about approaching God from the standpoint of a religion of merit. How do you merit something from God being a sinner? That is the idea behind what Jesus is saying.
2. On the other hand, we do have the example of Judas *regretting* his sin; and that did not get him any closer to salvation or even to fellowship if he was saved (Pastor Bobby Thieme thinks Judas is saved; I lean toward him not be saved—but it is certainly a debatable topic). In the case of Judas—his regret is not based upon the Greek word for *repent* but upon a different Greek word, sometimes translated *repent*, but more accurately translated *regret*. Judas' response to his own sin was emotional. *Repent* means *to change your mind*; and *regret* means to feel bad about something and to perhaps wish that you had not done that thing. In the Greek, these are similar, but different words. The word which is applied to Judas and his emotional response to his own sin is what most Christians think *repent* means.
3. The pharisees taught a religion of merit during the time of Jesus. They saw themselves as being righteous and they taught others to be righteous as well; and this righteousness was attained by adhering to hundreds and thousands of regulations, which had the intent of putting man more in line with God's proclamations in the Bible. Over the centuries, the religious class in Israel *fine-tuned* the Mosaic Law. So, rather than leave the commandment **Remember the Sabbath and treat it as being set apart** from the other days, up to the hoi polloi to understand, they devised perhaps 600 or so regulations to define exactly how a person was to observe the Sabbath. The Law of Moses condemns all mankind; and the pharisees added on top of the Law a thick layer of regulations so that men thought that keeping these regulations made them righteous. That is what they needed to change their minds about. Changing one's mind about the regulations of man and a religion of merit was not necessarily an emotional experience of any kind (just as salvation is not necessarily an emotional experience).
4. The words *repentance* and *remission (forgiveness)* [of sins] are found together in several passages (Mark 1:4 Luke 3:3 24:47 Acts 2:38 5:31; for instance, Mark 1:4 reads: **John came baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for remission of sins.**)
 - 1) *Remission* is the Greek word *áphesis* (ἀφεσις) [pronounced *AWF-ess-iss*], which means *forgiveness, remission, freedom*. Thayer gives these definitions for this feminine noun: 1) *release from bondage or imprisonment*; 2) *forgiveness or pardon, of sins (letting them go as if they had never been committed), remission of the penalty*. Strong's #859.
 - 2) You may or may not regret your sins; but John proclaimed that changing one's mind about a religion of merit would lead to a *forgiveness* of sins.
5. This is quite different than saying that men need to *repent of their sins*, which to many people, means to

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regret committing those sins and having a desire to not commit them again. If this is the standard for salvation, then *no one* is saved.

- 1) There is a theological problem with this approach as well. It is asking someone, in the power of the flesh, before they are saved, to take a stand against their own sins, and to make promises to God, by the energy of the flesh, not to commit those sins again.
 - 2) This would make salvation from God a system of works based upon the strength of the flesh. Emotional intent while unsaved would therefore become a part of the salvation requirements, and that is energy of the flesh.
 - 3) People are saved by having faith in Jesus Christ, despite the many sins they have committed and despite how they feel about those sins. Salvation is free and is given totally apart from the energy of the flesh. Personal effort of any sort is not a part of salvation. **And if by grace, then it cannot be based on works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.** (Romans 11:6; NIV)
 - 4) Now, some may reduce the number of sins that they commit after they believe in Jesus Christ; but that does not make them any more saved than someone who believes in Jesus, but returns to committing his favorite sins.
6. There is one place in Scripture where men are called upon to *repent* of some specific sins, and this is addressed to *believers* in 2Corinthians 12:21. The point being, that we do not repent of our sins as a necessary condition for salvation. You may need to change your mind about your sins *after* you are saved. We have an excellent example of this today: some homosexuals believe in Jesus, and they are saved. However, their Christian life can go nowhere, if they continue to think that committing homosexual acts is okay; it is just how God made them. In a situation like this, they would need to repent (change their mind) about their sins. Again, they do not need to regret their sins; they do not need to work up some great emotional thing about desiring those of the same gender; they simply have to recognize such acts are sins and sins of any kind slow a person down in their advance in the Christian life.
7. The repentance from fornication in Revelation 2:21 is directed toward a church that has been embracing a variety of false doctrines. They were embracing that which is false. Jesus told them to change their minds about *that*.
8. We also find the phrases *repentance toward God*, *repentance from [dead] works* and *repentance of deeds* in Scripture. These passages refer to change one's mind about something (what they do or what they think or what they teach); and none of this is related to salvation. For the most part, it is changing one's mind about the energy of the flesh production.
9. One of the few unequivocal statements of a repentance of sins is in Revelation 9:21, which is at a time when mankind had become incredibly degenerate. Revelation 9:20–21 **The rest of the people, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands to stop worshipping demons and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood, which are not able to see, hear, or walk. And they did not repent of their murders, their sorceries, their sexual immorality, or their thefts.** God, through judgments of the earth, had destroyed many people, but this did not dissuade others from committing the sins that they committed.
- 1) The things which these people did violated the laws of divine establishment.
 - 2) The things which these people did revealed their negative volition towards God.
 - 3) People saw the destruction of other people all around them, but it never occurs to them that this is related to their behavior. They never change their minds about their actions.
 - 4) If this was about salvation, God would be calling upon them to believe in Jesus Christ.
 - 5) However, the context of this passage is judgment, not salvation. That is, there does come a time when salvation is no longer available. Today, that is when the unbeliever dies; in the Tribulation, that occurs when Jesus returns and gathers all of the people for judgment.
10. Our salvation is all about faith in Christ; it is not about our attitude towards our sins at salvation or after salvation. We may come to God ashamed of our sins, or upset with ourselves over our sins, or perhaps we just recognize that we have made a mess of our lives—but we are *saved* by exercising faith in Jesus Christ. Working up some kind of emotion or feeling about our sins prior to salvation is not a part of the salvation process, despite what many evangelists have said.
11. Repentance as related to salvation is the other side of the coin of faith in Christ: we change our minds

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about deserving God's favor; we change our minds about the religion that we had been following; we change our minds about Jesus Christ, Who we did not really understand before. When we change our minds, we simultaneously believe in Him, and that is what secures our salvation for us.

Whereas, it is quite difficult to find any Scripture which ties salvation to the repentance of one's sins, I can point to dozens of Scripture where salvation is clearly based upon exercising faith alone in Christ alone; there is nothing in the Bible which connects the repentance of sins to salvation. See **Salvation** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

By the way, if there are things throughout this study which have offended you or that you doubted or that made you leery; you first start with salvation and work from there. You look at the fundamentals of salvation—what it takes to be saved, why God allows us to be saved in this way; how this relates to God's love, justice and righteousness (in theology, this is known as soteriology)—and then you build up theologically from there, using that as your foundation. This is why a lesson on salvation can be quite important, even to a person who has been saved for decades. If you are confused about your own salvation, then you will build a faulty structure of doctrine based upon not understanding how and why you are saved.

And so that there is no misunderstanding, this doctrine is not about excusing or promoting sin; it is about understanding how repentance is related to salvation and how it is not.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Back to Paul's speech:

Acts 13:25 **Then as John [the baptizer] was completing his life work, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not the One. But look! Someone is coming after me, and I am not worthy to untie the sandals on His feet.'** (HCSB; insertion added)

John is a witness that Jesus is not merely a good teacher or just a good man. John's life work was to herald the King; to tell about Jesus to come. Before Jesus is in the public eye, John the Baptizer indicates that Jesus is righteous beyond any other man. Jesus was absolutely righteous, whereas men can have, at best, relative righteousness. That is, I can look down my nose at the kinds of sins you commit and say, "I am better than you, Charley Brown! The sins which you commit are repugnant to me and I would never commit those kinds of sins!" That is relative righteousness (and, in that example, self-righteousness), which is completely unrelated to God's righteousness.

John the Baptizer, before Jesus, lacked righteousness and standing.

Acts 13:26 **"Brothers, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to us has been sent the message of this salvation.** (ESV)

Paul is speaking to an audience of mostly Jews—mostly Jews who are antagonistic towards him. He is telling those in his audience—those who are the family of Abraham (that is, Jews)—that this is the message of salvation, or deliverance. So Paul goes back to John the Baptizer to indicate that this was the *beginning* of the salvation message.

Paul calls them *brothers*; because they are his brothers according to the flesh—they are sons of Abraham.

Acts 13:27 **For those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers, because they did not recognize Him nor understand the utterances of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled them by condemning Him.** (ESV; capitalized)

When Jesus had His public ministry, many people saw Him and listened to Him, but did not realize Who it is. They did not understand what the prophets said about Him. They heard these prophecies related to the suffering of

our Lord, but never made the connection. Another way of saying this is, *they did not understand Bible doctrine*. These antagonistic to Him fulfilled the prophecies of the prophets by their condemnation of Him (like Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53). Those negative toward Jesus were the very ones who persecuted Him, nailing Him to the cross¹⁰¹ (the Romans actually nailed Jesus to the cross, but the religious Jews demanded that He be executed).

As an aside, we just studied Moses. He came to his people, but his people did not recognize him as their (human) savior; they did not realize that he was the human deliverer that they had been praying for. When Jesus arrived on the scene, He was not recognized by most of the people or by most of the religious leaders. They did not recognize that He was their Savior. This was despite the fact that they read the prophecies of the prophets every Saturday in their synagogues. Many of these prophecies were about Jesus in His 1st advent. Such as Zechariah 12:10 *Then I will pour out a spirit of grace and prayer on the house of David and the residents of Jerusalem, and they will look at Me whom they pierced. They will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child and weep bitterly for Him as one weeps for a firstborn.* (HCSB; spoken and written 500 years before Jesus). Psalm 22:16–19 *For dogs [those who have rejected the faith] have surrounded Me; a gang of evildoers has closed in on Me; they pierced My hands and My feet. I can count all My bones; people look and stare at Me. They divided My garments among themselves, and they cast lots for My clothing. But You, LORD, don't be far away. My strength, come quickly to help Me.* (HCSB; circa 1000 B.C.). Isaiah 61:1–2a *The Spirit of the Lord GOD is on Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and freedom to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the LORD's grace.* (Written circa 700 B.C.) There are dozens of Old Testament Scriptures which speak of Jesus and these Scriptures were read in the synagogues of the Jews. See **Messianic Prophecies** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Paul is saying, *you hear these things read every Saturday in the synagogue, and yet you refuse to make the connection between these words and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Acts 13:28 *And though they found in Him no guilt worthy of death, they [the religious Jews] asked Pilate to have Him executed.* (ESV; capitalized)

Pilate testified, as the ultimate judge, that no wrongdoing was found in our Lord. The Jews who accused Him had to lie about what Jesus had said or they distorted what He had said, in order to try to convict Him; and even in this, they could not find agreement among one another. They could not find two people who would agree upon the same distorted story. They agreed that they wanted Him crucified, but on nothing else.

Acts 13:29 *And when they had carried out all that was written of Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb.* (ESV; capitalized)

Paul, speaking to a crowd of antagonistic Jews, sons of Abraham, tells them that Jesus in the crucifixion was fulfilling the Scriptures. The clearest description of the crucifixion was written 700 years before the crucifixion actually took place, in Isaiah 53.

Acts 13:30 *But God raised him from the dead,...* (ESV)

Jesus, however, was raised from the dead, to show that God approved of His work on the cross; to tell us that we are saved because our Lord's sacrifice on the cross was efficacious for our sins.

Paul, in this speech, continued on for another 17 verses, which are outside our scope of study. However, Paul did turn these people around. Many of them believed in Jesus by the time he was done.

Abraham in the Pauline Epistles:

As before, we will go through a number of passages in the epistles where Abraham is mentioned. Most of the time, he is not central to the issue being discussed, but knowing who he is helps us to have a fuller understanding of the passage.

¹⁰¹ As an aside, the cross probably looked more like a T.

We have already covered Romans 4 back in **Genesis 15** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) and in **Genesis 17** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Romans 9:1–16

The True Seed of Abraham

Rom. 9:1–2 I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. (ESV)

Paul is writing to the Roman church. There are Jews at this church and, because it is clear that these epistles were copied and circulated, that many Jews would read these words of Paul.

The general topic is, what about this new age and what about God's relationship with the Jews from the Old Testament?

Rom. 9:3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. (ESV)

Paul is greatly concerned for his own brothers, which would be those who are Jews. A person is a racial Jew because they come from the stock of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Also, many converted to Judaism and moved to Judah. Paul would offer up himself as accursed, if only his brothers would believe in Jesus.

Rom. 9:4–5 They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen. (ESV)

They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Note that there are specific things which belong to the Israelites. This means that these things are not given to the gentiles or to the church.

The Things which Belong to Israel

The Adoption: The adoption means that God adopted the Jews as a people. In other places, the analogy used was, He took in the people as a wife (this was illustrated by Hosea and his whore wife, Gomer). After adopting the Jews as His people, God worked through the Jews as a race and as a nation to reveal Himself to the world.

The Glory: The word usually translated *glory* is *doxa* (δόξα) [pronounced *dohks-ah*], which means 1) *opinion, judgment, view*; 2) *opinion, estimate, whether good or bad concerning someone*; 2a) *in the NT always a good opinion concerning one, resulting in praise, honour, and glory*; 3) *splendour, brightness*; 3a) *of the moon, sun, stars*; 3b) *magnificence, excellence, preeminence, dignity, grace*; 3c) *majesty*; 3c1) *a thing belonging to God*; 3c1) *the kingly majesty which belongs to him as supreme ruler, majesty in the sense of the absolute perfection of the deity*; 3c2) *a thing belonging to Christ*; 3c2a) *the kingly majesty of the Messiah*; 3c2b) *the absolutely perfect inward or personal excellency of Christ*; the *majesty*; 3c3) *of the angels*; 3c3a) *as apparent in their exterior brightness*; 4) *a most glorious condition, most exalted state*; 4a) *of that condition with God the Father in heaven to which Christ was raised after he had achieved his work on earth*; 4b) *the glorious condition of blessedness into which is appointed and promised that true Christians shall enter after their Saviour's return from heaven*. Thayer definitions only. Strong's #1391. There is a future for Israel in the Millennium, where Jesus reigns over the earth from Israel. The church does not belong to any particular nation; churches are found in almost every country and nation. But Israel, as a nation, will be associated with the glory and excellency of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Millennium. In the Age of Israel, Israel was associated with the glory of God, at several points in time. The leading of Israel in the desert—the cloud by day; the fire by night—that is God's glory. The Shekinah Glory in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple—that is God's glory. These manifestations are associated directly with Israel.

The Things which Belong to Israel

The covenants: God made a number of covenants with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; with the people of Israel; and with King David. These covenants are specific to Israel and not to the church. These covenants have not been *spiritualized* and then transferred over to the church. This passage in Romans tells us that they belong to the Jews.

The giving of the law: The Law of Moses was given from God to the people of God, the Jews. Israel was a theocracy, and God made the rules for that nation. These laws belonged to a particular nation during a particular period of time. We do not live under the Law of Moses today, even though many principles from that Law are found in most societies (the Ten Commandments, for instance).

The worship: God also defined for them a specific worship system, which revealed Jesus over a thousand years before the Incarnation. The **animal sacrifices**, the **feasts**, the **Day of Atonement**, the **worship of the Jews**, the **Tabernacle**¹⁰² and the Temple all spoke of Jesus Christ; as did even the **furniture**¹⁰³ in the **Tabernacle** and **Temple** (particularly the **Ark of the Covenant**). These were not things which the Jews had to follow and get exactly right in order to be saved; these were things which evangelized the Jews and revealed Jesus Christ to the world.

The promises: The promises that God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; as well as to others, remain with the nation Israel. They were never transferred over to the church. The idea that God's specific promises made to Abraham and his progeny have been transferred over to some other group of people is a false notion. Right here, Paul writes that these promises belong to God's people, the Jews. The implication is, these were for the Jews specifically; they were not for the church.

The patriarchs: This is the very specific line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and then the 12 sons of Jacob. In order to be a racial Jew, you must be descended from these men. However, this relationship is *according to the flesh*; that is, there is no spiritual value in being born a Jew if you are negative toward the Revealed God.

None of the things above were transferred over to the church. For instance, at no time in the New Testament is the Mosaic Law said to have belonged to the Jews, but now God gives it to the church (although, 9 of the 10 commandments are restated in the New Testament).

[Chapter Outline](#)

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Rom. 9:5 **To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen. (ESV)**

This particular line, through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is all a part of the Jewish inheritance. All of the Jews have been descended from the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (unless, of course, they converted over during Israel's history).

Rom. 9:6 **But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel,...** (ESV)

The Word of God has not failed. It is the volition of the Jews in general which failed. Some who have the genes of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob rejected Jesus. *Not all Israel is Israel*. What this means is, not every person who is descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will believe in the Messiah of Israel. Being descended from these men does not insure salvation. Remember when we studied the gospels, so many Jews believed that, simply because of their status as Jews, that they were related to God; or that they had an "in" with God. Jews who believed that, but did not believe in Jesus are now in eternal torments.

¹⁰² [Wenstrom](#) also covers this topic in detail.

¹⁰³ See also [Realtime.net](#) on this doctrine.

Quite obviously, in this time that Paul is writing, there are problems in Israel. After Paul dies, Jerusalem will be destroyed, along with the Temple, beginning the 5th stage of national discipline for the Jews in Judæa (the 5th stage of national discipline is the removal of a people from their homeland; we see this happening in **Syria today**¹⁰⁴). In some cases, one nation removes a people from their homeland; in recent history, the population of Syria has removed itself from its homeland—as many people have done during times of great political upheaval.

Because of 5th stage of national discipline during the time of Paul, Jews would be scattered throughout the world. The Romans understood that the Jews could not be allowed to congregate into one large area, because that made them ungovernable. I refer here primarily to fallen Jews—those who rejected Jesus Christ.

Paul will teach those in Rome *not* to be ungovernable in Romans 13. No one should be able to accuse groups of Christians as being impossible to govern, as was believed about the Jews during this time period.

Rom. 9:7 **...and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named."** (ESV; Genesis 21:12)

Paul uses Abraham as an example. Not all of his children would be considered Jews and inheritors of God's promises. You will recall that Abraham had children by Hagar and then later by Keturah. It was not that his children were unbelievers; they were not Jews, and therefore God's promises would not be given to them. This did not disqualify them from eternal life through faith in the Revealed God.

So, in the way that Abraham's children are not all Jews, so all those descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not all *true Jews*. That is, they are not related to God through Jesus Christ, their true Messiah. Paul is taking an argument based upon genetics, but then actually applying this argument to those who have not apprehended Jesus as their Savior. He is taking a fact of genealogy, but applying it by analogy.

The Jewish faith was a Messianic religion. Nearly all of the Jews knew about the Messiah and hoped that Messiah would come in their generation. You may or may not be aware, but the Jews have had dozens of men (possibly hundreds) who presented themselves as the Messiah of Israel. However, unless you know Jewish history, you only know the name of one of those men.

Rom. 9:8 **This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring.** (ESV)

A child of the flesh is someone who simply has the genes of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Such a one does not have an automatic relationship with God. The key is, the circumcision of the heart (Deut. 10:16 30:6 Jer. 4:4 Romans 2:29 Colossians 2:11), which we might understand as the rebirth of the heart, or being born again. Circumcision of the heart is where life comes out of death. Only the children of promise are those who are the true descendants of Abraham. This means that they have trusted in the God of Abraham; not the god of the pharisees. Does this help you to understand why Jesus and His disciples called for others to *repent*? They needed to change their minds about all of the religion of merit that they had been brought up with.

Rom. 9:9 **For this is what the promise said: "About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son."** (ESV; Genesis 18:10)

For Abraham, the key was Isaac. All of the promises would be fulfilled through Isaac; not through Ishmael. His son Isaac was a Jew; his other son Ishmael was a gentile. As we have already studied, Abraham had a passel of children by Keturah. His son Ishmael became the father of many children. But none of these men were heirs to the promise, and therefore, Abraham sent them away from the Land of Promise with some cash in their pockets (Genesis 25:6). They had an earthly inheritance, but not a heavenly one.¹⁰⁵ The line of promise went through Isaac.

¹⁰⁴ There are at least 2.5 million refugees who have left Syria.

¹⁰⁵ Symbolically speaking.

We have studied the many genealogies in Genesis, and you will recall there is the **straight-line** (or, *linear*) genealogy, which often covers many generations, which is always the genealogy of the Child of Promise. There are also cluster genealogies, which may cover 2 or 3 generations and they are never picked up and continued again. There is only one genealogy which is followed throughout the Old Testament (and in Matthew and Luke in the New), and that is the genealogy of the Messiah, which went from Adam to Noah to Abraham to David and then to either Joseph or to Mary. Why do we have cluster genealogies? In my opinion, these are those who have believed in the God of Abraham; the Revealed God of their era. Ishmael and his mother, Hagar, were not unbelievers, and therefore cast out of Abraham's household. Hagar spoke to God; God saved Hagar and Ishmael from death in the desert. Therefore, it is logical that not only did they believe in the God revealed to them, but so did some of the children of Ishmael. It would be reasonable on the human level to record the sons of your half brother, as Isaac does; and it would be reasonable on the divine level to record the names of believers in the line of Ishmael. The actual difference is, many generations from Abraham and Isaac, their descendants still believed in their God; but many generations after Ishmael, the same was not true. Truth was passed down through many generations of Israelites; truth was not passed down through many generations of Ishmaelites.

Rom. 9:10 **And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac,...** (ESV)

Although we have not studied this yet in Genesis, Isaac would marry Rebekah and she would bear him twins. One of those twins, Jacob, would be a Jew; and the other twin, Esau, would be a gentile. One would be a child of promise and the other would not be. As with Ishmael, this does not mean that Esau was an unbeliever. It means that Esau was not in the line of promise. Messiah would not come from his genes. He would teach his children about the Revealed God, and some of them would believe; but the faith of the Revealed God would be continued in the line of Jacob.

Rom. 9:11–12 **...though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of Him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger."** (ESV; Genesis 25:23)

One of the twins would be a Jew and the other would be a gentile. One of them would continue the line of Abraham and the other would not. Esau was born first; and Jacob was born next. They might have been born 20 minutes apart, as Jacob's hand was grasping Esau's foot as he was delivered. But, this makes Esau the older of the twins.

Rom. 9:13 **As it stands written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."** (Mal. 1:2–3)

Jacob, despite his many faults, valued the inheritance that God promised his grandfather Abraham. God loved Jacob, not because of anything intrinsic in his character (his name means *chiseler, supplanter*), but because God's promises would be passed along through him to his children and to his children's children. Esau, whom we will come to know as being a nicer person than Jacob, will not be the son of promise. The Messiah will not be in his line. The truth of the Revealed God will not become a tradition in the line of Esau.

Newell: "A woman once said to Mr. Spurgeon, 'I cannot understand why God should say that He hated Esau.' 'That,' Spurgeon replied, 'is not my difficulty, madam. My trouble is to understand how God could love Jacob.'" ¹⁰⁶

What God says here is to be understood as an **anthropopathism**. That is, we assign to God emotions that we as humans understand, but these are emotions which God does not have (God is not emotional). So God neither loves Jacob nor does He hate Esau; God does not have His emotions tied up with either man in that way. This simply describes God's approbation (or disapprobation in the case of Esau) based upon the free will choices that these two men make.

¹⁰⁶ David Guzik's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; Genesis 25:19–26. Taken from Newell in *Romans, Verse by Verse*.

Guzik: *Is it fair for God to love one and hate another, and to choose one and not choose another, before they are even born? We should regard the love and the hate God speaks of here as having to do with His purpose in choosing one to become the heir of the covenant of Abraham. In that regard, God's preference could rightly be regarded as a display of love towards Jacob and hate towards Esau. The real thought here is much more like "accepted" and "rejected" more than it is like our understanding of the terms "loved" and "hated."*¹⁰⁷

Guzik continues: *Our greatest error in considering the choices of God is to think God chooses for arbitrary reasons, as if He were sort of an "eeny-meeny-miny-moe" chooser. We may not be able to fathom God's reasons for choosing, and they are reasons He alone knows and answers to, but God's choices are not capricious.*¹⁰⁸

Wenstrom: *The statement "Jacob I loved but Esau I hated" is "not" a reference to Jacob and Esau as individuals but rather it is a reference to the nations, which descended from them, namely, the Israelites from Jacob and the Edomites from Esau. Therefore, the statement refers to the "national" election of Israel as God's covenant people who are descendants of Jacob and the rejection of the Edomites as His covenant people who were descendants of Esau. The rejection of Esau's descendants as His covenant people does "not" mean that God elected the Edomites and the Gentiles to eternal condemnation and the Israelites to salvation since that would contradict the biblical doctrine of the unlimited atonement, which states that God desires all men to be saved. The election of the nation of Israel, like the choice of Jacob over Esau was "non-meritorious" meaning that there was nothing that the nation of Israel and Jacob did that secured God choosing them since many times both sinned and failed to obey God.*¹⁰⁹

Rom. 9:14 **What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means!** (ESV)

Does this make God wrong? Is God wrong to say that He loved Jacob and that He hated Esau? God said this, knowing full well the choices that these men would make, and by knowing where their lines would lead. If we were picking the nicest person of these twins, Esau would have been chosen every time. God is not unjust because the line of the Messiah goes through Jacob. That is just human history and human volition. God knew this from eternity past; and can therefore make such pronouncements.

Rom. 9:15 **For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."** (ESV; Exodus 33:19)

This is where the sovereignty and foreknowledge of God and the free will of man all meet. God knows us from the beginning, how we think, what we will believe and what we will choose.

Rom. 9:16 **So then, it is not by the desire or by the attempt [lit., *running*] of man, but by the mercy of God.** This is from the Bible in Basic English.

The first verb is the present active participle of *thélō* (θέλω) [pronounced *THEH-loh*], which means *to will, to have in mind, to wish, to desire, to purpose, to intend, to please; to take delight [pleasure] in*. One's active volition and purpose are implied. Strong's #2309. This means that we are not dealing with the desires, wishes or purposes of man.

The second verb is the present active participle of the verb *trechō* (τρέχω) [pronounced *TREHK-oh*], which means, *1) to run; 1a) of persons in haste; 1b) of those who run in a race course; 2) metaphorically; 2a) of doctrine rapidly propagated; 2b) by a metaphor taken from runners in a race, to exert one's self, strive hard; 2c) to spend one's strength in performing or attaining something; 2d) word occurs in Greek writings denoting to incur extreme peril*,

¹⁰⁷ David Guzik's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; Genesis 25:19–26.

¹⁰⁸ David Guzik's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; Genesis 25:19–26.

¹⁰⁹ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

which it requires the exertion of all one's effort to overcome. Thayer definitions only. Strong's #5143. This indicates the effort of man or the works of man.

The final verb is the present active participle of *eleeō* (ἐλεέω) [pronounced *ehl-eh-EH-oh*], which means, 1) *to have mercy on*; 2) *to help one afflicted or seeking aid*; 3) *to help the afflicted, to bring help to the wretched*; 4) *to experience mercy*. Thayer definitions only. Strong's #1653. Before God, we are wretched and deserving of nothing. We are afflicted and we need aid. God through His grace—through Jesus Christ—provides this to us. That is the key to God's plan.

God's plan is not the result of the wishes, desires or purposes of man; nor is it the result of the effort or works of man, it is the result of the mercy of God.

Rom. 9:16 **So then, it is not by man's desire [purpose or intention] nor is it by man's striving; but salvation is based upon the mercy of God.**

Romans 11:1–6

The Remnant of Grace

In Romans 11, Paul talks about the present-day relationship between God and His people, the Jews. Paul is writing in the Church Age. The Age of the Hypostatic Union has come to a conclusion; the Age of Israel has come to a halt (although 7 years yet remain on the clock for this era). So, there are clearly racial Jews all over the place. What is God's plan for these racial Jews? Are they now simply rejected in this new dispensation?

Rom. 11:1 **I ask, then, has God rejected His people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.** (ESV; capitalized)

Paul later asks, *has God rejected His Own people?* He answers that this is not the way to understand God's plan in the Church Age. After all, Paul himself is a Jew, descended from Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. God has accepted Paul and God uses Paul, the chief of sinners (1Timothy 1:15). Therefore, God has not rejected His Own people. What is going on is a change of dispensation—a change of how God manages His household on earth—but this change is not a rejection of the Jewish race. God will no longer work through the nation Israel, but God has not rejected His people.

Paul will teach that, if anyone believes in Jesus Christ, they will be saved.

Rom. 11:2 **God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel?** (ESV; capitalized)

Paul first used the example of himself, in v. 1; and then he goes back to the Old Testament and uses the example of Elijah. Elijah thinks that he is the last man standing; the last man to believe in the Revealed God.

Rom. 11:3 **"Lord, they have killed Your prophets, they have demolished Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life."** (ESV; capitalized; 1Kings 19:10)

These are the words which Elijah speaks to God. He gives up to God the best "Oh, woe is me" prayer that he can muster. He believed that he was the only remaining believer in all Israel, but this is not true.

I love how Paul continues to use the Old Testament. The Old Testament does not belong to the Jews alone. It is the Word of God. Therefore, even when writing to a mostly gentile church, Paul uses the Old Testament upon which to base his arguments. Paul uses the Old Testament because the Word of God is the Word of God.

As an aside, why did God have several different programs throughout the ages? Let me suggest several answers, any one of which could lead to a lengthy theological discussion. There are a myriad of objections which Satan

has made to the plan of God since the beginning of time. One of his objections would no doubt deal with the concept of perfect standards; another would involve a perfect environment. So, there was an era during which God provided perfect standards for that era (those standards being known to us today as the Mosaic Law). In the Millennium, there will be a time of perfect environment. There are many people today who have faith in various schemes to achieve the perfect environment. Some of these schemes may be environmental; some may be political; some may be economic. But, in the Millennium, there will be perfect environment; and some men will still sin and some men will still disobey God and some men will still reject faith in Jesus Christ, even though He will be on the throne in Jerusalem. All of this falls under the general heading, *the plan of God*; so this is why we study the Old Testament as well as the New.

This is another reason as well—the Bible was preserved by many divers and sometimes opposing groups. There is the false notion out there that the Catholic church, at the end of the 4th century, decided what the Bible was and what the Bible was not. That idea is poppycock, and reveals a complete lack of knowledge of the history of the canon of Scripture! First of all, the Old Testament had already been fixed in its canonicity and several groups were in charge of preserving the OT text. Jews preserved it in the Hebrew in several cities; Aramæans preserved it in Syriac; the Catholic church preserved it in the Latin (which was the common language of their day and geographical period); and earlier Christians preserved the OT in the Greek. These are very diverse groups of people, and they did not get together and say, “I really like Psalm 23, but don’t think that Psalm 24 belongs in Scripture, so let’s get rid of that.” Or, “I really like this set of verses, but this portion of this same chapter needs to be edited out.” Or, “What do you think about adding this book that I just found?” You cannot do that when there are thousands upon thousands of copies of the Old Testament scattered throughout the world, being preserved by a variety of groups and nationalities, not all of whom really got along too well; and most of whom do not necessarily even have a common language with which to communicate to one another. So, the idea that the early Catholic Church came along and waved some magic wand and changed all of the Scriptures to fit their point of view is silly and historically preposterous (even though many people believe this).

Some people are under the mistaken notion that the Catholic church somehow, around A.D. 400, chose the New Testament canon of Scripture. Also preposterous. They did gather and decide upon the New Testament canon, but they were not the only ones. There were 4 separate councils that we are aware of which *recognized* the canon: Nicea (325–400), Hippo (393); Carthage (397); Carthage (419).

New Testament Chart—Individuals recognition of books; Individuals devised canon

	X= Citation or allusion to O= Named as authoritative ? = Named as disputed																					
	Pseudo-Barnabas (c. 70-130) Clement of Rome (c. 95-97) Ignatius (c. 110) Polycarp (c. 110-150) Hermas (c. 115-140) Dionysius (c. 120-180) Papias (c. 130-140) Irenaeus (c. 130-180) Diognetus (c. 130-200) Justin Martyr (c. 150) Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-185) Tertullian (c. 150-220) Origen (c. 185-254) Eusebius (c. 260-340) Jerome (c. 325-390) Augustine (c. 350-430) Martin (c. 400) Muratorian (c. 140) Apostolic (c. 170) Cheltenham (c. 300) Augustine (357)																					
	Individuals																Canons					
Matthew	X	X		X	X	X		O		X	X	X	X	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O
Mark	X			X	X			O		X	X	X	X	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O
Luke	X			X		X		O		X	X	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
John		X		X			X	O		O	X	X	X	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O
Acts				X	X			O		X	X	X	X	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O
Romans		X		X		X		O		X	O	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
1Corinthians		O		X	X	X		O		X	O	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
2Corinthians				X	X			O	X	X	O	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Galatians				X				O	X	X	O	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Ephesians	X	X	X	X				O		X	X	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Philippians				X	X	X		O			O	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Colossians				X	X			O	X	X	O	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
1Thess.				X	X	X	X	O		X	X	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
2Thess.				X	X			O		X	X	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
1Timothy		X		X	X	X		X			O	X	X	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O
2Timothy	X				X			X			X	X	O	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O
Titus	X	X						X	X		O	X	X	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O
Philemon			X											O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Hebrews	X	X			X			X			O	X	?	O	O	O	O			O		O
James		X			X									O	?	O	O			O		O
1Peter	X			X	X			O		X	O	X	O	O	O	O	O			O	O	O
2Peter	X	X											?	O	?	O	O			O	?	O
1John				X	X			O			O	X		O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O
2John				X				X					?	O	?	O	O		O	O	?	O
3John													?	O	?	O	O		O	O	?	O
Jude								X			O	X		O	?	O	O		O	O		O
Revelation					X	X	O	O		X	O	X	O		O	O	O		O		O	O

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

There are all kinds of writings in the first 4 centuries where the New Testament is referenced. Pseudo Barnabas (circa 70–130); Clement of Rome (c. 95–97); Ignatius (c. 110); Polycarpa (c. 110–150); etc. There are nearly 2 dozen writers of theology in the first few centuries which referenced the New Testament books—some quoting passages, some indicating authority for certain books.

Then we have what would naturally occur—men would realize that amongst all of the writings available to them, there must be a core canon of Scripture. So, we are aware of at least 5 lists of books by respected men who tried determine which books were authoritative.

Not all of these agreed. Taking all of these various sources, books were then classified: there was the Homologoumena, the books accepted by all. About 20 of the 27 books of the New Testament fall into this category. Then there were the disputed books, called the Antilegomena, which were the remaining 7 books of the New Testament: Hebrews (who is the author?); James; 2Peter (unusual writing style compared to 1Peter); 2 and 3John (short, personal letters); and Revelation (weird). By about A.D. 300, all of the books from this list began to be accepted as a part of the canon.

New Testament Chart 2—Canons established by translation and by councils

From Norman Geisler and William Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible*, Chicago: Moody Press, ©1968, p. 295.
Although many portions of this book have been duplicated and are found on the internet, I highly recommend that every believer have a copy of this book in their collection of reference books.

X = Citation or allusion to
O = Named as authoritative
? = Named as disputed

Early Determinations of Canonicity	Translations			Councils			
	Thian (c. 170)	Old Lath (c. 200)	Old Syriac (c. 400)	Nicaea (c. 325-340)	Hippo (393)	Carthage (397)	Carthage (419)
Matthew	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Mark	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Luke	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
John	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Acts	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Romans	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
1 Corinthians	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
2 Corinthians	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Galatians	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Ephesians	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Philippians	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Colossians	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
1 Thess.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
2 Thess.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
1 Timothy	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
2 Timothy	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Titus	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Philemon	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Hebrews	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
James	O	O	?	O	O	O	O
1 Peter	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
2 Peter	O	O	?	O	O	O	O
1 John	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
2 John	O	O	?	O	O	O	O
3 John	O	O	?	O	O	O	O
Jude	O	O	?	O	O	O	O
Revelation	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

Jesus Christ did not come and present the gospel one day; Paul sent out epistles on the next, and on the day after that, some important council gathered to determine which books belonged in the Bible and which did not. This was all a very natural, organic process, as we would assume. The church at Corinth would get a letter from Paul, and they would make copies of it, and someone from the church in Galatia would request a copy of that epistle and it would be sent to them. In this way, the letters of Paul and the other Apostles were circulated throughout the various churches. Pastors would rise up, study these letters, study the Old Testament, study the gospels (the biographies of the life of Jesus), and they would both teach and write. As they wrote, they would cite passages from this or that letter, from this or that gospel, from this or that Old Testament book.

At some point, various individuals and groups saw a need to determine which books of the New Testament were authoritative. As a result, individuals and groups began to specify certain books as clearly canonical, which meant that they were authoritative (that is, they could be cited as accurate). Also, as the gospel spread, translations were made for new peoples, and a determination must be made what to translate.

These are lists of individuals, councils and translations and which books they either cited or recognized as authoritative.

This first table has early translations of the New Testament and the decisions made by various church councils. The next page has individuals and lists of some of the canons developed at that time. There are undoubtedly other individuals, canon determinations and councils from this early era that have been lost to historians.

Both of these charts came from Norman Geisler and William Nix; *A General Introduction to the Bible*; Chicago: Moody Press, ©1968, p. 193.

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Then there was the Pseudopigrapha, or the books rejected by all. There are 21 gospels, only one of which came out of the 1st century (and that is suspect); there are the various *Acts* of various Apostles (there are at least 8 of these, probably none from the 1st century); there are 9 epistles (again, not from the 1st century); and 4 Apocalypses. There is no indication that any of these books were considered as serious contenders for the canon by anyone or any group.

My point is, there are only 7 books which were seriously questioned, and those are in your Bible. You can read and study them at your own leisure and draw your own conclusions about them.

Finally, there were also translations which were made. The New Testament was written in the Koine Greek, but this was not the language used in Rome 400 years later; and when the message of Jesus was taken to other lands, it was spread in the language of that people. So we have the Old Latin translation from around A.D. 200; the Old Syriac translation from around 400.

So, when I study an Old Testament passage, I can easily find the Hebrew, Latin, Greek and Syriac versions of that passage, all preserved in the original languages, all translated into English, and come to a fairly clear understanding as to what the original text was and what it means. I have all of this information right on my computer; and I can find this information as well on the internet. The differences between the Hebrew text of the OT and the Latin text of the OT are minor; and many times, they are based upon, you would say one thing in Hebrew one way, but you would never express it in that way in the Latin. For instance, we use the singular noun *face* to refer to the front of a person's head. In the Hebrew, they never used that as a singular noun; it was always a plural noun. These are the kinds of differences, for the most part, which are found in these various manuscripts.

As you can tell by studying these charts, the formation of the New Testament canon was a very organic process. From the God-ward side, God made certain that the correct canon of Scripture would be recognized; and from the man-ward side, various men in a variety of ways, recognized the canon. Polycarp, for instance, might quote from the book of John in order to prove a point. By doing that, we understand that he is (along with those who read his writings) recognizing the authority of the book of John.

At some point, it would be natural for various individuals, by whatever means, decide to determine what the canon of Scripture ought to be—and then they recorded this in some of their writings. Because the New Testament Bible was disseminated to people who spoke in other languages, the translators had to figure out which books should be translated. So, that established a canon. Finally, at least 4 different councils met and discussed this situation, making a determination as a group which books should be recognized as canonical.

Back to Elijah:

Rom. 11:3 "Lord, they have killed Your prophets, they have demolished Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life." (ESV; capitalized; 1Kings 19:10)

Elijah portrays himself as the only faithful man remaining. "God, I am it. I am the only one in Israel who still believes in You. No one else has trusted You. It is only me."

Rom. 11:4 But what is God's reply to him? "I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." (ESV; 1Kings 19:18)

God has set aside another 7000 men who had not bowed before Baal. These are believers as well; these are men who have a place in God's plan as well.

Rom. 11:5 So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. (ESV)

These 7000 men that God speaks of—these are the remnant. These are the ones of Israel who have believed in the Revealed God. Being a part of the remnant—being a part of those who believe in the Revealed God—is a matter of grace. Paul argues that there is still a remnant in Israel; there remain believers in Israel. This means that God has not abandoned the Jews; this means that God has not rejected the Jews. There is still a remnant.

Paul acknowledges that, there is not this small handful of Jews who really believe in Jesus Christ; but that there is remains a large population of believing Jews, just as there were in the time of Elijah.

However, this remnant must be based upon grace, not upon works; and not upon the law.

Rom. 11:6 But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. (ESV)

The Jewish religion was a religion of merit; a religion of works (as is every religion). Being the chosen of God is completely of grace. We do nothing more than believe in His Son; there are no works required from us in order to be saved. If we depend upon works, then that is the opposite of grace, and we are only saved by grace

(Ephesians 2:8–9). Paul is making certain that his readers understand that they are saved only by grace, and not by adhering to some system of works.

Paul continues to reason through the remainder of Romans 11, but no longer speaks of Abraham specifically.

2Cor. 11:18–23

Paul Compares His Credentials with Those of the Judaizers

There are two ways that people try to meet God—through faith in Him and through merit. The religion of merit was taught by Judaism and by every other major religion and cult. However, no one is actually saved apart from faith alone in Christ alone. Jesus is the narrow gate through Whom we must pass. No one possesses enough merit to impress God. No one is good enough.

2Cor. 11:18 *Since many boast according to the flesh, I too will boast.* (ESV)

This is another letter written to the Corinthians (there appear to have been several); and some of the people in that church were boasting about their own credentials when opposing Paul. Because the legalists are boasting of their own background, accomplishments and works, Paul himself will also boast of his own credentials.

2Cor. 11:19 *For you gladly bear with fools, being wise yourselves!* (ESV)

Here, he uses a bit of sarcasm. He says that these people believe themselves to be wise, and they think that they are being tolerant of confused people (fools) like Paul.

Also, the people of Corinth indulged these people who boasted that they were as qualified as Paul to make pronouncements. “You are wise enough to put up with these men who boast.”

2Cor. 11:20 *For you bear it if someone makes slaves of you, or devours you, or takes advantage of you, or puts on airs, or strikes you in the face.* (ESV)

Paul asks them—what if someone treats them in this way? What if someone makes them into a slave (in this context, a slave to some legalistic system)? What if someone cheats them in a business deal? What if someone steps up and pops them in the face? Are you still going to be tolerant of them? Are you still going to listen to their point of view?

2Cor. 11:21 *To my shame, I must say, we were too weak for that! But whatever anyone else dares to boast of--I am speaking as a fool--I also dare to boast of that.* (ESV)

Paul says that he boasts of these things as well. Paul calls himself a fool, because he is going to get into a boasting contest with those in Corinth who boast of their own background and works.

2Cor. 11:22 *Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they offspring of Abraham? So am I.* (ESV)

These Judaizers brag that they are genetically related to Abraham. Paul says, “I am too.” Do Paul’s arguments suddenly hold more weight, since he is a racial Jew? Of course not! It is not a genetic relationship to Abraham that is key. In the same way, the arguments of the Judaizers are not strengthened because they are descendants of Abraham.

2Cor. 11:23 *Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one--I am talking like a madman--with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death.* (ESV)

These purveyors of false doctrine were coming to Corinth, and they would say, "You should listen to us because we are clearly in the line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and we can boast about our background and accomplishments." Paul suggests that he has far more to boast about, which boastings include beatings and imprisonments and being brought near to death. From here, Paul then describes the pressures that he has been under, which includes being beaten on many occasions; and being shipwrecked. The overall idea is, whatever those of his opposition boast of, he can either meet their boast or exceed it. "If you are going to listen to such people and give heed to them because of the things which they boast, well then, let me boast a bit as well. If authority is based upon who has the most to boast about; then listen to what I can claim."

Galatians 3:5–12

Abraham shows us that we are saved by faith and not by the law

We continue to explore all of the New Testament references to Abraham.

Galatians is a letter all about grace versus Law. Galatians is exactly the right epistle for Paul to speak of Abraham. Abraham is mentioned at least 7 times in Galatians 3.

Gal. 3:5–6 **Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith—just as Abraham "believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"?** (ESV; Genesis 15:6)

Paul has been before the Galatians and he has given the Holy Spirit to them and he has performed miracles before them. Was this done by the Law or by grace, he asks.

Paul speaks of Abraham, and asks what did he do? He believed God and this faith was counted to him as righteousness. His righteousness is based entirely upon faith. So, just as Abraham's righteousness is based upon faith, the giving of the Holy Spirit and the miracles worked among those in Galatia all came to them on the basis of faith.

As an aside, the letter to the Galatians is one of the earliest of the New Testament writings, if not the earliest, written A.D. 49 or 55.¹¹⁰ In the early part of the Church Age—specifically in the early part of the 1st century—the Apostles got a hearing by the use of sign gifts. They could speak in languages which they themselves did not know; they could heal; and they could perform miracles. This gained them a hearing. But, once their authority had been established, these sign gifts faded into obscurity.

Gal. 3:7 **Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.** (ESV)

Therefore, a true son of Abraham is a son by means of faith; not by a son by means of works. Again, even when writing to gentiles, Paul argues from the Old Testament. The Bible is for all mankind, even though the Old Testament was written by Jews; was preserved, for the most part, by Jews; and specifically dealt with God's relationship to Israel. It is still God's Word. In fact, Paul uses the Old Testament again and again in this passage.

Gal. 3:8 **And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed."** (ESV; Genesis 12:23)

Abraham was justified by faith; and God promises him that all the nations would be blessed in him. The promises made to Abraham, and passed down to Abraham, are promises for him and his descendants. Still, through him and through his Son, all the nations would be blessed.

Gal. 3:9 **So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.** (ESV)

¹¹⁰ From <https://bible.org/seriespage/pauline-epistles> accessed March 3, 2014.

God did not choose a man of works to bless, but a man of faith. Abraham is our guide or our model in this regard.

Gal. 3:10 For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them." (ESV; Deut. 27:26)

If we depend upon the Law, then we are under a curse. The Law of Moses does not justify us; it curses us. It reveals to us where we come up short. This is because in order to fulfill the Law, we must obey everything in the Law. If we don't, then we are cursed.

Gal. 3:11 Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for "The righteous shall live by faith." (ESV; Habak. 2:4)

Therefore, no one can be justified by the Law, because no one can keep all of the Law. Those who are righteous live by faith, not by works. And Paul quotes Old Testament passages to back him up.

Gal. 3:12 But the law is not of faith, rather "The one who does them shall live by them." (ESV; Leviticus 18:5)

The Law of Moses is not based upon faith; it defined the righteousness of God for that era. The spiritual life in the Old Testament and in the era of Paul has always been based upon faith; it was *never* defined by keeping the Law.

Gal. 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us--for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"-- (ESV; Deut. 21:23)

Jesus became the cursing of the Law for us. Jesus fulfilled all of the requirements of the Law, and then He was crucified. Because He was crucified, Jesus was cursed, as Deut. 21:23 tells us.

Gal. 3:14 ...so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of **Abraham** might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith. (ESV)

Jesus was cursed on the cross so that the blessing promised to Abraham would come to the Gentiles as well. All could receive the Spirit through faith.

By the way, this is not some holy roller passage where you get in a group of holy rollers and you lay your head back and you start making noises in your throat and mouth, hoping that something else will take you over, and you will call that the Spirit. Everyone receives the Spirit by faith in Christ.

When you are in some Christian cult, and they are trying to get you to speak in tongues, and they point out, tongues are here, and here and here in the Bible. But after that, they will do all kinds of non-Biblical things to *help* you "get the ghost." If you have to try a variety of non-Biblical methods to "get the ghost," then you are not really getting the Holy Spirit, no matter how you feel.

Gal. 3:15 To give a human example, brothers: even with a man-made covenant, no one annuls it or adds to it once it has been ratified. (ESV)

Paul illustrates God's covenant by using the example of a contract between men. Once a contract has been agreed to, one of the parties cannot come back later and change the terms of the contract unilaterally. He cannot add terms to it, remove clauses, and completely nullify this contract.

Gal. 3:16 Now the promises were made to **Abraham** and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to seeds," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your seed," who is Christ. (ESV; Genesis 3:15; 21:12; 22:18)

This is a fascinating take. When speaking of a *descendant* or *descendants*, the singular noun is used in the Hebrew. We do not find the plural of *seed* used for *descendants*. However, Paul uses this to confirm that this promise refers to Jesus Christ.

There are two things at work here: first, many prophecies are both near and far prophecies. That is, the prophecy can refer to something which will take place in the next decade or even the next century. That is a near prophecy. That Abraham would have children to whom the promises would be made came true. Abraham had a son Isaac and Isaac had a son Jacob. It is to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—and to Jacob’s 12 sons—to whom these promises are made.

However, the true Son of Promise is Jesus Christ. He is the far-fulfillment of this prophecy. As we studied, Isaac was a *type* of Christ, illustrating Jesus in his birth. **The Parallels between the Birth of Isaac and the Birth of Jesus** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Gal. 3:17 **This is what I mean: the law, which came 430 years afterward, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to make the promise void.** (ESV)

Now Paul backs up and closes the logic on this. The Law of Moses came 430 years later after He *ratified* this covenant originally made with Abraham. God cannot annul His covenant with Abraham 430 years later. God cannot say to Abraham, “You know what, all that stuff about the promises that I made to you about the land and your sons and all of that—well, I have changed My thinking on that. From hereon in, these promises are only available to those who keep the Law.” We cannot do this in contacts between men; so God cannot make a contract with Abraham, and then, hundreds of years later, make a new contract that annuls His first contract or dramatically revises his original contract.

Abraham is saved by faith. He is made righteous by faith. Abraham is given these promises by faith. His faith cannot be annulled by a Law or set of laws given 430 years later. If man cannot do something like this, then surely God cannot either.

There is a time problem here. God made His original promises to Abraham around the year 2000 B.C., and the Mosaic Law was given around 1450 B.C. That would suggest that Paul’s estimate here is off by 120 years.

The common explanation has Israel under the thumb of the Egyptians for 215 years, which is the number found in the Septuagint in Exodus 12:40. However, the Bible clearly states that Israel was under subjugation to Egypt for 400 years (Genesis 15:13).

The book *When Critics Ask*, seems to have the best explanation.

When Critics Ask, on the Time Problem

GALATIANS 3:17 —Does Paul err in the amount of time between Abraham and the time the Law was given?

PROBLEM: In Galatians 3:17, the apostle states that a period of 430 years elapsed between the time of God’s promises to Abraham (Gen. 12:1–3), which was about 2000 B.C., and the giving of the law to Moses, which was around 1450 B.C. This would be a mistake of over 100 years.

SOLUTION: The time that Paul refers to is not the initial giving of the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 12–15), but the later confirmation of the covenant to Jacob (Gen. 46), which was about 1877 B.C. Since the Exodus occurred around 1447 B.C. (cf. 1Kings 6:1), this would be exactly 430. There is good indication that Paul is referring to the confirmation to Jacob, not to the initiation of the covenant to Abraham. The text clearly dates the 430 years from “**the covenant that was confirmed**” (Gal. 3:17). Thus, the time period is the final reaffirmation of the Abrahamic promises to the descendants (seed) of Abraham which takes place in Genesis 46:2–4 to Jacob, a descendent of Abraham, which was 430 years before the children of Israel came out of Egypt.

The confirmation of the covenant in Genesis 46:2–4 occurs immediately before Jacob goes down to Egypt, as ordered by God. The verb is *prokuroō* (προδύρω) [pronounced *prohk-oo-ROH-oh*], which means, *to validate [establish] beforehand, to confirm legally; to sanction, ratify*. Strong's #4300.

Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe, *When Critics Ask*; Victor Books; taken from e-Sword, Galatians 3:17.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Gal. 3:18 **For if the inheritance comes by the law, it no longer comes by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise.** (ESV)

If the inheritance of Abraham comes through the Law, then it is not based upon God's promises, given when Abraham was alive and later in a grave when these promises were confirmed to Jacob. God gave Abraham a promise; God did not give Abraham a great set of laws to follow.

Gal. 3:19 **Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the Seed should come to Whom the promise had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary.** (ESV)

Why was the Law given in the first place? This was because of the constant transgressions made by the people of God against God. The Law carefully defined sin; it was not a means of justification or righteousness.

The Seed to come is Jesus Christ. All of the promises to Abraham were ultimately about Jesus and to Him as well.

That angels were involved in the giving of the Law is confirmed in Psalm 68:17 Acts 7:53 Hebrews 2:2.

Gal. 3:20 **Now an intermediary [= mediator, arbitrator] implies more than one, but God is one.** (ESV)

In order to have an intermediary, there must be people on both sides of the intermediary. There is no need for an intermediary unless there are two sides. Man is on one side, God is on the other. There needs to be a mediator between them.

The Greek word for mediator is *mesítês* (μεσίτης) [pronounced *meh-SEE-tays*], which means *mediator; one who intervenes between two, either in order to make or restore peace and friendship, or form a compact, or for ratifying a covenant; a medium of communication, arbitrator; a guarantor; a pledge*. Thayer, Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider. Strong's #3316.

The Law, as a mediator, is problematic. The Law is perfect and good, like God; but man continually violates the Law. So, with God on one side and man on the other, but the Law between them—man is able to do nothing but violate God's perfect Law. The Law is not a pathway from man to God; it is a barrier between man and God. The Law tells us, "This is *why* you cannot come to God." Since we cannot fully obey the Law, we cannot come to God by means of the Law.

So we have the problem that the Law is an imperfect mediator because man is unable to keep the Law.

Gal. 3:21 **Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law.** (ESV)

The Law of Moses was not given to give life or to establish righteousness. All law can do is establish our sinfulness.

There were certainly other purposes for the Law of Moses beyond condemning us. However, Paul concentrates on that aspect of the Law, because the Judaizers were teaching the congregation at Galatia that keeping the law was necessary to give them righteousness.

Gal. 3:22 **But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.** (ESV)

All mankind is under sin. We are all imprisoned by sin. We are all in the slave market of sin. Despite having given man the Law, the Scripture also concludes that **all of sinned and fall short of God's glory** (Romans 3:23 1Kings 8:46 Eccles. 7:20). Our only escape from this prison of sin is by means of Jesus Christ.

Gal. 3:23 **Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed.** (ESV)

The word *faith* is the feminine singular noun *pistis* (πίστις) [pronounced *PIHS-tihs*], which means, 1) *conviction of the truth of anything, belief; in the NT of a conviction or belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervour born of faith and joined with it; 1a) relating to God; 1a1) the conviction that God exists and is the creator and ruler of all things, the provider and bestower of eternal salvation through Christ; 1b) relating to Christ; 1b1) a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom we obtain eternal salvation in the kingdom of God; 1c) the religious beliefs of Christians; 1d) belief with the predominate idea of trust (or confidence) whether in God or in Christ, springing from faith in the same; 2) fidelity, faithfulness; 2a) the character of one who can be relied on.* Thayer definitions only. Strong's #4102. So it is not just the act of believing, but it is also that which is believed in. Salvation has always been through faith in the Revealed God. However, we did not understand exactly how and why this was true until the salvation of Jesus Christ was revealed. That *understanding* is a fundamental of our faith.

Imprisoned by law simply means that the Law of Moses condemns us before God.

Gal. 3:24 **So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.** (ESV)

The word *guardian* is the masculine noun *paidagōgos* (παιδαγωγός) [pronounced *pahee-dag-o-GOSS*], which means, *a tutor, i.e. a guardian and guide of boys.* Among the Greeks and the Romans the name was applied to trustworthy slaves who were charged with the duty of supervising the life and morals of boys belonging to the better class. The boys were not allowed so much as to step out of the house without them before arriving at the age of manhood. Thayer definition only. Strong's #3807.

We must be careful to understand what is being taught. Salvation has always been through faith in the Revealed God; so the Law of Moses did not take the place as the object of faith or means of salvation. This Law, in many ways, preserved the Jews as a people, and it also showed them how deficient they were when it comes to keeping the Law. There were different components to the Mosaic Law. Some portions of it were issues of morality; some revealed Jesus Christ; some simply preserved the people of Israel. There are even some laws in Deuteronomy which are not really laws, but Moses providing common sense guidance to a people who knew almost nothing about nothing.

The study of Deuteronomy is fascinating. Much of what is found here, in the realm of law, is like what is found elsewhere in the books of Moses. However, now and again, Moses will offer what is more of a helpful hint about how to do something (or, how *not* to do something, like not mixing divers threads when making clothing), and unbelievers will take these helpful hints, elevate them to the power of the Ten Commandments, and then say, "Are you wearing a polyester blend shirt? Then you are violating the Mosaic Law." The people in the desert who stood before Moses had never farmed, built houses, or made clothing before; and their parents were all dead by the sin unto death. So Moses taught them a few common sense things that they needed to know before going into the land. He told them a few common sense things becoming farmers, house builders and clothing manufacturers. There was no morality affixed to these *handy hints* (Moses did not warn people who mixed divers types of thread that they would receive lashings or be cut off from their people).

Here is the part that is fascinating—New Testament authors, like Paul, took those things which were given as helpful hints, and gives them a whole different spiritual application. In the New Testament, for instance, we are taught that certain things should not be intermixed—we don't put new wine into old wine containers. The principle

which is actually being taught is, you do not mix Christianity in with legalism. You cannot mix a little faith in with a little law. Which point brings us right back to our topic.

Gal. 3:25 **But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian,...** (ESV)

Faith again stands for what is believed; and we believe in Jesus, Who is both revealed and salvation is understood. Personally, I do not believe that Abraham or Moses or even Isaiah fully understood exactly Who Messiah would be. And most certainly, the citizens of Israel throughout the centuries did not fully understand Who their Messiah would be. They trusted and believed in their Messiah; they trusted and believed in the Revealed God—and this saved them—but a full understanding of Jesus and what He did took time and revelation.

As discussed back in Genesis 22, Abraham understood his offering of Isaac to be done as an act of obedience. He did not know that this was a type, looking forward to the antitype of God the Father offering up God the Son. Much (maybe all?) of typology is not known until the antitype is revealed. Then we can place the type next to the antitype and be amazed as to how closely they match up. This is one way that a type is different from a prophecy. When the Messiah was prophesied, many of the Jews understood that was a prophecy about Messiah. They may or may not have been able to correctly understand the prophecy completely, but they understood that the prophecy was about their Messiah. Nearly all Jews understood the general concept of the Messiah and that God had promised them a Messiah (whether they believed this or not is another thing; whether they could recognize the Messiah when He came, is another thing). But there was no connection made during the Age of Israel of the *types* to the Messiah. No one ever taught in the Temple or the Tabernacle that Abraham offering up his son to God was all about the Messiah. They understood it only in terms of obedience. God told Abraham to offer up his son of the covenant to God, and so he did. **The Offering of Isaac** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Back to the topic at hand:

Once Jesus has come, we are no longer under the Law of Moses. There are two basic reasons for this: (1) Jesus fulfilled all the requirements of the Law, which is something that we could not do; and (2) all of those things which looked forward to Jesus (the animal sacrifices, the feast days, etc.) were fulfilled in Jesus. They no longer need to look forward because Jesus, to Whom they looked forward, had come (this is what much of the book of Hebrews is all about).

Your kid has a birthday coming. On the refrigerator door, you tape a sign “7 days til Charley’s birthday.” The next day, “6 days til Charley’s birthday.” After his birthday has come, you don’t keep hanging up signs that his birthday is coming. Nor do you hang up signs, “Your birthday was 3 days ago.” So, once Jesus has come and has died for our sins, there are no more animal sacrifices. The things which pointed toward His coming—the types and the prophecies—are no longer presented anew. They are no longer needed.

Gal. 3:26 **...for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.** (ESV)

Here is something that was not fully understood in the Old Testament—when we believe in Jesus, we are made sons of God. We are in Christ, so that when God looks at us, He sees His Son; and His righteousness and His Sonship are all applied to us, because we are in Him. We are put into Christ by faith.

Gal. 3:27 **For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.** (ESV)

This simply means that we are identified with Christ and we are *in Christ*. Being baptized into Christ means that we are closely identified with Christ; so, in this way, we have put on Christ.

Gal. 3:28 **There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.** (ESV)

There are no superficial distinctions among Christians. If I am a Gentile, free and male, this does not make me any better or give me a higher ranking in Christ than a Jewish female slave. In Christ, we are one. This does not

mean we are the same person; it means that we are in the plan of God, and we have the same general purpose, to fulfill the plan of God for our lives. Furthermore, when God looks at us, we are both clothed in Christ, making us equal in that regard. God does not love one of us more than the other. What we do have is equal opportunity and equal privilege in God's plan, despite the great human differences which may exist between us.

Gal. 3:29 **And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.** (ESV)

If we have believed in Jesus Christ, then we are Abraham's true sons; his true seed. We are heirs to the kingdom. This does not mean that we have assumed all of the things found in the Law for the Jews; nor does this mean that we now replace the Jews. We are sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ, just as Abraham was made righteous through his faith in Y^ehowah Elohim.

Galatians 4 covered back with Isaac and Ishmael. in **Genesis 21** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

I realize that this has seemed like a long excursion outside of the book of Genesis. However, Abraham's name occurs in the New Testament 71 times; David's occurs 54 times and Moses' occurs 79 times. He is one of the greatest men of the Old Testament for many reasons; therefore, it behooves us to understand who Abraham is and how and why he is referenced so many times in the Christian era. He is just as much your father as he is the father of the Jewish race.

Abraham in Hebrews:

The book of Hebrews is quite the amazing book. This goes back and forth between the Old Testament and how so many things were fulfilled in Jesus Christ—prophecies and types.

Hebrews 2:9–18

Jesus brings many sons to glory

Heb. 2:9 **But we see Him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.**

Angels begin with much greater abilities than we have. They can apparently go from being here on earth to being in heaven in the Divine Courtroom in little or no time at all (compare Genesis 19 to Job 1–2). We do not have the ability to go back and forth like that.

Angels apparently can make themselves visible; they can make themselves material; they can inhabit both men and animals; and they can probably do a number of things not spoken of in Scripture. They are smarter than we are and stronger and more agile; and their bodies do not appear to wear out. God does put restrictions upon angels and the only angels we know who inhabit men or animals are fallen angels (also called demons).

So Jesus took on the nature of man—in fact, He was fully man, except without the sin nature. This was the purpose of the virgin birth—the sin nature is passed down by the man. Both the mother and father are carriers of the sin nature, but only the father passes it along to his children. Jesus, being born of a virgin, did not inherit the sin nature from a human father.

Jesus chose the place of a man, which is much lower than even the angels which He created.

Jesus took upon death for all men; he was willing to endure death for all men, so that we might live forever.

Heb. 2:10 **For it was fitting that He, for Whom and by Whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.**

Jesus brought all things into existence, and His suffering on the cross—paying for our sins—perfected our salvation and thereby, brings many sons to glory (Jesus brings many people to salvation which results in the glorification of Himself).

Heb. 2:11 **For He Who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why He is not ashamed to call them brothers,...**

We are all sanctified by Jesus Christ. Jesus is not ashamed to call us brothers, not because we are such wonderful people, but because we possess His righteousness by faith in Him. We have imputed righteousness.

The *one source* is God, of course. Although Jesus is a Member of the Godhead, His humanity is real, and that was ultimately created according to the plan of God the Father.

Heb. 2:12 **...saying, "I will tell of Your Name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing Your praise."** Psalm 22:22

The books which spend a great deal of time in the Old Testament include Matthew, Romans and Hebrews. In Psalm 22, the psalmist is a witness to the revealed Lord. Psalm 22 has several passages which speak of the cross quite graphically (although that was not the human author's original intent of this passage).

Heb. 2:13 **And again, "I will put my trust in Him." And again, "Behold, I and the children God has given Me."** Isaiah 8:17–18

Salvation is through trust in Jesus Christ. The children that God has given Him are believers. The writer of Hebrew is substantiating that faith in Christ results in eternal salvation; and he goes back to the Old Testament to show how.

Heb. 2:14–15 **Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, He himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death He might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.**

Jesus Christ was completely human, as are we all. He had to be human in order to die for our sins.

As men, we are subject to death and a lifelong slavery to the sin nature; and slave market of sin from which we cannot purchase ourselves or anyone else. The death of Jesus Christ on the cross is the coin of the realm which purchases us from the slave market of sin. See Genesis 14:19 for a thorough discussion of the slave market of sin. **Genesis 14** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Heb. 2:16 **For surely it is not angels that He helps, but He helps the offspring of Abraham.**

Although there are some theologians who suggest that there was a salvation issue presented to angels, I do not believe that to be the case. There is a great difference between angels and man. We are all related to one another as men. We all are carriers of the sin nature because we are born from Adam; we all stand condemned by God for our own sins and because Adam's original sin is imputed to us—in part, because Adam is our father.

Angels, on the other hand, appear to be discrete creations (billions may have been created all at once; but each angel is independently created). Because of this difference, Adam's sin affects all mankind; Satan's sin tempted other angels, but did not bring down all angelic creation. Only those who chose to follow him fell. This gives us two very separate groups of angels—those who disobeyed God and those who have never disobeyed God.

Here, Scripture tells us that it is not angels that Jesus helps. It is likely that the fallen angels simply chose against God. They each individually chose to disobey Him, and that damns them forever.

The offspring or the seed of Abraham are those who have believed in the Revealed God, Who is Christ Jesus in our dispensation. We are the ones that Jesus helps. We are the offspring of Abraham through faith in Abraham’s God.

In the context of Hebrews 2, Jesus originally comes as a help to the physical offspring of Abraham; that is, the Jews.

Heb. 2:17 **Therefore He had to be made like His brothers in every respect, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.**

Jesus had to be human in order to die for our sins. He had to be subject to all of the same weaknesses to which we are subject. He therefore needed to be a descendant of Adam, but without having the sin nature.

The High Priest was a human office, held by various Levites from Aaron’s line; and the High Priest represents man before God. In fact, once a year, the High Priest would go into the Holy of Holies (whether in the Tabernacle or in the Temple) and he would sprinkle blood on the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant (one of the articles of furniture in the Tabernacle which very few Jews had ever seen themselves). Both the Ark and the office of High Priest were representations of Jesus; they were *types*; Jesus was the *antitype*.

Types, by the way, are quite different from prophecies, even though there is obviously a prophetic nature in the concept of typology. Generally speaking, a *type* is not revealed, at his or its inception, as a type or as being prophetic. When the Ark of the Covenant was built, for instance; or when David brought the Ark into Jerusalem; at no time did anyone say, “And this Ark represents Messiah-to-come.” However, after the fact—after the antitype is fully understood—then we can look back and see how it is clearly the image of the type.

Let’s stay with this example:

The Ark of the Covenant is a Type of Jesus Christ	
The Ark of the Covenant	Jesus Christ
The ark was hidden in a compartment in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple.	All that God would do was not fully revealed to the Jews. In retrospect, it all makes sense—we understand exactly what God was teaching in the Old Testament. However, when these things occurred, the Jews did not fully understand what would happen.
The arks was constructed out of wood and overlain with gold.	The wood represents the humanity of Jesus Christ; the gold represents His deity.
On top of the Ark is the Mercy Seat, which the High Priest sprinkles with the blood of an animal sacrifice once a year.	The blood represents the spiritual death of Jesus Christ on the cross, when He took upon Himself all of our sins and paid for those sins. God will show mercy to those who believe in His Son.
On both sides of the Mercy Seat are two angels (one on each side), looking down upon the Mercy Seat.	Angels, fallen and elect, observe the crucifixion, understanding at once the justice, righteousness, mercy, love and grace of God.
In the Ark was the Ten Commandments; the bowl of manna, and Aaron’s rod that budded. To man, this represented the Law, which man was required to keep (but that he could not); the provision of God for the Jews; and the eventual resurrection.	The Ten Commandments represent the Law, which Jesus Christ kept. The manna represents the provision of God which He provided for God the Son when He was on earth. Aaron’s rod that buds represents our Lord’s resurrection after the crucifixion.

The Ark of the Covenant is a Type of Jesus Christ

The Ark of the Covenant

Jesus Christ

When the High Priest sprinkles the blood on the Mercy Seat, all of this takes place in the Holy of Holies, where it cannot be seen.

When Jesus died for our sins, God placed thick darkness over that area so that he could not be seen when dying for our sins.

My point is, the parallels are amazing; but to those in the Old Testament, they did not fully understand what the Ark of the Covenant was all about.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

The High Priest was a type of Jesus Christ; but, at no time, was that stated in the Old Testament. But here we are told that Jesus **became a merciful and faithful High Priest in the service of God**. And what was His purpose as our High Priest? **To make propitiation for the sins of the people**.

To be the Mediator between God and man, Jesus had to be equal to both man and God. This allows Him to go into the Holy of Holies (that is, into the Throne Room [Presence] of God).¹¹¹ As God, Jesus can appear before God the Father; and, as man, Jesus is able to represent us to God. No one else is qualified to represent us before God: not Abraham, not Moses, not Mohammed, not Confucius, and not Buddha (the last 3 of whom are probably in hell).

Heb. 2:18 **For because He Himself has suffered when tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.**

Hebrews 6 and 7 are also contained in **Genesis 14** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Hebrews 11:8–19

The Faith of Abraham and Sarah

Then comes from the chapter on faith, which features both Abraham and Sarah.

Heb. 11:8 **By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place where he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.**

Abraham was promised an inheritance, but God sent him out in such a way that Abraham did not know exactly where he was going. God directed him.

Heb. 11:9 **By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise.**

Abraham had faith in God, and for this reason, lived in this Land of Promise even though he owned none of it (except for the cave where he and Sarah would be buried).

Isaac and Jacob were heirs to this same promise. This is what separated the Jewish line of Abraham from the non-Jewish line—heirship. Those heir to God's promises (that is, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), were the true Jews. Others, like Esau, like Ishmael, both of whom are from the loins of Abraham, both of whom were believers, did not receive the promise, which they could then pass down to their own children. They were not heirs to the promise.

¹¹¹ The Holy of Holies is different from the Throne Room of God; but it is representative of the Throne Room of God, inasmuch as it takes the High Priest to the Presence of God.

Heb. 11:10 **For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.**

Ultimately, this city would be the New Jerusalem. In the time of Abraham, there was not even a Jerusalem (although that occupied area was called Salem).

Heb. 11:11 **By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered Him faithful Who had promised.**

Even Sarah, at some point, believed God, and that He was faithful in His promises. And God had promised her specifically that the son of promise would be born through her.

If you will recall, when Sarah heard that God promised Abraham a son through her specifically, she laughed within herself. Despite her laughter, she did consider God faithful, and that she could depend upon any promise which He made to Abraham and to her.

Heb. 11:12 **Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.**

The man who is as good as dead is Abraham. This does not mean that he was on his deathbed for 75 years. It means that he was sexually dead for several years (fewer than 13 years).

I have always liked this comparison between the stars of heaven and the grains of sand by the seashore and the descendants of Abraham. This does not mean that there would be a one-to-one correspondence, but that Abraham would have billions of those who would follow him in faith. God, Who made these promises, knew that the number of stars in the heavens was comparable to the grains of sand by the sea—and God did not require a telescope to know this, as He made all of the stars. The writer of that portion of Genesis knew this by revelation; not by science.

Heb. 11:13 **These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.**

Both Sarah and Abraham died. They are laid to rest in that cave. They remained foreigners in the land given them by God. The same is true of their children and their children's children.

They began as strangers and exiles in the land of promise; and believers in Jesus Christ experience the same thing—that we are of an earth not yet visible to us—except through God's promises.

Heb. 11:14 **For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.**

They were seeking a homeland, but they never owned any part of the land given them by God, except their gravesite. This homeland had been what God promised to them.

Heb. 11:15 **If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return.**

They could have returned at any time to the land of their fathers. But that was not the land given them by God.

Heb. 11:16 **But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared for them a city.**

God was providing them an eternal home.

There is another layer of meaning here, that we ought to be aware of. The earth on which we live, this is not our permanent home; therefore, we ought not to be caught up in the things of the earth (the philosophies, the propaganda and the blindness of human viewpoint thinking).

Heb. 11:17 **By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son,...**

This is Genesis 22, where the death of Jesus Christ is seen through the parallel of Abraham offering up his uniquely-born son, Isaac. Isaac was the fulfillment of many promises that God had made to Abraham; and yet Abraham was willing to offer up this uniquely-born son to God.

Isaac in his birth was a type of Christ ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)); Isaac, when offered up by Abraham, was a type of Christ ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Heb. 11:18 **...of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named."**

Isaac was offered up, even though God promised that the fulfillment of all the heavenly promises would come through Isaac. So Abraham had to keep in his head two principles which appeared to be in opposition to one another: (1) God's promises to him would be fulfilled in Isaac; and (2) God required that he offer up Isaac as a human sacrifice. These two seemingly contradictory things are also true of Jesus Christ.

Heb. 11:19 **He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.**

Abraham assumed that, if he offered up his son, then God would have to raise him up from the dead. In any case, Abraham did not lose his son.

This is the final installment of searching out where Abraham is mentioned in the New Testament.

Abraham in the General Epistles:

James and Peter both speak of Abraham in their writings.

James, the half-brother of the Lord, wrote the epistle of James, and it appears to be a very practical epistle, often misunderstood.

James 2:15 **If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food,...**

James is quite obviously a Jew, and usually, when speaking of a brother or a sister, this was a fellow Jew or a fellow believer. Even though there is a distinction, that is not really the point of what James is saying. At the beginning of this book, it is clear that James is addressing fellow Jewish believers.

James 2:16 **...and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?**

There are times when we, as believers, are put in a situation where there is someone before us who is in need. James is saying that we might want to do more for this person than pray for them.

I am not saying that you feed every homeless person that you see. In some cities, that would be on every street corner, but there are times to act and those times will sometimes cause you spend money—money which you may have earmarked for a different purpose. God will very likely put you face to face with a person or family in need and you have to determine the right thing to do.

In other cases, you might have a particular mission outreach which you support financially. It would appear that giving is a part of every believer's ministry, however, giving needs to be done not under pressure or because you have been moved emotionally, but as part of the Christian life. Obviously, it needs to be done in the power of the Holy Spirit, or you are wasting your time (this means, there is no unconfessed sin in your life).

As an aside, and generally speaking, you should not be supporting ministries which spend a significant amount of time asking for money. When I was a new believer, I recall listening to one radio show where, for nearly the full 30 min., the pastor (or whatever) spent the entire time asking for money, in a variety of ways, presumably so that he could come back tomorrow and do that same thing all over again. I was young in the faith at that time, but even I recognized that there was something wrong with this approach.

James 2:17 **So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.**

Dead here is the adjective nekros (νεκρός) [pronounced *nehk-ROSS*], which means, when used metaphorically, *spiritually dead; destitute of a life that recognizes and is devoted to God, because given up to trespasses and sins; inactive as respects doing right; destitute of force or power, inactive, inoperative.* Thayer definitions only. Strong's #3498. Here, the idea is *non-operational*.

One has to be careful here. This is not a call for new believers to start running around and doing things. However, a mature believer will have works, because a growing believer is beginning to understand his function as a believer. No believer who grows spiritually is going to be without works.

A new believer who runs around and does things is often going to do things which work at cross-purposes with the plan of God; or have no effect whatsoever on the plan of God.

James 2:18 **But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.**

The word *faith* can refer to believing; but it can also refer to *what* a person believes. In other words, this can be used as a synonym for *Bible doctrine*. It is the feminine noun pistis (πίστις) [pronounced *PIHS-tihs*]. From Zodhiates:¹¹² Metaphorically, it means *the object of Christian faith, meaning the doctrines received and believed; Christian doctrine; the gospel, all that Christianity stands for.* Strong's #4102.

The word translated *by* is actually ek (ἐκ) [pronounced *ehk*], which means *out of, out from, from, of.* Strong's #1537. His faith is made obvious *out from* his works.

James 2:18 **But someone will say, "You have faith [that which you have believed] and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my doctrine out from my works.**

Again, this is not applied to a believer who is a few months old in the faith. Your pastor needs to distinguish from time to time between those who are new in the faith and those who have grown spiritually and know the Word of God.

It should be noted that, in that particular era, right after the cross, during the great persecutions, and before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, many believers grew up quickly. Teaching sometimes came in very extended periods of time, because they knew not when they would have good teaching again (for instance, when Paul or Timothy or Titus were available to teach). Having sermons which might continue for hours was not out of the ordinary (Acts 20:9). This was particularly true close to Judah and among the Jews, some of whom were persecuted by fellow Jews and by the Romans. The dramatic events of that day made for spiritual growth which occurred more quickly. Suffering often accelerates spiritual growth, but that is a whole other topic. However, as another aside, given the state of our own country, this may become a very important point of doctrine to those of us who live in the United States. We have lived great lives of ease over the entirety of my lifetime, which is very much out-of-step with most of the rest of the world.

¹¹² Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study New Testament*; AMG International INC.; ©1992; p. 1164.

Suffering alone does not bring with it spiritual growth; suffering and the teaching and application of Bible doctrine.

James 2:19 **You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe--and shudder!**

It is accurate that God is one is essence. Jews new to the faith had a background to contend with. They had learned as Jews, the words of Moses: **Hear, O Israel: Y^ehowah is our God; Y^ehowah is one; and you shall love Y^ehowah your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.** (Deut. 6:4–5). Every Jew knew these words, and James is not denigrating them or saying that this is false. “You know this, and it is accurate.” is more the idea of what he says. And he adds, “But demons believe this as well.”

I have never seen any evidence that demons are offered salvation as we are. Any person, no matter who he is or what evil he has done, can believe in Jesus Christ and be saved. However, there does not appear to be the same open invitation to demons (fallen angels). They clearly know the reality of God and they know the reality of their future—being placed under judgment—and it makes the shudder.

James 2:20 **Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is non-operational?**

There appears to have been a problem with some Jewish believers; that they quietly believed in Jesus, but they did not publically admit to this. For a new believer, it is often best that they keep this to themselves and grow spiritually. One of the greatest embarrassments to Christianity is finding some celebrity who has just been converted, and then hauling him all over to speak to use his celebrity status. Such a person barely knows up from down. They might know how to speak before a group; and they might no how to tug on the heartstrings of some audience members, but they generally know little or nothing about the faith that they have professed, and provide zero spiritual impact when speaking to groups (unless they understand the gospel of Jesus Christ and are able to articulate it).

During a period of disaster, believers learning Bible doctrine often have their faith super-charged. They tend to learn more quickly, apply their faith more often, and therefore grow spiritually in a shorter period of time. In times of great stability, we are able to access and to enjoy the teaching of God’s Word more easily, as well as enjoy a life of relative ease (which is true of most people who live in the free world). However, because of the ease and stability of life, it is often easy to take our faith and stable periods of time for granted as well.

In the time of James, the Jewish world was in an upheaval. Jesus’ teachings were spreading throughout the Roman world; the Romans and the Jews were in difficult conflict, which would result in the destruction of Jerusalem and their Temple; and Christians were continually being persecuted, both by the Romans and by the Jews. This was the time during which James wrote this letter.

James 2:21 **Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar?**

The verb *justified* is aorist passive indicative of *dikaioō* (δικαίω) [pronounced *dik-ah-YOH-oh*], which means, 1) *to render righteous or such he ought to be*; 2) *to show, exhibit, evince, one to be righteous, such as he is and wishes himself to be considered*; 3) *to declare, pronounce, one to be just, righteous, or such as he ought to be.* Thayer definition only. Strong’s #1344. In that point of time, Abraham showed himself to be righteous. He had been saved many years earlier (Genesis 15:6); but he showed himself to be righteous or gave evidence of his righteousness by offering his son on the altar, thus giving us a marvelous type which matches the antitype of God offering His Son on the cross.

Abraham did not go from faith in Y^ehowah Elohim to offering Isaac on the altar in a few days or even a few weeks. Abraham clearly believed in the Revealed God before he left Ur of the Chaldeans. He therefore believed when he was less than 75 years old. However, he offered up Isaac to God somewhere between ages 107 and 112. Therefore, even the example that James uses does *not* indicate that Abraham was saved and then, a week or so later, he is doing great things for God. He had to grow spiritually in between.

The Jewish believers to whom James is writing (James 1:1) have to therefore grow spiritually and their works which come out from their faith will become manifest. It is a natural outgrowth of the believer entering into maturity.

This entire process is known as experiential sanctification. *Sanctification* means *to be set apart to be used by God*. Sanctification is a classification which involves position and relationship. There are 3 stages of sanctification. (1) salvation sanctification; (2) experiential sanctification; and (3) ultimate sanctification. Ideally, the believer enjoys sanctification in time, which means he grows spiritually and then expresses his sanctification through his works (James just has given the example of Abraham). In ultimate sanctification, we die and shed the sin nature, and stand righteous before God (we stand before God on the basis of what Jesus Christ did for us).

As we have previously studied, **Abraham's offering of Isaac** was one of the greatest applications of faith, as this **foreshadows the cross of Christ**. ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

James 2:22 **You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works;...**

The verb *was completed* is the aorist passive indicative of the verb *teleioō* (τελειόω) [pronounced *tehl-i-OH-oh*], which means, 1) *to make perfect, complete*; 1a) *to carry through completely, to accomplish, finish, bring to an end*; 2) *to complete (perfect)*; 2a) *add what is yet wanting in order to render a thing full*; 2b) *to be found perfect*; 3) *to bring to the end (goal) proposed*; 4) *to accomplish*; 4a) *bring to a close or fulfillment by event*; 4a1) *of the prophecies of the scriptures*. Thayer definition only. Strong's #5048. This describes experiential righteousness. The person expressed faith in Christ Jesus; grew spiritually; and then expressed his faith-doctrine by means of his works. A person with legitimate works had taken his faith to a point of fulfillment or completion.

James 2:23 **...and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness" —and he was called a friend of God.** (Genesis 15:6 Isaiah 41:8)

What has happened is faith-righteousness is parlayed into works-righteousness; or Abraham progressed from salvation sanctification to experiential sanctification. But notice that this progression, which James offers up as an example, took place over a period of at least 35 years. Therefore, what James is saying here is not directed toward the believer who is 3 weeks old in the faith.

James 2:24 **You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.**

There is a place for works righteousness in the plan of God. That is experiential righteousness; when we reach a certain point in our spiritual growth. Works are a natural outgrowth of spiritual advance.

Peter will speak about the relationship between husbands and wives and he will use Abraham and Sarah to illustrate.

1Peter 3:1–2 **Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct.**

Some women will be married to men who are not believers, or who are believers in reversionism (they had turned away from the faith). Often, such a woman is saved while being married, and Peter is telling them that they are still under the authority of their own husbands, even if they are unbelievers.

The wives, by their respectful conduct, can win over the souls (thinking) of their husbands. At some point, the wayward husband will recognize what a wonderful wife it is that he has. *Conduct* is the feminine singular noun

anastrophê (ἀναστροφή) [pronounced *an-as-trof-AY*], which means, *manner of life, conduct, behavior, deportment*. Thayer definitions only. Strong's #391.

The word *pure* is the adjective agnos (ἄγνός) [pronounced *hag-NOSS*], which means, *exciting reverence, venerable, sacred; pure; pure from carnality, chaste, modest; pure from every fault, immaculate; clean*. Thayer definitions only. Strong's #53.

Respect here is the masculine singular noun phobos (φόβος) [pronounced *FOHB-oss*], which means, *1) fear, dread, terror; 1a) that which strikes terror; 2) reverence for one's husband*. Thayer definitions only. Strong's #5401.

Through the woman's lifestyle and her respect shown toward her husband, this will sometimes win over the heart of a man who is either an unbeliever or who is turned away from the faith. There are an abundance of lousy wives out there; so a husband with a good wife may potentially come to recognize that part of her motivation is her faith in God.

1Peter 3:3 **Do not let your adorning be external--the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear--...**

This does not mean that a woman should not spend time doing her hair, picking out nice clothes or wearing jewelry. The passage deals with emphasis. The woman is not to emphasize the externals over the internals. Nothing in the Bible requires women to try to look ugly.

1Peter 3:4 **...but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.**

The woman is to put the emphasis upon adorning the "hidden person of the heart." That is, the woman is to concentrate on what is not seen, which would be the spiritual and soulish person. I have known some very beautiful women in my day. I can recall one woman who was, for most of her life, exceptionally attractive. However, her entire world revolved around her. Whatever she saw or heard, she related directly to herself. She did not appear to understand that people thought or made decisions independently of her. When she expressed this verbally, she could be very poor company, despite her physical beauty.

Peter is saying that the emphasis of the woman should be upon her human spirit, which means she needs to take in the Word of God. She needs to grow by means of the Word of God. This is described as having the **imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit**.

Here are some other translations:

AUV-NT	Do not let your [<i>adornment</i>] be [<i>the decorations</i>] of the physical body, such as elaborate hairdos, the wearing of golden [<i>jewelry</i>] and the wearing of [<i>stunning</i>] outfits. But [<i>the kind of adornment you should display is</i>] that of the inner person, with its enduring qualities of a meek and calm spirit, which are extremely valuable in God's eyes.
ERV	It is not fancy hair, gold jewelry, or fine clothes that should make you beautiful. No, your beauty should come from inside you—the beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit. That beauty will never disappear. It is worth very much to God.
God's Word	Wives must not let their beauty be something external. Beauty doesn't come from hairstyles, gold jewelry, or clothes. Rather, beauty is something internal that can't be destroyed. Beauty expresses itself in a gentle and quiet attitude which God considers precious.
JMNT	...whose world must not consist of the external adornment -- of braiding of [the] hair and placing-around of gold ornaments, or of dressing up (putting on garments) --but to the contrary, [it should consist of] the hidden human (concealed man; cloaked personality) of the heart, within the incorruptible and imperishable quality of the gentle (tender; mild; kind; meek) and still (at

rest; tranquil; quiet) spirit (or: attitude; disposition), which is (continually exists being) of great value (very costly) in God's sight.

Knox NT

Your beauty must lie, not in braided hair, not in gold trinkets, not in the dress you wear, but in the hidden features of your hearts, in a possession you can never lose, that of a calm and tranquil spirit; to God's eyes, beyond price.

1Peter 3:5 For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands,...

And Peter also throws in those words which are anathema to many women today: **...by submitting to their own husbands...** The woman's movement in the United States, since the 1970's in particular, rejects this axiom. As believers, we should expect this. In a society where most people are believers, Satan is going to be hard at work to turn others away from the faith in any way that he can. Therefore, I have seen several norms—submissive wives, obedient children, understanding that homosexual acts are wrong—be turned completely around in my lifetime. Along with this, we have seen the dissolution of marriage, the destruction of the public school system, and a bevy of homosexual lawsuits filling up our courts. This is what Satan does. He replaces truth with lies, which always results in societal ills. When society does the opposite of what the Bible mandates, society goes downhill.

1Peter 3:6 **...as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.**

Peter gives the example of Sarah and Abraham. Sarah refers to Abraham as her *lord* in Genesis 18:12 (**And Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After my being old, shall there be pleasure to me; my lord also being old?"**). She did not even need to state this out loud; she said this in her soul.

Even though I think it is a grand idea for women to periodically call their husbands *lord*, that certainly does allow for some measure of sarcasm, which we men might not fully appreciate. In any case, the key is the attitude of the woman's soul. The key is how the woman thinks about her man in her own soul.

We are children of Sarah and Abraham in the faith; and James warns here about living a life in fear. The believer, even when his nation is falling apart, ought not to be afraid.

1Peter 3:7 **Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.**

This passage, like many others, tells us that domestic tranquility is related to God hearing the prayers of a married couple.

This brings us to the end of our excursion into the New Testament.

Robert Dean's Summary Points of Abraham in the New Testament

- 1) The first thing we see emphasized in the New Testament is the Abrahamic covenant. This is the positional truth doctrine for Israel. This is their position in Abraham. The covenant gives them security. That covenant is never going to be breached or taken away.
- 2) The second thing we saw was that Abraham is the picture of justification at salvation, phase one. If we want to go to a situation in history, an individual's life, to teach justification salvation we go to Abraham. It is taught in Romans chapter four.
- 3) Third, he is the picture of justification at spiritual maturity. He vindicates his faith, his belief, his doctrine, what he has learned, that he hasn't been just a hearer but is an applier. James chapter two focuses on that.
- 4) Then, we learn about spiritual advance through the faith-rest drill. This is the whole point of Hebrews 11:8ff. Abraham goes from spiritual birth when he is justified by faith, starting as a spiritual infant, he goes

Robert Dean's Summary Points of Abraham in the New Testament

to that vindication stage of spiritual maturity incrementally by passing various tests-trusting God, or in some cases failing to trust God-in his progress to spiritual maturity.

- 5) He is a picture of election, that God chooses certain people for certain tasks in history; not for salvation, but He chooses Abraham in terms of what He is going to do through Abraham in history. It is not a choice related to salvation, it is a choice related to his role in history.
- 6) Missions: that all nations will be blessed through Abraham. He becomes the foundation for the doctrine of missions. In the Old Testament Israel wasn't commanded to send out missionaries, they were commanded to be obedient to God and then when people traveled to Israel they would see this tremendous culture and civilization that was built on a relationship with God, and then the travelers in theory would go back home and take the gospel. And that did happen at times, but most of the time Israel decided that they were going to compromise with the pagans around them and so they weren't a witness at all. In the New Testament the church goes out. There is not a nation per se, there is a people, the church, and they are sent to all the nations in the world.

From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen112.htm> accessed June 16, 2015.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

This concludes our digression into the New Testament where Abraham is spoken of.

We are still in the 25th chapter of Genesis. So far, we have studied Abraham's children by Keturah and Abraham's death (vv. 1–10). After which, we took an extended look of Abraham and Sarah in the New Testament. Now we return to complete Genesis 25 in a few lessons.

Logically, I would have ended the previous section with v. 10; noting that a different writer has taken over already.

Wenstrom's Division of Genesis

Genesis 25:7-11 records the death of Abraham and completes the sixth book in Genesis. The sixth book in Genesis is contained in 11:27-25:11 presenting the account of Terah's line and has three sections:

- (1) Introduction (Genesis 11:27b-32)
- (2) Main body (Genesis 12:1-22:19)
- (3) Transition to the next section of the book of Genesis and generation (22:20-25:11).

Therefore, Genesis 25:7-11 completes the third and final section of the sixth book, which prepares the reader for a shift from Abraham's leadership to Isaac's and from Sarah to Rebekah.

From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

And so he is after a death of Abraham and so blesses Elohim Isaac his son. And so dwells Isaac near Beerlahairoi [or, *Well of the Living One Who Sees Me*].

Genesis
25:11

And it is after the death of Abraham that Elohim blessed Isaac, Abraham's [lit., *his*] son. Isaac lived near Beerlahairoi [which means, *The Well of the Living One Who Sees Me*].

After the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac, Abraham's son. During this time period, Isaac was living near Beerlahairoi [which means, *The Well of the Living One Who Sees Me*].

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so he is after a death of Abraham and so blesses Elohim Isaac his son. And so dwells Isaac near Beerlahairoi [or, <i>Well of the Living One Who Sees Me</i>].
Targum of Onkelos	<u>And because Abraham had not designed to bless Ishmael, therefore he blessed not Izhak; for had he blessed Izhak and not Ishmael, it would have kept them in enmity.</u> But, after the death of Abraham, the Lord blessed Izhak; and Izhak dwelt near the well at which was <u>revealed the glory of the Living and Eternal One, who sees and is not seen.</u>
Latin Vulgate	And after his death, God blessed Isaac his son, who dwelt by the well named Of the living and seeing.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And it came to pass after the death of Abraham that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well of Khaya-khezan (The Well of The Living One who saw me).
Septuagint (Greek)	And it came to pass after Abraham was dead, that God blessed Isaac his son, and Isaac dwelt by the Well of the Vision.
Significant differences:	The targum as a lot of extra text. The Latin leaves out a few words in the first two phrases. The Septuagint, which translates the name of the well, leaves out <i>Living One</i> .

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English Easy-to-Read Version	Now after the death of Abraham, the blessing of God was with Isaac, his son. After Abraham died, God blessed Isaac. And Isaac continued to live at Beer Lahai Roi.
<i>God's Word</i> TM NIRV	After Abraham died, God blessed his son Isaac, who settled near Beer Lahai Roi. After Abraham died, God blessed his son Isaac. At that time Isaac lived near Beer Lahai Roi.
New Simplified Bible	After the death of Abraham, God blessed his son Isaac. Isaac lived by Beer-lahai-roi. (The Well of the Living One, My Beholder).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	God blessed Isaac after this, and Isaac moved to a place called "The Well of the Living One Who Sees Me."
New Berkeley Version	After Abraham's death, God's blessing was on his son Isaac, who lived at the well of La-hairai. Let me include two footnotes here, although the first is actually placed elsewhere: ¹ Where the Lord had shown Hagar and Ishmael a spring when they were thirsty. ² Mostly the region of the Israelites' journeying in the desert, therefore south of Jacob's, Esau's and Lot's descendants. The first footnote is not placed with this verse, although it appears to be the most apropos.
New Life Bible	After the death of Abraham, God brought good to his son Isaac. And Isaac lived at Beerlahairoi.
New Living Translation	After Abraham's death, God blessed his son Isaac, who settled near Beer-lahai-roi in the Negev.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And after AbraHam died, God blest his son IsaAc. Then IsaAc lived by the Well of the Vision.
International Standard V	After Abraham's death, God blessed his son Isaac, who continued to live near Beer-lahai-roi.
Translation for Translators	After Abraham died, God blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac moved to live near Beer-Lahai-Roi.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	After the death of Abraham, God had blessed his son Isaac. Isaac dwelled with Beer-lahai-roi (<i>The Living Well Saw Me</i>).
Ferar-Fenton Bible	After the death of Abraham GOD prospered Isaac his son, and he resided at the Well of Vision.
Lexham English Bible	And it happened [that] after the death of Abraham God blessed Isaac his son, and Isaac settled at Beer-Lahai-Roi.
Leupold	And it came to pass after the death of Abraham that God blessed Isaac his son, and Isaac took up his dwelling at Beer-lahai-roi,...
NIV – UK	After Abraham's death, God blessed his son Isaac, who then lived near Beer Lahai Roi.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	<i>After Abraham's death God blessed his son Isaac who lived near the well of Lahai-roi.</i>
The Heritage Bible	And it was after the death of Abraham that God knelt down with goodness to his son, Isaac, and Isaac dwelt by The Well of the Living One Seeing Me.
New Advent Bible	And after his death, God blessed Isaac his son, who dwelt by the well named Of the living and seeing.
New American Bible	After the death of Abraham, God blessed his son Isaac, who made his home near Beer-lahai-roi.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	After Avraham died, God blessed Yitz'chak his son, and Yitz'chak lived near Be'er-Lachai-Ro'i.
exeGesés companion Bible	And so be it, after the death of Abraham, Elohim blesses his son Yischaq; and Yischaq settles by Beer Lachay Roi.
Kaplan Translation	After Abraham died, God blessed Isaac, his son. Isaac lived in the vicinity of Beer LaChai Roi. See Genesis 16:14. Isaac later lived there (Genesis 25:11). Some say that he prayed there because this was where an angel had been seen (Ramban). Others maintain that he had gone to visit Hagar (Bereshith Rabbah 60; Rashi).
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And it came to pass after the mot Avraham, that Elohim blessed Yitzchak bno; and Yitzchak dwelt near Be'er Lachai Roi.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	After the death of Abraham, God blessed his son Isaac, and Isaac dwelt at Beer-lahai-roi [A well to the Living One Who sees me].
The Expanded Bible	After Abraham died, God blessed his son Isaac. Isaac was now living at Beer Lahai Roi [16:14].
Kretzmann's Commentary	And it came to pass after the death of Abraham that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahairoi. The welfare and prosperity of Abraham was continued in that of Isaac, who now, as once before, moved to the southern part of Canaan and made his headquarters at the well of Hagar, but retained his principal residence at Hebron, Genesis 35:27.
NET Bible®	After Abraham's death, God blessed [God blessed Isaac. The Hebrew verb "bless" in this passage must include all the gifts that God granted to Isaac. But fertility was not one of them, at least not for twenty years, because Rebekah was barren as well (see v. 21)] his son Isaac. Isaac lived near Beer Lahai Roi [The Hebrew name Beer

Lahai Roi (יֵאֵר יִחַל רֹאֵי, yĕ'er lakhay ro'i) means "The well of the Living One who sees me." See Gen 16:14.].

The Voice After Abraham's death, God blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac settled into his home at Beer-lahai-roi.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Context Group Version	After the death of Abraham, God esteemed Isaac his son. And Isaac dwelt by "Well of the Living One Who Sees".
English Standard Version	After the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac his son. And Isaac settled at Beer-lahai-roi.
LTHB	And it happened after the death of Abraham, God blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac lived by The Well of the Living One, My Beholder.
World English Bible	It happened after the death of Abraham, that God blessed Isaac, his son. Isaac lived by Beer Lahai Roi.
Young's Updated LT	And it comes to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blesses Isaac his son; and Isaac dwells by the Well of the Living One, my Beholder.

The gist of this verse: God blesses Isaac after Abraham's death; and Isaac lived by the Well of the Living One Who Sees.

Genesis 25:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Without a specific subject and object, the verb hâyâh often means <i>and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass</i> (with the wâw consecutive). It may be more idiomatically rendered <i>subsequently, afterwards, later on, in the course of time, after which</i> . Generally, the verb does not match the gender whatever nearby noun could be the subject (and, as often, there is no noun nearby which would fulfill the conditions of being a subject).			
'achar (אַחַר) [pronounced ah-KHAHR]	<i>after, following, behind; afterwards, after that</i>	preposition/adverb	Strong's #310 BDB #29
mâveth (מָוֶת) [pronounced MAW-veth]	<i>death, death [as opposed to life], death by violence, a state of death, a place of death</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4194 BDB #560
'Ab ^e râhâm (אַבְרָהָם) [pronounced ahb ^{ve} -raw-HAWM]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4

Translation: And it is after the death of Abraham...

One of the many ways that the passage of time is noted is simply by saying one event occurs after another. In the previous chapter, Abraham had bound his head servant to go find a wife for Isaac. In this chapter, which reads much differently in the Hebrew, there will be a number of things which will be discussed. The death of Abraham

has already been noted; and there are two things which are true of Isaac after the death of his father. Those things are named in the next two clauses.

Genesis 25:11b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bârak ^e (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced baw-RAHK ^e]	<i>invoke God, praise, celebrate, bless [God]; bless [men], invoke blessings; to bless [as God or man] and therefore cause to prosper or make happy; salute anyone [with a blessing]; curse</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Piel imperative	Strong's #1288 BDB #138
Wenstrom: "Bless" is the verb <i>barakh</i> (בָּרַךְ), which means, "to endue with power for success, prosperity, fecundity, longevity, etc." Therefore, the verb <i>barakh</i> indicates that Isaac was endued with power by the Lord for success, prosperity, fecundity (offspring in great numbers) and longevity." ¹¹³			
’Ēlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Yis ^e châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced yih ^e -KHAWK]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

Translation: ...that Elohim blessed Isaac, Abraham's [lit., his] son.

God blessed Isaac. This would mean that Isaac would have both material and spiritual blessings. We know very little about the personal life of Isaac. As mentioned before, he will talk about deaths, births and marriages, the typical milestones in the life of any person. He does not talk about much else. However, here he notes that God does bless him greatly.

God poured out his blessing on Abraham and continued that to Isaac. It will be clear that Isaac will not be the spiritual giant that Abraham was nor will Jacob appear to reach the standard set by Abraham. In fact, we will not find great spiritual maturity until we come to Joseph, the last son of Jacob.

On the other hand—and this is amazing—we will come to meet Jacob in Genesis 25:23 as one of the twins in Rebekah's womb, and he will remain alive until the end of Genesis (Genesis 50:1–14). Jacob receives more page-time in Genesis than any other person, although Abraham, his grandfather, and Joseph, his son, are by far greater men. Jacob was a slow learner, a manipulator and a duplicitous man, entrenched in human viewpoint that he

¹¹³ Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

returned to continually. However, he wrote much of the latter portion of Genesis, all of Israel is his progeny and every son that he had was a Jew. Furthermore, we sometimes learn more from someone who was a failure much of his life. Many of us can relate better to such a person.

Wenstrom: *Like Abraham, the Lord blessed Isaac in the sense that the Lord multiplied his descendants so that his posterity was great in number both, racially and spiritually. Also, like Abraham, the Lord blessed Isaac in the sense that the Lord multiplied his possessions and livestock and prospered him financially. Like Abraham, the Lord blessed anyone who was associated with Isaac.*¹¹⁴

Clarke: *The peculiar blessings and influences by which Abraham had been distinguished now rested upon Isaac; but how little do we hear in him.*¹¹⁵

Keil and Delitzsch: *The blessing of Isaac is traced to Elohim, not to Jehovah; because it referred neither exclusively nor pre-eminently to the gifts of grace connected with the promises of salvation, but quite generally to the inheritance of earthly possessions, which Isaac had received from his father.*¹¹⁶

Wenstrom: *Each of God's servants must do all that he can to ensure the perpetuation of God's work. No individual leader is bigger than God's plan for the work is bigger than any individual. Therefore, with the death of Abraham the torch has been passed to Isaac to carry on the work of God on planet earth.*¹¹⁷

Genesis 25:11c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâshab (יָשַׁב) [pronounced yaw-SHAH ^{BV}]	<i>to remain, to stay; to dwell, to live, to inhabit; to sit</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
Yis ^e châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced yihs ^e -KHAWK]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
‘îm (עִם) [pronounced ġeem]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
b ^e êr (בְּעֵר) [pronounced b ^e -AIR]	<i>well, pit; spring</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #875 BDB #91
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
chay (חַי) [pronounced KHAH-ee]	<i>life</i>	substantive; masculine singular noun	Strong's #2416 BDB #311

¹¹⁴ Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

¹¹⁵ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:11.

¹¹⁶ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:11.

¹¹⁷ Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

Genesis 25:11c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
rô'yîy (רֹאִי) [pronounced row-EE]	<i>looking, seeing, sight; vision, appearance; spectacle, example, gazing-stock</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7210 BDB #909
The word above is exactly how this is spelled here. The Hebrew Dictionary associates this final word with Strong's #7203 and BDB associates it with Strong's #7208. All of these are forms of the verb <i>to see</i> (Strong's #7200); Strong's #7210 is exactly the form found in this passage.			
These 3 words + the preposition are taken as one word, a proper noun:			
B ^e êr Lahey Rô'yîy (רֹאִי לַחַי הַיְהוּדָי) [pronounced b ^e -AIR-lah-HAY-row-EE]	<i>Well to Life of Seeing, Well of the Living One Who Sees Me; transliterated Beer Lachay Roi, Beer-lahai-roi</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #883 BDB #91

Translation: Isaac lived near Beerlahairoi [which means, *The Well of the Living One Who Sees Me*].

Interestingly enough, we are told that Isaac is living near Beerlahairoi. This particular well had become quite closely associated with the extended family of Abraham. We first became acquainted with this well when Hagar ran away from the household of Abraham because Sarah was abusing her. This is the place where Hagar and her very young son Ishmael had come to, thinking that they were going to die of privation. And then Hagar opens her eyes and sees this well, which is given this name. The water from this well gets Hagar and Ishmael over the first hurdle of living apart from Abraham. She got this far away, and God spoke to her and sent her back to Abraham's compound (Genesis 16:6–14).

Clarke: [*Beerlahairoi*] was near the wilderness of Beersheba and Paran, where Ishmael dwelt; so that they were not far from one another.¹¹⁸

Wenstrom: "*Beer-lahai-roi*" was the fountain by which the Lord rescued Hagar as recorded in Genesis 16:7, 14 and was located between Kadesh and Bered, about fifty miles southwest of Beersheba.¹¹⁹

When Isaac met Rebekah for the first time, he was living by this well (Genesis 24:61–67). Isaac is still living by this well at this time.

Isaac and Ishmael became reacquainted when Abraham died. As families do, Ishmael would have told Isaac about his children; and these are recorded here in Genesis 25.

Genesis 25:11 **And it is after the death of Abraham that Elohim blessed Isaac, Abraham's [lit., his] son. Isaac lived near Beerlahairoi** [which means, *The Well of the Living One Who Sees Me*]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:11 **After the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac, Abraham's son. During this time period, Isaac was living near Beerlahairoi** [which means, *The Well of the Living One Who Sees Me*]. (Kukis paraphrase)

V. 11 reads: **And it is after the death of Abraham that Elohim blessed Isaac, Abraham's [lit., his] son. Isaac lived near Beerlahairoi** [which means, *The Well of the Living One Who Sees Me*].

Barnes: *This verse is an appendix to the history of Abraham, stating that the blessing of God, which he had enjoyed until his death, now descended upon his son Isaac, who abode at Beer-lahai-roi. The*

¹¹⁸ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:11.

¹¹⁹ Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

general name “God” is here employed, because the blessing of God denotes the material and temporal prosperity which had attended Abraham, in comparison with other men of his day. Of the spiritual and eternal blessings connected with Yahweh, the proper name of the Author of being and blessing, we shall hear in due time.¹²⁰

Interestingly enough, even though it reads that *God blessed his son Isaac*, we will then study the children of Ishmael. I think that the technical term for this is *pulling the old switcheroo*. We have the list of Abraham’s children by Keturah; the death of Abraham; the blessing of Isaac, which we would expect to be followed by a listing of all Isaac’s children. But the author pulls the old switcheroo, and will then talk about all of Ishmael’s children.

vv. 7–11 read: *And these are the days of the years of the life of Abraham which [he] lived: 175 years. Abraham [lit., he] draws his last breath and he dies in a good old age. [He is both] elderly and satisfied [with his life]. Therefore, he is gathered to his people. Isaac and Ishmael, Abraham’s [lit., his] sons, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zophar the Hittite, which [is] facing [or, overlooking] Mamre—the [same] field that Abraham acquired from the Hittites. There, Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried. And it is after the death of Abraham that Elohim blessed Isaac, Abraham’s [lit., his] son. Isaac lived near Beerlahairoi [which means, The Well of the Living One Who Sees Me].*

Snider Summarizes the Life of Abraham

1. After devoting the longest section to this point in Genesis, to Abraham, Moses details the final events of his life.
2. The life of Abraham:
 - 1) born in Ur in 1950 B.C.
 - 2) Salvation and call in Ur at unspecified date.
 - 3) Marriage to Sarah at unspecified date in Ur.
 - 4) relocated to Canaan in 1875 B.C. at 75 years of age. c 1875 B.C.
 - 5) flunked major living grace test and moved to Egypt c1875
 - 6) relocated back in Canaan and separation from Lot. 1875-4 B.C.
 - 7) Delivered Lot and military victory. 1873-1866 B.C.
 - 8) Operation Hagar at age 85. 1865 B.C.
 - 9) Birth of Ishmael. 1864 B.C. at age 86
 - 10) MAJG at age 99, 1851 B.C.
 - 11) Failure with Abimelech. age 99. Gen. 20
 - 12) Birth of Isaac at age 100 1850 B.C.
 - 13) Test of prosperity in Gen. 22 age 120-125
 - 14) Death of Sarah age 137, c. 1813 B.C.
 - 15) Marriage of Isaac at age 140
 - 16) Birth of twins Jacob and Esau at age 160
 - 17) Dying grace age 175, 1775 B.C.
3. Abraham completed his course and exited this life under dying grace and maximum blessing of God.
4. His physical life ends as it had begun, with the breathing.
5. He breathed out his last breath, and the soul departed the body, producing a state of death.
6. He died completely satisfied with his life, and no regrets.
7. The Lord had promised him a peaceful death in Gen. 15:15.
8. It is evident that Abraham lived a long life for his time and the life span since the flood had decreased dramatically. flood c 2300 B.C.
9. The final phrase of vs 8 does not mean his dead physical body, but refers to his soul being gathered to the same place as the souls of his ancestors who were believers, as most of them were.
10. IT is evident that Abraham understood the concept of life after death, from the commentary on Gen. 22 as found in Heb. 11:17-19.
11. It is completely evident that Moses understood the concept, since he could not be referring to the

¹²⁰ Albert Barnes, *Barnes’ Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:11.

Snider Summarizes the Life of Abraham

- physical bodies of his ancestors, since he was not buried with them, only Sarah.
12. Abraham was taken to paradise, as seen in the passive of the word "gathered".
 13. He received an escort to Paradise, which later came to be known as Abraham's bosom, since he was the most notorious person there.
 14. There he remained with all other believers who had died before him and with those who died before the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST.
 15. At the time of the triumphal entry into Heaven, JC took all the souls of the believers in Paradise and escorted them personally into the third Heaven with Himself. Eph. 4:8-9
 16. There Abraham still resides, until the beginning of the Millennium when he will be resurrected and come out of the cave where his physical body was buried.
 17. He will inherit the land which he had been promised, and all other blessings of the covenant will be fully
 18. His SG3 was constantly before him and he believed it until the day of his death. Heb. 11:13
 19. Ishmael has returned for the burial of his father, and he and Isaac take care of the funeral.
 20. Abraham had sent all the other sons away, and none of them apparently returned for the funeral.
 21. He had made it plain where he was to be buried, and the men complied with his wishes.
 22. He was buried with Sarah his wife, who will accompany him out of the cave on the day of their
 23. vs 11 is somewhat of a transition verse into the next major person with whom Moses intends to deal.
 24. Before we get to Isaac, the minor matters concerning Ishmael will be presented in vs. 12-18.
 25. Isaac had inherited the vast bulk of his father's estate, and that would of course provide for him for many years.
 26. Abraham had provided not only physically for his son, but had left quite a spiritual heritage and footsteps for Isaac to follow in.
 27. Isaac, does not possess the same spiritual dynamics which his father possessed, and was by nature passive and reticent.
 28. This is seen to some degree in his attachment to his mother, and failure to fully recover and move on after some 3 years following her death.
 29. Abraham had even made his wedding plans for him.
 30. Nevertheless, Isaac came under God's blessing in his own right and eventually made the MAJG.
 31. Not nearly as much is recorded about Isaac, because although he did nothing exceptionally strange, neither did he make dramatic applications as his father had done.
 32. He continued to reside by the well where the Lord had rebuked Hagar for her self pity, demonstrating His
 33. This place held some sort of fascination for Isaac, who was passive so the doctrines of Sov. and Omniscience obviously appealed to him.
 34. Isaac to some extent wanted to be left to himself and not deal with certain issues in life, a flaw which would cause problems in his family.

From <http://makarios-online.org/notes/genesis/gen25.doc> accessed June 16, 2015.

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This chapter is not yet complete, but Barnes adds this set of observations:

An Addendum to the 7th Section by Albert Barnes

The section now completed contains the seventh of the documents commencing with the formula, "these are the generations." It begins in the eleventh chapter and ends in the twenty-fifth, and therefore contains a greater number of chapters and amount of matter than the whole of the preceding narrative. This is as it should be in a record of the ways of God with man. In the former sections, things anterior and external to man come out into the foreground; they lie at the basis of his being, his mental and moral birth. In the present section, things internal to man and flowing from him are brought into view. These are coincident with the growth of his spiritual nature. The latter are no less momentous than the former for the true and full development of his faculties and capacities.

An Addendum to the 7th Section by Albert Barnes

In the former sections the absolute being of God is assumed; the beginning of the heavens and the earth asserted. The reconstruction of skies and land and the creation of a new series of plants and animals are recorded. This new creation is completed by the creating of man in the image of God and after his likeness. The placing of man in a garden of fruit trees prepared for his sustenance and gratification; the primeval command, with its first lessons in language, physics, ethics, and theology; the second lesson in speaking when the animals are named; and the separation of man into the male and the female, are followed by the institutions of wedlock and the Sabbath, the fountain-heads of sociality with man and God, the foreshadows of the second and first tables of the law. The fall of man in the second lesson of ethics; the sentence of the Judge, containing in its very bosom the intimation of mercy; the act of fratricide, followed by the general corruption of the whole race; the notices of Sheth, of calling on the name of Yahweh begun at the birth of Enosh, of Henok who walked with God, and of Noah who found grace in his sight; the flood sweeping away the corruption of man while saving righteous Noah; and the confusion of tongues, defeating the ambition of man, while preparing for the replenishing of the earth and the liberties of men - these complete the chain of prominent facts that are to be seen standing in the background of man's history. These are all moments, potent elements in the memory of man, foundation-stones of his history and philosophy. They cannot be surmounted or ignored without absurdity or criminality.

In the section now completed the sacred writer descends from the general to the special, from the distant to the near, from the class to the individual. He dissects the soul of a man, and discloses to our view the whole process of the spiritual life from the newborn babe to the perfect man. Out of the womb of that restless selfish race, from whom nothing is willingly restrained which they have imagined to do, comes forth Abram, with all the lineaments of their moral image upon him. The Lord calls him to himself, his mercy, his blessing, and his service. He obeys the call. That is the moment of his new birth. The acceptance of the divine call is the tangible fact that evinces a new nature. Henceforth he is a disciple, having yet much to learn before he becomes a master, in the school of heaven. From this time forward the spiritual predominates in Abram; very little of the carnal appears.

Two sides of his mental character present themselves in alternate passages, which may be called the physical and the metaphysical, or the things of the body and the things of the soul. In the former only the carnal or old corrupt nature sometimes appears; in the latter, the new nature advances from stage to stage of spiritual growth unto perfection. His entrance into the land of promise is followed by his descent into Egypt, his generous forbearance in parting with Lot, his valorous conduct in rescuing him, and his dignified demeanor toward Melkizedec and the king of Sodom. The second stage of its spiritual development now presents itself to our view; on receiving the promise, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, thy exceeding great reward, he believes in the Lord, who counts it to him for righteousness, and enters into covenant with him. This is the first fruit of the new birth, and it is followed by the birth of Ishmael. On hearing the authoritative announcement, I am God Almighty; walk before me and be perfect, he performs the first act of that obedience which is the keystone of repentance, by receiving the sign of covenant, and proceeds to the high functions of holding communion and making intercession with God. These spiritual acts are followed by the destruction of the cities of the Jordan vale, with the preservation of Lot, the sojourning in Gerar, the birth of Isaac, and the league with Abimelek. The last great act of the spiritual life of Abraham is the surrender of his only son to the will of God, and this again is followed by the death and burial of Sarah, the marriage of Isaac, and the second marriage of Abraham.

It is manifest that every movement in the physical and ethical history of Abraham is fraught with instruction of the deepest interest for the heirs of immortality. The leading points in spiritual experience are here laid before us. The susceptibilities and activities of a soul born of the Spirit are unfolded to our view. These are lessons for eternity. Every descendant of Abraham, every collateral branch of his family, every contemporary eye or ear-witness, might have profited in the things of eternity by all this precious treasury of spiritual knowledge. Many of the Gentiles still had, and all might have had, a knowledge of the covenant with Noah, and a share in its promised blessings. This would not have precluded, but only promoted, the mission of Abraham to be the father of the seed in whom all the families of man should effectually be blessed. And in the meantime it would have caused to be circulated to the ends of the earth that new revelation of spiritual experience which was displayed in the life of Abraham for the perfecting of the saints.

Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:11.

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Ishmael's Sons

1Chronicles 1:29–31

Wenstrom: *Genesis 25:12-18 constitutes the seventh book in Genesis and presents to us the genealogy of Ishmael's descendants. The seventh book contained in Genesis 25:12-18 consists of three parts: (1) Ishmael's segmented genealogy presenting the twelve tribes (25:13-16) (2) Ishmael's obituary notice (25:17) (3) Settlements and destiny of Ishmael's tribes (25:18). The genealogy contained in Genesis 25:12-18 is a "segmented" genealogy displaying the relations between twelve kinship groups by tracing their lineage back to Ishmael. This broad segmented genealogy consists entirely of the twelve names of the first generation indicating a very powerful confederation of tribes, which is confirmed by the statement in Genesis 25:16 "and these are the names of the twelve tribal rulers."*¹²¹ I use the term *cluster genealogy*; Wenstrom uses the words *segmented genealogy*.

Ellicott: *These are the generations of Ishmael.-Following the usual rule of this book, Ishmael is not dismissed from the Divine presence without a short record of his history, after which he falls into the background, and the historian proceeds with his main subject, which is the preparation for the forming of that race and nation of whom, according to the flesh, Christ came. These brief notices, moreover, of personages not in the direct line of Christ's ancestry have their value in God's great purpose that the Jewish Messiah should be the Redeemer of the Gentiles also (Romans 10:12); and consequently from the first their history was not alien from God's counsels. (Romans 10:13-15).*¹²²

Matthew Henry: *Note, The blessing of Abraham did not die with him, but survived to all the children of the promise. But he presently digresses from the story of Isaac, to give a short account of Ishmael, forasmuch as he also was a son of Abraham, and God had made some promises concerning him, which it was requisite we should know the accomplishment of...Concerning his children. He had twelve sons, twelve princes they are called (Genesis 25:16), heads of families, which in process of time became nations, distinct tribes, numerous and very considerable. They peopled a very large continent, that lay between Egypt and Assyria, called Arabia. The names of his twelve sons are recorded.*¹²³

When Sarah first caused Hagar, the handmaid pregnant with Ishmael, to flee, God spoke to her. **And the angel of the LORD said to her, "Behold, you are pregnant and shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, because the LORD has listened to your affliction. He shall be a wild donkey of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen."** (Genesis 16:11–12; ESV) So, even though it is rare to feature the genealogy of a secondary wife (or of a mistress), this is included in Scripture because it shows that God fulfills His promises to Abraham.

Later, after Hagar returned to Abraham and Sarah, God differentiated between Ishmael and Isaac, who would be born to Abraham: **God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish My covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and multiply him greatly. He shall father twelve**

¹²¹ Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

¹²² From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/ebc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 29, 2015.

¹²³ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:11–18.

princes, and I will make him into a great nation. But I will establish My covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year." (Gen 17:19–20; ESV; capitalized)

Why is there a genealogy for Ishmael?

Now, how exactly do we explain Genesis 25:12–18 and 1Chronicles 1:29–31 (which also features the genealogy of Ishmael)? Why are these passages in the Word of God? We might understand how Abraham or Isaac, from a human point of view, might want to include this sort of information. Have you ever kept in touch with a part of your family in another state, and you know 3 or 4 generations of them, but, at some point, it is clear that you and no one in your direct line will know any more than that of their family, despite being related? So, from a human perspective, it is easy to understand why either Abraham or Isaac wanted to include these names and these generations of Ishmael in their records. But what about God the Holy Spirit, the other Author of Scripture? There is always a human and a divine reason for this information being here.

Let me suggest a few things that might be different than you have read elsewhere, and then answer the question. We tend to shortcut our explanation of why Isaac is in the line of promise and Ishmael is not. One is the line of faith and the other is the line of unbelief. Yeah, well, sort of yes, but sort of no.

Let me suggest to you that both Isaac and Ishmael both believed in the Revealed God. Let me further suggest that all of the people named below in vv. 12–18 are believers. These are not just a list of nobodies that the Holy Spirit grudgingly recorded, because the human authors write these genealogical tables down; but these are men to be celebrated, men whom we will meet in person sometime in eternity. They are not just a batch of random names; they are believers who continued in the Ishmael line. Ishmael believed in the Revealed God and some of his sons also believed and some of their sons also believed.

God knew where both lines were going. For the most part, the line of Abraham and Isaac would be filled with believers. Furthermore, that line would lead to Moses, to David, to Solomon, to Isaiah, to Jeremiah and to Jesus, our Savior. Therefore, their line is the line of promise; their line is the line of the Hebrew people. Does this mean that every Arab is cursed? Does this mean that no Arab will believe in Jesus Christ? Of course not! Many do. Not necessarily an overwhelming number, but they do. This genealogy recognizes and blesses those early on who believed; and it also offers hope for the Arab today. And, in case you were unaware, the Arab are a Semitic group just like the Jews, but they are cousins to the Jews—originally first cousins, then second cousins and now distant cousins. All Arabs are ultimately descended from Abraham. Some are direct descendants from Abraham and Keturah; others are the descendants of Ishmael; and others are the seed of Esau.

What happens to the Arab who recognizes that the religion of his people is bankrupt? It is a medieval system of religion that does very little beyond inspiring wars and personal striving. There is a solution for their corrupt faith. That is the solution taken by Ishmael, Nebaioth, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. For them, that solution was to believe in the Revealed God; and today, for any Arab reading this, the solution is to believe in Jesus Christ. Because, long, long before there was Mohammed, there was the Revealed God; Who eventually was revealed as Jesus Christ in the fullness of time. That is Who Ishmael and his twelve sons believed in. The earliest and greatest tradition of the Arab peoples was to believe in the God revealed in the Scriptures, which God is Jesus.

And these [are] the generations [genealogies, families, history, origin] of Ishmael, a son of Abraham, whom bore Hagar, the Egyptian, a maid of Sarah, to Abraham.

Genesis
25:12

These [are] the generations [genealogies, families; history, origin] of Ishmael, a son of Abraham, whom Hagar, the Egyptian woman, Sarah's maidservant, bore to Abraham.

What follows is the family line for Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar bore to Abraham (Hagar was the Egyptian girl who was Sarah's personal servant).

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And these [are] the generations [genealogies, families, history, origin] of Ishmael, a son of Abraham, whom bore Hagar, the Egyptian, a maid of Sarah, to Abraham.
Targum of Onkelos	And these are the generations of Ishmael bar Abraham, whom Hagar the Mizreitha, the handmaid of Sarah, bare unto Abraham.
Latin Vulgate	These are the generations of Ismael the son of Abraham, whom Agar the Egyptian, Sara's servant, bore unto him.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abrahams son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarahs maid, bore to Abraham.
Septuagint (Greek)	And these are the generations of Ishmael the son of Abraham, whom Hagar the Egyptian, the handmaid of Sarah, bore to Abraham.
Significant differences:	None.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Now these are the generations of Ishmael, the son of Abraham, whose mother was Hagar the Egyptian, the servant of Sarah:...
Easy English	Ishmael's *descendants, 25:12-18 These are Ishmael's *descendants. Hagar, Sarah's *Egyptian maid, had given birth to Ishmael for Abraham.
Easy-to-Read Version	This is the list of Ishmael's family. Ishmael was Abraham and Hagar's son. (Hagar was Sarah's Egyptian maid.)
Good News Bible (TEV)	Ishmael, whom Hagar, the Egyptian slave of Sarah, bore to Abraham,...
NIRV	The Sons of Ishmael Here is the story of Abraham's son Ishmael. Hagar had Ishmael by Abraham. She was Sarah's servant from Egypt.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V. New Century Version	Ishmael was the son of Abraham and Hagar, the slave woman of Sarah. This is the family history of Ishmael, Abraham's son. (Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian servant, was Ishmael's mother.)
New Life Bible	These are the children and their children's children of Abraham's son Ishmael, who was born to Abraham and Hagar, who was Sarah's woman servant.
New Living Translation	Ishmael's Descendants This is the account of the family of Ishmael, the son of Abraham through Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian servant.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	These are the generations of Ishmael the son of Abraham , who Hagar the Egyptian handmaid of Sarah bore to Abraham, ¹³ and these are the names of Ishmael's sons by each of their generations:... A portion of v. 13 was included for context.
International Standard V	A Summary of Ishmael's Life Now this is what happened to Ishmael, whom Sarah's Egyptian servant Hagar bore for Abraham.
Today's NIV	Ishmael's Sons This is the account of the family line of Abraham's son Ishmael, whom Sarah's servant, Hagar the Egyptian, bore to Abraham.
Translation for Translators	The descendants of Ishmael

◀These are/I will now give a list of▶ the descendants of Abraham's son, Ishmael, whom Sarah's female slave, Hagar from Egypt, gave birth to.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The progeny of Abraham's son, Ishmael, that Hagar the Egyptian, handmaid of Sarah, begot to Abraham:...
Ferar-Fenton Bible	<i>The History of Ishmael</i> Now these are the sons of Ishmael, son of Abraham, whom Hagar, the Egyptian, the slave of Sarah, had by Abraham.
HCSB	These are the family records of Abraham's son Ishmael, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's slave, bore to Abraham.
Lexham English Bible	Now these [are] the generations [Or, "family records"] of Ishmael, the son of Abraham, that Hagar the Egyptian, the maidservant of Sarah, bore to Abraham.
Leupold	This is the history of Ishmael, the son of Abraham whom Hagar the Egyptian slave girl of Sarah bore to Abraham.
NIV – UK	Ishmael's sons This is the account of the family line of Abraham's son Ishmael, whom Sarah's slave, Hagar the Egyptian, bore to Abraham.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	<i>These are the descendants of Ishmael, the son of Abraham and Hagar, the Egyptian.</i>
New Advent Bible	These are the generations of Ismael the son of Abraham, whom Agar the Egyptian, Sara's servant, bore unto him.
New American Bible (R.E.)	<i>Descendants of Ishmael.</i> These are the descendants of Abraham's son Ishmael, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's slave, bore to Abraham. Like the conclusion of the Jacob story (chap. 36), where the numerous descendants of the rejected Esau are listed, the descendants of the rejected Ishmael conclude the story.
New RSV	These are the descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's slave-girl, bore to Abraham.
Revised English Bible	This is the table of the descendants of Abraham's son Ishmael, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's slave-girl, bore to him.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Here is the genealogy of Yishma'el, Avraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian woman bore to Avraham.
exeGesés companion Bible	<u>GENEALOGY OF YISHMA EL</u> Now these are the generations of Yishma El the son of Abraham, whom Hagar the Misrayim the maid of Sarah birthed to Abraham:.
Kaplan Translation	<i>Ishmael</i> These are the chronicles of Ishmael son of Abraham, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's slave, bore to Abraham:...
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Now these are the toldot Yishmael ben Avraham, whom Hagar the Egyptian, shifchat Sarah, bore unto Avraham:...
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And this is the genealogy of Yishma'ēl, Abraham's son, whom Haḡar the Mitsrite, Sarah's female servant, bore to Abraham.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

- The Amplified Bible* Now this is the history of the descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bore to Abraham.
- The Expanded Bible This is the family history [These are the generations; 2:4] of Ishmael, Abraham's son. (Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian servant, was Ishmael's mother [bore him to Abraham].)
- Kretzmann's Commentary Verses 12-18
The Generations of Ishmael
Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar, the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham. We have here the final account of Ishmael and a short summary of his family's history.
- NET Bible® *The Sons of Ishmael*
This is the account of Abraham's son Ishmael [This is the account of Ishmael. The Book of Genesis tends to tidy up the family records at every turning point. Here, before proceeding with the story of Isaac's family, the narrative traces Ishmael's family line. Later, before discussing Jacob's family, the narrative traces Esau's family line (see Gen 36).], whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's servant, bore to Abraham.
- The Voice This is how the lineage of *the two brothers progressed*. Ishmael, Abraham's son born to Hagar the Egyptian (Sarah's slave girl), fathered sons in this order: Nebaioth (his firstborn), Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. Vv. 13–15 are included for context.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

- Concordant Literal Version And these are the genealogical annals of Ishmael, son of Abraham, whom Hagar, the Egyptian, Sarah's maid, bore for Abraham.
- Darby Translation And these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's bondwoman, bore to Abraham.
- LTHB And these are the generations of Ishmael, the son of Abraham, whom Hagar the Egyptian, the slave-girl of Sarah, bore to Abraham.
- NASB **Descendants of Ishmael**
Now these are *the records of* the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's maid, bore to Abraham;.
- New King James Version **The Families of Ishmael and Isaac**
Now this is the genealogy of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's maidservant, bore to Abraham.
- World English Bible Now this is the history of the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bore to Abraham.
- Young's Updated LT And these are births of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, has borne to Abraham.

The gist of this verse: This verse introduces a list of the sons of Ishmael, Abraham's son; Isaac's half-brother.

Genesis 25:12a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced <i>ALE-leh</i>]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective	Strong's #428 BDB #41

Genesis 25:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
tôwl ^e dôth (תּוֹלְדוֹת) [pronounced <i>tohl^e-DOTH</i>]	<i>generations, results, proceedings, genealogies, history, course of history; origin; families; races</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #8435 BDB #410
Yish ^e mâ'ê'l (יִשְׁמָעֵאל) [pronounced <i>yish-maw-GALE</i>]	<i>whom God hears; God is hearing and is transliterated Ishmael</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3458 BDB #1035

Translation: These [are] the generations [genealogies, families; history, origin] of Ishmael,...

Recall that Isaac is a man concerned with deaths, births and marriages. With the death of Abraham, he had a chance to catch up with his half-brother Ishmael. Whatever was past is apparently left there, and Isaac, no doubt, inquired about Ishmael's family.

The Hebrew word tôwl^edôth (תּוֹלְדוֹת) [pronounced *tohl^e-DOTH*] is found 13 times in the book of Genesis; and 11 times in a manner similar to this passage. This word means *generations, results, proceedings, genealogies, history, course of history; origin; families; races*. Strong's #8435 BDB #410. It is not completely clear to me whether this indicates a new author or not, however.

Gill: *Or the genealogy of his posterity; and which is given to show that the Lord was not unmindful of his promise made to Abraham, concerning the multiplication of his seed, Genesis 16:10.*¹²⁴

Wenstrom: *The names of the twelve princes descending from Ishmael are applied not only to tribal divisions but also to geographical localities. These twelve sons of Ishmael and were grandsons of Abraham formed Arab nation in fulfillment of the Lord's promise to Abraham in Genesis 21:13 and populated the Arabian Peninsula.*¹²⁵

Genesis 25:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
'Ab ^e râhâm (אֲבִירָאֵם) [pronounced <i>ahb^{ve}-raw-HAWM</i>]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i>]	<i>to give birth, to bear, to be born, to bear, to bring forth, to beget</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
Hâgâr (חַגָּר) [pronounced <i>haw-GAWR</i>]	<i>flight, fugitive; transliterated Hagar</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #1904 BDB #212

¹²⁴ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:12.

¹²⁵ Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

Translation: ...a son of Abraham, whom Hagar,...

It is Ishmael who is the son of Abraham and Hagar. Hagar will be described in the next clause. For literary reasons, I have placed the verb found here in the final clause.

Except for the change of focus, this list of the sons of Ishmael is a natural progression. Isaac and Ishmael are brought together after the death of their father, Abraham. Therefore, it would be expected that they would have discussed their families, and this is why Isaac would be aware of Ishmael's family and be able to record it here.

Let's put a timeline to this. Isaac was born when Abraham was 100, and Ishmael was 13 years older than him. Abraham slept with his fathers (died) at age 175, so Isaac is now 75 years old and Ishmael is 88 years old. What we would expect is for Ishmael to recount, at this point in time, 3–4 generations. We have already seen this in [chart form](#).

Ishmael had to grow up fast. When he and his mother were dying of thirst, his mother saw the well (God pointed it out to her) and took care of her young son. However, soon thereafter, Ishmael learned to take care of his mother. My point in this is, Ishmael grew up quickly—he had to be a man at the age of 14 or 15; so he may have taken a wife early—say, age 17 or 18, or even in his 20's—as opposed to Isaac, who married when he was 40 years old. All of this would be in agreement with the text of Scripture.

Over this period of time, Ishmael will have had 12 sons; and their names will be recorded in this section. At this point in time, they would likely have all have been already born; and they are probably all young and middle age adults by this time.

Interestingly enough, even though some of their sons were probably already born to them, Isaac lists only Ishmael's sons (I am assuming that Isaac *wrote* this portion of Genesis based upon reuniting with Ishmael at Abraham's funeral).

Actually, I don't believe that anyone actually *wrote* the book of Genesis until perhaps the time of Moses. I believe that man had a tremendous mental capacity at this time, and it would have been easy for a parent to teach his son or daughter the history of man and God by teaching them to memorize the book of Genesis, including the genealogies. As each new generation arose, new chapters would be added, continuing the history of man. The new chapters follow logically and reflect the sensibilities of the author who recorded it (i.e., the one who taught it to his son). So Isaac or Rebekah would have taught Job and the first 23 or 24 chapters of Genesis to Jacob; and then they would add to this what they believed needed to be known; and Jacob carried all of that in his brain for the next generation.

As you may recall, I postulated that Melchizedek possibly *handed off* the first 10 or 11 chapters of Genesis to Abraham; and that Abraham continued the tradition of teaching these chapters and his particular genealogy to his son Isaac, who would do that same. Or, perhaps, when Melchizedek and Abraham compared notes, they found that they had the same understanding of teaching of the history of God and man.

Isaac is a man of milestones. He will primarily talk about births, deaths and marriages. Sometimes he would talk about places he has lived. A list of sons of his half-brother is exactly the sort of thing that Isaac would find out about and record.

Now, you may ask, *what about Genesis 24, which was this very detailed and repetitive story of how Abraham's servant went to Abraham's relatives and brought Rebekah back to Isaac?* Exactly my point. Who were the main characters in this story? Abraham's servant and Rebekah. Who would have recalled all of the details? Abraham's servant would know all of this; and Rebekah would have known some of it. As mentioned before, it reads like a bedtime story, and is likely what Rebekah or her personal maidservant "read" this story (an actual historical event) to Jacob and Esau when they were infants (they have not yet been born in our narrative, but that will occur in this chapter).

Genesis 25:12c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Mits ^e rîy (מִצְרַיִם) [pronounced mits ^e -REE]	<i>Egyptian, of Egypt; a Mitsrite, or inhabitant of Mitsrajim</i>	gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #4713 BDB #596
shiph ^e châh (שִׁפְחָה) [pronounced shif-KHAW]	<i>maid, maid-servant, household servant, handmaid, female slave</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #8198 BDB #1046
Sârâh (סָרָה) [pronounced saw-RAW]	<i>princess, noble woman; transliterated Sarah</i>	proper noun; feminine singular	Strong's #8283 BDB #979
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'Ab ^e râhâm (אֲבִרָהָם) [pronounced ahb ^{ve} -raw-HAWM]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4

Translation: ...the Egyptian woman, Sarah's maidservant, bore to Abraham.

Early on, Abraham and Sarah left the land of promise to go to Egypt during an economic depression, and probably returned from there with Hagar, who became Sarah's personal servant. At some point, when Sarah had not conceived, she suggested to Abraham that he sire a child through Hagar. This was Ishmael. This was a bad idea and put a strain on the relationship of Abraham and Sarah, and certainly upon the relationship between Sarah and her maid.

Genesis 25:12 **These [are] the generations [genealogies, families; history, origin] of Ishmael, a son of Abraham, whom Hagar, the Egyptian woman, Sarah's maidservant, bore to Abraham.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:12 **What follows is the family line for Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar bore to Abraham (Hagar was the Egyptian girl who was Sarah's personal servant).** (Kukis paraphrase)

We are reminded just who Hagar is. We would expect Isaac to do this. Even though we are well-acquainted with Hagar, Isaac was not. When he was around age 3 or so, Ishmael and his mother Hagar, were sent away from Abraham's compound. So, Isaac's memory of Hagar would have been sketchy at best. Therefore, he is careful to identify who she is. She was an Egyptian woman, she was the maidservant of Sarah, and she bore Ishmael to Abraham. Therefore, this would make Ishmael Isaac's half-brother. We would expect Isaac to record this information, which is possibly the first time he is actually hearing about all of this (again, we do not know how much he recalls from his infancy).

Furthermore, despite his older half-brother making fun of him around the time that he was weaned, Isaac would have little or no memory of Ishmael. However, both men would have tremendously fond memories of their father Abraham.

In other words, Isaac probably recorded this chapter of Genesis (mentally recorded it), having observed his father's new family, his father's funeral, and having been told by Ishmael his own adult children. For the few chapters which are reasonably attributable to Isaac (Genesis 25–26), only the most basic information is recorded. In Genesis 27, there will be internal evidence pointing to Jacob as being the author (Jacob will author Genesis 27–35). It is not clear who writes Genesis 36, 37 and 38; but Joseph takes up recording history at Genesis 39.

God made certain promises to Abraham; but when Sarah said, "This maid has got to go;" and Isaac had been born, God told Abraham, "It is okay, you can cut them loose." And Abraham sadly had Hagar and her 13-year-old son leave Abraham's compound. God promised to look over them, which we found when God let them know

where a well was, when Ishmael was almost ready to die of thirst; and now, by a list of Ishmael's sons, it will be clear that God has watched over him for a long period of time.

This tells us about God. God is not a single person, confined to one place at one time. God watched over Isaac and Jacob; but He also watched over Ishmael, who lived outside of the Land of Promise. God did all of this at one time, indicating that God is both a personal God and omniscient. God is also truthful; He keeps His Word. I have done a study of God's essence, drawing from the Pentateuch and from the book of Job, and God's essence is clearly presented in those books. I would not be surprised if God's essence is clearly revealed in the book of Genesis by itself. See **Essence of God in the Pentateuch** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Clarke: *The object of the inspired writer seems to be to show how the promises of God were fulfilled to both the branches of Abraham's family. Isaac has been already referred to; God blessed him according to the promise. He had also promised to multiply Ishmael, and an account of his generation is introduced to show how exactly the promise had also been fulfilled to him.*¹²⁶

Keil and Delitzsch: *[This passage shows] that the promises of God, which had been made to Ishmael (Genesis 16:10 and Genesis 17:20), were fulfilled, a short account is given of his descendants; and according to the settled plan of Genesis, this account precedes the history of Isaac. This is evidently the intention of the list which follows of the twelve sons of Ishmael, who are given as princes of the tribes which sprang from them.*¹²⁷

Barnes: *According to custom, before the history of the principal line is taken up, that of the collateral branch is briefly given. Thus, Cain's history is closed before Sheth's is commenced; Japheth and Ham are before Shem; Haran and Nahor before Abram. And so the sons of Keturah are first dismissed from the pages of history, and then Ishmael.*¹²⁸

Wenstrom: *The twelve tribes descending from Ishmael correspond in number to the twelve tribes of Nahor (see Genesis 22:20-24), of Edom (see Genesis 36:10-14) and of Israel (See Genesis 35:23-26).*¹²⁹

And these [are] names of sons of Ishmael in their names to their generations: firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth and Kedar and Adbeel and Mibsam, and Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, Hadad, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

Genesis 25:13-15

These [are] the names of the sons of Ishmael by their names in order of their births [lit., by their names for their generations]: Nebaioth (the firstborn of Ishmael), Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad [or, Cheder], Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kederman.

This is a list of the sons of Ishmael, in order by their birth: Nebaioth (Ishmael's firstborn), Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kederman.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And these [are] names of sons of Ishmael in their names to their generations: firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth and Kedar and Adbeel and Mibsam, and Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, Hadad, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

¹²⁶ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:12.

¹²⁷ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:12.

¹²⁸ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:12-18.

¹²⁹ Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

Targum of Onkelos	And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael by their names, according to their generations. The firstborn of Ishmael, Neboi, and Arab, and Abdeel, and Mibsham,--Hearing, Silence, Patience, and Sharpness: and Tema, Yetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.
Latin Vulgate	And these are the names of his children according to their calling and generations. The firstborn of Ismael was Nabajoth, then Cedar, and Adbeel, and Mabsam, And Masma, and Duma, and Massa, Hadar, and Thema, and Jethur, and Naphis, and Cedma.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the first-born of Ishmael, Nebioth, and Kedar, Arbal, and Mibsam, Mishma, Romah, Massa, Hadar, Tema, Nator, Naphish, and Kedem.
Septuagint (Greek)	And these are the names of the sons of Ismael, according to the names of their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael was Nabajoth, then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.
Significant differences:	The targum appears to have both transliterations and translations.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English	These are the names of Ishmael's sons. The names are in order of the sons' birth. Nebaioth was Ishmael's oldest son. Then there came Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedema.
Easy-to-Read Version	These are the names of Ishmael's sons: The first son was Nebaioth, then Kedar was born, then Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Ishmael, whom Hagar, the Egyptian slave of Sarah, bore to Abraham, had the following sons, listed in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. V. 12 was included for context.
NIRV	Here are the names of the sons of Ishmael. They are listed in the order they were born. Nebaioth was Ishmael's oldest son. Then came Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	¹³ These are the names of Ishmael's sons, by their names and according to their birth order: Nebaioth, Ishmael's oldest son; Kedar; Adbeel; Mibsam; ¹⁴ Mishma; Dumah; Massa; ¹⁵ Hadad; Tema; Jetur; Naphish; and Kedemah.
Contemporary English V.	Ishmael had twelve sons, in this order: Nebaioth, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.
New Living Translation	Here is a list, by their names and clans, of Ishmael's descendants: The oldest was Nebaioth, followed by Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	¹³ and these are the names of Ishmael's sons by each of their generations: The firstborn of Ishmael was NabaiOth, then Kedar, NabDeEl, MasSam, ¹⁴ MasMa, Duma, MasSe, ¹⁵ ChodDan, ThaEman, Jetur, Naphes, and Kedma.
International Standard V	Here's a list of the names of Ishmael's sons, recorded by their names and descendants: Nebaioth was the firstborn, followed by Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

Translation for Translators These are their names, in the order in which they were born: Ishmael's oldest son was named Nebaioth. After him were born Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear These *are* the names of the sons of Ishmael, and the names of their progeny from the firstborn Ishmael: Nebajoth, North-Arabia, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah (*oasis*), Mesha, Hadar, Teima (*oasis*), Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

Ferar-Fenton Bible These are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by the names of their families. The eldest of Ishmael was Nebioth, and Kedar, and Abdal, and Mibsam, and Mishma, and Dumah, and Masa, Khader, and Thema, Zetur, Nafish, and Kadmah.

Lexham English Bible And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names according to their family records. The firstborn of Ishmael [was] Nebaioth, then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

Leupold These are the names of the sons of Ishmael named according to their generations: the first-born of Ishmael Nebaioth; and Kedar and Abdeel and Mibsam, and Mishma and Dumah and Massa; Hadad and Temah, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar, the Egyptian, Sarah's maid, bore to Abraham, 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, And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah; These were the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their enclosed villages, and by their walled fortresses, twelve rulers according to their communities. Vv. 12 & 16 are included for context.

New Advent Bible And these are the names of his children according to their calling and generations. The firstborn of Ismael was Nabajoth, then Cedar, and Adbeel, and Mabsam, and Masma, and Duma, and Massa, Hadar, and Thema, and Jethur, and Naphis, and Cedma.

New American Bible These are the names of Ishmael's sons, listed in the order of their birth: Nebaioth (Ishmael's firstborn), Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

New American Bible (R.E.) These are the names of Ishmael's sons, listed in the order of their birth: Ishmael's firstborn Nebaioth, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam [Is 60:7.], Mishma, Dumah, Massa, 15Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. [25:13-16] 1 Chr 1:29-31.

New Jerusalem Bible These are the names of the sons of Ishmael by name and line: Ishmael's first-born was Nebaioth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah.

New RSV These are the names of the sons of Ishmael, named in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the firstborn of Ishmael; and Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible These are the names of the sons of Yishma'el, listed in the order of their birth. The firstborn of Yishma'el was N'vayot; followed by Kedar, Adbe'el, Mivsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Teima, Y'tur, Nafish and Kedmah.

exeGeseges companion Bible ...and these are the names of the sons of Yishma El, by their names, according to their generations: the firstbirth of Yishma El, Nebayoth;

and Qedar and Adbe El and Mibsam
and Mishma and Dumah and Massa
Hadar and Tema
Yetur, Naphish and Qedemah:.

Hebrew Names Version

These are the names of the sons of Yishma'el, by their names, according to the order of their birth: the firstborn of Yishma'el, Nevayot, then Kedar, Adbe'el, Mivsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Chadad, Tema, Yetur, Nafish, and Kedemah.

Kaplan Translation

These are the names of Ishmael's sons in order of their birth: Nebayoth [Nevayoth in Hebrew. The Torah later specifies that it was his sister who married Esau (Genesis 28:9, 36:3). It appears that the people of Nebayoth were nomads engaged in sheep-raising (Isaiah 16:7; Radak ad loc.). They are identified with the Nabetaeans, who lived in northern Arabia, to the south of the Dead Sea (Targum on 1 Chronicles 1:29; Josephus, Antiquities 1:12:4. See 1 Maccabees 5:25, 9:35, 2 Maccabees 5:8; Strabo 16:4; Pliny 12:37). Their capital was Petra, the ancient site of Kadesh (Strabo 16:799, 17:803; Pliny 6:32). Also see Josephus, Antiquities 14:3:3. 14:6:4.] (*Ishmael's first-born*), *Kedar* [The Targum renders this as Arabia; cf. Ezekiel 27:21. This was a well known nation; see Isaiah 21:16,17, 42:11, Jeremiah 2:10. They were an eastern tribe (Jeremiah 49:28), raising and dealing in sheep (Isaiah 60:17, Ezekiel 27:21), living in black tents (Song of Songs 1:5), and they were hostile (Psalms 120:5). They were associated with a city Chatzor (Jeremiah 49:28). Some identify them with the Kidru found in Assyrian writings, and with the Cedrei in ancient geographies (Pliny 5:11).], *Adbiel* [The name is found in ancient Assyrian writings.], *Mibsam*, *Mishma*, *Duma* [See Isaiah 21:11 (Radak, Ibn Ezra, ad loc., but see Rashi). Josephus renders it Idumas, perhaps relating it to Idumia. There was a place on the Syrian-Arabian border known as Duma or Dumath Algandel. There is also a Duma in Syria, some 10 miles east of Damascus. Domita is mentioned by Ptolemy (5:19).], *Masa* [See Genesis 10:30, Exodus 17:7. The name is found in ancient Assyrian writings.], *Chadad*, *Tema* [It is associated with Arabia (Isaiah 21:14), especially with Dedan and Buz (Jeremiah 25:23). This was also a people who had caravans associated with Sheba (Job 6:19). It was a nation that lived in the northern Arabian desert. It may be associated with the present city of Tayma in Saudi Arabia. The Targum on 1 Chronicles 1:30 renders it Adroma, literally 'the south.' There is an area known as Hadramut in southern Arabia.], *Yetur* [Yetur and Nafish were driven out of the area east of the Jordan by Reuben, Gad and Manasseh (1 Chronicles 5:19; Rashi ad loc.). This is in the exact area of Ituraea, northeast of Lake Hula (see Strabo 16:755; Pliny 5:19). They originally came from another area named Ituraea in the Arabian Desert (Strabo 16:756). They then settled in the mountain range to the north and south of Damascus, in regions where it was difficult to reach them. During the time of the Second Temple, the Hasmonean King Aristobulus forced the people of Ituraea to convert to Judaism and annexed their territory to Judea (Josephus, Antiquities 13:11:3). The area was later annexed to Syria by the Romans (Tacitus, Annals 12:23).], *Oafish* [See note on Genesis 25:15, 'Yetur', from 1 Chronicles 5:19.] and *Kedmah*.

Orthodox Jewish Bible

And these are the shemot bnei Yishmael, by their shemot, according to their toldot: the bechor of Yishmael, Nevayot; and Kedar, and Adbe'el, and Mivsam, And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, Chadad, and Tema, Yetur, Naphish, and Kedmah:...

The Scriptures 1998

And these were the names of the sons of Yishma'ël, by their names, according to their generations: The first-born of Yishma'ël, Nebayoth; then Qëdar, and Adbe'ël, and Mibsam, and Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, Haðar, and Tëma, Yetur, Naphish, and Qëdemah.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

NET Bible® These are the names of Ishmael's sons, by their names according to their records [The meaning of this line is not easily understood. The sons of Ishmael are listed here "by their names" and "according to their descendants."]: Nebaioth (Ishmael's firstborn), Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, for their genealogical annals: The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth; and Kedar and Adbeel and Mibsa. and Mishma and Dumah and Massa and Chador and Tema and Jetur and Naphish and Kedemah.

Third Millennium Bible 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.

Young's Updated LT And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their births: first-born of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, and Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

The gist of this verse: The names of Ishmael's 12 sons are given.

Genesis 25:13a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced <i>ALE-leh</i>]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective	Strong's #428 BDB #41
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced <i>shame</i>]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
bânîym (בָּנִיִּם) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yish ^e mâ'êl (יִשְׁמָעֵל) [pronounced <i>yish-maw-GALE</i>]	<i>whom God hears; God is hearing and is transliterated Ishmael</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3458 BDB #1035

Translation: These [are] the names of the sons of Ishmael...

Isaac likely caught up with his half-brother Ishmael at this funeral, and, Isaac, being interested in births, deaths and marriages, found out exactly who Ishmael's sons are.

Genesis 25:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
shêm (שׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
tôwl ^e dôth (תּוֹלְדוֹת) [pronounced tohl ^e -DOTH]	<i>generations, results, proceedings, genealogies, history, course of history; origin; families; races</i>	feminine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #8435 BDB #410
Owen is calling this a feminine plural adjective.			
b ^e kôwr (בְּכוֹר) [pronounced b ^e KOHR]	<i>firstborn; metaphorically used for anything which is chief or first of its kind</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1060 BDB #114
Although we may think that the Bible puts some kind of premium upon being the firstborn, this is only the 3 rd time this word has occurred in the Bible (Genesis 10:15 22:21). This word is found 3 times in Job (Job 1:13, 18 18:13).			
Yish ^e mâ'êl (יִשְׁמַעֵל) [pronounced yish-maw-GALE]	<i>whom God hears; God is hearing and is transliterated Ishmael</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3458 BDB #1035

Translation: ...by their names in order of their births [lit., by their names for their generations]:...

Most of the translators appear to agree that we are looking at these men in the order in which they are born. However, as you will notice, this literally says, ...*by their names regarding their generations*... and then the firstborn is named first. In any case, I don't know that this is really an issue of any sort.

Genesis 25:13a-b *These [are] the names of the sons of Ishmael by their names in order of their births [lit., by their names for their generations]:...* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:13c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
N ^e bâyôwth (נְבַיּוֹת) [pronounced neh-baw-YOUTH]	<i>fruitfulness; heights; transliterated Nebajoth, Nebaioth, Nebayoth; Nabatæans, Nabateans</i>	proper noun; gentilic singular adjective	Strong's #5032 BDB #614

This is an odd word indeed, as it appears to apply to just one man in this passage; but it also refers to those descended from him who have a capitol city at Petra.

Genesis 25:13c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וָ, וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Qêdâr (קֵדָר) [pronounced <i>kay-DAWR</i>]	<i>black, swarthy, black tinted, dark-skinned, transliterated Kedar, Qedar</i>	proper noun; gentilic singular adjective	Strong's #6938 BDB #871
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וָ, וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾAdêb ^e el (אֲדֵבֵֿאֵל) [pronounced <i>ahd-beh- ALE</i>]	<i>chastisement, chastened of God; transliterated Adbeel, Abdal</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #110 BDB #9
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וָ, וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Mib ^e sâm (מִיבְשָׁם) [pronounced <i>mihb- SAWM</i>]	<i>sweet odor, fragrance; and is transliterated Mibsam</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #4017 BDB #142

Translation: ...Nebaioth (the firstborn of Ishmael), Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam,...

It is reasonable to suppose that all of these sons believed in the Revealed Lord. It would make sense for them to be named in Scripture because they are believers. I am personally unaware of any other reason for listing them. I can understand Isaac listing them, as he concerns himself with births, deaths and marriages. However, I am unsure as to why God the Holy Spirit would include these men, apart from them being believers, and possibly the last generation of believers in Ishmael's line (with some individual exceptions).

You will recall the two types of genealogies: (1) the straight-line genealogy, which follows many generations and is *only* found in the line leading from Adam to Jesus; and (2) the cluster genealogy, where the sons and grandsons of a man might be named. However, unless this genealogy is in the line of promise, it is never taken any further. This portion of Genesis is a cluster genealogy.

The son of Abraham by Hagar is named *Ishmael*.

The Pulpit Commentary on Ishmael, the Prince

- I. THE PRINCE'S NAME. Ishmael.
 1. The significance of his name. "God hears." It was thus a perpetual reminder to its bearer of a grand religious truth, that God is essentially a hearer of prayer, and that he is never far from any of his intelligent and needy creatures.
 2. The occasion of his getting it.
 - (1) Before his birth, because the Lord had heard the affliction of his mother.
 - (2) At his birth, because his father believed the report of Hagar concerning the instruction of the angel.
 3. The verification of his name. When he lay beneath the shrub God heard the voice of his distressful cry. (Genesis 21:17)

The Pulpit Commentary on Ishmael, the Prince

- II. THE PRINCE'S LINEAGE. Abraham's son. That
1. Proclaimed his dignity. Though not a prince in the Church, he was a prince in the world, being Abraham's immediate descendant, Grace runs not in the blood, earthly rank does.
 2. Bespoke his privilege. Jehovah reckoned it a great thing for Ishmael that he was Abraham's seed. To be the offspring of those who are exalted in earthly station is a special honor, though not so great an honor as to be descended from those who are eminent in grace.
 3. Implied his responsibility. Degrees of rank in society are of God's ordaining, and involve the recipients thereof in corresponding obligations. (Luke 12:48)
- III. THE PRINCE'S FAMILY.
1. Princely in rank. This quality they received by birth, being Ishmael's sons.
 2. Many in number. They were twelve princes, and as such they developed into large and flourishing tribes and nations.
 3. This characteristic was due to grace, God having promised that kings and nations should spring from Hagar's son.
 4. Influential in power. The twelve princes mentioned were powerful chieftains of as many clans.
- IV. THE PRINCE'S DEATH.
1. The time. At 137 years. The days of all, even of princes, in this life are numbered.
 2. The manner. "He expired." "There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit" in the day of his death.
 3. The result. "He was gathered unto his people," passing to the company of those who were like-minded with himself in the unseen world, as Abraham went to enjoy the society of those who were of kindred spirit with him.
- V. THE PRINCE'S DOMINIONS. "His lot was cast in the presence of all his brethren," i.e. his empire was
1. Outside of Canaan. He had no part or lot in the inheritance of Isaac. Neither have the world's princes as such any share in the heritage of heaven's peers.
 2. Among the tribes of earth. And so the worldly man's portion is of the earth, earthy.

The Pulpit Commentary suggests that we make the following observations:

1. How comparatively unimportant the world's biographies are in the judgment of the Spirit.
2. How the children of the wicked often outnumber the offspring of the pious.
3. How it is appointed unto all men once to die, though not to all to die alike.
4. How certain it is that the wicked and the good shall be separated after death, since at death both are gathered unto their respective peoples.
5. How clearly and minutely God fulfils the promises he makes to wicked men no less than to good.

The Pulpit Commentary; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, from e-sword, Genesis 25:12-18.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Nebaioth is named in the genealogies (here and in 1Chronicles 1:29), and he is found mentioned with Kedar by Isaiah: *And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. Lift up your eyes all around, and see; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be carried on the hip. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and exult, because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall bring good news, the praises of the LORD. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered to you; the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you; they shall come up with acceptance on My altar, and I will beautify My beautiful house* (Isaiah 60:3-7). Much of the end of Isaiah deals with the Millennium and this suggests that there are believers to come from these two lines who will come to Israel.

Nebaioth is also associated with the Nabataeans, however the Nabataeans are associated with Greek and Roman history, and these men would have been Semitic, having been descendants of Abraham (and, therefore, ultimately

from Shem instead of Japheth). There may have been some intermarriage—we do not really know one way or the other.

Kedar, which means *dark-skinned*, is named in as #2 son of Ishmael in Genesis 25:13; 1Chronicles 1:29. This is also the name of a great tribe of Arabs settled on the northwest of the peninsula and on the confines of Palestine¹³⁰ (and they are likely from this particular Kedar). The “*glory of Kedar*” is mentioned in Isaiah 21:13–17 and the “*princes of Kedar*” are mentioned in Ezekiel 27:21. In fact, *Kedar* is mentioned in at least 12 times in these Bible: Genesis 25:13 1Chronicles 1:29 Song. 1:5 Isaiah 21:16–17 42:11 60:7 Jer. 2:10 49:28 Ezekiel 27:21. Therefore, this particular line continued for hundreds of years.

Apparently, the prophet Mohammed claims to be a descendant of Kedar?

The Bible Query: Do the references to Kedar refer to Mohammed?

Q: In Gen 25:13, do the references to Kedar relate to Mohammed?

A: Genesis 25:13 mentions Kedar, the son of Ishmael, but there is doubt on Mohammed’s ancestry of Ishmael and Kedar. Regardless, though, Genesis 25:13 mentioning twelve sons of Ishmael, including Kedar, does not say anything good or bad about them. al-Tabari vol.6 p.6, records three things:

- 1) There are differences among genealogists about Mohammed’s ancestry after ‘Adnan, (p.37)
- 2) Many but not all genealogies include Mohammed ... ‘Adnan ... Nabt b. Qaydhar [Kedar?], b. Isma’il [Ishmael]
- 3) "These differences arise because it is an old science, taken from the people of the first Book (the Old Testament).

So if al-Tabari acknowledges that they took genealogy names from the Jews and the Old Testament, it is not an independent witness.

Bible Query; March 2006 version. Copyright (c) Christian Debater(tm) 1997-2006.; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:13.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Regarding this, Driver writes: *At a much later date, Ishmael was connected vaguely with Arabia in general; Mohammed was supposed to have been descended from him through Kedar; and his tomb is still shewn in Mecca. In the OT., however, it is to be observed, Ishmael is hardly at all connected with what we call 'Arabia': the 'Arabian' peninsula is peopled by the Joktanidae (descendants of Joktan, son of Abraham's sixth ancestor, 'Eber, and consequently much less closely connected with Israel), ch. x. 26—30; the Ishmaelites are limited to certain specified tribes, living almost entirely on the N. and NW. of these.*¹³¹

Adbeel, which means *offering of God*, is only found in the genealogy passages. ISBE tells us *[This] name appears in the Assyrian records as that of a north Arabian tribe residing somewhere Southwest of the Dead Sea.*¹³² This is exactly where we would expect any of Ishmael’s sons to be found.

Mibsam is found in the typical genealogies and there is another Mibsam spoken of in 1Chronicles 4:25. His name means *perfume*.

¹³⁰ Dr. William Smith, *Smith’s Bible Dictionary*; 1894; from e-Sword, topic: Kedar.

¹³¹ From Driver’s [The Book of Genesis](#); accessed July 1, 2015 (Genesis xxv). Driver provides additional references.

¹³² *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Adbeel.

Genesis 25:14

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Mish ^e mâ ^c (מִשְׁמָע) [pronounced <i>mish-MAWÇ</i>]	<i>a hearing, a thing heard; obedience band and is transliterated <i>Mishma</i></i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #4927 BDB #1036
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Dûwmâh (דֹּוּמָה) [pronounced <i>doo-MAW</i>]	<i>silence; transliterated <i>Dumah</i></i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #1745 & 1746 BDB #189
This refers to a son of Ishmael, a tribe in Arabia (presumably descended from him); and a town located in the mountainous region of Judah.			
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Massâ ['] (מַסָּא) [pronounced <i>mahs-SAW</i>]	<i>burden, transliterated <i>Massa</i></i>	proper noun; gentilic singular adjective	Strong's #4854 BDB #601

We seem to have the same proper noun listed here: Strong's #4854 BDB #672. However, there appear to be only two occurrences of this noun in Scripture: Genesis 25:14 1Chronicles 1:30.

Translation: ...Mishma, Dumah, Massa,...

Mishma is named in the two Ishmael genealogies. There is also a Mishma who shows up as a son of Mibsam in a different genealogy (1Chronicles 4:25–26). We know that his name means *a hearing*, but nothing else about him. There is no reason to think that every son of Ishmael had an enduring legacy.

Dumah is named here and in 1Chronicles 1:30. There was a city in Judah with this name (Joshua 15:52) an Isaiah speaks of an oracle concerning Dumah in Isaiah 21:11.

Concerning Dumah, ISBE writes: *According to the Arabic geographies this son of Ishmael rounded the town of Dûmat-el-Jandal, the stone-built Dûmah, so called to distinguish it from another Dumah near the Euphrates. The former now bears the name of the Jauf ("belly"), being a depression situated half-way between the head of the Persian Gulf and the head of the gulf of Akaba. Its people in the time of Mohammed were Christians of the tribe of Kelb. It contained a great well from which the palms and crops were irrigated. It has often been visited by European travelers in recent times.*¹³³

Although I thought there were a lot of references to Massa, there are only two in Ishmael's genealogies. Smith writes: *His descendants were not improbably the Masani, placed by Ptolemy in the east of Arabia, near the borders of Babylonia.*¹³⁴

¹³³ *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Dumah.

¹³⁴ Dr. William Smith, *Smith's Bible Dictionary*; 1894; from e-Sword, topic: Massa.

Genesis 25:15

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Cheder (חֶדֶר) [pronounced KHEH-dehr]	<i>chamber, room</i> ; transliterated <i>Cheder, Heder, Hadar, Chadar</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #2316 BDB #293
Because dâhleth (ד) and and rêhsh (ר) are often confounded in proper names, the proper noun found here is probably the one below:			
Chadad (חֲדָד) [pronounced khah-DAHD]	<i>sharp, pointed</i> and is transliterated <i>Chadad, Hadad</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #2301 BDB #292
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Têymâ' (תַּימָא') [pronounced tay-MAW]	<i>desert</i> ; transliterated <i>Tema</i>	masculine singular proper noun; also a location (the land settled by the Tema)	Strong's #8485 BDB #1066
Y ^e tûwr (יְטוּר) [pronounced yeht-OOR]	<i>enclosed, encircled</i> ; transliterated <i>Jetur</i>	masculine singular proper noun; also used as a gentilic adjective	Strong's #3195 BDB #377
Nâphîysh (נַפִּישׁ) [pronounced naw-FEESH]	<i>refreshed, refreshment</i> ; transliterated <i>Naphish, Nafish</i>	masculine singular proper noun; used for a tribe and for an individual	Strong's #5305 BDB #661
Qêd ^e mâh (קֵדְמָה) [pronounced KAYD-maw]	<i>original; eastward; precedence</i> ; transliterated <i>Kedemah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6929 BDB #870

Translation: ...[Hadad](#) [or, [Cheder](#)], [Tema](#), [Jetur](#), [Naphish](#) and [Kederman](#).

The first man in the list, *Hadad* or *Cheder*, has the problem of his name (the Hebrew letter equivalents of *d* and *r* are frequently confounded in proper names). There are also two similar letters in the Hebrew (ח, ה = hê'; ח, נ = chêyth) which are properly transliterated with an *h* and a *ch*; however, it is quite common for the letter chêyth in the Hebrew to be represented with just an *h*. In fact, the Strong's #2316 (which is *Chădar*) is said by the e-sword version of the KJV concordance not to exist anywhere. Both Smith and ISBE reference *Hadad* instead. He is only named in the genealogies, although there are 4 *Hadad*'s found in Scripture.

The name *Tema* is found in Genesis 25:15 1Chronicles 1:30 Job. 6:19 Isaiah 21:14 Jer. 25:23. The man *Tema*, the son of *Ishmael*, is in the genealogies of the first two passages. The tribe which was descended from him is found in Jer. 25:23. The place where they lived is named in the other two passages.

ISBE has the following information: *the place where they dwelt (Job. 6:19 Isaiah 21:14) [is]...a locality in Arabia which probably corresponding to the modern Teimā' (or Taymā' —see Doughty, Arabia Deserta, I, 285), an oasis which lies about 200 miles North of el-Medina, and some 40 miles South of Dūmat el-Jandal (Dumah), now known as el-Jauf. It is on the ancient caravan road connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Akaba; and doubtless the people took a share in the carrying trade (Job. 6:19). The wells of the oasis still attract the wanderers from the parched wastes (Isaiah 21:14). Doughty (loc. cit.) describes the ruins of the old city wall, some 3 miles in circuit. An Aramaic stele*

recently discovered, belonging to the 6th century B.C., shows the influence of Assyrian art. The place is mentioned in the cuneiform inscriptions (Schrader, KAT2, 149).¹³⁵

With the name *Tema*, we face a chicken-and-egg situation with regards to Job 6:19. Did the family of Tema settle into an area which was then named Tema? Did the area Tema exist first, and Ishmael liked the name and gave it to one of his sons? Did a particular son of Ishmael become so closely associated with an area called *Tema*, that *Tema* became the family name (names of places were updated on many occasions in the Bible)? I ask these questions, simply because I believe the book of Job to predate Abraham. However, there is nothing in the book of Job which prevents it from occurring in the time of Jacob and Esau. The close association of a person with the place where he lives occurs today just as it did in the ancient world. I am a Texan, even though I was not born or raised here. So, it is possible the name *Tema* comes down to us today based upon where this son of Ishmael lived instead of this being his name at birth.

Jetur is found in two genealogies and named as a tribe in 1Chronicles 5:19. ISBE tells us *they are the Itureans (Ituræans) of New Testament times.*¹³⁶

Naphish (Nephish) is essentially mentioned in the same places as Jetur is, first as an individual and then as a tribe.

ISBE tells us: [The] Naphish, along with other Hagrite clans, was overwhelmingly defeated by the Israelite tribes on the East of the Jordan (1Chronicles 5:19, the King James Version "Nephish"). Their descendants are mentioned among the Nethinim by the name "Nephisim".¹³⁷

Finally, Kedemah is only mentioned by name in the two genealogy passages. The people who came from him *might be* the Kadmonites (found in Genesis 15:19, which is part of a list of the peoples who eventually lived in Canaan).

Genesis 25:13c–15 [Nebaioth \(the firstborn of Ishmael\), Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad \[or, Cheder\], Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kederman.](#) (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:13–15 [These \[are\] the names of the sons of Ishmael by their names in order of their births \[lit., by their names for their generations\]: Nebaioth \(the firstborn of Ishmael\), Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad \[or, Cheder\], Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kederman.](#) (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:13–15 [This is a list of the sons of Ishmael, in order by their birth: Nebaioth \(Ishmael's firstborn\), Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kederman.](#) (Kukis paraphrase)

Therefore, it is possible that several of these peoples remained with Ishmael in the land of Canaan; and some apparently moved east.

This is the best we can do with determining what happened to the tribes listed (assuming that each prince became a tribe).

¹³⁵ *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Tema.

¹³⁶ *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Jetur.

¹³⁷ *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Naphish. There are some alternate spellings for his descendants.

The Sons of Ishmael (by Barnes, Clarke, Driver, Gill, Keil, Delitzsch, Wenstrom)

Ishmael's sons	Meaning	Commentary
Nebajoth	fruitfulness; heights	<i>[He is] preserved in the Nabataei inhabiting Arabia Petraea, and extending far toward the East.^B From whom came the Nabatheans, whose capital was Petra, or, according to Strabo, Nabathea. They dwelt in Arabia Petraea, and extended themselves on the east towards Arabia Deserta.^C Josephus says, that all the country from Euphrates to the Red sea is called the Nabatene country...Strabo...observes, that their country is populous and abounds with pastures; hence the rams of Nebaioth, mentioned in Isaiah 60:7. Pliny also places them in Arabia, and says they inhabit the town called Petra, and that they border upon Syria.^G The Nabataeans held possession of Arabia Petraea, with Petra as their capital, and subsequently extended toward the south and north-east, probably as far as Babylon; so that the name was afterwards transferred to all the tribes to the east of the Jordan, and in the Nabataean writings became a common name for Chaldeans (ancient Babylonians), Syrians, Canaanites, and others.^K [His] descendants were the "Nabayati" an Arab tribe that was conquered by Ashurbanipal in the seventh century (668-633 B. C.).^W Esau married a sister of Nebaioth (Genesis 28:9).</i>
Kedar	black, swarthy, black tinted, dark- skinned	<i>[Evidence of Kedar's name] appears in the Cedrei of Pliny...who dwell east of Petraea.^B [Kedar is] The founder of the Cedreans, who dwelt near to the Nabatheans. The descendants of Kedar form a part of the Saracens.^C Isaiah places them in Arabia in Isaiah 21:13.^G Pliny [calls them] Cedrei, and mentions them along with the Nabathaeans, as near to them, [dwelling]...in the same country, Arabia Petraea, and in tents, living by pasturage, hence they are sometimes called Scenites; and mention is made of the tents of Kedar in SoS 1:5. These are the Scenite Arabs, called Saracens by Ammianus Marcellinus.^G The Kedarenes are mentioned in Isaiah 21:17 as good bowmen. They dwelt in the desert between Arabia Petraea and Babylon (Isaiah 42:11; Psalm 120:5). According to Wetzstein, they are to be found in the nomad tribes of Arabia Petraea up to Harra.^K Isaiah 21:17 [His] descendants were nomadic tribe of the Syrian-Arabian desert (Ps. 120:5; Song. 1:5; Jer. 49:28f), specifically, in the region between Egypt and Dedan-Edom. Despite their nomadic habits, they seem to have had some stability because they are said to have dwelled in villages (Isa. 42:11) and helped supply Tyre with lambs, rams and goats (Ezek. 27:21). Not only were they owners of flocks (Isa. 60:7) but also they were great archers and mighty warriors (Isa. 21:16f.) before the Lord diminished them.^W</i>
Adbeel	chastisement, chastened of God	<i>[His] descendants subjugated by Tiglath Pileser III and as a result lived on the border of Egypt and thus were located in northwest Arabia.^W</i>
Mibsam	sweet odor, fragrance	<i>[His] descendants were later absorbed into the Israelite tribe of Simeon since he and his brother "Mishma" appear in the genealogy of Simeon, which is recorded in 1Chronicles 4:24f.^W</i>
Mishma	a hearing, a thing heard; obedience band	<i>[Mishma] is connected with the Μαισαιμενείς (the Maisaimeneis of Ptolemy.^B [His] descendants like "Mibsam" were later absorbed into the Israelite tribe of Simeon when they extended southward (1 Chronicles 4:38-43) since the two brothers appear together in the genealogy of Simeon, which is recorded in 1 Chronicles 4:24f.^W There are two cities named Jebel Misma.^D</i>

The Sons of Ishmael (by Barnes, Clarke, Driver, Gill, Keil, Delitzsch, Wenstrom)

Ishmael's sons	Meaning	Commentary
Dumah	silence	<i>Dumah is probably Δούμηθα Doumetha (Ptolemy. vi. 19, 7) and Domata (Pliny H. N. 6, 32) and Dumat el-Jendel in Nejd and the Syrian desert.^B It is probable that Dumah gave his name to a place called Dumah in Arabia.^C [Their name] has been retained in the modern Dumat el Jendel in Nejd, the Arabian highland.^K Isaiah 21:11 [His] descendants are referred to in Isaiah 21:11 making it a part of Edom. The place where Dumah's descendants settled is described in the inscriptions of Esarhaddon (680-669 B.C.) as "Adumati the stronghold of the Arabs." The later Arabs called the place "Dumah of the stones" and its modern name is "el-Jof," which means, "the cavity" and lies in the northern sector of the Arabian Desert due east of the Gulf of Akaba.^W</i>
Massa	burden	<i>Massa" may be preserved in the Μασσαιοι Masanoi of Ptolemy (v. 19, 2), northeast of Duma.^B [His] descendants settled in Tayma and who were subjugated by Tiglath-Pileser III (744-727 B.C.) who extracted gold, silver, male and female camels all kinds of spices from them.^W</i>
<p><i>These three names have passed into a proverb among the Hebrews, because of their signification. מִשְׁמָע mishma signifies Hearing; דִּמְיָה dumah, Silence; and מַשָּׂא massa, Patience. Hence, "Hear much, say little, and bear much," tantamount to the famous maxim of the Stoics, Ἀνεχου και απεχου, "Sustain and abstain," is supposed to be the spirit of the original words.^C The Targum of Jonathan translates these three names, "hearing, silence, and patience;" which the Jews use as a proverb, when they would signify that there are some things to be heard and not spoken of, and to be patiently borne.^G We find this proverb in James 1:19 Therefore, my beloved brothers, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. (MKJV)</i></p>		
Hadad	sharp, pointed	<i>Hadad" is Hadad in 1Chronicles 1:30, the Samaritan Pentateuch, Onkelos, perhaps the Septuagint, and many codices.^C It is supposed to be Χαττηνια Chatteenia (Polyb.), Attene, and to lie between Oman and Bahrein.^B Gill associates them with the city Adra in Arabia Petraea.^G Probably associated with Arabian coastline.^K Wenstrom says that the location of his descendants are unknown.</i>
Cheder	chamber, room	<i>This name should be read Hadad as in 1Chronicles 1:30. This reading is supported by more than three hundred MSS., versions, and printed editions.^C</i>
Tema	desert	<i>Tema lay on the borders of Nejd and the Syrian desert.^B Supposed to be a place in Arabia Deserta, the same of which Job speaks.^C Gill associates them with the city Themma in Arabia Deserta.^G They are a trading people.^K [His] descendants settled in an area now known as "Teyma," which was situated in northern Arabia, about 180 miles from the Dead Sea, adjacent to the Syrian desert. Three trade routes once converged at the town Teyma connecting it to southern Arabia, Syria and the Mediterranean, with branches accessing Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf. Like the descendants of his brothers, Adbeel and Massa, the descendants of Tema were subjugated by Tiglath Pileser III.^W The city TSma of Tiglath-pileser III., now Teima, in NW. Arabia, about 250 m. SE. of Edom, an important station on the ancient trade-route from Yemen to Syria, where some interesting inscriptions have recently been found {Studia Biblica, i. 209—214}.^D Job 6:19 Isaiah 21:14 Jer. 25:23</i>

According to Wetzstein, Dûma and Têma are still two important places in Eastern Hauran.^K

The Sons of Ishmael (by Barnes, Clarke, Driver, Gill, Keil, Delitzsch, Wenstrom)

Ishmael's sons	Meaning	Commentary
Jetur	enclosed, encircled	<p><i>Jetur remains in Ituraea, Jedur, northeast of the sea of Galilee. Some suppose the Druses descended from him.^B From whom came the Itureans, who occupied a small tract of country beyond Jordan, which was afterwards possessed by the half-tribe of Manasseh.^C Gill associates his descendants with the Hagarites, as the Ishmaelites were sometimes called. From Jetur came the Itureans, whom Pliny places in Coelesyria; and their country Iturea is reckoned by Strabo along with Arabia; and the Ithyreans with Virgil are famous for their bows, as Ishmael and his posterity were for archery in all ages.^G From Jetur sprang the Ituraeans, who lived, according to Strabo, near the Trachonians in an almost inaccessible, mountainous, and cavernous country; according to Wetzstein, in the mountains of the Druses in the centre of the Hauran, possibly the forefathers of the modern Druses.^K The Itureans, who inhabited a small tract of country east of Jordan, which afterwards belonged to Manasseh.^T [His] descendants were called the "Ituraeans" who fought against the Israelite tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh according to 1Chronicles 5:19. The "Ituraeans" at one time lived in the Trans-jordan area but moved northeast of Galilee to the Biqa Valley of Lebanon when they were defeated by the Israelites. They were infamous in the Middle East since they were known for involved in robbery, extortion and had a reputation as barbarians and were also skilled archers taking after their father Ishmael. In New Testament era, they lived in a region controlled by the Romans and were assigned successively to Herod the Great, his son Philip and Herod Agrippa I according to Luke 3:1.^W Yetur is no doubt the same as the later Ituraeans (cf. Lk. iii. 1), a wild and predatory tribe...[mentioned by] Cicero...[and they were] a troop of whom formed a bodyguard to Mark Antony in Rome.^D</i></p>
Naphish	refreshed, refreshment	<p><i>Naphish 1Chronicles 6:19, 1Chronicles 6:22 lay in the same quarter [as Jetur].^B These are evidently the same people mentioned 1Chronicles 5:19, who, with the Itureans and the people of Nadab, assisted the Hagarenes against the Israelites, but were overcome by the two tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.^C The Nubaeans by Lebanon may be from Naphish.^G [His] descendants like "Jetur" were defeated by the Israelite tribes of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh according to 1Chronicles 5:19 and therefore, were displaced from the Trans-jordan area, and moved northeast of Galilee to the Biqa Valley of Lebanon. According to 1Chronicles 5:21, this victory by the Israelite tribes over Naphish and Jetur gained them a tremendous spoil including 50,000 camels, 250,000 sheep, 2,000 donkeys and 100,000 captives and the territory of the descendants of Naphish and Jetur.^W 1Chronicles 6:19, 1Chronicles 6:22</i></p>
<p><i>Jetur and Naphish were neighbours of the tribes of Israel to the east of the Jordan (1Chronicles 5:19), who made war upon them along with the Hagarites, the Αγγαῖοι (mentioned by Ptolemy and Strabo).^K</i></p>		
Kedemah	original; eastward	<p><i>Probably the descendants of this person dwelt at Kedemoth, a place mentioned Deut. 2:26.^C [His descendants are possibly] the men of the east, or the men of Kedem, Jer. 49:28, which is not improbable, since they are mentioned with the posterity of Kedar the second son of Ishmael.^G [His] name means, "eastward" and is unattested.^W</i></p>

One commentator will say that some of these men are lost to history; others will say they are associate with this or that city or country.

^B Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:13–16.

^C Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:13–16.

Driver is from Driver's *The Book of Genesis*; accessed July 1, 2015 (Genesis xxv).

^G Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:13, 14, 15 (some editing done).

^K Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:12–18.

^T *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, Genesis 25:13.

^W Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

Check footnotes for original sources.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

The Sons of Ishmael (a graphic); drawn by R. Crumb; from [the Hooded Utilitarian](#); accessed August 29, 2018.



Peter Pett, summing this up: *The names in the genealogy also refer us to the regions of Southern Palestine and North West Arabia. As noted earlier tribal groups would arise by birth, inter-marriage, amalgamation and accumulation and this genealogy might suggest that Abraham's sons had important leadership roles in these tribes (compare Genesis 25:16). We especially note that the 'sons' of Dedan, whose names are plural in form, were, as the forms suggest, probably sub-tribes. And Dedan is a well know tribal grouping in Arabia, as is Sheba. Comparison should be made with Genesis 10. We thus find here the possible connection of sons of Abraham with Midianites, Medanites (both closely associated elsewhere with Ishmaelites - Genesis 37:28 with Genesis 37:36; Judges 8:24), Sabaeans*

(from Sheba) and Dedanites among others. The result would be that through his sons his influence has become wide and effective. As we have seen earlier (on Genesis 14) he was an effective fighter, and he has passed these skills on to his sons making them welcome anywhere.¹³⁸

The sons of Ishmael—those from outside the line of promise—are spoken of first. The sons of Isaac will be covered next. Similarly, the children of Esau (who are not in the line of promise) will be named first; then the children of Jacob.

These [are] they, sons of Ishmael and these [are] their names in their villages and in their encampments, two and ten princes to their tribes.

Genesis
25:16

These [are] they—the sons of Ishmael—and these [are] their names by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes.

These were the names of Ishmael's sons, who are 12 princes over their own villages and encampments, according to their clans.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	These [are] they, sons of Ishmael and these [are] their names in their villages and in their encampments, two and ten princes to their tribes.
Targum of Onkelos	These were the sons of Ishmael, and these their names in their villages, and in their fenced dwellings, twelve chiefs of their peoples.
Latin Vulgate	These are the sons of Ismael: and these are their names by their castles and towns, twelve princes of their tribes.
Peshitta (Syriac)	These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names by their villages and by their sheepfolds, twelve princes according to their nations.
Septuagint (Greek)	These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names by their towns and in their camps, twelve princes according to their nations.
Significant differences:	Roughly the same. The word <i>villages</i> and <i>encampments</i> may require some explaining.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names in their towns and their tent-circles; twelve chiefs with their peoples.
Easy English	Those are the names of Ishmael's sons. Those names also refer to villages and camps. Ishmael's sons were 12 princes over 12 *tribes.
Easy-to-Read Version	Those were the names of Ishmael's sons. Each son had his own camp that became a small town. The twelve sons were like twelve princes with their own people.
God's Word™	These are the sons of Ishmael and their names listed by their settlements and camps-12 leaders of their tribes.
Good News Bible (TEV)	They were the ancestors of twelve tribes, and their names were given to their villages and camping places.
The Message	...all the sons of Ishmael. Their settlements and encampments were named after them. Twelve princes with their twelve tribes.
NIRV	All of them were Ishmael's sons. They were rulers of 12 tribes. They all lived in their own settlements and camps.

¹³⁸ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/pet/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 17, 2015.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Each of Ishmael's sons was a tribal chief, and a village was named after each of them.
New Century Version	These were Ishmael's sons, and these are the names of the tribal leaders listed according to their settlements and camps.
New Life Bible	These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their towns and by their groups of tents, twelve rulers and their families.
New Living Translation	These twelve sons of Ishmael became the founders of twelve tribes named after them, listed according to the places they settled and camped.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Those are Ishmael's sons, whose names are on their tents and dwellings. twelve princes of their nations.
International Standard V	These were Ishmael's children, listed by their names according to their villages and their camps. There were a total of twelve tribal chiefs, according to their clans.
Today's NIV	These were the sons of Ishmael, and these are the names of the twelve tribal rulers according to their settlements and camps.
Translation for Translators	The twelve sons of Ishmael became the leaders/chiefs of people-groups that had those names. They each had their own settlement and campsite.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	These are the sons of Ishmael, and these their names, by their courtyards, and by their colonies of the twelve chiefs to their tribes.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	These were the sons of Ishmael; and these their names, by their villages and towers, twelve men by their nations.
HCSB	These are Ishmael's sons, and these are their names by their villages and encampments: 12 leaders of their clans.
Lexham English Bible	These [are] the sons of Ishmael, and these [are] their names by their villages and by their encampments--12 leaders according to their tribes.
Leupold	These, they are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names according to their settlements and encampments, twelve princes according to their nations.
NIV – UK	These were the sons of Ishmael, and these are the names of the twelve tribal rulers according to their settlements and camps.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	<i>These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, according to their settlements and camps, twelve tribal princes.</i>
New American Bible (R.E.)	These are the sons of Ishmael, their names by their villages and encampments; twelve chieftains of as many tribal groups.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	These are the sons of Yishma'el, and these are their names, according to their settlements and camps, twelve tribal rulers.
exeGesés companion Bible	...these are the sons of Yishma El and these are their names, by their courts and by their walls; twelve hierarchs according to their peoples.
Judaica Press Complete T.	These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names in their open cities and in their walled cities, twelve princes to their nations.

Kaplan Translation	These were Ishmael's sons, and these names were given to their towns and encampments. There were twelve princes [See Genesis 17:20.] for their nations.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	These are the bnei Yishmael, and these are their shemot, by their settlement, and by their camps; twelve nasiim (princes, rulers) according to their tribes.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their villages and by their encampments (sheepfolds)-twelve princes according to their tribes. [Foretold in Gen. 17:20.]
The Expanded Bible	These were Ishmael's sons, and these are the names of the tribal leaders [twelve princes/chieftains according to their tribes; 17:20] listed according to their settlements [villages] and camps.
Kretzmann's Commentary	These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names by their towns and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations. As the Lord had promised Hagar, so it came to pass: twelve princes were begotten of her son Ishmael, twelve mighty sheiks of powerful tribes, the names of some of which were preserved for many centuries. Thus the descendants of Nebajoth and Kedar lived in Arabia Petraea, on the Peninsula of Sinai, and beyond, Isaiah 60:7, the Kadarenes afterward extending toward the east in the direction of Babylonia, Isaiah 42:11; Psalm 120:5. The other Iahmaelitic tribes do not seem to have been so large and mighty, still there are references, also in Scripture, which place them into the great country on the east side of Jordan. Twelve princes they were in their tribes, governing and representing twelve tribes, with their permanent, walled camps, or cities, and their temporary encampments, with their fixed and movable habitations.
NET Bible®	These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names by their settlements and their camps - twelve princes [Or "tribal chieftains."] according to their clans.
The Voice	These are the names of Ishmael's 12 sons; they became the princes of 12 villages and camps named after them.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	These, they are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, in their environs and in their domiciles--twelve princes for their clans.
Darby Translation	These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, in their hamlets and their encampments -- twelve princes of their peoples.
English Standard Version	These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes.
LTHB	These were the sons of Ishmael, and these their names in their settlements and in their camps, twelve chiefs according to their nations.
Webster's Bible Translation	These [are] the sons of Ishmael, and these [are] their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	These are sons of Ishmael, and these their names, by their villages, and by their towers; twelve princes according to their peoples.

The gist of this verse: Summing up, these were the names of the sons of Ishmael, according to their villages and encampments. They were 12 princes.

Genesis 25:16a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'êlleh (הֵלֵךְ) [pronounced ALE-leh]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective	Strong's #428 BDB #41
hêm (הֵם) [pronounced haym]	<i>they, those; themselves; these</i> [with the definite article]	3 rd person masculine plural personal pronoun	Strong's #1992 BDB #241
As with many pronouns, the verb <i>to be</i> is often implied.			
bânîym (בָּנִים) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yish ^e mâ'êl (יִשְׁמָעֵל) [pronounced yish-maw-GALE]	<i>whom God hears; God is hearing and is transliterated Ishmael</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3458 BDB #1035

Translation: *These [are] they—the sons of Ishmael—...*

The writer of this chapter of Genesis has just named all of Ishmael's sons, and he writes, *these were they, Ishmael's sons.*

Genesis 25:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êlleh (הֵלֵךְ) [pronounced ALE-leh]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective	Strong's #428 BDB #41
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027

Translation: *...and these [are] their names... Or, and these were their names...*

The writer has just listed all the names of Ishmael's sons.

Genesis 25:16c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
chatsêrîym (חֲצֵרִים) [pronounced khah-tzah-REEM]	<i>enclosures, courts; settlements, villages, towns</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #2691 & #2699 BDB #346

This refers to the few settlements which are scattered around a city.

Translation: ...by their villages...

There are small villages that these men oversee. Let's go back to the time frame of this chapter. Abraham has died at age 175, and Isaac and Ishmael reunite for his funeral. Isaac is 75 and Ishmael is 88. By this time, Ishmael has had 12 sons and at a young age, these young men went out on their own and founded their own village with their own families. Recall that Ishmael was out on his own at age 13 (with his mother). So, a son is going to pass along such things to his own sons. Somewhere in their teens, his sons were seemingly expected to begin to make it on their own. If Ishmael is married around age 20 (it was probably earlier), then, by his 40's not only has he had 12 children, but some of them are beginning their own families by that time.

By being forced out of his own home at the tender age of 13, Ishmael had to grow up quickly, and he appears to have expected the same from his own sons. If his sons are beginning to establish their own independent lives by the time Ishmael is 40, then by his 60's, all of these children are grown and independent. Therefore, at age 88, when he reunites with Isaac, and passes along all of this information to Isaac (much as we share the pictures in our wallet or on our iphones), and he certainly is bragging about how not only does he have 12 sons, but each son heads his own village or encampment.

It is possible that, in some cases, the son is named by the city that he founds.

Genesis 25:16d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ṭîyrâh (טֵירוֹחַ) [pronounced <i>tee-RAW</i>]	<i>encampment, tent camp; walled dwelling places, battlement (metaphorically); row (of stones)walls, fences, hedges, enclosures</i>	feminine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #2918 BDB #377

Driver: [Translated] encampments...[or] enclosures¹³⁹—an unusual word, denoting apparently the circular and temporary encampment of a nomad tribe: cf. Num. xxxi. 10 Ezek. xxv. 4. The Ishmaelite tribes lived partly in fixed villages, partly in movable 'encampments.'

Translation: ...and by their encampments,...

Although it is difficult to distinguish these words, probably an encampment is smaller than a village (named above); so some of Ishmael's sons had complete families with grandchildren; and some were just beginning on their own with a family and sons.

However, these encampments probably had walled dwelling places, according to the meaning of that word.

These are the various opinions found on the difference between these two words. Here is what BDB has:

chatsêrîym (חֲטָרִיִּם) [pronounced <i>khah-tzah-REEM</i>]	<i>enclosures, courts; settlements, villages, towns</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #2691 & #2699 BDB #346
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¹³⁹ From Driver's [The Book of Genesis](#); accessed July 1, 2015 (Genesis xxv).

תַּיְרָאִה (הַרִיט) [pronounced tee-RAW]	<i>encampment, tent camp; walled dwelling places, battlement (metaphorically); row (of stones) walls, fences, hedges, enclosures</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #2918 BDB #377
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What follows is the opinion of several expositors.

Expositors on Villages and Encampments

Expositors	Commentary
Albert Barnes	<i>The former are unwalled collections of houses or perhaps tents; the latter, fortified...encampments.</i> ¹⁴⁰
Adam Clarke	<i>[These are] probably mountain tops, fortified rocks, and fastnesses of various kinds in woods and hilly countries.</i> ¹⁴¹
Matthew Henry	<i>The posterity of Ishmael had not only tents in the fields, wherein they grew rich in times of peace; but they had towns and castles.</i> ¹⁴²
Keil and Delitzsch	<i>רצח: premises hedged round, then a village without a wall in contrast with a walled town (Leviticus 25:31). הריט: a circular encampment of tents.</i> ¹⁴³
Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge	<i>The word tiroth, rendered "castles," is supposed by some to denote here "towers," fortified rocks, or mountain-tops, and fastnesses of various kinds in woods and hilly countries; but it rather means, "shepherds' cots," surrounded by sufficient enclosures to prevent the cattle from straying, as the cognate Syriac word teyaro, and Arabic tawar, signify "a sheep-fold."</i> ¹⁴⁴
Wenstrom	<i>"Villages" is the noun chatser (khaw-tsare), which refers to a settlement without walls and therefore without protection and yet contained enclosures for animals, thus pointing to the settlement of pastoral nomads. "Encampments" is the noun tirah (tee-raw), which refers to simply to a "habitation" and therefore the "tents" of the Ishmaelites.</i> ¹⁴⁵

As you can see, what these words mean is not unanimously agreed upon.

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Notice how this is stated—[these are their names, by their towns and by their settlements](#). People were closely associated with where they lived. Therefore, these men could have been given one name, but they became so closely associated with an area, they became known by that name. This would allow for Tema (for instance) to have been given a different name; but he became so closely associated with the area of Tema, that became the name he was known by. I am not saying that this is the case; but the way this is written allows for such an understanding for some of Ishmael's sons.

This further suggests that each one of Ishmael's children either began a city or a city-state. What happens is, each child may claim a piece of territory for himself. He will marry, have children, and have a farm or a ranch.

¹⁴⁰ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:13–16.

¹⁴¹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:13.

¹⁴² Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:11–18.

¹⁴³ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:16.

¹⁴⁴ *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, Genesis 25:16.

¹⁴⁵ Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

As we have seen throughout Scripture, particularly in this time period, it was not unusual for a family to have 10 or 12 children. This would continue until the patriarch is 60–90 (or older), in most cases. By this time, his children will have become adults and they will have begun their own families. Before the patriarch has died, all of his 12 or so children will have married and would be producing children as well. Some of the oldest ones would have grandchildren or even great grandchildren before the patriarch has passed. So, over one lifetime, a small city could be established, all coming from one man. This patriarch may have 120–150 children and grandchildren. Before he dies, even some of his grandchildren will be grown and reproducing children as well.

Where do their mates come from? Sometimes, in certain circumstances, one family will intermarry with another family which lives nearby (see the proposal of the father of Shechem in Genesis 34:8–10). If there is an established village nearby, the grandchildren of Ishmael might choose from the women in the village (the example of Genesis 34 is a village, but of one family primarily).

It would be very likely that this spirit of young independence would have been engendered by Ishmael in his young sons. He was on his own at age 13 or 14; so he is not going to tolerate children as layabouts at the late age of 17 or 18. So it is likely that his sons started on their own at a young age, at the urging and training of Ishmael their father. So, at this time, when Ishmael is 88 years old, all 12 of his sons would be old enough to be establishing small villages on their own. Ishmael's upbringing would have likely resulted in his sons becoming tough and independent young men in their teens.

Matthew Henry: The posterity of Ishmael had not only tents in the fields, wherein they grew rich in times of peace; but they had towns and castles (Genesis 25:16), wherein they fortified themselves in time of war. Now the number and strength of this family were the fruit of the promise made to Hagar concerning Ishmael (Genesis 16:10), and to Abraham (Genesis 17:20 and Genesis 21:13). Note, Many that are strangers to the covenants of promise are yet blessed with outward prosperity for the sake of their godly ancestors. Wealth and riches shall be in their house.¹⁴⁶

Genesis 25:16e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
sh ^e nayîm (שְׁנַיִם) [pronounced sh ^e n-AH-yim]	<i>two, a pair; a second [time]; again; a repetition, a repeating; cognate of a verb which means to repeat</i>	dual numeral substantive	Strong's #8147 BDB #1040
‘âsâr (עָשָׂר) [pronounced ġaw-SAWR]	<i>ten; –teen [resulting in numbers 11–19]</i>	masculine/feminine singular noun	Strong's #6240 BDB #797
These two numerals together mean 12.			
n ^e sîyîm (נְסִיִּים) [pronounced naw-SEEM]	<i>leaders, princes, chiefs, rulers; clouds, rising mist, vapors</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #5387 BDB #672
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
‘ummâh (אֲמָה) [pronounced oom-MAW]	<i>tribe, people; nation</i>	feminine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #523 BDB #52

¹⁴⁶ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:11–18.

Genesis 25:16e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
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Driver: *A very rare word in Hebrew, though common in Arabic and Aramaic : probably the word specially used of these Ishmaelite tribes.*¹⁴⁷ This word is also found in Num. 25:15 Psalm 117:1 and translated *people* in the KJV.

Translation: ...twelve princes according to their tribes.

This is the kind of thing that we would expect, for a person who began his life at a very early age, who had to overcome great obstacles at age 13 and on; who pushed his own children out of the nest in a similar fashion.

*Coffman: At the time Abraham was buried, Ishmael was nearly ninety years old; and by that time his sons were all grown into strong and powerful leaders with strongholds and villages of their own, so they were called, "Twelve princes according to their nations."*¹⁴⁸

This would also be typical for a man who feels as though he was thrown out of his own family, to desire to come back and throw this in Isaac's face (not in anger, but just to let Isaac know where he is in life). "I've got 12 children and each of them heads his own encampment or village. These men are all princes." Since this is in the Word of God, we must accept this as being more than simply Ishmael bragging. All this has to be true, and, logically, there is no reason why it would not be.

Genesis 25:16 These [are] they—the sons of Ishmael—and these [are] their names by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:16 These were the names of Ishmael's sons, who are 12 princes over their own villages and encampments, according to their clans. (Kukis paraphrase)

v. 16 reads: These [are] they—the sons of Ishmael—and these [are] their names by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes. God's Word and God's promises will be fulfilled.

Map of the Tribes of Ishmael; from [Bible.CA](http://www.bible.ca); accessed July 3, 2015.



¹⁴⁷ From Driver's [The Book of Genesis](http://www.bible.ca); accessed July 1, 2015 (Genesis xxv).

¹⁴⁸ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 30, 2015.

Steven Cole: *[The author of Genesis] lists the generations of Ishmael (25:12-18). Why? To [show]...that God's purpose according to His choice will stand. Abraham had asked God that Ishmael might live before Him (17:18). God denied that request because He had chosen Isaac, but He promised Abraham that Ishmael would become the father of twelve princes, and that He would make him into a great nation (17:20). Also, the Lord had promised Hagar that her son would live in defiance of (or "over against") all his brothers (16:12). Moses records the fulfillment of that in 25:18. The point is, God's purpose according to His sovereign choice was accomplished.*¹⁴⁹

It appears as if Isaac and Ishmael kept some contact over the years, as the next verse records when Ishmael died (at age 137). Given his age and his early start, it would not be impossible for there to be 6 generations of Ishmaelites by the time of his death. Therefore, the information listed previously of his sons as heads of villages and encampments is even more likely. If such a thing is possible at age 88 for Ishmael; then it is certain even more likely by the time of his death. So, if Isaac knows about his death (I am assuming that Isaac is the author here), then Isaac clearly knows about Ishmael's sons and their villages and encampments. Remember that these two families—Isaac's and Ishmael's—do not live that far from one another. Isaac is living near the very well where Ishmael almost died of thirst when cast out at age 13.

With regard to authorship here: it does not take an Einstein to determine what has happened. Ishmael lives out in the Arabian desert and he has been blessed through his relationship to Abraham. He has had twelve children who are not known far and wide. However, since he came to the funeral, he and Isaac would certainly be speaking and visiting and Ishmael would catch Isaac up on his family. Ishmael would be about 88 years old and Isaac would be about 75. Ishmael tells Isaac the names of his twelve sons and Isaac recorded these in the Word of God. Of the sons of Ishmael, only Kedar has had his name carried down and attached to a tribe of people in Northern Arabia. Furthermore, this is based purely upon having the same name and not upon a clear lineage given in the Bible. The tribe and area of Kedar are mentioned several times throughout the Bible, but they have very little direct contact with the Israelites. Again, quantity is not quality. Despite the prolificacy of Ishmael, perhaps one of his sons was not lost to history. Furthermore, his entire lineage cannot be compared to Abraham's one son, Isaac; nor can it be compared to Isaac's one son, Jacob.

Isaac apparently kept in contact with Ishmael and with his sons. With regards to Isaac recording this: we have three possibilities: (1) Isaac wrote this and the next few chapters many years later in retrospect; (2) Isaac left a space in the tablet (assuming that is what he wrote on) to record Ishmael's death; or, (3) Moses, when editing the historical materials that he had access to, he placed this information here where it had subject relevance yet was not in chronological order. It is not necessary that we know these things; they are but speculation.

There were obviously problems between their respective mothers. However, this does not mean that Isaac and Ishmael were equally estranged in their lifetimes. The fact that Isaac would include the names of all the sons of his half-brother Ishmael suggests that they both developed a much friendlier relationship as older men. The inordinate competition between them was over.

We have been studying the sons of Ishmael and the relationship between Isaac and Ishmael.

And these [are] years of lives of Ishmael: a hundred a year and thirty a year and seven years. And so he perishes and so he dies and so he is gather unto his people.

Genesis
25:17

These [are] the years of Ishmael's life: 137 years. He breathed his last breath, died and was gathered to his people.

Ishmael lived a full life of 137 years before he breathed his last breath, died, and was gathered to his people.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

¹⁴⁹ From <http://www.fcfonline.org/content/1/sermons/121596M.pdf> accessed July 2, 2015.

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And these [are] years of lives of Ishmael: a hundred a year and thirty a year and seven years. And so he perishes and so he dies and so he is gather unto his people.
Targum of Onkelos	And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty and seven years; and he <u>was covered in repentance</u> , and expired, and was gathered to his people.
Latin Vulgate	And the years of Ismael's life were a hundred and thirty-seven, and <u>decaying</u> he died, and was gathered unto his people.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty-seven years; and he <u>became sick</u> and died; and was gathered to his people.
Septuagint (Greek)	And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, one hundred and thirty-seven years; and he breathed his last and died, and was added to his fathers.
Significant differences:	After Ishmael's age is given, the first verb differs somewhat in the targum, the Latin and the Syriac from the Hebrew.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And the years of Ishmael's life were a hundred and thirty-seven: and he came to his end, and was put to rest with his people.
Easy English	Ishmael lived for 137 years. Then he breathed his last breath and he died. He went to be with his *ancestors.
God's Word™	Ishmael lived 137 years. Then he took his last breath and died. He joined his ancestors in death.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Ishmael was 137 years old when he died.
NIRV	Ishmael lived a total of 137 years. Then he took his last breath and died. He joined the members of his family who had already died.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Ishmael lived to the age of 137. He took his last breath and died, and was placed with his ancestors.
Contemporary English V.	Ishmael had settled in the land east of his brothers, and his sons settled everywhere from Havilah to Shur, east of Egypt on the way to Asshur. Ishmael was one hundred thirty-seven when he died. The CEV appears to have combined vv. 17–18.
New Life Bible	Ishmael lived 137 years. Then he breathed his last and died, and was buried with his people.
New Living Translation	Ishmael lived for 137 years. Then he breathed his last and joined his ancestors in death.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And this is how long Ishmael lived: a hundred and thirty-seven years. Then [his health started to] fail and he died and was [buried with] his family.
Beck's American Translation	Ishmael was 137 when he died and was laid away with his people.
International Standard V	Ishmael lived [Lit. <i>These are the years of Ishmael's life</i>] for 137 years, then he took his last breath, died, and joined his ancestors [Lit. <i>and he was gathered to his people</i>].
Translation for Translators	Ishmael lived until he was 137 years old. Then he died [EUP] and joined his ancestors who had previously died.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ferar-Fenton Bible	The years of the life of Ishmael were a hundred and thirty-seven years, when he expired and died, and was added to his people;...
HCSB	This is the length of Ishmael's life: 137 years. He took his last breath and died, and was gathered to his people.
Lexham English Bible	Now these [are] the years of the life of Ishmael: 137 years. And he passed away and died, and was gathered to his people.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And these are the years of the life of Ishmael: one hundred and thirty-seven years, and he breathed out, and died, and was gathered to his people.
New American Bible	The span of Ishmael's life was one hundred and thirty-seven years. After he had breathed his last and died, he was taken to his kinsmen.
New Jerusalem Bible	The number of years Ishmael lived was one hundred and thirty-seven. When he breathed his last and died, he was gathered to his people.
New RSV	(This is the length of the life of Ishmael, one hundred and thirty-seven years; he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people.)
Revised English Bible	Ishmael had lived for a hundred and thirty-seven years when he breathed his last. So he died and was gathered to his forefathers.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	This is how long Yishma'el lived: 137 years. Then he breathed his last, died and was gathered to his people.
Kaplan Translation	This is the account of Ishmael's years. He lived a total of 137 years. He breathed his last and died, and he was gathered to his people.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And these are the years of the life of Yishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven shanah; and he breathed his last and died; and was gathered unto his people.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And Ishmael lived 137 years; then his spirit left him, and he died and was gathered to his kindred.
The Expanded Bible	Ishmael lived [“These are the years of the life of Ishmael] one hundred thirty-seven years and then ·breathed his last breath [expired] and died [“and was gathered to his people/relatives; 25:8].
Kretzmann's Commentary	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. Although Ishmael, the son of the slave woman, is represented in Scriptures as a type of the fleshly, the Spirit of God finally gained and kept the ascendancy in him. He also died in the faith and was added to the number of those that trusted in the Messiah and His salvation.
NET Bible®	Ishmael lived a total of [Heb "And these are the days of the years of Ishmael."] 137 years. He breathed his last and died; then he joined his ancestors [Heb "And he was gathered to his people." In the ancient Israelite view he joined his deceased ancestors in Sheol, the land of the dead.].
Syndein/Thieme	And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years {137} and he 'exhaled his last breathe' and died; and was gathered unto his people.
The Voice	Ishmael lived to the age of 137. When he breathed his last and died, he joined his ancestors <i>in death</i> .

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Context Group Version	And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty seven years. And he breathed out [a final time] and died, and was gathered to his people.
English Standard Version	(These are the years of the life of Ishmael: 137 years. He breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people.)
The Geneva Bible	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 [Who dwelt among the Arabians, and were separate from the blessed seed.].
Third Millennium Bible	And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty and seven years; and he gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people.
World English Bible	These are the years of the life of Ishmael: one hundred thirty-seven years. He gave up the spirit and died, and was gathered to his people.
Young's Updated LT	And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty and seven years; and he expires, and dies, and is gathered unto his people.

The gist of this verse: Ishmael lives to age 137 and then breathes his last; and is gathered to his people.

Genesis 25:17a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced <i>ALE-leh</i>]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective	Strong's #428 BDB #41
shânîym (שָׁנִים) [pronounced <i>shaw-NEEM</i>]	<i>years</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
chayyîm (חַיִּים) [pronounced <i>khay-YEEM</i>]	<i>life, lives; a life of long duration, immortality; living, sustenance; refreshment; prosperity, welfare, happiness</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #2416 BDB #311
Yish ^e mâ'êl (יִשְׁמָעֵל) [pronounced <i>yish-maw-GALE</i>]	<i>whom God hears; God is hearing and is transliterated Ishmael</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3458 BDB #1035
Yish ^e mâ'êl (יִשְׁמָעֵל) [pronounced <i>yish-maw-GALE</i>]	<i>whom God hears; God is hearing and is transliterated Ishmael</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3458 BDB #1035
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i>]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sh ^e lôshîym (שְׁלֹשִׁים) [pronounced <i>sh^elow-SHEEM</i>]	<i>thirty</i>	plural numeral	Strong's #7970 BDB #1026
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i>]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040

Genesis 25:17a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וַ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sheba ^c (שֶׁבַע) [pronounced <i>she^b-VAHG</i>] ¹	<i>seven</i>	numeral masculine noun	Strong's #7651 BDB #987
shânîym (שָׁנַיִם) [pronounced <i>shaw-NEEM</i>]	<i>years</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040

Translation: These [are] the years of Ishmael's life: 137 years.

As discussed earlier, it was perfectly possible for Ishmael, at age 88, to have had sons already striking out on their own and establishing their own families and their own villages by the time that he reunites with Isaac at his father's funeral. Ishmael dies almost 50 years later, which is more than enough time for these small villages and encampments to be prospered with more and more children. For Ishmael, that is another 2 generations.

At this point in time, the age of man is continuing to decrease. Abraham was 175; his son Ishmael has died at age 137; his son Isaac will live until age 180; and grandson Jacob will die at age 147.

Ishmael should not be viewed as some kind of a villain in Scripture. He was simply not Abraham's true heir to the promises of God. However, he did come from Abraham, and God, for this reason, blessed Ishmael. God blessed and protected Ishmael and his mother.

We also know that his mother named the well which saved their lives *The Well of Him Who Sees Me*, a reference to the Living and Revealed God, Who saw her and Who looked out for her. 137 years is a long life; 12 sons, all of whom are tough and independent, is a great blessing. However, these sons are not to be the 12 tribes of Israel. Whereas Ishmael is a believer in the Revealed Lord, as is his mother, and as are probably his sons, the Word of God does not appear to be central to their lives or to the generations from that point on. However, there is no denying that God greatly blessed Ishmael. This blessing would have been a combination of an extension of blessing to Abraham as well as blessing given to Ishmael and his family directly, because they have believed in the Revealed God.

Furthermore, as we have already observed, some men from Ishmael's line continued to impact history for many generations after.

Genesis 25:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
gâvâ ^c (גָּוַ) [pronounced <i>gaw-VAHG</i>]	<i>to expire, to perish, to die, to be about to die</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1478 BDB #157

Genesis 25:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced mooth]	<i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

Translation: He breathed his last breath, died...

We have two words here which appear to mean the same thing, as per BDB and Gesenius. However, there seems to be a connotation of breathing out one's last breath or giving up the spirit of life with the first verb. God breathes life into each person at birth, and when that person breathes his last, he gives up that life. That is essentially what is occurring here. Ishmael breathes his last breath and then he dies.

Throughout the Bible, there is the concept of the human soul—human life, if you will—which is the life that God breathes into each one of us at birth. For some reason, people make the soul into some weird, ethereal thing. It is not. It is simply our mentality, our volition, our norms and standards, our conscience, etc. The soul is very definable and very easy for even the unbeliever to understand. Apart from this soul, we are nothing. Apart from the soul, we are a lifeless body. And when man acts only upon instinct and upon desires, he has abandoned the thinking of his own soul.

Humanists often deny the human soul, not really knowing what it is. They try to present people as strictly physical creatures, with absolutely no immaterial part whatsoever. To admit that there is something about us that is immaterial would be almost admitting the existence of God.

Now would be a good time to examine the **Doctrine of the Human Soul**.

The short and simple differentiation between the human spirit and the human soul is, we relate to other people by means of our human soul (memory, thinking, emotions, norms and standards); and we relate to God by means of our human spirit (doctrinal content). We do not have a functioning human spirit until we are born again, at which point the human spirit is regenerated (made alive). We will talk about the human spirit next after the doctrine of the human soul.

Doctrine of the Human Soul

1. What the soul is not:
 - 1) The soul is not some mysterious, undefinable, ethereal essence.
 - 2) The soul is not simply the result of biological, chemical and electrical impulses firing off in our brains, which make us think that we are able to think.
 - 3) The soul did not develop by evolution. We were not some grunting heathen with a 10 word vocabulary which evolved into the men that we are today. Various segments of mankind de-evolve; but at almost any time in human history, the full scope of mankind from his best to his worst, from his most primitive to his most advanced exist simultaneously on this earth.
2. *Soul* is often used to translate the feminine noun psuchê (ψυχή) [pronounced psoo-KHAY], which means 1) *breath*; 1a) *the breath of life*; 1a1) *the vital force which animates the body and shows itself in breathing*;

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1a1a) of animals; 1a1b) of men; 1b) life; 1c) that in which there is life; 1c1) a living being, a living soul; 2) the soul; 2a) the seat of the feelings, desires, affections, aversions (our heart, soul etc.). Strong's #5590. When studying the Bible, we need to understand that, the language of the Greek could be nearly as flexible as the English language. That is, a word can have several different meanings often determined contextually. Sometimes *psuchê* is used very technically, as defined in this doctrine; and sometimes it is used in a much more general way.

3. God breathes life into each one of us, and that is the soul. Without this breath-life-soul, we are not alive. Human life is the result of soul life and biological life. After we are born, the electrical signals from the brain indicate a functioning soul. When these signals die, then we are physically dead. Genesis 2:7
4. The real person is the soul. Gen. 2:7 35:18 46:26–27 Psalm 104:29 Matthew 10:28
5. God has designed the human body and human soul to intersect in the brain. The electrical activity in the brain is the function of the human soul.
6. That electrical activity is both soul-life and exceptionally complex circuitry which controls the involuntary functions of the body. For instance, you do not think about maintain your body temperature to 98.5°—it just happens. But it is the circuit board in your brain which makes that happen.
7. The Essence of the Soul (which is the shadow image of God—Genesis 1:26)
 - 1) Self-consciousness. Man is aware of his own existence and is able to relate to both animate life and inanimate objects on earth. Animals have consciousness, but not self-consciousness. 2Samuel 7:18 (And King David came in and sat before Jehovah, and said: Who am I, O Lord Jehovah, and what is my house, that you have brought me to this point?) Psalm 8:4 (What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man, that You interact with him?)
 - 2) Mentality. Self-consciousness is no good without mentality (Prov 19:2). This is the thinking part of man and is composed of two parts.
 - (1) The *mind* or left lobe of the soul.
 - (2) The *heart* or right lobe of the soul contains the frame of reference, memory center, vocabulary and categorical storage, norms and standards, and launching pad for application of knowledge to life.
 - (3) Knowledge enters into the left lobe (the mind); it is believed and then transferred over to the right lobe (the heart). Knowledge which is true and knowledge which is false can be believed; and that begins a layering in the heart. When this knowledge is true and about God, we experience spiritual growth. When this knowledge is false and a part of the cosmic system (= Satan's thinking), then we are building up **scar tissue** of the soul.
 - (4) Emotion is also a part of the mind; and when it begins making decisions, that is when a person goes into **emotional revolt of the soul**.
 - (5) Like much of the technical terminology in Scripture, *mind* and *heart* are not used in this technical sense each and every time these words are found. There are times when these words are virtually interchangeable.
 - 3) Volition. Man has the ability to be negative or positive to anything in life. Volition is given to man in order to resolve the angelic conflict. Joshua 24:15b ("This day choose whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.") God gives all men true volition.
 - 4) Emotion is the appreciator of the soul (Luke 12:19). Emotion responds or reacts to whatever thoughts are in the soul. Ideally speaking, the emotion should be dominated by the right lobe (thinking) of the soul. When emotion controls the soul, there are a variety of negative results: the rejection of the Word of God, the rejection of God, the embracing of liberalism, humanism, etc. In more severe cases, this can result in an emotional and/or mental breakdown. Emotional control of the soul is sometimes described as *emotional revolt of the soul*.
 - 5) Conscience. This is the evaluator of the soul. It contains the norms and standards. Acts 24:16
 - 6) The old sin nature is genetically formed in every cell of the human body. It battles for control of the soul through **sin, human good (HTML) (PDF) (WPD) and evil**. Because we have an **old sin nature**, we are said to be totally depraved. Without Bible doctrine in the soul, you tend to run loose

Doctrine of the Human Soul

- with your old sin nature's area of strength and link this activity with pride. You set up your system of standards and compare yourself to others to further your pride.
8. The soul must be distinguished from the human spirit.
 - 1) Heb. 4:12a reads: **The word of God [is] alive and powerful; sharper than any double-edged sword, and it penetrates deeply enough to effect the division of both the soul and spirit...** Originally man was trichotomous, having a body, soul, and spirit. **Y^ehowah God formed the man out of the dust from the ground [= the body] and breathed the breath [= spirit] of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living soul.** (Gen 2:7)
 - 2) After the fall, man is born dichotomous, having only a body and soul. The spirit of man is short-circuited by the sin nature. **But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God [= Bible doctrine; information about God], for they are foolishness to him, and he is not able to know these things, because they are spiritually discerned.** (1Cor. 2:14). And the natural man simply lacks the human spirit in which to store this information and classify it. **At the last time there will be scoffing skeptics following after their ungodly lusts. In this, they distinguish themselves, being like animals, not having a [human] spirit.** (Jude 18b–19)
 - 3) The believer in Jesus Christ, however, is said to have a body, soul, and spirit (1Thessalonians 5:23). The human spirit is regenerated by God the Holy Spirit at salvation. It is the human spirit that is born again; it is the human spirit where we store Bible doctrine.
 9. Only the soul, not the body, is saved at the point of regeneration. Psalm. 19:7 34:22 Mark 8:36-37 1Peter 1:9 Heb. 10:39
 - 1) Therefore, there is no "healing in the atonement." The body is not saved because the old sin nature resides there. In eternity the soul is given a perfect body minus an old sin nature and minus human good. The only reason that we can have eternal fellowship with God is because we will not have a sin nature and we will not retain or produce human good.
 - 2) Those in eternity who glorify God forever will be those who had maximum Bible doctrine in the soul during their time on earth.
 10. Only the soul, not the body, was made in the image of God. Gen 1:26-27 and Gen 2:7. God is not material but spiritual.
 11. The soul is the source of all basic sin. It is the battleground between the old sin nature and the Holy Spirit. Matthew 10:28 Rom 1:20–22 Eph. 4:17–19 Psalm 143
 12. The soul is the area of the worst sins which are mental attitude sins. Job 21:25 Zech 11:8.
 - 1) The content of the soul is seen when a person speaks. What you truly are is only revealed when you speak.
 - 2) Sins of the tongue reveal mental attitude sins. If you are guilty, arrogant, bitter, or full of revenge, you will talk a certain way—that reveals this content of your soul.
 13. In physical death, the soul departs from the body. Job 27:8 Psalm 16:10 2Corinthians 5:8
 14. However, the soul does not die. Gen. 35:18 1Kings 17:21 1Sam. 28:14-19 2Cor. 5:8 Luke 16 Matt. 17:23 Rev. 6:9-11
 15. The soul will be reunited with some kind of a body in the end times—for the believer, this will be a resurrection body (something which we will discuss at a later date).

Much of this doctrine was taken from <http://dikaosune.com/documents/DoctrineoftheSoul.pdf> and edited (accessed December 17, 2013).

Also used:

http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=549 accessed April 2, 2014.

Wenstrom's [Doctrine of the Human Soul](#) accessed April 2, 2014.

This doctrine is one reason why there is such a push to get you to believe in evolution. God saves the soul; so the idea of evolution is, we really do not have a soul; but we simply have all of these electrical impulses shooting off in our brain, awash with a variety of chemicals, all sloshing about, which cause us to do the things which we do. The idea is, this separates us from the notion of a Creator-God and, at the same time, lessens our own personal responsibility for the things that we do (after all, if these are just chemical reactions and the function of various chemicals, then how much of a choice do we really have?).

Such beliefs lead to both moral relativism as well as belief in the cheapness of human life (survival of the fittest).

This naturally leads to the doctrine:

Like many words, *soul* and *spirit* have technical and nontechnical meanings. Either word may be used to refer to human life. These doctrines define their technical meanings. Their technical meanings do not apply to each and every passage of Scripture.

The human spirit is might be understood as a reflection of the human soul; but directed toward God rather than toward man. The human spirit relates God to ourselves; and the human soul relates other people to ourselves. Man is born with a human spirit that is not functioning or is dormant. When we are born again, that human spirit is regenerated.

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- I. The human spirit is distinguished in Scripture from the human soul.
 - A. Hebrews 4:12 **For the Word of God is alive, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.**
 - B. 2Thessalonians 5:23b **May your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless...**
- II. In the original creation of man, the human spirit was made alive along with the soul.
 - A. Genesis 2:7 **And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the **breath** of lives; and man became a living **soul**.** Note the plural in *Breath of lives*; this refers to the soul and spirit. The bolded words are *spirit* and *soul*.
 - B. We find this soul and spirit spoken of together in Job 7:11 12:10.
- III. The unbeliever is born without a human spirit. He cannot understand spiritual phenomena. He is dichotomous.
 - A. 1 Corinthians 2:14 **But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.**
 - B. We are all born as *natural men*; with a fully-functioning sin nature but without a functioning human spirit.
 - C. Jude 19 **These be they who separate themselves, **sensual**, having not the Spirit.** The word translated *sensual* is *psuchikos* (ψυχικός) [pronounced *psoo-khee-KOSS*], which means, *soulish; natural; unregenerate; of or belonging to breath; having the nature and characteristics of the breath; the principal of animal life, which men have in common with the brutes; governed by breath; the sensuous nature with its subjection to appetite and passion.* Thayer definitions only. Strong's #5591. This is the adjective for the noun *soul*.
 - D. Unregenerate man does not have the apparatus for perception, and he is guided only by his own human IQ.
 - E. God the Holy Spirit acts as a human spirit in the presentation of the Gospel to the unbeliever so that he can be saved.
 1. Genesis 6:3 **And the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."**
 2. John 16:8-11 **"And when He [God the Holy Spirit] is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on Me; Of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."**
 3. 1 Corinthians 2:14-16 **But the natural [= psuchikos] man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who has known the mind of the Lord, that He may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.** R. B. Thieme, Jr., in the **Doctrine of GAP**, spent two hours explaining this short passage.
 - F. At the point of salvation, both the Holy Spirit and the human spirit are given to the believer. Being

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born again means that the human spirit is given life (or is regenerated). We now potentially have a place in our mentality with which to process and store information about God.

- IV. The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is trichotomous: body, soul and spirit.
- A. 1Thessalonians 5:23 *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
 - B. The giving of the human spirit and the Holy Spirit makes human IQ no longer a handicap. Romans 8:16 *The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.*
 - C. Spiritual perception functions under the principle of grace, Holy Spirit, human spirit, and the Word of God.
 - D. The Spiritual IQ of the believer is in the human spirit, and is determined by the amount of the word of God in the human spirit.
 1. Job 32:8 *"But there is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding."*
 2. Ephesians 3:16-19 *That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, **May be able to comprehend with all saints** what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passes all knowledge, that you [all] might be filled with all the fullness of God. The spiritual life occurs within a person's soul and spirit—in the *inner man*. R. B. Thieme, Jr. also spent two hours on this passage in the **Doctrine of GAP**.*
 3. You can be a brilliant person and know virtually nothing about God; you can be a barely functioning adult, and yet have great knowledge of God and the Word of God.
- V. The human spirit is both the target and storage area for the Word of God under the concept of full knowledge.
- A. The filling of the Holy Spirit is necessary to get the Word of God from the Bible to the mind to the human spirit.
 1. John 14:26 *"But the Comforter, Who is the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My Name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you." The Comforter is God the Holy Spirit.*
 2. 1Corinthians 2:9-16 *But as it is written, **Eye has not seen, nor ear heard**, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him. But God has revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who has known the mind of the Lord, that He may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. (Isaiah 64:4)*
 3. 1John 2:27 *But the anointing which you [all] have received of Him abides in you, and you [all] need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you of all things, and is Truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, you [all] will abide in Him.*
 - B. Knowledge of the Word of God in the mind is called gnosis, which has not yet been believed in. It is something that we have been made aware of; and stands as academic knowledge.
 - C. The Word of God which is transferred by faith to the human spirit is called epignosis, *full knowledge* or *rooted doctrine*.
 1. Ephesians 3:17 *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love.*
 2. Colossians 2:6–7, 3:9–10 *As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in*

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Him, being rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his practices... (VW) The new man is the soul and spirit of the growing believer; that is, the believer with Bible doctrine in his soul.

3. The difference between gnosis (= knowledge) and epignosis (= full or complete knowledge) is the expression, **By means of faith**; (pistis). Ephesians 3:17 (above)
 - D. The target therefore for the Word of God is inside the human spirit which becomes the basis of application or wisdom.
- VI. The Word of God is usable only from the human spirit.
- A. Intake of the Word of God into the mind as frame of reference and Divine viewpoint.
 - B. Exhale of the Word toward God and man. The human spirit stores knowledge of God and interacts with God. The human soul stores knowledge about people and interacts with other people. Many decades ago, R. B. Thieme, Jr. developed the **Doctrine of the Edification Complex of the Soul**. The weakness in this doctrine was, there was no differentiation made between our relationship with other people and with God. See the **God-ward and the man-ward sides of the Edification Complex** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). This doctrine will show the original edification complex structure and the revised version. The God-ward side is the human spirit and the man-ward side is the human soul.
 - C. Bible doctrine in the soul results in having eyes in your soul.
 - D. Bible doctrine in the soul results in maturity of the soul. Ephesians 4:12-16, 20-24 **For the perfecting [or, maturing] of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; until we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ [that is, spiritual maturity]; That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. But speaking the Truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ; From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. But you [all] have not so learned Christ; If so be that you [all] have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the Truth is in Jesus; That you [all] put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that you [all] put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.** All of the body working together is the function of various believers who are spiritually mature, so that their gifts are all functioning without there being inordinate competition or people working in cross purposes with one another.
- VII. Since the Word of God in the human spirit is the basis for spiritual IQ (Ephesians 3:16-19), the human spirit is the area of refreshment.
- A. 2Corinthians 7:13 **Therefore we were comforted in your comfort; yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy to Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.**
 - B. The Word of God stored in the human spirit constitutes the basis for grace orientation.
- VIII. It is the human spirit that goes to God at death. Acts 7:59

From http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=181 accessed December 17, 2013; and is probably ultimately attributable to R. B. Thieme, Jr. Edited and appended.

See also:

[Doctrine of Soul & Spirit](#) (probably attributable to R. B. Thieme, Jr.)

Dano's [Doctrine of the Human Spirit](#)

Wenstrom's [Doctrine of the Human Spirit](#).

Baytown's Grace Bible Church's [Doctrine of the Human Spirit](#).

At the moment that a person breathes his last or the moment when the soul leaves the body, that is when the person has died. Both believers and unbelievers have souls; only the believer has a human spirit.

Back to the family of Ishmael:

Genesis 25:17c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âçaph (אָפַח) [pronounced aw-SAHF]	<i>to be assembled, to be gathered, to assemble, to gather</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #622 BDB #62
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'am (אָם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: ...and was gathered to his people.

Again, the Hebrews understood that physical death was not the end of our existence, and that we would still live. Ishmael and his mother were certainly believers; as is likely true for all of his sons. Therefore, the Bible lists them to both honor them and to glorify God, Who gave them eternal life.

Genesis 25:17 These [are] the years of Ishmael's life: 137 years. He breathed his last breath, died and was gathered to his people. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:17 Ishmael lived a full life of 137 years before he breathed his last breath, died, and was gathered to his people. (Kukis paraphrase)

Wenstrom: *The expression gathered to his people" is always used with reference to believers (Abraham in Genesis 25:8; Isaac in Genesis 35:29; Jacob in Genesis 49:33; Aaron in Numbers 20:24, 26; Deuteronomy 35:20).*¹⁵⁰

I can't believe that I forgot to spend more time on this topic (I have touched on it in a couple of places).

Wenstrom on, why Ishmael was saved

The expression gathered to his people" is always used with reference to believers (Abraham in Genesis 25:8; Isaac in Genesis 35:29; Jacob in Genesis 49:33; Aaron in Numbers 20:24, 26; Deuteronomy 35:20).

Further indicating that he was saved is that it would seem highly likely that Abraham spent a good deal of time speaking of the Lord to Ishmael and that Ishmael would have accepted the Lord as his Savior. Ishmael lived under Abraham's authority until he was seventeen and then he was expelled.

Also, according to Genesis 17:25, Ishmael entered into the Abrahamic covenant by being circumcised at thirteen years of age indicating that he had accepted the Lord as his Savior.

¹⁵⁰ Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

Wenstrom on, why Ishmael was saved

Furthermore, as we saw in Genesis 16, Hagar, Ishmael's mother was saved and undoubtedly told Ishmael of the Lord who delivered her in the wilderness of Shur. Although, the Lord in Genesis 16:12 prophesied that Ishmael would be a "wild donkey of man" does "not" imply that he was not saved but only serves as a description of his character and that of his descendants.

Also, Paul teaches in Galatians 4:29 that Ishmael was born of the flesh and Isaac of the Spirit but this does not indicate that Ishmael was saved and Isaac was not. But rather it refers to the fact that Isaac was born miraculously by the power of the Spirit like all believers through regeneration and that Ishmael was not born miraculously like Isaac.

The fact that the Lord informs Abraham that He will make His covenant with Isaac does "not" mean that Ishmael was not saved and Isaac was not but rather it means that Isaac would be in the line of the human nature of Jesus Christ and Ishmael would not. Therefore, when Genesis 25:18 states that Ishmael was "gathered to his people" it means that like his father Abraham, he went to a compartment of Hades or Sheol called, "Paradise" that was the abode of the saved prior to the ascension of Jesus Christ.

Add to this that God spoke to Hagar on at least two occasions, giving her comfort and sustenance at the time. Hagar obviously had to have believed in Abraham's God; and this would have been logically passed along to her son.

Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

And so they live from Havilah as far as Shur which [is] against faces of Egypt [as] your going Assyrian-ward, against faces of all his brothers he fell.

Genesis
25:18

Ishmael's sons resided from Havilah to Shur, which [is] facing [or, east of] Egypt [as] you go towards Assyria. He fell [possibly, settled] before all his brothers.

Ishmael's sons resided all the way from Havilah to Shur, east of Egypt, along a trade route which goes to Assyria. Ishmael settled before all his relatives.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so they live from Havilah as far as Shur which [is] against faces of Egypt [as] your going Assyrian-ward, against faces of all his brothers he fell.
Targum of Onkelos	And they dwelt from Hindiki unto Chalutsa, which is in face of Mizraim from going up to Athur. Before the face of all his brethren <u>he dwelt in his possession</u> .
Jerusalem targum	In their villages, and in their fenced dwellings (or encampments). Twelve chiefs of their peoples. And they dwelt from Hindekaia unto Chalutsa, which is by the side of Mizraim, from thy going up towards Arthur. Before all his brethren <u>he dwelt</u> .
Latin Vulgate	And he dwelt from Hevila as far as Sur, which looketh towards Egypt, to them that go towards the Assyrians. He died in the presence of all his brothers.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And they <u>dwelt</u> from Havilah as far as Shud, which extends from the border of Egypt to the gateway of Assyria; he dwelt adjacent to the lands of all his brethren.
Septuagint (Greek)	And he dwelt from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt, until one comes to the Assyrians; he <u>dwelt</u> in the presence of all his brethren.

Significant differences: The Jerusalem targum has some previous material added here. The names of the first two places are quite different in the Hebrew. The targum ends differently. Both the Syriac and Greek have *dwelt* rather than *fell*. See the discussion below under this particular section.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And their country was from Havilah to Shur which is east of Egypt: they took their place to the east of all their brothers.
Easy English	Ishmael's *descendants lived in the area from Havilah to Shur. The area is opposite Egypt. The area is on the way towards Assyria. Ishmael went to live opposite all his brothers.
Easy-to-Read Version	Ishmael's descendants camped throughout the desert area. This area went from Havilah to Shur, near Egypt. And it went from Shur all the way to Assyria. Ishmael's descendants often attacked his brothers' people.
God's Word™	His descendants lived as nomads from the region of Havilah to Shur, which is near Egypt, in the direction of Assyria. They all fought with each other.
Good News Bible (TEV)	The descendants of Ishmael lived in the territory between Havilah and Shur, to the east of Egypt on the way to Assyria. They lived apart from the other descendants of Abraham.
The Message	His children settled down all the way from Havilah near Egypt eastward to Shur in the direction of Assyria. The Ishmaelites didn't get along with any of their kin.
NIRV	His children settled in the area between Havilah and Shur. It was near the eastern border of Egypt, as you go toward Asshur.
New Simplified Bible	His descendants lived as nomads from the region of Havilah to Shur. This is near Egypt, in the direction of Assyria. He died in the presence of all his brothers.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	He established camps [LXX; MT they established camps] from Havilah to Shur, which is near Egypt on the road to Assyria. He died [Or He fell] among all of his brothers.
Contemporary English V.	Ishmael had settled in the land east of his brothers, and his sons settled everywhere from Havilah to Shur, east of Egypt on the way to Asshur. Ishmael was one hundred thirty-seven when he died. The CEV combined vv. 17–18.
New Century Version	His descendants lived from Havilah to Shur, which is east of Egypt stretching toward Assyria. They often attacked the descendants of his brothers.
New Life Bible	His people lived from Havilah as far as Shur, east of Egypt on the way toward Assyria. He lived away from all his brothers.
New Living Translation	Ishmael's descendants occupied the region from Havilah to Shur, which is east of Egypt in the direction of Asshur. There they lived in open hostility toward all their relatives [The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.].

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	[IshmaEl] lived [in the area] from Evilat [in the northeast] to Sur [in the southwest], from Assyria to just across from Egypt. He lived there among all of his family.
International Standard V	His descendants [Lit. <i>They</i>] settled from Havilah to Shur (that's near Egypt), all the way to Assyria, in defiance [Lit. <i>in the face of</i>] of all of his relatives.
Today's NIV	His descendants settled in the area from Havilah to Shur, near the eastern border of Egypt, as you go toward Ashur. And they lived in hostility toward [Or lived to the east of] all the tribes related to them.

Translation for Translators His descendants «settled/went to live» in the area between Shur and Havilah, near the border of Egypt as a person travels toward Asshur. All of their camps were close to each other (OR, they all frequently attacked each other).

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear They dwelled in front of the trade-route coming from West-Arabia and Egypt to North-Iraq. He fell in front of all his brothers.

Ferar-Fenton Bible ...and they took him from Havilah to the Wall which is between Egypt and the road to Ashur, laying him with all his relatives.

Leupold They had their dwelling place (in the region) from Havilah unto Shur, which lies east of Egypt in the direction of Assyria. He settled to the east of all his brethren.

Lexham English Bible They settled from Havilah to Shur, which [was] opposite Egypt, going toward Asshur, opposite; he {settled} opposite all his brothers.

NIV – UK His descendants settled in the area from Havilah to Shur, near the eastern border of Egypt, as you go towards Ashur. And they lived in hostility towards [Or lived to the east of] all the tribes related to them.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

New Advent Bible And he dwelt from Hevila as far as Sur, which looks towards Egypt, to them that go towards the Assyrians. He died in the presence of all his brethren.

Christian Community Bible His descendants lived in the territory stretching from Havilah to Shur, near the border of Egypt in the direction of Assyria. They have been fighting continually among themselves.

The Heritage Bible And they dwelt from Havilah to Shur, that is before the face of Egypt, as you go toward Assyria, and he died before the face of all his brothers.

New American Bible The Ishmaelites ranged from Havilah-by-Shur, which is on the border of Egypt, all the way to Asshur; and each of them pitched camp in opposition to his various kinsmen. Pitched camp: literally "fell"; the same Hebrew verb is used in Judges 7:12 in regard to the hostile encampment of Bedouin tribes. The present passage shows the fulfillment of the prediction contained in Genesis 16:12.

New American Bible (R.E.) The Ishmaelites ranged from Havilah, by Shur, which is on the border of Egypt, all the way to Asshur; and they pitched camp [lit., "fell"; the same Hebrew verb is used in Jgs 7:12 in regard to the hostile encampment of desert tribes. The present passage shows the fulfillment of the prediction contained in Gn 16:12.] alongside their various kindred.

New Jerusalem Bible He lived in the territory stretching from Havilah-by-Shur just outside Egypt on the way to Assyria, and he held his own against all his kinsmen.

New RSV They settled from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt in the direction of Assyria; he settled down [Heb he fell] alongside [Or down in opposition to] all his people.

Revised English Bible Ishmael's sons inhabited the land from Havilah to Shur, which is east of Egypt on the way to Asshur; he himself had settled to the east of his brothers.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible Yishma'el's sons lived between Havilah and Shur, near Egypt as you go toward Ashur; he settled near all his kinsmen.

exeGesés companion Bible And they tabernacle from Havilah to Shur, at the face of Misrayim as you go toward Ashshur: and he falls facing all his brothers.

Kaplan Translation [His descendants] lived in the area from Havilah to Shur (which borders on Egypt), all the way to Assyria [All the way to the north; see Genesis 2:14, 10:11. Some

associate this with Asshurim mentioned in Genesis 25:3.]. **They overran all their brethren** [(Cf. Rashi; Hirsch). See Genesis 16:12. This would mean that the Ishmaelite Arabs would take over the territory of Abraham's other sons, dominating the entire Middle East. Literally, 'on the face of all his brethren he fell.' Others interpret it, 'He traveled among all his brothers' as a nomad (Ibn Ezra). Another interpretation is, 'He died in the presence of all his brethren' (Ibn Ezra). See note on Genesis 37:28.].

Orthodox Jewish Bible

And they dwelt from Chavilah unto Shur, that is near Mitzrayim, as thou goest toward Assyria; they took their place east of their brethren.

The Scriptures 1998

And they dwelt from Hāwilah as far as Shur, which is east of Mitsrayim as you go toward Ashshur. He settled before all his brothers.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible

And [Ishmael's sons] dwelt from Havilah to Shur, which is before Egypt in the direction of Assyria. [Ishmael] dwelt close [to the lands] of all his brethren.

The Expanded Bible

His descendants lived from Havilah to Shur, which is east of Egypt stretching toward Assyria [the area from the northern Sinai to the border of western Mesopotamia, the area of Arab tribes]. They often attacked [or settled among; fell on] the descendants of his brothers.

Kretzmann's Commentary

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. That was the extent of the Ishmaelites' territory in later years, from the stream of Egypt on the southwest and Havilah in Arabia Deserta on the southeast to the Euphrates on the northeast. So Ishmael, in his descendants, fell upon, settled, took possession of, this country, in the presence of, next to his brethren, on the boundary of the Promised Land.

NET Bible®

His descendants [Heb "they"; the referent (Ishmael's descendants) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] settled from Havilah to Shur, which runs next [Heb "which is by the face of," or near the border. The territory ran along the border of Egypt.] to Egypt all the way [Heb "as you go."] to Asshur [The name Asshur refers here to a tribal area in the Sinai]. They settled [Heb "he fell."] away from all their relatives [Heb "upon the face of all his brothers." This last expression, obviously alluding to the earlier oracle about Ishmael (Gen 16:12), could mean that the descendants of Ishmael lived in hostility to others or that they lived in a territory that was opposite the lands of their relatives. While there is some ambiguity about the meaning, the line probably does give a hint of the Ishmaelite-Israelite conflicts to come.].

The Voice

His descendants settled into the regions from Havilah to Shur, opposite Egypt in the direction of Assyria. They lived on the fringes of civilization, at odds with all his relatives.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

American KJV

And they dwelled from Havilah to Shur, that is before Egypt, as you go toward Assyria: and he died in the presence of all his brothers.

Concordant Literal Version

And tabernacling are they from Havilah unto Shur, which is adjoining Egypt, as you come to Assyria. It falls to him to be adjoining all his brothers.

A Conservative Version

And they dwelt from Havilah to Shur which is before Egypt, as thou go toward Assyria. He abode opposite all his brothers.

Context Group Version

And they dwelt from Havilah to Shur that is before Egypt, as you go toward Assyria. He abode across from all his brothers.

Darby Translation

And they dwelt from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite to Egypt, as one goes towards Assyria. He settled before the face of all his brethren.

English Standard Version	They settled from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt in the direction of Assyria. He settled over against all his kinsmen.
The updated Geneva Bible	And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that [is] before Egypt, as you go toward Assyria: [and] he died in the presence of all his brothers. He means that his lot fell to dwell among his brethren as the angel promised
LTHB	And they lived from Havilah to Shur, which is facing Egypt as you come toward Assyria; he settled facing all his brothers.
NASB	They settled [Lit dwelt] from Havilah to Shur which is east [Lit before] of Egypt as one goes [Lit as you go] toward Assyria; he settled [Lit fell over against] in defiance of all his relatives [Lit brothers].
New King James Version	(They dwelt from Havilah as far as Shur, which is east of Egypt as you go toward Assyria.) He died in the presence of all his brethren.
World English Bible	They lived from Havilah to Shur that is before Egypt, as you go toward Assyria. He lived opposite all his relatives.
Young's Updated LT	And they tabernacle from Havilah unto Shur, which is before Egypt, in your going towards Asshur; in the presence of all his brothers has he fallen.

The gist of this verse: The sons of Ishmael lived along a trade route that ran between Havilah and Shur, and continued all the way to Asshur.

Genesis 25:18a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâkan (שָׁקַן) [pronounced shaw-KAHN]	<i>to tabernacle, to pitch a tent; to dwell, to reside, to live in, to domicile at, to settle, to settle down, to encamp</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7931 BDB #1014
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Chăvîylâh (חַוִּילָה) [pronounced khuh-vee-LAW]	<i>circle; sand-land, sand region, wet sand and is transliterated Havilah, Chavilah</i>	proper noun, location	Strong's #2341 BDB #296
'ad (עַד) [pronounced gahd]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
Shûwr (שׁוּר) [pronounced sher]	<i>wall, fortress and is transliterated Shur</i>	proper noun, location	Strong's #7793 BDB #1004

A place southwest of Palestine on the eastern border or within the border of Egypt; the Israelites passed through the wilderness of Shur after crossing the Red Sea

Translation: Ishmael's sons resided from Havilah to Shur,...

The sons of Ishmael resided over an area that began in Havilah and extended as far as Shur (maps will follow).

Wenstrom: *The twelve sons of Ishmael and their families [settled in Havilah to Shur]. "Havilah" was located in the region East of Egypt in northwest Arabia (see 1 Samuel 15:7). The name "Shur" means*

“wall” and was a city on the borders of Egypt and Palestine and a comparison of Genesis 20:1, 25:18, 1 Samuel 15:7 and 27:8 indicates that it clearly lies near the northern border of Egypt in the Sinai peninsula in the modern Suez region.¹⁵¹

Snider, instead, suggests that the location of Havilah is rather tenuous: *some place it on eastern side of Arabian peninsula, others toward the west in modern Saudi Arabia, north of Yemen.*¹⁵²

Driver: *If Havilah (ii. 11) be in NE. Arabia, and Shur is the part of the Sinaitic Peninsula bordering on Egypt (xvi. 7), the positions, so far as they have been determined above, of the Ishmaelite tribes would fall mostly within the limits assigned.*¹⁵³

Wenstrom on Ishmael and the People of Ishmael

Genesis 25:12-18 records that Ishmael was the progenitor of twelve tribes who settled in the region from Havilah to Shur in the Arabian Desert and were hostile to their neighbors.

“Havilah” was located in the region East of Egypt in northwest Arabia (see 1 Samuel 15:7) whereas “Shur” was a city on the borders of Egypt and Palestine and a comparison of Genesis 20:1, 25:18, 1 Samuel 15:7 and 27:8 indicates that it clearly lies near the northern border of Egypt in the Sinai peninsula in the modern Suez region.

The fact that twelve princes originated from Ishmael is a fulfillment of the Lord’s prophecy to Abraham that is recorded in Genesis 17:20.

Genesis 17:20, “As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I will bless him, and will make him fruitful and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.”

Like Abraham, Ishmael was a believer since Genesis 25:17 records that he was “gathered to his people,” which is always used with reference to believers (Abraham in Genesis 25:8; Isaac in Genesis 35:29; Jacob in Genesis 49:33; Aaron in Numbers 20:24, 26; Deuteronomy 35:20).

From https://www.gracenotes.info/bible_studies/genesis.pdf (Genesis 28:8–9); accessed May 28, 2017.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

From https://www.gracenotes.info/bible_studies/genesis.pdf (Genesis 28:13); accessed May 29, 2017.

Genesis 25:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	that, which, when, who, whom	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gah]	upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
pânîym (פְּנֵיַם) [pronounced paw- NEEM]	face, faces, countenance; presence	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

¹⁵¹ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

¹⁵² From <http://makarios-online.org/notes/genesis/gen25.doc> accessed June 16, 2015.

¹⁵³ From Driver's *The Book of Genesis*; accessed July 1, 2015 (Genesis xxv). Driver adds: *See Genesis xvi. 7; and of 1 Samuel xv. 7 (where, however, 'from Havilah' can scarcely be the correct text)..*

Genesis 25:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Mits ^e rayim (מִצְרַיִם) [pronounced mits-RAH-yim]	double straights; transliterated Mizraim; also Egypt, Egyptians ⁸⁰⁴	proper noun	Strong's #4714 BDB #595

Translation: ...which [is] facing [or, east of] Egypt...

The place where the sons of Ishmael lived was east of Egypt. Now, there are two different maps which place Havilah in very different places.

Genesis 25:18c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
bōw' (אוּב) [pronounced boh]	entering [coming, going, advancing] [in]; those entering [going, coming (in)]	Qal active participle with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'Ashshûwr (אַשּׁוּר) [pronounced ahsh-SHOOR]	a step; successful; transliterated Asshur, Assur or Assyria	proper singular noun gentilic/territory with the directional hê	Strong's #804 & #838 BDB #78

The hê locale: However, this word, after a verb of motion, has the locale *âh* (ה) ending. This is called the *directive hê* or the *he locale*, which often indicates direction and puts somewhat of an adverbial spin on the noun. Essentially, it answers the question *where?* The pronunciation of the word does not change. The directional hê indicates the direction in which something moves. It is often used with the noun *heaven* and the most literal rendering in the English would be *heavenward*. We can also indicate the existence of the hê directional by supplying the prepositions *to* or *toward*.

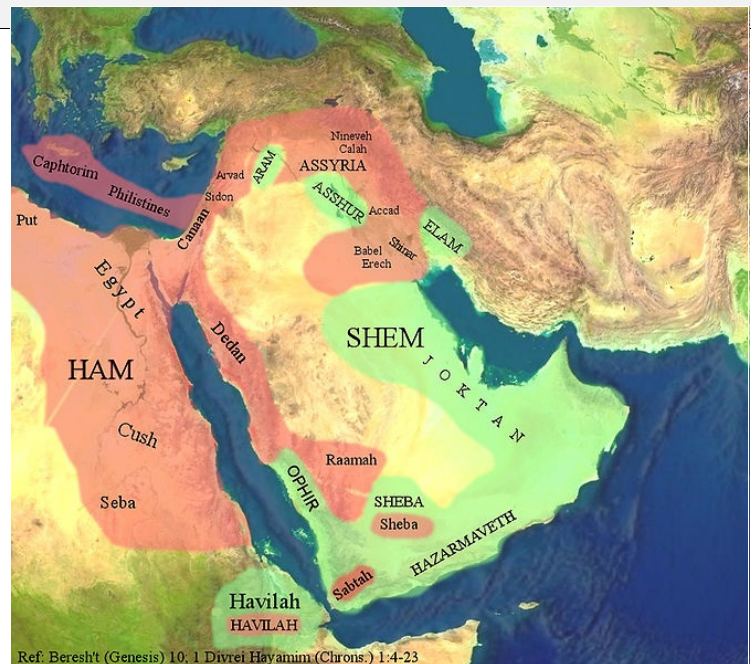
Translation: ...[as] you go towards Assyria.

I believe that Assyria here indicates a direction rather than a location.

Genesis 25:18a-c Ishmael's sons resided from Havilah to Shur, which [is] facing [or, east of] Egypt [as] you go towards Assyria. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:18a-c And they lived from Havilah to Shur, which is before Egypt, as you go toward Assyria.

Map of the Location of the Tribes of Ishmael



Ref. Beresh't (Genesis) 10, 1 Divrei Hayamim (Chron.) 1:4-23

You will notice Havilah in the deep southern portion of this map. Shur is the other side of the water from Havilah.

From:

<http://bigfaithministries.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/land-of-ham-and-shem-map1.jpg>

There are two fixed places mentioned that we know where they are: Egypt and Assyria. This somewhat explains the two radically different locations of Havilah—one is place opposite Egypt and the other one is placed opposite Assyria.

Driver says that Assyrian cannot possibly be correct direction. He suggests¹⁵⁴ this might even read *upon Shur*, which would require us to leave out several letters.



Alternate Map of Ishmael's Sons

You will notice that this time, Havilah is located way over in what is now Iraq. That changes everything. This will be discussed below.

From:

<http://www.bible.ca/archeology/maps-bible-archeology-exodus-ishmaelites-amalekites.jpg>

This does not necessarily mean that the sons of Ishmael are stretched out all the way from Shur to Assyria. If that were the case, as the second map suggests, then they might as well be said to be living between Shur and Assyria. Or go from Shur as far as Havilah in Assyria (or, in the Chaldees).

I think the best sense of this is found in the Ancient Roots Translinear Bible translation: *They dwelled in front of the trade-route coming from West-Arabia and Egypt to North-Iraq. He fell in front of all his brothers.* The trade route eventually got as far as North-Iraq (Asshur). So, they spread out along the western section of this trade route, as that seemed to be beneficial to them.

Egypt and Assyria would have both traded with one another and been at war with one another; so there would be a way to go from Egypt to Assyria. Havilah and Shur would have been on that route. One of those would be right next to Egypt; and the other would be *on the way towards Assyria*. It could be that this family began to expand more and more towards Assyria as time went on.

Clarke feels differently, that they covered much more area: *The descendants of Ishmael possessed all that country which extends from east to west, from Havilah on the Euphrates, near its junction with the Tigris, to the desert of Shur eastward of Egypt; and which extends along the isthmus of Suez, which separates the Red Sea from the Mediterranean.*¹⁵⁵ This would be like the second map.

The problem that I see with the second map is, *why mention Assyria at all?* If the sons of Ishmael are on basically a west-east line stretching all the way to the Euphrates-Tigris junction, then *going toward Assyria* is not really an issue. My observation is apt, as Clarke, after making the statement above, tries to explain what *going to Assyria*

¹⁵⁴ From Driver's [The Book of Genesis](#); accessed July 1, 2015 (Genesis xxv).

¹⁵⁵ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:18.

means. Furthermore, that is a huge amount of ground, even for this family to live on. A more likely explanation is, Shur lies on the route from Egypt to Assyria, so this may be a way of designating that.

Let's compare our text—Ishmael's sons resided from Havilah to Shur, which [is] facing [or, east of] Egypt [as] you go towards Assyria—with 1Sam. 15:7¹⁵⁶ And Saul defeated the Amalekites from Havilah as far as Shur, which is east of Egypt. If this is the same Havilah (which would make sense, as it is named in connection with Shur), then Havilah would not be very far from Israel proper—and Havilah might be more northern bearing (which would be on a route from Egypt to Assyria). Given that sensibility, the previous maps would be incorrect in their placement of Havilah. The other option is, Havilah is between Shur and Egypt, as is on the first map; and that could be the region occupied to the sons of Ishmael.

Keil and Delitzsch give a pretty reasonable understanding of these boundaries: *Havilah and Shur therefore formed the south-eastern and south-western boundaries of the territories of the Ishmaelites, from which they extended their nomadic excursions towards the N.E. as far as the districts under Assyrian rule, i.e., to the lands of the Euphrates, traversing the whole of the desert of Arabia, or (as Josephus says, Ant. i. 12, 4) dwelling from the Euphrates to the Red Sea.*¹⁵⁷ This movement further into the east would have occurred much later in the history of the Ishmaelites.

Genesis 25:18d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, ʿal and pânîym mean <i>upon the face of, facing, in front of, before (as in preference to), in addition to, overlooking</i> .			
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]; also kôl (כָּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>all, all things, the whole, totality, the entirety, everything</i>	masculine singular noun without the definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʾâch (אָח) [pronounced <i>awhk</i>]	<i>brothers, kinsmen, close relatives; tribesmen; fellow-countrymen</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26
nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced <i>naw-FAHL</i>]	<i>to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply; to desert</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect; pausal form	Strong's #5307 BDB #656

¹⁵⁶ Although ISBE calls this text questionable, both the Hebrew and Greek are in agreement here on *Havilah*. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Havilah.

¹⁵⁷ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:17–18.

Genesis 25:18d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
<p>Extended Qal meanings: <i>to fall [to the ground, in battle], to die, to die a violent death; a man felled [by sickness]; [a building] falling down [in decay]; about to fall, about to come to ruin; [a fetus] falling out [or, being born, being aborted]; to fall away [used of members of a body]; [a face being] cast down [in sorrow], to fall down, to come down [from heaven], to descend; [sleep, terror, calamity] to fall upon [anyone]; to throw oneself, to cast oneself; to rush upon; to fall prostrate, to prostrate oneself; to fall upon someone [in affection]; to fall upon [an enemy], to attack; to alight [from a beast or chariot], to let oneself down; to encamp [as an army]; [a prayer] to fall before [someone for consideration, to be heard]; to fall away, to desert, to defect.</i>¹⁵⁸ I hope that the relationship is clear between the basic meaning, <i>to fall</i>, and the extended understanding of this verb.</p>			

Translation: He fell [possibly, settled] before all his brothers.

Now, this is the difficult portion of this verse. The verb found here usually means that he falls down dead before these people. That is the common use. There does not appear to be an easy meaning to indicate that somehow Ishmael is living in opposition to his people, or in front of them, or whatever—because we are stuck with this verb. 3 ancient translation suggest that Ishmael lived somewhere in opposition to his sons; one simply translates this *to die*, as is the most common meaning.

Genesis 25:18 Ishmael's sons resided from Havilah to Shur, which [is] facing [or, east of] Egypt [as] you go towards Assyria. He fell [possibly, settled] before all his brothers. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:18 Ishmael's sons resided all the way from Havilah to Shur, east of Egypt, along a trade route which goes to Assyria. Ishmael settled before all his relatives. (Kukis paraphrase)

Several attempt to tie this to Genesis 16:11–12, where God tells Hagar what her son would be like: *And the angel of the LORD said to her, "Behold, you are pregnant and shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, because the LORD has listened to your affliction. He shall be a wild ass of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen."* Most of us are familiar with family disagreements and anger between family members which, at times, lasts for decades. We are not aware of Ishmael having a falling out with Isaac, except for their youth when he was sent away (Ishmael may have been bitter; Isaac would have been too young to even know what was going on). So, there are two possible interpretations of this: either Ishmael had a falling out with all of his sons, which further kept them all separated; or that the descendants of Ishmael would be against virtually everyone. That latter understanding seems to have been clearly fulfilled in time, as Arabs are infamous for being stubborn, hard-headed and warlike. More than likely, both of these interpretations are true, although we have observed less of the personal application.

The word translated *to fall, to die*, is the Qal perfect of nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced *naw-FAHL*], which means *to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply; to desert*. Strong's #5307 BDB #656. This sounds like more than just a simple death. He obviously lived a long life; but we have no idea what transpired at the end. However, since his death is recorded in the previous verse, there is likely a different meaning to be taken by this verse.

¹⁵⁸ Taken from H. W. F. Gesenius, *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*; ©1979 by Baker Books; p. 557.

Commentators on Genesis 16:18d (**He fell [or, settled] before all his brothers.**)

Commentator	Opinion
John Calvin	<i>The word לפנ (naphal) sometimes signifies to lie down, or to rest, and also to dwell. The simple assertion therefore of Moses is, that a habitation was given to Ishmael opposite his brethren, so that he should indeed be a neighbor to them, and yet should have his distinct boundaries.</i> ¹⁵⁹
<p>This final phrase is quite interesting. <i>In the presence of</i> is actually a preposition and a plural noun, which together mean <i>upon the face of, facing, in front of, before (as in preference to), in addition to, overlooking</i>. This does not mean that all Ishmael's brothers were there when he died (as far as we know, there is only Isaac); it could simply indicate that Isaac and his family members lived fairly close to one another. All of the information found in this chapters about Ishmael and about his family indicates some interaction between Isaac and Ishmael after they became adults.</p>	
<p>Who are Ishmael's brothers? There is Isaac, of course; but then there are the sons of Abraham by Ketura, who were sent towards the east. <i>Brothers</i> can also refer to a family of people, which may simply refer to Ishmael's descendants, who became a people.</p>	
Dr. John Gill	Gill takes a different approach (he is not the only commentator who looks at it this way): <i>and he died in the presence of all his brethren; they being present when he died, or in peace with them, in all prosperity along with them: but since his death is spoken of before, and here the situation of his posterity, the words may be read, "it fell in the presence of his brethren"; his lot, or the habitation of his posterity fell by lot between his brethren the Egyptians on one side of him, and the Israelites on the other; or between the sons of Keturah on the east, and the posterity of Isaac on the west.</i> ¹⁶⁰ The use of this word with <i>lot</i> is found in Leviticus 16:9,10 Num 33:54 Joshua 16:1. The only problem is, there is no word for <i>lot</i> anywhere.
Matthew Henry	Matthew Henry has a different approach: <i>Those words, he fell in the presence of all his brethren, whether they mean, as we take them, he died, or, as others, his lot fell, are designed to show the fulfilling of that word to Hagar (Genesis 16:12—The Angel of the Lord told Hagar: "He shall be a wild donkey of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen."), He shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren, that is, he shall flourish and be eminent among them, and shall hold his own to the last.</i> ¹⁶¹
Keil and Delitzsch	<i>Thus, according to the announcement of the angel, Ishmael "encamped in the presence of all his brethren." לפנ, to throw one's self, to settle down, with the subordinate idea of keeping by force the place you have taken (Judges 7:12 <i>And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the people of the East lay along the valley like locusts in abundance, and their camels were without number, as the sand that is on the seashore in abundance</i>).</i> ¹⁶²
Ron Snider	<i>[This Greek word means] to fall, to fall down, to alight from a camel in Gen. 24, to fall in battle, to fall in an area is to reside there, or end up there, see Judges 7:12.</i> ¹⁶³

¹⁵⁹ John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentary on the Bible*; 2nd beta version from e-Sword, Genesis 25:18.

¹⁶⁰ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:18. Apparently, this is the opinion of Aben Ezra, Kimchi, Ben Gersom, and Ben Melech.

¹⁶¹ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:11–18.

¹⁶² Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:17–18. The word *lay* is the same verb. Although I like Keil and Delitzsch's explanation, the verb in Judges 7:12 may be used simply because of the locust reference.

¹⁶³ From <http://makarios-online.org/notes/genesis/gen25.doc> accessed June 16, 2015.

Commentators on Genesis 16:18d (He fell [or, settled] before all his brothers.)

Commentator	Opinion
William Wenstrom, Jr.	The verb niph'al has a wide range of meanings in the Old Testament, from a simply physical fall to the violence of death in battle, each stemming from the meaning "to fall." In Genesis 25:18, the verb niph'al means that Ishmael, "died" in opposition to all his relatives, which parallels the statement concerning him in Genesis 16:12 that he "lived" in opposition to all his relatives.
Wenstrom, con't	The statement "he (Ishmael) settled in defiance of all his relatives" is a fulfillment of the Lord's prophecy to his mother Hagar in Genesis 16:12. Genesis 16:12 "He will be a wild donkey of a man, his hand will be against everyone, and everyone's hand will be against him; And he will live to the east of all his brothers."
Wenstrom, con't	The Lord prophesied that Ishmael would wander the deserts like a wild donkey and would be a man who loved the freedom of roaming the desert, but would be constantly in conflict with others. It is implied that he would also be a man of courage but would be an aggressor full of hostility.
Wenstrom, con't	The expression "to the east" is incorrectly translated since it is composed of the preposition 'al (אל) [pronounced <i>gah</i>], which means, "against" and the preposition pānīym (פָּנִיִּם) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>], which means, "in the face of" and therefore, should be translated "he will live in opposition to all his brothers." This prophecy indicates that Ishmael and his descendants, who are the Arabs would live in opposition to their blood relatives and in particular the Jews who are related to the Arabs since they share the same father, Abraham. ¹⁶⁴

I think the combination of Keil and Delitzsch and Wenstrom explain this. Keil and Delitzsch show that this verb has some alternate meanings, and Wenstrom points out that this fulfills prophecy.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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In any case, if Ishmael dies at age 137, then this would be nearly 50 years after his father Abraham dies (which is the subject of the previous part of this chapter). This would suggest that Ishmael had a very full and excellent life.

What is described here is southern Jordan and a portion of Saudi Arabia. It is possible to translate the gist of this verse as them settling in defiance of their relatives, but recall that Abraham had sent Hagar and Ishmael away. Where they settled is a logical stopping point. Therefore, I would not interpret this as a move which implies animosity and the verse should not reflect animosity which doesn't exist at this time.

There are about 10 toloboth sections of Genesis.

Snider Summarizes Genesis 25:12–18

1. vs 12-18 contain the shortest of all the 10 distinct sections of Genesis. toloboth used 10 times to divide the book.
2. It is devoted to Ishmael, who was an illegitimate son of Abraham through the servant, Hagar. Gen. 16
3. This came about due to the lack of faith-rest by Sarah in regard to the promise of an heir.
4. Abraham capitulated and the result was Ishmael and ultimately these descendants.
5. The sons of Ishmael refer to his direct descendants, sons in the strictest sense of the word.
6. They are 12 in number as was previously foretold. Gen. 17:20

¹⁶⁴ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

Snider Summarizes Genesis 25:12–18

7. They are listed in the order of their birth, which is somewhat unusual, since Moses has not done this
8. Each of these sons became a prince or leader of a particular group of Semitic Arabs.
9. They occupied the general area from Shur, the wilderness area just E. of Egypt east across the Sinai and esp. the Arabian peninsula.
10. They were somewhat nomadic but organized into tribes or clans which tended to stick together.
11. They did not organize to the point of establishing cities or permanent dwelling places, but lived in what we might call tent cities.
12. Their existence is documented in Assyrian records, the most important tribe being mentioned being Nebaioth and Jetur.
13. The land which the Midianites, a descendant of Keturah, and the Ishmaelites, descendants of Ishmael occupied was later attributed to the Amalekites, descendants of Esau. cp Gen. 25:18; ISam. 15:7
14. These groups had several things in common including their nomadic lifestyle and lack of organized cities, and their anti-Semitism.
15. They are consistently seen to be on the wrong side of God's Plan and outside the auspices of the Abrahamic covenant.
16. Each one of Ishmael's sons rises to power and eventually their names became the name of the particular place in which they lived.
17. Such was often the case in the settlement of new areas, the place being assigned the name of the most notable settler or leader.
18. Ishmael lived a total of 137 years, and died a believer.
19. We must now correct a misconception which has been passed down, that being the notion that Ishmael was an unbeliever.
20. Reasons why he was not:
 - 1) The phrase "gathered to his people" is used only by Moses and only 7 times. Gen. 25:8,17, 35:29, 49:33; Num. 20:26; Deut. 35:50
 - 2) In each case it is used only for believers, including, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Aaron and Moses.
 - 3) To interpret it differently here would be a gross violation of what the phrase obviously means.
 - 4) The request of Abraham in Gen. 17:18 in regard to Ishmael makes little sense if Ishmael is an unbeliever.
 - 5) Abraham understood very little doctrine if he was asking God to accept an unbeliever as the heir!!!
21. This is somewhat of a minor point and does not affect the doctrine which we have studied.
22. The final phrase of vs 18 has several possible interpretations which have been advanced, including:
 - 1) Ishmael settled east of his relatives, which include Isaac and sons of Keturah.
 - 2) He settled in antagonism to them, based on his personality. Gen. 16:12
 - 3) He fell or died in battle in the presence of his relatives.
23. The first one is the more likely meaning since his death has already been noted in vs 17, and this is merely a closing general statement regarding Ishmael.

From <http://makarios-online.org/notes/genesis/gen25.doc> accessed June 16, 2015.

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Vv. 12–18 read: These [are] the generations [genealogies, families; history, origin] of Ishmael, a son of Abraham, whom Hagar, the Egyptian woman, Sarah's maidservant, bore to Abraham. These [are] the names of the sons of Ishmael by their names in order of their births [lit., *by their names for their generations*]: Nebaioth (the firstborn of Ishmael), Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad [or, *Cheder*], Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kederman. These [are] they—the sons of Ishmael—and these [are] their names by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes. These [are] the years of Ishmael's life: 137 years. He breathed his last breath, died and was gathered to his people. Ishmael's sons resided from Havilah to Shur, which [is] facing [or, *east of*] Egypt [as] you go towards Assyria. He fell [possibly, *settled*] before all his brothers. Although the descendants of Ishmael will remain as an influence in Israel for a long period of time (they are mentioned in 2Kings 25), the Bible will only mentioned them incidentally from hereon out.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Jacob and Esau are Born*Genesis 24:67 1Chronicles 1:34*

Wenstrom: *The statement “God blessed Isaac” anticipates the next major section in the book of Genesis, namely, the eighth book of Genesis, which gives us the record of the account of the line of Isaac that appears in Genesis 25:19-35:29 and ends the story of Abraham.*¹⁶⁵

Wenstrom: *Genesis 25:19 begins a new section in Genesis, which ends in Genesis 35:29 and constitutes the eighth book in Genesis presenting to us the family history of Isaac and in particular Jacob whose name was later changed by the Lord to “Israel.” The emphasis in this section is upon Jacob since he would carry on the line of Christ. Up to this point in our study of Genesis, we have seen that the human nature of Jesus Christ would come from the line of Seth (Luke 3:38) and Shem (Gen. 9:24-27; Luke 3:36), Abraham (Gen. 12:3) and Isaac (Gen. 17:19).*¹⁶⁶

Barnes: *The ninth document here begins with the usual phrase, and continues to the end of the thirty-fifth chapter. It contains the history of the second of the three patriarchs, or rather, indeed, as the opening phrase intimates, of the generations of Isaac; that is, of his son Jacob.*¹⁶⁷

In Genesis 25, we have the death of Abraham and information about the next generation—those who are descended from Abraham. In this chapter, we have already studied Abraham’s children by Keturah and we have looked at the sons of Ishmael (Ishmael is Abraham’s son by Hagar). As noted before, the recording of this information is very much in keeping with the personality of Isaac, who records the most monumental events to his family, such as births and deaths.

At this point, we will look at the line of promise. God made promises to Abraham, and those promises will be carried down along one specific line, which is contained in the straight-line genealogies which go from Adam to Jesus.

Wenstrom: *At the forefront of Jacob’s story is his struggle with his twin brother, Esau, which was a fulfillment of the Lord’s prophecy to Rebekah in Genesis 25:22-23.*¹⁶⁸

From this point forward, many of the incidents recorded appear to be closely associated with Isaac or with Jacob, suggesting that one of them he is the author. Not authoring in the sense of writing any of this down, but in the sense of speaking these words to his own sons. Both men would have carried the previous *History of God and Man* in his memory as well.

If I were to make an educated guess, I would say that Abraham’s servant authored Genesis 24; Isaac, Genesis 25–26; and Jacob, Genesis 27–35.¹⁶⁹

V. 19, by the way it is always translated, sounds as though we are about to embark on a genealogical chart of Isaac. In a way we do, but it is a short chart consisting of one set of twins; one a Jew and the other a Gentile.

¹⁶⁵ Wenstrom from http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 15, 2015.

¹⁶⁶ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

¹⁶⁷ Albert Barnes, *Barnes’ Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:19. One may find what Barnes **writes** after this as interesting. He draws many conclusions about the person of Isaac, which may or may not be true.

¹⁶⁸ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

¹⁶⁹ In Genesis 36, we will briefly study the cluster genealogy of Esau; and Joseph will author the remainder of Genesis.

And these [are] generations [genealogies, families, history, origin] of Isaac a son of Abraham: Abraham was a father of Isaac.

Genesis
25:19

These [are] generations [genealogies, families, history, origin] of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham became the father of Isaac.

What follows is the family line for Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham was the father of Isaac.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And these [are] generations [genealogies, families, history, origin] of Isaac a son of Abraham: Abraham was a father of Isaac.
Targum of Onkelos	These are the generations of Izhak bar Abraham. <u>And because the appearance of Izhak resembled the appearance of Abraham, the sons of men said, In truth Abraham begat Izhak.</u>
Latin Vulgate	These also are the generations of Isaac the son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac:...
Peshitta (Syriac)	These are the generations of Isaac, Abrahams son: Abraham begot Isaac.
Septuagint (Greek)	And these are the generations of Isaac the son of Abraham:... There is a small piece of the Hebrew v. 19 which is just moved over to v. 20.

Significant differences: The targum has additional text.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Now these are the generations of Abraham's son Isaac:...
Easy English	Jacob and Esau, 25:19-34 These are the *descendants of Abraham's son Isaac. Abraham was Isaac's father.
Easy-to-Read Version	This is the story of Isaac. Abraham had a son named Isaac.
God's Word™	This is the account of Abraham's son Isaac and his descendants. Abraham was the father of Isaac.
The Message	This is the family tree of Isaac son of Abraham: Abraham had Isaac.
NIRV	Jacob and Esau Here is the story of Abraham's son Isaac. Abraham was the father of Isaac.
New Simplified Bible	This is the genealogy of Abraham's son Isaac and his descendants. Abraham was the father of Isaac.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Jacob and Esau are born These are the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham became the father of Isaac.
Contemporary English V.	Isaac was the son of Abraham,...
New Century Version	Isaac's Family This is the family history of Isaac. Abraham had a son named Isaac.
New Life Bible	These are the children and their children's children of Abraham's son Isaac. Abraham was the father of Isaac.
New Living Translation	The Births of Esau and Jacob This is the account of the family of Isaac, the son of Abraham.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And these are the generations of IsaAc, the son of AbraHam: ²⁰ AbraHam fathered IsaAc. The AEB places the end of v. 19 with v. 20 (which is logical).
Beck's American Translation	<i>Twins</i> This is the history of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham was the father of Isaac. .
International Standard V	The Births of Esau and Jacob This is the account of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham fathered Isaac..

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	These are the progeny of Abraham's son Isaac. Abraham begat Isaac.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	<i>History of Isaac</i> And these are the children of Isaac, son of Abraham; Abraham begat Isaac.
Lexham English Bible	Jacob and Esau Now these [are] the generations of Isaac, the son of Abraham. Abraham fathered Isaac, And Isaac was {forty years old} when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-Aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, as his wife. V. 20 is included for context.
NIV – UK	Jacob and Esau This is the account of the family line of Abraham's son Isaac. Abraham became the father of Isaac,.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	<i>This is the story of Isaac, son of Abraham.</i>
New American Bible	This is the family history of Isaac, son of Abraham; Abraham had begotten Isaac.
New American Bible (R.E.)	<i>Birth of Esau and Jacob.</i> These are the descendants of Isaac, son of Abraham; Abraham begot Isaac. [25:19-36:43] The Jacob cycle is introduced as the family history of Isaac (Jacob's father), just as the Abraham stories were introduced as the record of the descendants of Terah (Abraham's father, 11:27). The cycle, made up of varied stories, is given unity by several recurring themes: birth, blessing and inheritance, which are developed through the basic contrasts of barrenness/fertility, non-blessing/blessing, and inheritance/exile/homeland. The large story has an envelope structure in which Jacob's youth is spent in Canaan striving with his older brother Esau (25:19-28:22), his early adulthood in Paddan-aram building a family and striving with his brother-in-law Laban (chaps. 29-31), and his later years back in Canaan (chaps. 32-36).
New RSV	These are the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham was the father of Isaac,...

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Here is the history of Yitz'chak, Avraham's son. Avraham fathered Yitz'chak.
exeGesés companion Bible	And these are the generations of Yischaq the son of Abraham: Abraham births Yischaq:...
Hebrew Names Version	This is the history of the generations of Yitzchak, Avraham's son. Avraham became the father of Yitzchak.
Kaplan Translation	<i>Jacob and Esau</i> These are the chronicles of Isaac son of Abraham:. A portion of v. 19 is placed with v. 20.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible

And this is the history of the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham was the father of Isaac.

The Expanded Bible

Isaac's Family

This is the family history [These are the generations; 2:4] of Isaac. Abraham had a son named [or was the father of] Isaac.

Kretzmann's Commentary

Verses 19-23

Isaac's Prayer for Rebekah

And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac; 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. The threads of the story concerning Isaac are here gathered together in order to devote a paragraph to the founding of his family. The section of Mesopotamia from which Rebekah hailed is called the plains of Aram, which extended west of the Euphrates. V. 20 is included for context.

NET Bible®

Jacob and Esau

This is the account of Isaac [This is the account of Isaac. What follows for several chapters is not the account of Isaac, except briefly, but the account of Jacob and Esau. The next chapters tell what became of Isaac and his family.], the son of Abraham.

Abraham became the father of Isaac.

Syndein/Thieme

And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} Isaac:...

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version

And these are the genealogical annals of Isaac, son of Abraham: Abraham begets Isaac.

LTHB

And these were the generations of Isaac, the son of Abraham: Abraham fathered Isaac.

NASB

Now these are the records of the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham became [Lit begot] the father of Isaac;...

World English Bible

This is the history of the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham became the father of Isaac.

Young's Updated LT

And these are births of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham has begotten Isaac.

The gist of this verse:

This begins the family of Isaac.

Genesis 25:19a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'èlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced ALE-leh]	these, these things	demonstrative plural adjective (often the verb to be is implied)	Strong's #428 BDB #41
tôwl ^e dôth (תּוֹלְדוֹת) [pronounced tohl ^e -DOTH]	generations, results, proceedings, genealogies, history, course of history; origin; families; races	feminine plural construct	Strong's #8435 BDB #410

Genesis 25:19a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
And these are the generations = [an] account of the leading events in his life. ¹⁷⁰			
Yis ^e châq (יִשְׁחָק) [pronounced yih ^s ^e - KHAWK]	he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
bên (בן) [pronounced bane]	son, descendant	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
'Ab ^e râhâm (אֲבִרְחָם) [pronounced ahb ^{ve} -raw- HAWM]	father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4

Translation: These [are] generations [genealogies, families, history, origin] of Isaac, Abraham's son:...

What follows will be the generations, family history of genealogy of Isaac. This would be the title of this section, and put in bold or centered and placed at the top of the page, if this were English.

Scott Grant: *The word translated "generations" (toledot) marks the beginning of a major section in the book of Genesis. Altogether, there are 10 of these major sections, each beginning with this word. The three largest sections--the generations of Terah (11:27-25:11), the generations of Isaac (25:19-35:29) and the generations of Jacob (Genesis 37:2-50:26)--focus on the family of Abraham and its relation to the promises of God. The name at the head of each section is the father of the man who will be featured in that section. Thus, the generations of Isaac feature the story of his son, Jacob.*¹⁷¹

The narrative that follows also centers on Jacob more than it does on Isaac, so we might understand this to focus on the descendants of Isaac. So perhaps we should understand this to indicate that we will focus on the descendants of Isaac more than this being about Isaac.

The Expositor's Bible Commentary has an interesting take: *The character and career of Isaac would seem to tell us that it is possible to have too great a father. Isaac was dwarfed and weakened by growing up under the shadow of Abraham. Of his life there was little to record, and what was recorded was very much a reproduction of some of the least glorious passages of his father's career. The digging of wells for his flocks was among the most notable events in his commonplace life, and even in this he only re-opened the wells his father had dug.*¹⁷² They may have a point. After all, it was Abraham who finally decided to take care of getting Isaac a wife.

However, on the other hand, there is a human aspect to the recording of this patriarchal history, and that is, different men do different things. Charley Brown might be a writer, whose eye for detail engages the reader. Charley Brown, Jr. might not have even the slightest interest in recording this or that event. Clearly, both Abraham and his great grandson Joseph are impressive men; just a great deal of page time is given over the Jacob, whose spiritual progress during his lifetime is questionable. It may well be that Abraham, Jacob and Joseph are simply more prolific writers than Isaac, which accounts for the very little history about Isaac which is recorded (although he does record information which he believes to be important: births and deaths (this chapter is a testament to that view).

¹⁷⁰ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, Genesis 25:19.

¹⁷¹ From http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99649/4865.pdf accessed July 2, 2015.

¹⁷² From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/teb/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 18, 2015.

The Holy Bible is written by men as inspired by God the Holy Spirit. God does not act as a controlling spirit, literally controlling their every thought and movement of their writing hand, but there is an interplay between the physical and the spiritual, so that various men, without these authors waving their intelligence, vocabulary, writing style, point-of-view, and lifetime experiences, record the complete Word of God. Although it is often not clear, particularly in the King James Bible, the Bible is a plethora of ancient writing styles, many of which could be recognized by the vocabulary and sentence structure alone. Just as Jesus Christ is fully God *and* fully man, so the Bible is completely the Word of God and yet, at the same time, the words of man.

Genesis 25:19b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'Ab ^e râhâm (אֲבִרְחָם) [pronounced <i>ahb^{ve}-raw-HAWM</i>]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i>]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Yis ^e châq (יִשְׁחָק) [pronounced <i>yih^s-KHAWK</i>]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850

Translation: ...Abraham became the father of Isaac.

Abraham fathered Isaac, the circumstances of which we have already studied in depth.

This general statement of the first half of this verse occurs many times in the book of Genesis, and it often signals a new section of Genesis, and possibly a new author (which is what I believe). It could simply mean that someone was adding onto the traditions from before—even the same author picking up at that place, 10–50 years later.

J. Vernon McGee: *This is the line we are going to follow. "Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob" is the way the first chapter of Matthew begins. Each of these men had other sons, as we have seen. Abraham had quite a few sons, but the genealogy of those men is not followed. It is the genealogy of Isaac that is followed. You can forget Ishmael and Midian and Medan and all the rest. They will cross paths with the descendants of Isaac time and again, but we will not follow their lines.*¹⁷³

Genesis 25:19 **These [are] generations** [genealogies, families, history, origin] of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham became the father of Isaac. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:19 **What follows is the family line for Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham was the father of Isaac.** (Kukis paraphrase)

V. 19: **These [are] generations** [genealogies, families, history, origin] of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham became the father of Isaac. Again, this abruptly changes the focus of Scripture. The children of Ishmael are listed; but the focus will be upon Isaac and his sons.

¹⁷³ From https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt (Genesis 25); accessed July 1, 2015.

Many times, sections of chapters are set up in parallels, which also allow for easy memorization.

Constable's Chiasm of Genesis 25:20–26

- A Isaac was forty years old when he took to wife Rebekah (Genesis 25:20).
 B Rebekah was barren; prayer for children was answered (Genesis 25:21 a).
 C His wife Rebekah conceived (Genesis 25:21 b). The children struggled together within her (Genesis 25:22 a).
 D Rebekah asks for an oracle (Genesis 25:22 b)
 D' Yahweh grants her an oracle (Genesis 25:23)
 C' Her days to be delivered were fulfilled (Genesis 25:24 a). And behold, there were twins in her womb (Genesis 25:24 b).
 B' Jacob and Esau are contrasted in birth and appearance (Genesis 25:25-26 a).
 A' Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah bore the twins (Genesis 25:26 b).

It appears that this might not have been original with Constable. The text and references were not easy to follow. I find this without attribution at [Northridge Baptist Church](#); and at [Constable's Commentary](#); accessed June 29, 2015. The correct reference appears to be Michael Fishbane, "Composition and Structure in the Jacob Cycle (Genesis 25:19 to Genesis 35:22)," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 26:1-2 (Spring-Autumn 1975):15-38.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

And so is Isaac a son of forty a year in his taking Rebekah, a daughter of Bethuel the Aramæan from Padda-arm, sister of Laban the Aramæan, to him for a wife.

Genesis
25:20

Isaac was 40 years old [lit., a son of 40 years] when he took Rebekah—the daughter of Bethuel the Aramæan from Paddan-Aram, the sister of Laban the Aramæan—as his wife [lit., to him for a wife].

Isaac was 40 years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel and the sister of Laban (both of them Aramæans from Paddan-Aram) as his wife.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so is Isaac a son of forty a year in his taking Rebekah, a daughter of Bethuel the Aramæan from Padda-arm, sister of Laban the Aramæan, to him for a wife.
Targum of Onkelos	And Izhak was the son of forty years when he took Rivekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramite, who was of Padan Aram, the sister of Laban the Aramite, unto him for a wife.
Latin Vulgate	Who when he was forty years old, took to wife Rebecca the daughter of Bathuel the Syrian of Mesopotamia, sister to Laban.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Padan-aram, the sister of Laban, the Aramean (Syrian).
Septuagint (Greek)	Abraham begot Isaac. And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebecca as wife, daughter of Bethuel the Syrian, out of Syrian Mesopotamia, sister of Laban the Syrian.

Significant differences: The Greek moves a short phrase from v. 19 to v. 20. *Syrian* = *Aramæan*.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English	Isaac was 40 years old when he married Rebekah. Rebekah was Bethuel's daughter and she was also Laban's sister. Rebekah's family lived in Paddan-Aram and they were from the people called Arameans.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebecca, the daughter of Bethuel (an Aramean from Mesopotamia) and sister of Laban.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Isaac was the son of Abraham, and he was forty years old when he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel. She was also the sister of Laban, the Aramean from northern Syria. Almost twenty years later, Rebekah still had no children. V. 19 and a portion of v. 20 were added for context.
New Berkeley Version	At 40, Isaac married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, the Aramæan of Padan Aram and sister to Laban the Aramean.
New Century Version	When Isaac was forty years old, he married Rebekah, who came from Northwest Mesopotamia. She was Bethuel's daughter and the sister of Laban the Aramean.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And when IsaAc was forty years old, he took RebekKa (the daughter of BathuEl, the Syrian of Syrian MesoPotamia, the sister of Laban the Syrian) as his woman.
International Standard V	Isaac was forty years old when he married [Lit. <i>took</i>] Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, the Aramæan [In later centuries this region would be called Syria] from Padda-aram [Paddan-aram was located in northwest Mesopotamia] and sister of Laban the Aramæan [In later centuries this region would be called Syria].
Today's NIV	Abraham became the father of Isaac, ²⁰ and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddan Aram [That is, Northwest Mesopotamia] and sister of Laban the Aramean. A portion of v. 19 was included for context.

Translation for Translators	<p style="text-align: center;">The birth of Esau and Jacob</p> <p>◀This is an account of/I will now tell you about▶ Abraham's son, Isaac. Abraham became the father of Isaac, and when Isaac was forty years old, he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel. Bethuel was one of the descendants of Aram from Paddan-Aram. Rebekah was the sister of Laban, who belonged to the Aram people-group. V. 19 is included for context.</p>
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Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ferar-Fenton Bible	And Isaac son of Abraham was forty years old when he took for his wife Rebekah the daughter of Bethuel the Aramite of Padan Aram and sister of Laban the Aramite.
Leupold	Abraham begat Isaac. And Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramaean of Padan Aram, the sister of Laban, the Aramaean.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begot Isaac, 20 And Isaac was a son of forty years when he took Rebekah as wife, the daughter of Bethuel, the Syrian of Padan Aram, the sister to Laban, the Aramean. V. 19 is included for context.
New Advent Bible	Who when he was forty years old, took to wife Rebecca the daughter of Bathuel the Syrian of Mesopotamia, sister to Laban.

- New American Bible (R.E.) Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram and the sister of Laban the Aramean. Padda-aram [is] the name used by the Priestly tradition for the northwest region of Mesopotamia, between the Habur and the Euphrates rivers. In Assyrian, padana is a road or a garden, and Aram refers to the people or the land of the Arameans. The equivalent geographical term in the Yahwist source is Aram Naharaim, "Aram between two rivers." Gen. 24:67.
- New RSV ...and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, sister of Laban the Aramean.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

- Complete Jewish Bible Yitz'chak was forty years old when he took Rivkah, the daughter of B'tu'el the Arami from Paddan-Aram and sister of Lavan the Arami, to be his wife.
- exeGeses companion Bible ...and Yischaq is a son of forty years and he takes Ribqah to woman, the daughter of Bethu El the Aramiy of Paddan Aram the sister to Laban the Aramiy.
- Kaplan Translation Abraham was Isaac's father.
When Isaac was 40 years old, he married Rebecca, daughter of Bethuel the Aramaean of Padan Aram and sister of Laban the Aramaean. A portion of v. 19 is included for context.
- Orthodox Jewish Bible [TO-DOS]
And these are the toldot of Yitzchak ben Avraham: Avraham fathered Yitzhak; And Yitzchak was arba'im shanah when he took Rivkah as his wife, the bat Betuel the Aramean of Padan Aram, the achot Lavan the Aramean. V. 19 is included for context.
- The Scriptures* 1998 And Yitshaq was forty years old when he took Ribqah as wife, the daughter of Bethu'el the Aramean of Paddan Aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

- The Expanded Bible When Isaac was forty years old, he married [^Ltook as a wife] Rebekah [ch. 24], who came from northwestern Mesopotamia [^Lthe Aramean from Paddan-aram]. She was Bethuel's daughter and the sister of Laban the Aramean.
- NET Bible® When Isaac was forty years old, he married Rebekah [Heb "And Isaac was the son of forty years when he took Rebekah."], the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddan Aram and sister of Laban the Aramean. Some valuable information is provided here. We learn here that Isaac married thirty-five years before Abraham died, that Rebekah was barren for twenty years, and that Abraham would have lived to see Jacob and Esau begin to grow up. The death of Abraham was recorded in the first part of the chapter as a "tidying up" of one generation before beginning the account of the next.
- The Voice This is the lineage of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham was of course his father, and Isaac was 40 years old when he married Rebekah (the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, sister of Laban the Aramean). V. 19 is included for context.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

- Concordant Literal Version And coming is Isaac to be forty years of age at his taking Rebecca, the daughter of Bethuel, the Syrian of Padan, Syria, the sister of Laban the Syrian, for his wife.
- Context Group Version And 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 woman { or wife }.

LTHB

And Isaac was a son of forty years when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Padan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to him for a wife. 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.

World English Bible

Young's Literal Translation

And Isaac is a son of forty years in his taking Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel the Aramaean, from Padan-Aram, sister of Laban the Aramaean, to him for a wife.

The gist of this verse:

Isaac was 40 when he took Rebekah as his wife. She was the daughter of Bethuel and the sister of Laban, both called Aramæans in this verse.

Genesis 25:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Yis ^e châq (יִשְׁחָק) [pronounced <i>yih^s-KHAWK</i>]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
'ar ^e bâ'îym (אַרְבַּעִים) [pronounced <i>ar^e-BAW-GEEM</i>]	<i>forty</i>	undecidable plural noun	Strong's #705 BDB #917
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i>]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i>]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
The infinitive construct, when combined with the bêyth preposition, can often take on a temporal meaning and may be rendered <i>when [such and such happens]</i> . It can serve as a temporal marker that denotes an event which occurs simultaneously with the action of the main verb.			
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Rib ^e qâh (רִיבְקָה) [pronounced <i>rihb-KAW</i>]	<i>ensnarer; a noose; fat, fattened; a quarrel appeased; which is transliterated Rebekah, Rebekkah, Rebecca</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #7259 BDB #918

Translation: Isaac was 40 years old [lit., a son of 40 years] when he took Rebekah...

Let's set up a timetable here: Isaac's mother Sarah dies when she is 127 years old. This would make Abraham 137 years old and Isaac 37 years old (obviously, give or take a year depending upon what time of the year each one was born). Abraham sends his most trusted servant to fetch Isaac a wife. Although we are not given a timetable for this, this being perhaps a year for all of this to take place is about right. So, perhaps Abraham did this at age 139, Rebekah got fetched and brought to Isaac when Isaac is 40 years old. This indicates that Isaac, 3 years out from his mother's death, was still grieving for her (Genesis 24:66).

This entire sentence reads: **Isaac was 40 years old** [lit., a son of 40 years] **when he took Rebekah for his wife** [lit., to him for a wife]. However, time is taken to identify Rebekah more clearly. That is what the next 3 phrases will do. We already know this. We all read and studied **Genesis 24 (HTML) (PDF) (WPD)**. Did the writer of Genesis 24 forget? As I see it, there are two logical possibilities: (1) if it is the same author, these are chapters composed at different times for different reasons. This is more of a genealogical chapter, saying who was born, who had children (and what are their names) and who died. So, details are included here which may be repeated. (2) However, the writing style is quite different here as compared to Genesis 24. This tends to support the idea that Rebekah or Abraham's servant wrote Genesis 24, and it was repeated many times to Jacob and Esau as a bedtime story. Genesis 25 is what Isaac wrote, a man who concerns himself primarily with births, deaths and children.

It may have been that Isaac did not really intend to include the events of Genesis 24 in the Great Historical Narrative, so Rebekah would need to be more clearly identified. Jacob, who had heard Genesis 24 as a bedtime story, probably chose to enter it in to the Great Historical Narrative, which has come down to us as the book of Genesis.

Or, this could all be Jacob, writing at a later age, giving the background of his parents. In the narrative, Jacob has not yet been born. He will be the next generation in the line of promise. Isaac may have recorded the names of his half-brother and the children of his half-brother Ishmael; but, at this point in the chapter, Jacob begins writing the narrative.

Quite obviously, we have the narrative itself and we also have the author and the time that it was written. This narrative appears to continue somewhat organically throughout human history. However, there are the writers of Genesis, who may write about these events many decades after they have actually occurred.

Now, it ought to be clear that, given Isaac's age, that Abraham is still alive when this marriage between Isaac and Rebekah takes place. Genesis 25:1–11 is about Abraham's death. Therefore, this section of Genesis 25 overlaps the first portion of this chapter in time. This is a normal topical approach and it does not suggest that there are two authors for this chapter of Genesis.

Genesis 25:20b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
bath (בַּת) [pronounced <i>bahth</i>]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #1323 BDB #123
B ^e thûw'êl (בֵּית־אֵל) [pronounced <i>behth-oo-ALE</i>]	<i>destroyed of God, God destroys; man of God; a virgin of God; a house of God, dweller in God; and is transliterated Bethuel, Bathuel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #1328 BDB #143
ʾĀrammîy (אַרְמִי) [pronounced <i>uh-rahm-MEE</i>]	<i>exalted; transliterated/translated Aramæan, Aramite; Syrian</i>	gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #761 BDB #74

Translation:...—the daughter of Bethuel the Aramæan...

These phrases identify Rebekah's lineage more thoroughly, as it was important to Abraham for his son not to marry a Canaanite woman. When he sent his servant back east, it was with the expressed vow that he would bring back a distance relative so that Isaac would not marry a heathen woman.

Genesis 25:20c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Paddân (פַּדְאָן) [pronounced <i>pahd-DAWN</i>]	<i>to extend, a plateau; garden, field; transliterated Paddan, Padan</i>	proper singular noun/location:	Strong's #6307 BDB #804
ʾĀrām (אַרָּם) [pronounced <i>uh-RAWM</i>]	<i>the highland, high region; exalted; and is transliterated Aram; sometimes rendered Syria, Mesopotamia</i>	proper noun, singular	Strong's #758 BDB #74

Together, these words refer to the table land of Aram; Paddan or Paddan-Aram, a region of Syria.

Translation: ...from Paddan-Aram,...

This is a region of Aram where this part of Abraham's family lived. This was covered in greater detail in the previous chapter.

Paddan-Aram is related to *Aram-Naharaim*, which means *Aram of the two rivers*. Sometimes this is translated *Syria* or *Mesopotamia*. *Aram-Naharaim* likely refers to the entire land between and around the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers whereas *Paddan-Aram* refers more to the northwestern section of Aram-Naharaim. [Map](#) to follow.

Wenstrom suggests that this is actually a different pair of rivers: *These two rivers were in the western part of Mesopotamia and the two rivers were the Balikh and the Khabur, tributaries of the Euphrates River. The city of Haran was on the Balikh River about a seven hundred mile journey north-northeast of Beersheba and nearby was the city of Nahor, which was founded by Abraham's brother, Nahor. The name "Paddan" means "field, plain" therefore, the expression "Paddan Aram" means, "plain of Aram." The name "Aram" (אַרָּם) [pronounced uh-RAWM] means, "exalted" and is frequently translated "Syrian" or "Syria" and is used to speak specifically of the Aramean people who were a leading branch of Semitic people living in Mesopotamia and northern Syria (2 Sam. 8:5-6; 1 Kgs. 20:20-21).*¹⁷⁴

Genesis 25:20d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾāchôwth (אָחֻוּת) [pronounced <i>aw-KHOWTH</i>]	<i>sister, half-sister; relative; beloved [bride]; figuratively of intimate connection; metaphorically for relationship between Israel and Judah; another</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #269 BDB #27

¹⁷⁴ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

Genesis 25:20d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Lâbân (לָבָן) [pronounced law ^b -VAWN]	<i>white</i> ; and is transliterated <i>Laban</i>	masculine singular proper noun:	Strong's #3838 BDB #526
ʾĀrammîy (אַרַמִּי) [pronounced uh-rahm-MEE]	<i>exalted</i> ; transliterated/translated <i>Aramæan, Aramite; Syrian</i>	gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #761 BDB #74

Translation: ...the sister of Laban the Aramæan—...

As we noticed back in Genesis 24, the son Laban seemed to have an equal say in things as his father, Bethuel. They seemed to function as co-heads of their tribe in Paddan-Aram. Laban is also called an Aramæan, again signifying the area in which they all lived.

Genesis 25:20e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾîshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAW]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #802 BDB #61

Translation: ...as his wife [lit., to him for a wife].

These few words actually continue the narrative of before, after taking out time to talk about Rebekah's father and brother.

Genesis 25:20 Isaac was 40 years old [lit., a son of 40 years] when he took Rebekah—the daughter of Bethuel the Aramæan from Paddan-Aram, the sister of Laban the Aramæan—as his wife [lit., to him for a wife]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:20 Isaac was 40 years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel and the sister of Laban (both of them Aramæans from Paddan-Aram) as his wife. (Kukis paraphrase)

This is a curious time when men seemed to live almost a century longer than they do today and they got married later in life. With the way that we are bombarded by sex in the media, it is hard to imagine waiting until age 40 for the love of your life. However, Isaac was willing to do this and the Bible states that he loved Rebekah (or actually, Isaac recorded in Scripture that he loved Rebekah).

When it comes to who wrote what, Rebekah or Abraham's servant probably wrote Genesis 24, but Jacob added it into the Great Historical Narrative (that is, *Genesis*). Then Genesis 25:1–18 was the sort of thing that Isaac was interested in: family records. Jacob may be writing this portion of Genesis, but 70 (or more) years later. Hence, the introduction:

Genesis 25:19 And these were the generations [genealogies, families, history, origin] of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham fathered Isaac.

Genesis 25:20 And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian.

Although we often think chronologically and sequentially, not everything that we put to paper is going to be in a chronological order. Genesis 25:1–11 describes that last 35 years of Abraham's life (unless he took on a mistress while Sarah was still alive, which is a popular theory, but very doubtful in my opinion¹⁷⁵). In that short time, Abraham fathered 6 children¹⁷⁶ (which could have happened in the first 10 years), and Abraham sent all of these children to the east with a generous gift. If Abraham sent them away at around the age of 16 or so, then they are all living in the east at the time of Abraham's death. This also makes psychological sense. Isaac and Ishmael are ages 75 and 88 respectively when Abraham passes, so they would be closely involved with the funeral proceedings. If Abraham has some 20-something sons living in the east, and they were specifically sent away, then it makes sense that they would not come for the funeral.

There may be some resentment involved here as well. These new sons, having little interest or respect for the promises of Abraham being laid upon Isaac (for these sons, that would be ancient history, as it occurs before they are born). So, at some point in their early lives, Abraham tells them, "Look, kid, you are not the child of God's promise, and you need to take this \$10,000 (or, whatever) and go east and do not come back. Given that start in life, Abraham possibly died at an age where they were too young to appreciate who he was (again, his greatness was made clear before these children were even born; and that which happens before a person is born is ancient and often disregardable history—particularly to children in their 20's).

If we allow for a new author to step in at this point, there is no problem with the time frame being slightly messtup.

Genesis 25:20 And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian.

Bethuel is called an Aramæan (a Syrian); and often people are given names related to where they live, as opposed to who they have descended from. Bethuel is called specifically one from Padanaram, which would refer to the part of Aram where they lived. Laban, his son and Rebekah's brother, is also called an Aramæan for the same reason,

Calling Bethuel a Syrian—even though he is related to Abraham—suggests the spiritual distance between these two men. They are treated as if they are different races, even though Bethuel was Abraham's nephew.

Map of the Ancient World is from Bible-History.com, accessed February 26, 2014. You will see Padan Aram right above the word Mesopotamia, east of Syria. You may recall that, when God told



¹⁷⁵ Recall that Sarah was none too happy about the arrangement with Hagar (which was her idea); so it seems like she would be less happy about Abraham keeping a mistress while she is alive.

¹⁷⁶ When God sexually regenerated Abraham, there is no reason to think that it was a one-shot deal.

Abraham to head out west, he got this far and then stopped. He went with his whole family, even though God told him to separate from his family. However, around age 75, Abraham almost completely separated from his family and moved to Canaan.

Padan-aram is the plain of Aram (or the plain of the highlands), mentioned many times in Genesis (Genesis 25:20 28:2, 5-7 31:18).

According to Smith: *Padanaram....signifies the table-land of Aram, that is, Syriac...otherwise, called the Aram-naharaim, "Aram of the two of rivers", [which is] the Greek Mesopotamia (Genesis 24:10)...[this] term was, perhaps, more especially applied to that portion, which bordered on the Euphrates, to distinguish it from the mountainous districts, in the north and northeast of Mesopotamia.*¹⁷⁷

Shem (son of Noah) had some very famous sons: Assur, Arphaxad and Aram, to name 3 (Genesis 10:22). Abraham and his family have all come down through Arphaxad (Genesis 11:10-26); but Aram appears to be the father of the Aramæans (although we do have another Aram in Genesis 22:21). Although it is possible that Bethuel, the son of Nahor (Abraham's brother) was somehow closely associated with the Aramæans; it is more likely that this designation is simply based upon where he lives. This topic is never discussed in any sort of detail, this suggests that Nahor and his family became fully immersed within the people of Aram. Or, simply that they lived in the same area as the Aramæans did.

Laban is also called an Aramæan. Again, a reference to where he lives, not who is ancestors are. You may recall Laban from Genesis 24, whose eyes lit up when he saw the jewelry that Abraham's servant gave to his sister Rebekah.

We now jump 20 years ahead in time from Genesis 25:20:

And so prays Isaac to Y^ehowah for a behalf of his wife because barren [is] she. And so is supplicated to him Y^ehowah and so conceives Rebekah his wife.

Genesis
25:21

Isaac entreated Y^ehowah on behalf of his wife because she [is] barren. Therefore, Y^ehowah was supplicated by him and Rebekah, Isaac's [lit., his] wife, conceived.

Isaac prayed to Jehovah for his wife because she is barren. Jehovah heard his prayer and, as a result, his wife conceived.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so prays Isaac to Y ^e howah for a behalf of his wife because barren [is] she. And so is supplicated to him Y ^e howah and so conceives Rebekah his wife.
Targum of Onkelos	<u>And Izhak went to the mountain of worship, the place where his father had bound him.</u> And Izhak in his prayer <u>turned the attention of the Holy One, blessed be He! from that which He had decreed concerning him who had been childless.</u> And he was enlarged, and Rivekah his wife was with child.
Latin Vulgate	And Isaac besought the Lord for his wife, because she was barren: and he heard him, and made Rebecca to conceive.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Isaac prayed before the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD answered him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.
Septuagint (Greek)	Now Isaac prayed to the Lord concerning Rebecca his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord heard him, and his wife Rebecca conceived in her womb.

¹⁷⁷ Dr. William Smith, *Smith's Bible Dictionary*; 1894; from e-Sword, topic: Padanaram.

Significant differences: A lot of extra material in the targum. Hard to tell where the actual text begins and leaves off. The targum appears to be missing some text as well.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Isaac made prayer to the Lord for his wife because she had no children; and the Lord gave ear to his prayer, and Rebekah became with child.
Easy English	Isaac prayed to the *Lord about his wife because she had no children. The *Lord granted what Isaac prayed for. Rebekah became *pregnant.
Easy-to-Read Version	Isaac's wife could not have children. So Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife. The Lord heard Isaac's prayer. And the Lord allowed Rebekah to become pregnant.
NIRV	Rebekah couldn't have children. So Isaac prayed to the Lord for her. And the Lord answered his prayer. His wife Rebekah became pregnant.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, since she was unable to have children. The Lord was moved by his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant.
Contemporary English V.	Rebekah still had no children. So Isaac asked the LORD to let her have a child, and the LORD answered his prayer.
New Berkeley Version	Isaac prayed the LORD on behalf of his wife, for she remained childless, and the LORD responded to his entreaty; his wife Rebekah conceived.
New Century Version	Isaac's wife could not have children, so Isaac prayed to the Lord for her. The Lord heard Isaac's prayer, and Rebekah became pregnant.
New Life Bible	Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she could not give birth and the Lord answered him. Rebekah was able to give birth.
New Living Translation	Isaac pleaded with the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was unable to have children. The Lord answered Isaac's prayer, and Rebekah became pregnant with twins.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then IsaAc prayed to Jehovah about his woman RebeKka, because she was sterile, and Jehovah heard him; so his woman (RebekKa) got pregnant.
International Standard V	Later, Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife, since she was unable to conceive children, and the LORD responded to him-his wife Rebekah became pregnant.
Translation for Translators	Almost twenty years after they were married, Rebekah still had no children. So Isaac prayed to Yahweh concerning his wife, and Yahweh answered his prayer. His wife Rebekah became pregnant.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Isaac entreated in view of Yahweh for his barren woman. He entreated Yahweh, and his woman Rebekah conceived.
Leupold	And Isaac interceded with Yahweh in behalf of his wife, for she was childless; and Yahweh granted his entreaty and Rebekah his wife conceived.
Lexham English Bible	And Isaac prayed to Yahweh on behalf of his wife, for she [was] barren. And Yahweh responded to his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived.
NIV – UK	Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was childless. The Lord answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	The birth of Esau and Jacob Isaac prayed to Yahweh for his wife, because she could not have children. Yahweh heard Isaac's prayer and Rebekah, his wife, conceived.
The Heritage Bible	And Isaac ignited a prayer as incense to Jehovah for his wife, because she was barren, and Jehovah received his prayer, and Rebekah, his wife, conceived.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Isaac entreated the LORD on behalf of his wife, since she was sterile. The LORD heard his entreaty, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant.
Revised English Bible	Isaac appealed to the LORD on behalf of his wife because she was childless; the LORD gave heed to his entreaty, and Rebecca conceived .

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Yitz'chak prayed to ADONAI on behalf of his wife, because she was childless. ADONAI heeded his prayer, and Rivkah became pregnant.
exeGesés companion Bible	And Yischaq intreats Yah Veh for his woman because she is sterile: and Yah Veh is intreated by him and Ribqah his woman conceives:...
Judaica Press Complete T.	And Isaac prayed to the Lord opposite his wife because she was barren, and the Lord accepted his prayer, and Rebecca his wife conceived.
Kaplan Translation	His wife was sterile, and Isaac pleaded with God for her sake. God granted his plea, and Rebecca became pregnant.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Yitzchak davened to Hashem on behalf of his isha, because she was barren; and Hashem was entreated of him, and Rivkah his isha conceived.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	Isaac's wife ·could not have children [was barren], so Isaac ·prayed to [entreated; interceded with] the Lord for her. The Lord heard Isaac's prayer, and Rebekah ·became pregnant [conceived].
Kretzmann's Commentary	And Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife because she was barren; and the Lord was intreated of him, and Rebekah, his wife, conceived. It is the Lord who grants issue to married people, but the blessing of children, like all other blessings, must be prayed for. Just as Isaac had prayed for a pious wife, so he also prayed for children, and undoubtedly for pious children, just as Luther teaches in his explanation of the Fourth Petition.
NET Bible®	Isaac prayed to [The Hebrew verb אָתַר ('atar), translated "prayed [to]" here, appears in the story of God's judgment on Egypt in which Moses asked the Lord to remove the plagues. The cognate word in Arabic means "to slaughter for sacrifice," and the word is used in Zeph 3:10 to describe worshipers who bring offerings. Perhaps some ritual accompanied Isaac's prayer here] the Lord on behalf of his wife because she was childless. The Lord answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant.
Syndein/Thieme	And Isaac entreated/'pleaded to' Jehovah/God for his wife, because she was barren. And Jehovah/God 'answered his plea', and Rebekah his wife conceived.
The Voice	Isaac prayed to the Eternal One on behalf of his wife because she wasn't becoming pregnant. The Eternal granted his prayer, and Rebekah conceived <i>after 20 years</i> .

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And Isaac is entreating Yahweh for the invigorating of Rebecca, his wife, for barren is she. And Yahweh is being entreated by him, and pregnant is Rebecca, his wife.
English Standard Version	And Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife, because she was barren. And the LORD granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

LTHB	And Isaac prayed to Jehovah for his wife for she was barren. And Jehovah was entreated for him, and his wife Rebekah conceived.
New King James Version	Now Isaac pleaded with the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived.
Young's Updated LT	And Isaac makes entreaty to Jehovah before his wife, for she is barren: and Jehovah is entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceives.

The gist of this verse: Rebekah was barren, so Isaac prayed on her behalf and Jehovah answered this prayer.

Genesis 25:21a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâthar (אָתָר) [pronounced <i>gaw-THAR</i>]	<i>to pray, to supplicate, to appeal, to petition, to entreaty</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6279 BDB #801
Yis ^e châq (יִשְׁחָק) [pronounced <i>yihse-KHAWK</i>]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
nôkach (נֹכַח) [pronounced <i>NOH-kahkh</i>]	<i>front, in front of, opposite to, towards the front of, on behalf of</i>	substantive (preposition/adverb)	Strong's #5227 BDB #647
With the lâmed preposition, this acts as an adverb and means <i>towards what is opposite; straight before oneself; before; for; on behalf of.</i>			
ʾishshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAW</i>]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #802 BDB #61

Translation: Isaac entreated Y^ehowah on behalf of his wife...

Ishmael, Isaac's older half-brother, has a whole lot of children. Isaac does not have any, even though he is the son of promise. He is the heir of Abraham, which heirship is based upon the line of promise—but, to this point, there was no line. All Isaac had was the promises of God.

Prayer is presented in the same way throughout the Bible. When Abraham spoke directly to the Angel of the Lord, and bargained with him about Lot and Sodom (at the end of Genesis 18), he did this believing that (1) God would listen to him; (2) God would be reasonable; and (3) God would act. Our praying today includes these exact same principles, and David praying in 1000 B.C., the exact same principles. If we do not believe these things, then why would we pray?

Since I do not want to reinvent the wheel, this doctrine has already been covered in great detail.

Links to the Doctrine of Prayer

Source	Link
R. B. Thieme, Jr.	http://rbthieme.org/PDF/Prayer.pdf This booklet can also be order for free from R. B. Thieme, Jr. Ministries.
Bible Doctrine Resources	http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=433
Maranatha Church	http://www.versebyverse.org/doctrine/prayer.pdf
Grace Notes	http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics/prayer.html
Dr. Randall E. Radic	http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics/prayerprin.html
William Wenstrom, Jr.	http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Pp. 377–379)

A weapon does you no good unless you actually know how to use it. There is only one thing I would add to this—even when I am alone, I often pray out loud. This way, because we are in the intensified stage of the Angelic Conflict, I know that both angels and demons hear my prayers.

These links were updated June 16, 2015.

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We know very little about the relationship between Isaac and God, mostly because we know very little about Isaac. We have essentially 2 chapters by Isaac, much of which is devoted to his collection of the Arabic lines in his family. We know here that he spoke to God in prayer concerning the barrenness of his wife,¹⁷⁸ and then when she conceives, she will speak to God about the turmoil which appears to be going on inside of her (v. 22).

Genesis 25:21b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
‘âqâr (אָקָר) [pronounced <i>gaw-KAWR</i>]	<i>barren, sterile</i>	feminine singular, adjective	Strong's #6135 BDB #785
hîy' (היא) [pronounced <i>hee</i>]	<i>she, it; also used as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one)</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>is</i> , <i>is</i> implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

¹⁷⁸ Rabbinic traditions that they prayed on Mount Moriah have no basis in fact. This tradition is mentioned by Gill and Clarke, but there is no reason to acknowledge it within the text of the exegesis.

Translation: ...because she [is] barren.

We will put 2 and 2 together in this chapter and find out that Rebekah had been barren for 20 years. We do know that Isaac loved Rebecca, but it is almost a biological necessity for two people who love each other and are married to want to have children. For nearly 20 years, Rebecca was barren, so, at some point in time, Isaac began to pray on her behalf.

Genesis 25:21c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâthar (אָתָר) [pronounced ġaw-THAR]	<i>to be supplicated, to be petitioned, to be entreated; to let oneself be supplicated; to hear and answer</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #6279 BDB #801
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l̄]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: Therefore, Y^ehowah was supplicated by him...

This has the Niphal of the verb just used. Jehovah heard Isaac; he was entreated for Isaac. This is an amazing thing, when your very words reach the God of the universe, the God Who created all things (and through Whom all things are held together) and He listens and He answers this prayer.

We do not find near as much interaction between God and Isaac as we found between God and Abraham. James calls Abraham the friend of God in 2Chronicles 20:7 Isaiah 41:8 James 2:23, which is hard to hear for some of us. Some of us know just how unlikeable we are, so we are taken aback when Abraham has such an exalted status.

More of us can relate to Isaac, who does not appear to have 7 or 8 face to face meetings with God as his father Abraham had.

In any case, Isaac has clearly believed in the God of his father and prayed to Him. If he married Rebekah at age 40, but does not father a child until age 60, then there are 20 years during which it would have been normal to have a child. When he comes to realize how many children his half-brother Ishmael has sired, Isaac may feel a bit jealous. After all, he is the child of promise; Ishmael was not.

Like his father Abraham, having a child was not any easy thing for Isaac and Rebekah. However, apparently, God was waiting for Isaac to turn toward Him, which he did in this prayer. This may have been what God was waiting on Isaac to do.

Matthew Henry: *Though God had promised to multiply his family, he [Isaac] prayed for its increase; for God's promises must not supersede, but encourage, our prayers, and be improved as the ground of our faith.*¹⁷⁹

Genesis 25:21d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hârâh (הָרָה) [pronounced haw-RAW]	<i>to conceive, to become pregnant, to be with child</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2029 BDB #247
Rib ^e qâh (רִיבְקָה) [pronounced rihb-KAW]	<i>ensnarer; a noose; fat, fattened; a quarrel appeased; which is transliterated Rebekah, Rebekkah, Rebecca</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #7259 BDB #918
ʾîshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAW]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #802 BDB #61

Translation: ...and Rebekah, Isaac's [lit., his] wife, conceived.

As a result, Isaac's wife Rebecca conceived.

Genesis 25:21 Isaac entreated Y^ehowah on behalf of his wife because she [is] barren. Therefore, Y^ehowah was supplicated by him and Rebekah, Isaac's [lit., his] wife, conceived. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:21 Isaac prayed to Jehovah for his wife because she is barren. Jehovah heard his prayer and, as a result, his wife conceived. (Kukis paraphrase)

Wenstrom explains the time frame: *The Lord fulfills Isaac's prayer request twenty years later since Genesis 25:21 records Isaac as being forty when he married Rebekah and Genesis 25:26 records Isaac as being sixty when Rebekah had twins. The fact that Isaac prayed for twenty years for his wife to get pregnant emphasizes that like his father Abraham, Isaac was a man of great faith and a powerful intercessor. This great faith that Isaac displayed in his intercessory prayer for his wife Rebekah will be the focus of our study this morning. This passage also emphasizes the power of intercessory prayer.*¹⁸⁰

V. 21 reads: Isaac entreated Y^ehowah on behalf of his wife because she [is] barren. Therefore, Y^ehowah was supplicated by him and Rebekah, Isaac's [lit., his] wife, conceived.

Steven Cole: *God's purpose according to His sovereign choice was accomplished...[So it is with] the account of the birth of Esau and Jacob. If God was going to make a great nation of Abraham through Isaac, then obviously Isaac needed to have children. But Rebekah, like Sarah, was barren. For 20 years there were no children in their marriage. But Isaac prayed and the Lord answered in accordance with His promise to Abraham.*¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:19–26.

¹⁸⁰ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

¹⁸¹ From <http://www.fcfonline.org/content/1/sermons/121596M.pdf> accessed July 2, 2015.

Catholic Bibles have improved tremendously over the years (apart from their inclusion of the apocrypha); and some of their footnotes are important, interesting, or, at least, not inaccurate. The era of the patriarchs, noted below, is not accurate, however.

I have not yet decided whether to edit this or remove it.

Community Bible Translation Notes on Genesis 25:21–23

We may be astonished that the Israelites called themselves the sons of Israel (or sons of Jacob) rather than the sons of Abraham.

Let us remember first what has been said in the Introduction: the sequence Abraham, father of Isaac, father of Jacob is only a construction of the history of these first fathers of the people of God. These three names were kept in the early traditions of different regions, and the corresponding persons had not lived at the same time.

Abraham would have lived in the 18th century before Jesus, Isaac doubtless a little later, but in another corner of Southern Palestine, at Gerar, and Jacob in the 16th or 15th century. If the name of Abraham has been eclipsed by that of Jacob the reason is without a doubt the following. Abraham was in fact the great patriarch of the south of Palestine, he had settled in Mamre, near Hebron; he was taken to be the ancestor of David. Did David not reign in Hebron? Popular traditions recounted in the Bible come from the tribes established in central Palestine, where the powerful kingdom of Israel would be established after the schism. Then it seems that in this northern kingdom the figure of Abraham was “demoted” with the first place given to Israel–Jacob; then they had the twelve tribes descending from the “twelve sons” of Jacob.

Two nations are in your womb (v. 23). We must not forget that, in this story, each character represents a group of people bearing the same name. Just as Jacob–Israel was considered the ancestor of the Israelites, so Esau or Edom (25:31) was considered the ancestor of the Edomites, neighbors and rivals of the Israelites.

These chapters show the freedom of God who chooses the Israelites rather than the Edomites to be the instrument of his salvation; even among the Israelites God chooses whom he wants to be put in charge of a more or less transcendent mission.

In this chapter we are given three reasons for the rejection of Esau:

- A passage in chapter 25 shows Esau to be guilty: he himself scorned his sacred rights as eldest son.
- Another passage, 26:34, mentions his marriage to foreign women.
- A third passage (in chap. 27) shows how God takes advantage of one of Jacob’s tricks to achieve his goals. The Israelites were not very scrupulous about lying. For them Jacob’s trick only showed that he was determined to get God’s promises by any means, and in so doing, he becomes deserving of these promises.

In Hebrews 12:16 Esau will be mentioned as an example of a godless person, one who sells God’s blessing for a meal. How many lost opportunities in our own life: stupid things in life have bewitched us and caused us to miss what alone is worth keeping!

From <http://www.bibleclaret.org/bibles/REDCCB2013/01Gen.pdf> (footnote for Genesis 25:21) accessed June 10, 2015.

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This is the 2nd time we have had the situation where a woman was barren; there will be 3 such situations among the patriarchs. This doctrine will also be found in **Genesis 29** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Robert Dean's Take on Barrenness

- 1) The significance of barrenness is not some sin on the part of the woman. None of the women in the Old Testament were barren because of sin in their life, it was because of something that God was teaching through their barrenness.
- 2) These were the women who are said to be barren in Scripture: Sarai, the wife of Abram; Rebecca, the wife of Isaac; and Rachel, the wife of Jacob. It is interesting that the wives of the three patriarchs of Israel are all barren women—at least barren for a time. That should be the first clue that there is something going on here related to God's development of the nation Israel. There is also barrenness associated with the mother of Samson; Hannah; Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist in Luke chapter one.
- 3) Exodus 23:26 gives an insight. The absence of barren women would indicate that Israel was spiritual, indicating Israel's positive spirituality and divine blessing. But the presence of barren women in Israel indicated Israel's carnality and divine judgment. It was a sign. **"There shall be no one miscarrying or barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days."** (Exodus 23:26; NASB)
- 4) Thus we see that the barren womb in these women picture the emptiness and lifelessness of mankind apart from God and apart from Jesus Christ. The fact that they were barren was a picture of spiritual barrenness. It was also a picture of spiritual death. What is it that distinguishes Abram from the culture around him? He is a Gentile, like everybody else, from Ur of the Chaldees but he is a believer in the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ and is regenerate. He is going to have a couple of boys, Ishmael and Isaac, and what distinguishes them is regeneration. God is illustrating this life from death in the womb of the patriarchs of Israel. That is what sets them apart, that the foundation of this nation of people is miraculous. There is a 90-year-old woman who is going to give birth. It is a picture of how God gives life where there is no life.
- 5) There is a right time for a child to be born, just as there was an exact right time for Jesus to be born. Even though He had been promised to the woman after she and Adam had sinned, the final fulfillment of this promise would not come until thousands of years had passed.
- 6) In each case God miraculously brings forth life where there is death or there is no life. This is a picture of regeneration. The point is that only God can solve the problem of spiritual death by providing spiritual birth. And all of the six women are foreshadowing one individual: the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 7) The barren womb is also a type of the virgin womb of Mary, and there the solution to the barren womb is the new life in the incarnation of the God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Poole remarks: *as divers of those holy women that were progenitors of Christ have long been, that it might appear that that sacred stock was propagated more by the virtue of God's grace and promise than by the power of nature.*¹⁸²

Keith Krell: *In all of this a question that begs to be answered is: Why did God close the wombs of Sarah, Rebekah, and later Rachel? Answer: So the chosen family would recognize their children as the fruit of His grace rather than simply the fruit of nature.*¹⁸³

Paul speaks of this barrenness in order to make a theological argument. Rom 9:6–14 **But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named."** This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. For this is what the promise said: **"About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son."** And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls— she was told, **"The older will serve the younger."** As it is written, **"Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."** What shall we say then? **Is there injustice on God's part? By no means!** (ESV; Genesis 21:12 18:10 25:23 Mal. 1:2–3) God's Word has not failed! He has delivered that which He promised!

¹⁸² Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:21.

¹⁸³ From <https://bible.org/seriespage/32-born-be-wild-genesis-2519-34> accessed July 1, 2015.

Some passages on barrenness: Genesis 11:30 15:2–3 16:2 17:16–19 1Samuel 1:2 Luke 1:7.

From Robbie Dean's [Genesis-092b](#) Hagar: The Human Solution is a Defective Solution. Genesis 16 05/24/05. Edited.

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And so struggle together the sons in her midst; and so she says, "if therefore for why this [to] me?" And so she goes to consult Y^ehowah.

Genesis
25:22

The sons within her struggled together, so she said, "Behold, therefore, why [is] this [happening to] me?" Therefore, she went to consult Y^ehowah.

When her sons struggled together inside of her, she cried out, "Listen, why is this happening to me?" Therefore, she went to speak to Jehovah.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so struggle together the sons in her midst; and so she says, "if therefore for why this [to] me?" And so she goes to consult Y ^e howah.
Targum of Onkelos	And the children pressed in her womb as men doing battle. And she said, If this is <u>the anguish of a mother</u> , what then are <u>children</u> to me? And she went <u>into the school of Shem Rabba</u> to supplicate mercy before the Lord.
Jerusalem targum	And the children <u>pressed</u> in her womb, and she said, If such be <u>the anguish of a mother</u> , what now is life, that <u>children</u> are to be mine? And she went to supplicate mercy before the Lord <u>in the beth midrash of Shem Rabba</u> .
Latin Vulgate	But the children struggled in her womb, and she said: If it were to be so with me, <u>what need was there to conceive?</u> And she went to consult the Lord.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the children struggled together within her womb; and she said, If it is to be like this, why do I <u>live</u> ? So she went to enquire of the LORD.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the babes <u>leaped</u> within her; and she said, If it will be so with me, why is this to me? And she went to inquire of the Lord.

Significant differences: The Hebrew has the children *struggling*; the Jerusalem targum says *pressed*; the Greek says *leaped*. The targums add a lot of extra text (however, the Hebrew text is fairly sparse here). The questions which Rebekah asks are difficult to understand, and the Syriac and Latin add in some additional words to smooth them out.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And the children were fighting together inside her, and she said, If it is to be so, why am I like this? So she went to put her question to the Lord.
Easy English	The children fought together inside Rebekah. She said, 'I cannot continue to live, because it is like this.' So she went to ask the *Lord about it.
Easy-to-Read Version	While Rebekah was pregnant, she had much trouble with the babies inside her. Rebekah prayed to the Lord and said, "Why is this happening to me?"
God's Word™	When the children inside her were struggling with each other, she said, "If it's like this now, what will become of me?" So she went to ask the LORD.
The Message	But the children tumbled and kicked inside her so much that she said, "If this is the way it's going to be, why go on living?" She went to GOD to find out what was going on.

New Simplified Bible She was going to have twins. Before they were born they struggled against each other in her womb. She said: »Why should something like this happen to me?« She asked Jehovah for an answer.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible But the boys pushed against each other inside of her, and she said, "If this is what it's like, why did it happen to me [Heb uncertain]?"
So she went to ask the LORD.

Contemporary English V. Before Rebekah gave birth, she knew she was going to have twins, because she could feel them inside her, fighting each other. She thought, "Why is this happening to me?" Finally, she asked the LORD why her twins were fighting,...

New Century Version While she was pregnant, the babies struggled inside her. She asked, "Why is this happening to me?" Then she went to get an answer from the LORD.

New Life Bible But the babies within her fought together. And she said, "If this is so, why am I like this?" She went to ask the Lord why.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible And [one day], the babies that were inside her jumped. And she asked, 'If this happened to me, then why did it happen?'
So, she went to ask Jehovah, and Jehovah told her... A portion of v. 23 was added for context.

Beck's American Translation When the children inside her were bumping each other, she said, "If it's like this, what am I here for?" She went to ask the LORD.

International Standard V But when the infants [Lit. *sons*] kept on wrestling each other inside her womb [Or *within her*], she asked herself, "Why is this happening?" [Lit. *If so . . . why this I?*]
So she asked the LORD for an explanation [The Heb. lacks *for an explanation*].

Today's NIV The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, "Why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the LORD.

Translation for Translators There were two babies in her womb, and they kept jostling each other. So she said, "Why is it *that this is happening to me?*" So she asked Yahweh about it.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear The sons battered in her center. She said, "So what is this for me?" She went to request of Yahweh.

Ferar-Fenton Bible ...for Rebekka his wife conceived, and the children struggled together in her breast and she consequently said, "Why does this happen to me?" so went to enquire of the EVER-LIVING.

H. C. Leupold And the children jostled one another within her, and she said: If it be so, for what then am I (destined)? And she went to inquire of Yahweh.

Lexham English Bible And the children in her womb jostled each other, and she said, "{If it is going to be like this, why be pregnant}?" And she went to inquire of Yahweh.

NIV – UK The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, 'Why is this happening to me?' So she went to enquire of the LORD.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

New Advent Bible But the children struggled in her womb, and she said: If it were to be so with me, what need was there to conceive? And she went to consult the Lord.

The Heritage Bible And the children were crushing one another within her, and she said, If this is right, why am I this way? And she walked to tread seeking it out with Jehovah.

New American Bible	But the children in her womb jostled each other so much that she exclaimed, "If this is to be so, what good will it do me!" She went to consult the LORD,...
New American Bible (R.E.)	But the children jostled each other in the womb so much that she exclaimed, "If it is like this,* why go on living!" She went to consult the LORD, and the LORD answered her:... A portion of v. 23 was added for context.
New Jerusalem Bible	But the children inside her struggled so much that she said, 'If this is the way of it, why go on living?' So she went to consult Yahweh,...
New RSV	The children struggled together within her; and she said, 'If it is to be this way, why do I live [Syr: Meaning of Heb uncertain]?'
Revised English Bible	The children pressed on each other in her womb, and she said, 'If all is well, why am I like this?' She went to seek guidance of the LORD, ²³ who said to her:...

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation	But the children clashed inside her, and when this occurred [(Hirsch). Otherwise, the expression here is very ambiguous: 'If so, why am I thus?' Some interpret it; 'If this is the way it must be, why go on?' (Ramban; cf. Bereshith Rabbah 63). Other interpretations are, 'If [there is such pain], why did we pray for children?' (Rashi); 'Why am I having such an unusual pregnancy?' (Ibn Ezra; Radak); or, 'If I am upright, why is this happening?' (HaKethav VeHaKabbalah).], she asked, 'Why is this happening to me?' She went to seek a message from God.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And the banim struggled jostling within her; and she said, If it be well, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of Hashem.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	[Two] children struggled together within her; and she said, If it is so [that the Lord has heard our prayer], why am I like this? And she went to inquire of the Lord.
The Expanded Bible	While she was pregnant, the babies [-children] struggled inside her. She asked, ".Why is this happening to me [-If thus, why this, I-; ^C the Hebrew is uncertain]?" Then she went to get an answer from [-seek; inquire of] the LORD.
Kretzmann's Commentary	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. This was after pregnancy had advanced to the point that movement was distinctly felt. Fearing that her condition would result in misfortune to herself and probably to the child of promise, Rebekah, rash in her speech and actions, and easily discouraged, cried out: If this be so, what is the object of my still being here? Why should I still be living, with this sore and strange struggle within me? Nevertheless she went to ask the Lord, probably through the ministry of Abraham.
NET Bible®	But the children struggled [The Hebrew word used here suggests a violent struggle that was out of the ordinary.] inside her, and she said, "If it is going to be like this, I'm not so sure I want to be pregnant [Heb "If [it is] so, why [am] I this [way]?" Rebekah wanted to know what was happening to her, but the question itself reflects a growing despair over the struggle of the unborn children.]" So she asked the Lord [Asked the Lord. In other passages (e.g., 1 Sam 9:9) this expression refers to inquiring of a prophet, but no details are provided here.], and the Lord said to her,... A portion of v. 23 was added for context.
The Voice	But the children she carried struggled <i>and fought</i> with each other until, <i>in great pain</i> , she exclaimed, "What is going on? Why is this happening to me?" <i>In frustration</i> she inquired of the Eternal One <i>why this civil war was occurring inside of her</i> .

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And bruising themselves are the sons within her. And saying is she, "Should it be so? Why have I this? And going is she to inquire of Yahweh.
Context Group Version	And the sons struggled together inside her. And she said, If it is so, why is this happening to me? And she went to inquire of YHWH.
English Standard Version	The children struggled together within her, and she said, "If it is thus, why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the LORD.
The Geneva Bible	And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If [it be] so, why [am] I thus [That is, with child, seeing one shall destroy another.]? And she went to enquire [For that is the only refuge in all our miseries.] of the LORD.
Green's Literal Translation	And the sons struggled together within her. And she said, If this is right, why am I this way? And she went to ask Jehovah.
Webster's Bible Translation	And the children struggled together within her: and she said, If [it is] so, why [am] I thus? And she went to inquire of the LORD.
World English Bible	The children struggled together within her. She said, "If it be so, why do I live?" She went to inquire of Yahweh.
Young's Updated LT	And the children struggle together within her, and she says, "If it is right—why am I thus?" and she goes to seek Jehovah.

The gist of this verse: Rebecca suffers great pain while pregnant with the twins, and goes to the Lord about it.

Genesis 25:22a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râtsats (רצצ) [pronounced <i>raw-TSAHTS</i>]	<i>to crush [bruise] one another [each other]; to struggle together</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Hithpoel imperfect	Strong's #7533 BDB #954
Owen, who is the basis for this portion of each exegetical study, has that this is a 3 rd person masculine singular, Hithpoel imperfect. However, it appears to be a plural to me; and a plural makes more sense to me as well.			
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
qereb (בְּרֵב) [pronounced <i>KEH-re^{bv}</i>]	<i>midst, among, from among [a group of people]; an [actual, physical] inward part; the inner person with respect to thinking and emotion; as a faculty of thinking or emotion; heart, mind, inner being; entrails [of sacrificial animals]</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #7130 BDB #899

With the bêyth preposition, it means *in the midst of, among, into the midst of* (after a verb of motion).

Translation: The sons within her struggled together,...

Isaac has prayed for her, and now she has conceived. However, it feels as though the twins in her are struggling together or fighting. Quite obviously, she was not expecting anything like this.

Wenstrom: *The verb râtsats (רצצ) [pronounced raw-TSAHTS] implies an extraordinary violent struggle taking place in the womb of Rebekah, which she understood to be far greater than normal, and thus of great significance. This struggle among the fetuses in Rebekah's womb foreshadowed the relationship of the children and their descendants later on in history. So Rebekah is experiencing an unusually difficult pregnancy and fears of miscarrying. Rebekah thought she was simply carrying the next generation but little did she know that she was carrying twins.*¹⁸⁴

Wenstrom continues: *The rivalry of Jacob and Esau begins in the womb of Rebekah and would progress from her womb to the troubled delivery of the twins (25:26), and to their differences in profession (25:27) as well as to the opposing preferences of the parents (25:28). This struggle in the womb of Rebekah would also foreshadow Jacob's struggle with the preincarnate Christ (32:22-32). The struggle of the twins, Esau and Jacob foreshadows the struggles between Jacob and Esau in the following events: (1) Jacob secures the birthright (Genesis 25:27-34). (2) Jacob steals Esau's blessing (Genesis 27:1-40). (3) Jacob prevails with Esau and secures his good will (Genesis 32:1-33:16). The rivalry between Jacob and Esau spilled over into conflicts between their parents, Isaac and Rebekah (Genesis 27:1-46) and it also effected Jacob and his wives as well as his wives with each other (Genesis 30:1-24) and Jacob and Laban (Genesis 29:14b-31:55).*¹⁸⁵

This struggle in Rebekah's womb is predictive of the struggles between Jacob and Esau and between their descendants that would continue for hundreds of years.

Rebekah is barren for 20 years of marriage (cp Genesis 25:20 & 26). It is possible that Isaac, being in love, thought very little about God during this time until he realized that Rebekah was not going to conceive. So he prayed to God and God answered his prayer.

The word here for *sons* (or children) is used throughout the Bible for even adult sons. The Bible was left intentionally vague on some matters. One matter of great debate is the ideal kind of government or the ideal kind of church administration—I believe that the Bible was not specific in these areas because we, as Christians, can function using our spiritual gifts in all kinds of churches and we can live under all sorts of governments. In the matter of abortion, it is a more difficult issue. I tend to believe that unquestionably, the latest that a fetus becomes a child is the time wherein he takes his first breath, whether this follows an abortion or a birth. Therefore, any kind of medical procedure where the child draws breath and is killed is murder—however, it is clear from Scripture that child does spend eternity with God (since Christ dies for all of his sins and since Adam's original sin has been imputed to him, his volition has not become an issue; therefore all children who die prior to the age of accountability are saved). Verses like this seem to indicate that we have children within the mother prior to birth; however, on the other hand, this could be nonscientific language (which is found in the Bible) along the lines of saying *the sun rises*. It is language of accommodation and communicates what is occurring, but the literal meaning is not altogether accurate. See the Doctrine of **Abortion** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

What Rebekah says is an expression of her great discomfort. It is not unlike saying, *I feel so awful that I just want to die*. Bullinger lists this sentence under aposiopesis, which means *sudden silence*. It is used when something is omitted or the speaker suddenly stops talking. Rebekah's pain was grief were so severe that she could not find words to describe it. She could not understand how, if this was God answering Isaac's prayer, why was it answered like this? Why was it accompanied with pain and suffering.

¹⁸⁴ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

¹⁸⁵ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

Genesis 25:22b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'îm (אם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
The particle 'îm (אם) can be used as a demonstrative (<i>lo, behold</i>), an interrogative (usually expecting a negative response and often used with other particles and rhetorically), and as a conditional particle (<i>if, though</i>); an indication of a wish or desire (<i>oh that, if only</i> ; this is a rare usage).			
kên (כי) [pronounced <i>kane</i>]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	properly, an active participle; used primarily as an adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
I could not find a meaning for these two particles together, although there seems like there ought to be.			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâh (מה) [pronounced <i>maw</i>]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
Lâmed + mâh can be rendered <i>why, for what reason, to what purpose, for what purpose</i> , indicating an interrogatory sentence. BDB also offers the rendering <i>lest</i> . Gesenius, perhaps for this passage alone (1Chronicles 15:13), offers the rendering <i>on account of [that] which, because that</i> .			
zeh (זה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i>]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
I suspect that all 3 particles above combine to mean something together. Gesenius suggests <i>why then</i> ; various translators suggest <i>why [should]; why [is] this; why</i> . See <i>zeh</i> listings as well.			
'ânôkîy (אניכי) [pronounced <i>awn-oh-KEE</i>]	<i>I, me; (sometimes a verb is implied)</i>	1 st person singular personal pronoun	Strong's #595 BDB #59
Wenstrom translates this section: " <i>Why am I having this happen to me, which is very uncomfortable?</i> " ¹⁸⁶			

Translation: ...so she said, "Behold, therefore, why [is] this [happening to] me?"

There are a whole lot of particles thrown together here, and often two or three participles together have a meaning which is different than their separate meanings placed together. We have 5 one-syllable words thrown together, followed by a 3-syllable word meaning *me*. It is almost as if she is saying, "Why, why, why, why, why

¹⁸⁶ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

meeeeeeeeeeeeee?” Although we are not told this in the text, Rebekah is in desperate pain here. So she can get she can struggle and get out a series of one-syllable words, and finally end with a long, drawn-out *awn-oh-KEEEEEEE*. Perhaps she is regretting that prayer to Jehovah for pregnancy?

Wenstrom: *Therefore, Rebekah is saying in effect to the Lord in prayer, “If this is Your will that I get pregnant, then why am I having this struggle take place in my womb, which is very uncomfortable?” Rebekah asks this question because she fears that she might be miscarrying and doesn’t understand why the Lord would permit her to get pregnant but then lose the children through a miscarriage.*¹⁸⁷

It should be clear that there will be times of great pain and difficulty in our lives. Rebecca is not to thrilled with that realization.

Gill: *[The] great uneasiness of mind [and the]...pain of her] body [were] emblems of the future difference between those two children, Esau and Jacob, and of the contentions that would be between their respective offspring, and of the enmity and war between good and bad men in all ages, and of the conflict between flesh and spirit in all good men.*¹⁸⁸

Genesis 25:22c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong’s # BDB #510
dârash (שָׁדַח) [pronounced <i>daw-RASH</i>]	<i>to seek, to make inquiries concerning, to consult, to investigate, to study, to follow, to inquire; to require</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong’s #1875 BDB #205
’êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong’s #853 BDB #84
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong’s #3068 BDB #217

Translation: Therefore, she went to consult Y^ehowah.

Up until now, it was Isaac who petitioned on her behalf to God. Well, something must have gotten lost in the translation, so she is not going to send her husband, but she will go herself to God.

Genesis 25:22 The sons within her struggled together, so she said, “Behold, therefore, why [is] this [happening to] me?” Therefore, she went to consult Y^ehowah. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

¹⁸⁷ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

¹⁸⁸ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:22 (edited).

Genesis 25:22 When her sons struggled together inside of her, she cried out, “Listen, why is this happening to me?” Therefore, she went to speak to Jehovah. (Kukis paraphrase)

Gary Everett: *Any mother who has given birth to children understands the importance of the child’s continual kicks within her womb. Although painful at times, these kicks serve to assure the mother that the baby is alive and healthy. When these kicks cease for a few days a mother naturally becomes worried, but in the case of Rebekah the very opposite was true. There was too much kicking to the point that she besought the Lord in prayer. It was her beseeching God rather than her husband because a pregnant mother is much more focused upon these issues.*¹⁸⁹

We do not know exactly what this entails. Who did she go to? Where did she go? We are told that *she went* and that *she went to consult Y^ehowah*; but we have no idea the mechanics involved. As a result, there are no shortage of theories, which include her speaking to Abraham, to Melchizedek, to Shem or to Isaac. She may have gone directly to God in prayer as well. Recall that Hagar spoke twice to God, and without an intermediary. In any case, there are no clues here.

God also answered her prayer. God is listening to Rebekah as well. Isaac prayed for a child, and God gave them twins. However, this was apparently a difficult pregnancy, and God will explain what is going on.

This struggling, which appeared to be taking place within Rebekah, is a foreshadowing of the relationship between Jews and Arabs for many centuries to come. Jacob would be in the line of the Jews and Esau would father many Arab groups. This also foreshadows the struggles between Jacob and Esau, which would be a problem for them for much of their lives.

The Bible is often accused of being a book which has something against females. We are in the first book of the Bible and Rebekah is going directly to God to sort this situation out. She speaks to God and God will speak to her. That is hardly misogynistic. God does not say, “Listen, sister, I need to talk to your husband about this matter.” Although it is possible that Rebekah went through an intermediary, that is not a part of the narrative.

Also recall that the Angel of the Lord *first* appears to Hagar, the Egyptian girl carrying Abraham’s son—and He appears in this way to her *before* He appears as the Angel of the Lord to Abraham. Again—that is not misogynistic.

And so says Y^ehowah to her, “Two of nations in your womb and two of peoples from your inward parts will be divided, and a people more than a people will be strong; and an elder will serve a younger [one].”

Genesis
25:23

Y^ehowah said to her, “[There are] two nations in your womb and the two peoples inside of you will be divided. [One] people will be stronger than [the other] people; and the elder will serve the younger one.”

Jehovah replied to her, “There are two nations at war in your womb; the two infants inside of you will be divided one from the other. One of them will dominate the other—in fact, the oldest one will serve the youngest one.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos

And the Lord said to her, Two peoples are in thy womb, and two kingdoms from thy womb shall be separated; and one kingdom shall be stronger than the other, and

¹⁸⁹ Gary H. Everett *Gary Everett’s Bible Commentary*; ©1981-2013; from e-sword, Genesis 25:22.

the elder shall serve the younger, if the children of the younger will keep the commandments of the Law.

Latin Vulgate And he answering, said: Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples will be divided out of your womb, and one people will overcome the other, and the elder will serve the younger.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew) And so says Y^ehowah to her, "Two of nations in your womb and two of peoples from your inward parts will be divided, and a people more than a people will be strong; and an elder will serve a younger [one]."

Peshitta (Syriac) And the LORD said to her, Two peoples are in your womb, and two nations shall be separated from your body; and the one nation shall be stronger than the other nation; and the elder shall serve the younger.

Septuagint (Greek) And the Lord said to her, There are two nations in your womb, and two peoples shall be separated from your body, and one people shall be stronger than the other, and the older shall serve the younger.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English The *Lord said to her, `There are two nations inside you. You will give birth to two nations, and they will make war with each other. One nation will be stronger than the other nation. The older child will serve the younger one.'

Easy-to-Read Version The Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your body. The rulers of two families will be born from you. And they will be divided. One son will be stronger than the other. The older son will serve the younger."

God's Word™ The LORD said to her, "Two countries are in your womb. Two nations will go their separate ways from birth. One nation will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger."

The Message GOD told her, Two nations are in your womb, two peoples butting heads while still in your body. One people will overpower the other, and the older will serve the younger.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V. ...and he told her: "Your two sons will become two separate nations. The younger of the two will be stronger, and the older son will be his servant."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible ...and Jehovah told her: 'There are two nations in your womb, and two races will be separated from your belly. One race will become greater than the other, and the older one will serve the younger.'

International Standard V "Two nations [Or two infants] are in your womb," the LORD responded, "and two separate people will emerge. One people will be the stronger, and the older one will serve the younger."

Translation for Translators Yahweh said to her, "The older one of the twins within you will serve the younger one. The twins will be ancestors of two nations. And those two people-groups will separate from each other." [CHI]

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Yahweh said to her, "Two nations are in your belly, and two citizens segregate from your bowels: Citizen encourages citizen, and legions will serve the younger."

Ferar-Fenton Bible	And the LORD said, to her, "Two nations are in your breast, and two peoples shall proceed from your womb, and one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger."
H. C. Leupold	And Yahweh said unto her: Two nations are in thy womb, Two peoples shall be separated from thy bowels; One people shall be stronger than the other, And the elder shall serve the younger.
Lexham English Bible	And Yahweh said to her, "Two nations [are] in your womb, and two peoples {from birth} shall be divided. And {one people shall be stronger than the other}. And [the] elder shall serve [the] younger."

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	She went to consult Yahweh, ²³ and Yahweh said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples will be born of you; one nation will be stronger than the other, and the elder shall serve the younger."
The Heritage Bible	And Jehovah said to her, Two peoples are in your womb, and two communities shall be separated from your insides; and the one community shall be more powerfully alert than the other community; and the older shall serve the younger.
New Advent Bible	And he answering, said: Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples shall be divided out of your womb, and one people shall overcome the other, and the elder shall serve the younger.
New American Bible	...and he answered her: "Two nations are in your womb, two peoples are quarreling while still within you; But one shall surpass the other, and the older shall serve the younger."
New American Bible (R.E.)	and the LORD answered her: Two nations are in your womb, two peoples are separating while still within you; But one will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger. The older will serve the younger: Rebekah now knows something that no one else knows, that God favors Jacob over Esau. The text does not say if she shared this knowledge with anyone or kept it to herself, but, from their actions, it seems unlikely that either Isaac or Esau knew. That fact must be borne in mind in assessing Rebekah's role in chap. 27, the theft of Esau's blessing. Scriptural references: Gn 27:29 Nm 24:18 Mal 1:2-5 Rom 9:10-13.
New Jerusalem Bible	...and Yahweh said to her: There are two nations in your womb, your issue will be two rival peoples. One nation will have the mastery of the other, and the elder will serve the younger

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	...who answered her, "There are two nations in your womb. From birth they will be two rival peoples. One of these peoples will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger."
Judaica Press Complete T.	And the Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two kingdoms will separate from your innards, and one kingdom will become mightier than the other kingdom, and the elder will serve the younger.
Kaplan Translation	God's word to her was, 'Two nations are in your womb. Two governments will separate from inside you. The upper hand will go from one government to the other. The greater one will serve the younger.' Rebecca thus knew that Jacob would be the chosen one. This explains Genesis 25:28 and 28:5.

Orthodox Jewish Bible And Hashem said unto her, Two goyim (nations) are in thy womb, and two peoples shall be separated from within thee; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the older shall serve the younger.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible The Lord said to her, [The founders of] two nations are in your womb, and the separation of two peoples has begun in your body; the one people shall be stronger than the other, and the elder shall serve the younger.

The Expanded Bible The Lord said to her,
 "Two nations are in your body [womb],
 and two groups of people will be taken from you [are being divided within your body].
 One group will be stronger than the other,
 and the older will serve the younger [Rom. 9:10-13]."

Kretzmann's Commentary 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. The answer was thus given in rhythmic parallels, the form of Hebrew poetry, stating that the older of the twins, the first-born, would be the servant of the younger. Cf Romans 9:11-12. The younger, therefore, would be the bearer and heir of the Messianic promise, the spiritual fatherhood of Abraham should be continued in him.

NET Bible®

...and the Lord said to her,
 "Two nations are in your womb,
 and two peoples will be separated from within you.
 One people will be stronger than the other,
 and the older will serve the younger." By metonymy the two children in her womb are described as two nations of which the two children, Jacob and Esau, would become the fathers. The language suggests there would be a struggle between these nations, with one being stronger than the other. The oracle reveals that all of Jacob's scheming was unnecessary in the final analysis. He would have become the dominant nation without using deception to steal his brother's blessing.

The Voice

Eternal One (to Rebekah): Two nations are growing inside of your womb,
 and the two peoples will be divided in the future.
 One will be stronger than the other,
 and the older will serve the younger.

Genesis 25:23 (a graphic); from 180movie.com; accessed July 3, 2015.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:



Concordant Literal Version	And saying is Yahweh to her, "Two nations are in your belly, and two folkstems shall be parted from your bowels. And one folkstem shall be more resolute than the other folkstem. And the greater shall serve the inferior.
English Standard Version	And the LORD said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger."
LTHB	And Jehovah said to her, Two nations are in your womb; even two peoples shall break from your body. And one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.
Webster's Bible Translation	And the LORD said to 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.
World English Bible	Yahweh said to her, Two nations are in your womb, Two peoples will be separated from your body. The one people will be stronger than the other people. The elder will serve the younger.
Young's Updated LT	And Jehovah says to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from your bowels are parted; and the one people than the other people is stronger; and the elder does serve the younger."

The gist of this verse: God tells her that she has two nations within her who would be at odds; and that the older son would serve the younger.

Genesis 25:23a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced waw]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: Y^ehowah said to her,...

As is often the case, we do not know how exactly God communicated with Rachel. We have had situations in the past where God has appeared to people in their dreams; and sometimes He has come in the form of an angel. In any case, God speaks to Rebekah, and not to Isaac to speak to Rebekah. Since this is recorded in the Bible, she obviously told Isaac about it.

Whether there was an intermediary involved or not, we do not know. The text does not suggest that there was. Recall that God spoke to Hagar directly when she was in Beer-lahai-roi (which is where Rebekah appears to be—Genesis 24:62 25:11¹⁹⁰). The text appears to indicate that God spoke directly to Hagar and directly to

¹⁹⁰ Since 35 years transpire between these two verses, we cannot say unequivocally that Isaac and Rebekah lived there all of that time.

Rebekah (compare Genesis 16:7–14). As an aside, this would contradict the idea that the God of the Bible (or the Bible itself) are misogynistic.

Genesis 25:23b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
sh ^e nêy (שְׁנַי) [pronounced sh ^e n-Ā]	<i>two, two of, a pair of, a duo of</i>	dual numeral construct	Strong's #8147 BDB #1040
gôwyîm (גּוֹיִם) [pronounced goh-YIHM]	<i>Gentiles, [Gentile] nations, people, peoples, nations</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #1471 BDB #156
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
beṭen (בֶּטֶן) [pronounced BEH-ten]	<i>womb; belly, stomach [in reference to a man]; inside; appetite, craving</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #990 BDB #105

This is the first occurrence of this word in Scripture.

Translation:... “[There are] two nations in your womb...

The difficult that she had in her pregnancy was emblematic of the trouble which would be between the descendants of these two brothers. The would become the nations of Israel and Edom.

Genesis 25:23c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sh ^e nêy (שְׁנַי) [pronounced sh ^e n-Ā]	<i>two, two of, a pair of, a duo of</i>	dual numeral construct	Strong's #8147 BDB #1040
l ^e ûmmîym (לְגוֹיִם) [pronounced l ^e -oom-MEEM]	<i>nations; peoples; vulgar or common peoples, heathen; Gentiles; Gentile peoples</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #3816 BDB #522

This is the first occurrence of this word in Scripture.

min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
mê'iyim (מַעֲיִם) [pronounced may-GEEM]	<i>internal organs, inward parts, intestines, bowels; figuratively the womb; organs of procreation, loins; emotions; stress, love</i>	masculine plural noun (this noun is always found in the plural) with the 2 nd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #4578 BDB #588
pârad (פָּרַד) [pronounced paw-RAHD]	<i>to divide, to separate; to be divided, to be separated; to separate oneself</i>	3 rd person plural, Niphal imperfect; pausal form	Strong's #6504 BDB #825

Translation: ...and the two peoples inside of you will be divided.

Although this verse has the words bowels in it; this can simply refer to the womb; it is not quite a synonym, but it is close enough. Having been a teacher for many years, one that I have noticed about most twins—particularly identical twins—is that they are unusually close; and more close than most siblings. With Jacob and Esau, this would not be the case; and with the nations that would come out from them, they would be even more divided.

Scott Grant: Her pain causes her to seek an answer from the Lord, who gives her an explanation in the form of a four-line poem of two couplets. The second line in each couplet amplifies the first line. Her pregnancy is so problematic because her womb has become the battlefield in a cataclysmic conflict. Two nations are in her womb. They literally “crush” each other in their struggle for supremacy. The struggle goes back to Genesis 3:15, where two lines destined for conflict would proceed from Eve: the children of Eve and the children of the serpent. The conflict is seen in Genesis 4:8, where Cain kills his brother Abel. Now these two children are facing off inside their mother’s womb, and two nations would proceed from them, those who worship God and those who oppose Him.¹⁹¹

Chuck Smith: So God chose while the children were still fighting it in the womb, two nations are fighting. Nations that are gonna be different from each other. One is stronger. And so the two nations, Israel and the Edomites, who never did really get along. Now the Edomite nation has come to the end. The last known Edomite was the family of Herod, who was the king at the time of Jesus and still then he destroyed all the Jewish boys trying to get rid of the Messiah. The Edomites remained antagonistic toward the purposes of God. When the children of Israel were coming out of the land of Egypt and wanted to pass through their land in order that they might come to the land that God had promised them, the Edomites came out to meet them; to fight them to keep them from coming through. Again seeking, or showing themselves antagonistic to the purposes of God. This is the characteristic of the Edomites from the beginning.¹⁹²

Genesis 25:23d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
l ^e ôwm (לְאֻמִּים) [pronounced l ^e ohm]	<i>people; vulgar or common people, nation; heathen; Gentiles; Gentile people</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong’s #3816 BDB #522
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong’s #4480 BDB #577
l ^e ôwm (לְאֻמִּים) [pronounced l ^e ohm]	<i>people; vulgar or common people, nation; heathen; Gentiles; Gentile people</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong’s #3816 BDB #522
’âmêtz (אָמֵץ) [pronounced aw-MAYTS]	<i>to be strong [firm, alert; eager], to be strong [in the feet], to be fast [or swift-footed]; to prevail over</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #553 BDB #54

Translation: [One] people will be stronger than [the other] people;...

¹⁹¹ From http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99649/4865.pdf accessed July 2, 2015.

¹⁹² From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/csc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 14, 2015.

Of the two peoples, one would clearly be stronger than the other; one people would dominate the other.

Wenstrom: *The Lord's prediction that "one people shall be stronger than the other" refers to the fact that the Israelites would prevail over the Edomites in history. Also this prophecy indicates that Jacob and not Esau would be in the Messianic line and would inherit the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant. Normally, the oldest would receive the father's inheritance and estate but the Lord does not always subscribe to this.*¹⁹³

Bishop Newton: *For some time the family of Esau was the more powerful of the two, there having been dukes and kings in Edom before there was any king in Israel; but David and his captains made an entire conquest of the Edomites, slew several thousands of them, and compelled the rest to become tributaries, and planted garrisons among them to secure their obedience. In this state of servitude they continued about one hundred and fifty years, without a king of their own, being governed by deputies or viceroys appointed by the kings of Judah; but in the days of Jehoram they revolted, recovered their liberties, and set up a king of their own. Afterwards Amaziah, king of Judah, gave them a total overthrow in the valley of Salt; and Azariah took Elath, a commodious harbor on the Red Sea, from them. Judas Maccabeus also attacked and defeated them with a loss of more than twenty thousand at two different times, and took their chief city Hebron. At last Hyrcanus his nephew took other cities from them, and reduced them to the necessity of leaving their country or embracing the Jewish religion; on which they submitted to be circumcised, and become proselytes to the Jewish religion, and were ever afterwards incorporated into the Jewish Church and nation.*¹⁹⁴

Genesis 25:23e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
rab (רַב) [pronounced rah ^b v]	<i>elder; great man; leader, captain, chief; one who is masterful or skillful</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7227 BDB #912
‘âbad (עָבַד) [pronounced gaw ^b -VAHD]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
tsâ'îyr (צָעִיר) [pronounced tzaw-GEER]	<i>little, insignificant, young, youngest, least</i>	feminine singular adjective used here as a substantive	Strong's #6810 BDB #859

Translation: ...and the elder will serve the younger one."

Then God makes a statement which is quite unusual: "The elder son will serve the younger son." These are twins. They have the same birthday (we can devise a situation where they do not, but we are dealing with principle here). One would be literally minutes younger than the other. God is telling Rebekah right now of the differences between her two sons that she is expecting.

Genesis 25:23 Y^ehowah said to her, "[There are] two nations in your womb and the two peoples inside of you will be divided. [One] people will be stronger than [the other] people; and the elder will serve the younger one." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

¹⁹³ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

¹⁹⁴ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:23.

Genesis 25:23 Jehovah replied to her, “There are two nations at war in your womb; the two infants inside of you will be divided one from the other. One of them will dominate the other—in fact, the oldest one will serve the youngest one.” (Kukis paraphrase)

Wenstrom: *In Genesis 25:23, the Lord declares that the “older shall serve the younger” indicating that the younger son, Jacob would receive the inheritance and not Esau who was older. Esau, the older, did not actually serve Jacob, his younger twin but rather Esau’s descendants did (see 1Samuel 14:47 2Samuel 8:14 1Kings 11:15-16 22:47 2Kings 14:7). This prophecy that “one people shall be stronger than the other; And the older shall serve the younger” indicates that the sovereign will of God has ordained the following: (1) Jacob to be in the Messianic line and not Esau. (2) Jacob would be the beneficiary of the divine promises enumerated in the Abrahamic Covenant and not Esau. (3) Jacob would receive his father’s estate and not Esau.*¹⁹⁵

The NIV Study Bible: *The ancient law of primogeniture provided that, under ordinary circumstances, the younger of two sons would be subservient to the older. God’s election of the younger son highlights the fact that God’s people are the product not of natural or worldly development, but of his sovereign intervention in the affairs of men. Part of this verse is quoted in Romans 9:10–12 as an example of God’s sovereign right to do “whatever pleases Him” (Psalm 115:3)—not in an arbitrary way (see Romans 9:14), but according to His Own perfect will.*¹⁹⁶

Coffman: *God’s indicating his choice between them at this point in time (to Rebekah) was due to His foreknowledge of all that would ensue. There was nothing capricious, haphazard, partial, or unfair about this.*¹⁹⁷

Chuck Smith: *Esau was [antagonistic toward the purposes of God]...He really didn’t care about God or the things of God. He was a very natural man. He was the typical natural man, interested in manly kind of things to be sure, but not interested in godly things. And God, knowing in advance his disposition and his despising of spiritual things in advance, chose the younger one to be the heir and the one through whom the Messiah would eventually come. So the younger one is chosen by God over the elder while still in the womb.*¹⁹⁸

The word usually translated *elder* is *rav* (רַב) [pronounced *rabv*] and it is translated variously as *great, enough, many*. It can be found in Genesis 6:5 7:11 13:6, 20 21:34 24:25 (and in many more places). The other Hebrew word, *tsâ’yr* (צֵעִיר) [pronounced *tzaw-GEER*] can be reasonably translated either *younger* or *little*.

Dr. Dodd: *This passage serves for a key to explain the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, where the words are quoted; for it proves to a demonstration that this cannot be meant of God’s arbitrary predestination of particular persons to eternal happiness or misery, without any regard to their merit or demerit - a doctrine which some have most impiously fathered on God, who is the best of beings, and who cannot possibly hate, far less absolutely doom to misery, any creature that he has made: but that it means only his bestowing greater external favors, or, if you please, higher opportunities for knowing and doing their duty, upon some men, than he does upon others; and that merely according to his own wise purpose, without any regard to their merits or demerits, as having a right to confer greater or smaller degrees or perfection on whom he pleases.*¹⁹⁹

Then Clarke expands on that observation: *The doctrine of unconditional predestination to eternal life and eternal death cannot be supported by the example of God’s dealings with Esau and Jacob, or with the Edomites and Israelites. After long reprobation the Edomites were incorporated among the Jews,*

¹⁹⁵ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

¹⁹⁶ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 43 (footnote) (slightly edited).

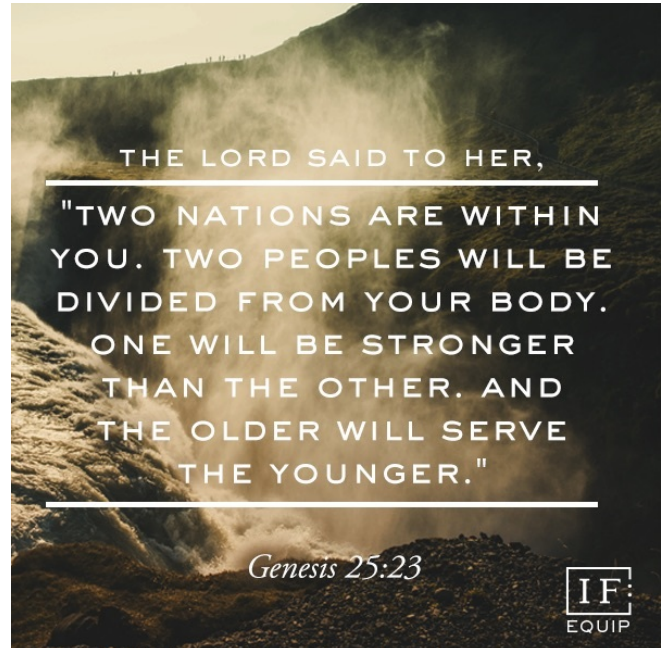
¹⁹⁷ From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 30, 2015.

¹⁹⁸ From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/csc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 14, 2015.

¹⁹⁹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:23.

and have ever since been undistinguishable members in the Jewish Church. The Jews, on the contrary, the elect of God, have been cut off and reprobated, and continue so to this day. If a time should ever come when the Jews shall all believe in Christ Jesus, which is a general opinion, then the Edomites, which are now absorbed among them, shall also become the elect. And even now Isaac finds both his children within the pale of the Jewish Church, equally entitled to the promises of salvation by Christ Jesus, of whom he was the most expressive and the most illustrious type.²⁰⁰

Genesis 25:23 (another graphic); from ifequip.com; accessed July 3, 2015.



V. 23: Y^ehowah said to her, “[There are] two nations in your womb and the two peoples inside of you will be divided. [One] people will be stronger than [the other] people; and the elder will serve the younger one.” This verse further illustrates the language of accommodation: there are not literally two nations within her (just as there are not two fighting children within her). This is called a metonymy when the action or the effect is used instead of that from which the action or effect springs. Here we are speaking of the two unborn children represented by the nations that they will become. Her trouble with carrying twins is spoken of as a struggle between two children. God tells her that this is a struggle between two nations. Her pain and discomfort during pregnancy illustrates what will occur long after birth. God has predicted what would happen between the two children as well. The oldest is generally given the greatest portion and assumes a position of leadership when the father has passed away; however, it will be the opposite in this case. The difference between the two children, as we will see, will not be a matter of the younger child being more moral or a better, kinder person. The second child will be the moral inferior of the eldest; yet he is an heir to the promise. The difference is regeneration—Jacob, the younger, believed in Yahweh and eventually grew spiritually (though, not as much as his father or grandfather) and Esau did not.

The difference between the two children, as we will see, will not be a matter of the younger child being more moral or a better, kinder person. The second child will be the moral inferior of the eldest; yet he is an heir to the promise. The difference is regeneration—Jacob, the younger, believed in Yahweh and eventually grew spiritually (though, not as much as his father or grandfather) and Esau did not.

Paul, in Romans, speaks about this: **And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of Him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger." As it stands written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means!** (Romans 9:10–14; Genesis 25:23 Mal. 1:2–3; ESV). The context of this chapter is, Paul is desperately concerned about the Jews. Not only had they rejected Jesus in the flesh when He is here on earth, but after the resurrection, they continue to reject Him. However, despite the fact that the Jews are God's people and they reject Him, this does not mean that God failed or that the Word of God failed. This is because, **not all Israel is Israel**. There are the children of the flesh and the children of the promise. Paul illustrates that with Isaac, who was a child of promise; and then with Jacob and Esau. These are twins—they come out of the same womb; yet God loves Jacob and hates Esau. This is not based upon works, but upon their being called—God, foreknowing their free will, called Jacob but not Esau. So Jacob is a Jew, but his twin brother, Esau is not a Jew but a gentile (specifically, an Arab). Is God unjust? He is not! Esau had free will; Jacob had free will. God knew their free will choices from eternity past. God allowed them their free will choices. Furthermore, God knew the free will choices of their children and their children's children. God has a perfect plan for the human race, which He knows the end from the beginning; but within this plan are people with free will, whose free will is real and dynamic.


²⁰⁰ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:23.

Twin Sons of Isaac and Rebecca; graphic and text on Jacob and Esau. From [the Real Israelites](#); accessed July 3, 2015.


TWIN SONS OF ISAAC & REBECCA

JACOB & ESAU


GENESIS 25:21-26

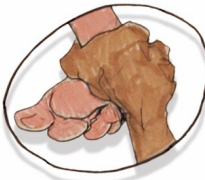


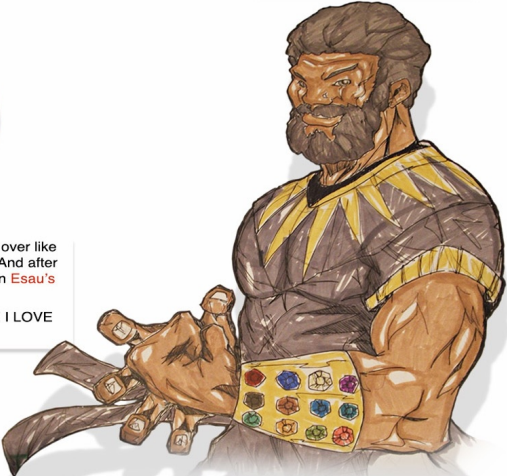
ESAU
Father of the Edomites



JACOB
Father of the Israelites







GENESIS 25: 25-26 And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment: and they called his name **Esau**. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on **Esau's** heel; and his name was called **Jacob**:

ROMANS 9:13 "AS IT IS WRITTEN **JACOB** HAVE I LOVE BUT **ESAU** HAVE I HATED".

TWO NATIONS SEPARATED AT BIRTH.

GENESIS 27:39-39 "Behold thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and dew of the heaven above, and by the sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck".

GENESIS 27:28-29 "Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth and plenty of corn and wine let people serve thee and nations bow down to thee: cursed be everyone that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee".

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

In the course of this study, I certainly came upon a great many views of God's sovereignty versus man's volition. Personally, I cannot buy into the idea that God is sovereign and simply gives us the faith to believe in Him arbitrarily—that is, that our salvation is completely a matter of God's election, and that whatever free will we have is coerced or supplied by Him in order to be saved. On the other hand, our free will is not a matter of any sort of merit. Let me suggest to you that God has designed a world in which His sovereignty co-exists with our free will; and that God will bring His great purposes to pass, allowing both sets of wills to play out on the grand stage of human history.

In the alternative, also known as 5-point Calvinism, our actions in this world are completely arbitrary and dependent upon God's sovereignty. Therefore, the pleading of Paul in his epistles, for us to do this or that, is rather meaningless, if God makes the ultimate decision, what we will do.

Furthermore, if our free will is simply illusionary, entirely subject to God's sovereignty, then by God failing to act, failing to guide us toward the light, is that not God directing us into sin (since we have no free will)?

It is interesting to me that 5 point Calvinism is so close in philosophy to humanism, which tries to remove the concept of free will, at least with regards to some behaviors.

Let's look at an illustration, which might help you to understand God's sovereignty and man's free will. Surely you and your spouse have taken your children on vacation. You plan out where you are going to go, how you are going to get there, and sometimes, you know all of the different places that you will go to. Your children all of have volition, which can be manifested in very unpleasant ways from time to time. This does not destroy your plan; this does not destroy the list of places you are going to go to. The expression of their volition is an integral part of your vacation. You expect that their volition and your plans to coincide at various times, and, not so much at other times. Now and again, when their volition seems to run counter to the plans that you have made, that might require a spanking (or however you discipline your children). Also, along this trip, you make prophetic utterances, such as, "If you kids are good, then we will..." Ideally speaking, you and your spouse are on the same page as to what this vacation is all about—and that would be analogous to the Unity of the Trinity (obviously, you are one person short, unless you want to round out this analogy and include the energy involved getting you from point A to point B as analogous to the Holy Spirit). If you can grasp the machinations of such a vacation—your overall plan, which, at times, must pay attention to the free will of your urchins—then you understand the basics of the plan of God. God has an overarching plan; and we have free will. Sometimes our free will is in synch with God's plan and sometimes it is not.

So far, we have studied Genesis 25:19–23:

These [are] generations [genealogies, families, history, origin] of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham became the father of Isaac. Isaac was 40 years old when he took Rebekah—the daughter of Bethuel the Aramæan from Paddan-Aram, the sister of Laban the Aramæan—as his wife. Isaac entreated Y^ehowah on behalf of his wife because she [is] barren. Therefore, Y^ehowah was supplicated by him and Rebekah, Isaac's wife, conceived. The sons within her struggled together, so she said, "Behold, therefore, why [is] this [happening to] me?" Therefore, she went to consult Y^ehowah. Y^ehowah said to her, "[There are] two nations in your womb and the two peoples inside of you will be divided. [One] people will be stronger than [the other] people; and the elder will serve the younger one."

The promise of Abraham went through Isaac, and for this promise to be fulfilled, Isaac would have to have a son. However, after 20 years of marriage, there was no son. Therefore, Isaac and Rebekah turned toward God and prayed for a son—and now Rebekah has twins.

We are not given any details on how she goes to see Y^ehowah. Nor do we know how God spoke to her. The simplest explanation is, she went to God *in prayer* but that there was an audible answer from God. There may have been an intermediary process, like going through a priest (although the only priest spoken of from this era is Melchizedek). As is so often the case, there are details of interest which are left out of this narrative, when it comes to God.

Now as we have studied already in Romans 9, the fact that Jacob is chosen does not mean that Jacob was some little goody-two-shoes and that Esau was anti-God. Compared to one another, Esau was probably a nicer guy. But Jacob recognized the importance of the promise of God—of the heritage promised first to Abraham—and Esau did not. Jacob wanted to carry on with the heritage of Abraham, and was willing to do anything in order to make that happen. His choices—which we will study (and many of them are wrong-headed)—were indicative of what was in his soul.

*Steven Cole: God's choice usually runs counter to man's wisdom. If we were going to pick a man to be the father of a multitude of nations, we'd probably run the couple through a fertility test and then pick the one who looked the most promising. God picked a couple who couldn't produce any children. Then, we'd make sure that his son and his wife were fertile. In God's sovereignty, the son's wife was barren. His half-brother, Ishmael, didn't seem to have any problem producing twelve sons, but Isaac could produce only two, and that only after 20 years of pleading with God. If we had to pick between the two sons, we'd pick the oldest. He seemed to be the strongest. The youngest was a wimp and a deceiver! God picked him. That's how God's choice usually runs--counter to man's wisdom. As the apostle Paul explained (1Cor. 1:26-31): **For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were***

wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." (ESV) Cole concludes: If God chose those who were strong in themselves, they would boast in themselves and God would be robbed of His glory. If God chose those who first chose Him, they could brag about their intelligent choice. So God chooses those whom the world would never choose, those who cannot choose Him. When His purpose is fulfilled through them, He gets the glory.²⁰¹

Let me give you a modern-day example. There is no logical reason for nation Israel to exist, but it does. Now, whether this is the nation spoken of in the end times, or whether another nation will come up, we don't know. But the current nation is under God's protection, despite being surrounded by nearly a billion hostile people. There are nations like Iran and Palestine (not yet an official nation as of this writing) who just about have the destruction of Israel written into their national charters. But God uses the weak things of this world to shame the strong. God's plan is always a matter of grace and never a matter of merit.

What is important prophecy, God reveals. Genesis 25:22–23 *The children struggled together within her, and she said, "If it is thus, why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the LORD. And the LORD said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger." (ESV)*

The Bible Query on, Why God Told Rebekah about the Far Future

Q: In Gen 25:22-23, Rebekah's question concerned the present and near future, yet God's answer told of the far future. Why does God do that?

Five points to consider in the answer.

1. God apparently wanted to reveal this prophetic truth about Jacob and Esau.
2. Like good human teachers, God knows that a point will be remembered better if it is an answer to a student's question.
3. Regardless of whether God caused the babies to jostle solely to prompt Rebekah to ask the question, the jostling did prompt her to ask the question.
4. Perhaps Rebekah was not thinking long-term at this point, but here question was open-ended enough that God's revelation still answered her question.
5. When we ask things of God, we should ask in an "open way" and not just on our terms. We should be prepared for God to show us truths we did not expect and for which we did not directly ask.

From *Bible Query*; March 2006 version. Copyright (c) Christian Debater(tm) 1997-2006.; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:22–23.

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I have an interesting and unique theory—Rebekah and Isaac will appear to raise these boys separately, Isaac keeping Esau outside, teaching him how to hunt; and Rebekah concentrates upon Jacob, keeping him inside for the most part. Perhaps they heard this prophecy, but did not fully understand it; and therefore, took steps to try to keep the boys apart, believing that they could somehow keep them from fighting with each other. Children do fight—particularly boys—so it is not impossible to imagine that these boys did get into fights until their parents took steps to separate them, thinking that this might mollify the prophecies of God to some degree. This is only a theory, and it fits well with this and the following chapters.

Application: Much as we might not want it, there will always be conflict in this world. Much as you try to be at peace with all men (something that we are commanded to do), not all men will be at peace with us.

²⁰¹ From <http://www.fcfonline.org/content/1/sermons/121596M.pdf> accessed July 2, 2015.

These are a few of the prophecies related to the people and nations that would proceed from Abraham.

Prophecies About the People to Come from Abraham

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Gen 17:15–16 And God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her." (ESV)	God told Abraham that, through Sarah, would become the father of many nations; and that kings of people would come from her.
Gen 24:59–60 So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men. And they blessed Rebekah and said to her, "Our sister, may you become thousands of ten thousands, and may your offspring possess the gate of those who hate him!" (ESV)	The relatives of Rebekah, when sending Rebekah westward to meet and marry Isaac, called for her to become thousands of ten thousands (that is, to have many descendants); and for her seed to possess the gate (that is, control of that city) of those who hate him.
Genesis 25:22–23 The children struggled together within her, and she said, "If it is thus, why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the LORD. And the LORD said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger." (ESV)	Rebekah was upset, wondering what was happening inside of her, and God warned her that within her are two peoples, who would be in a constant struggle with one another.

God communicates the future in 3 different ways here.

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Bishop Newton: *We have in the prophecies delivered respecting the sons of Isaac, ample proof that these prophecies were not meant so much of single persons as of whole nations descended from them; for what was predicted concerning Esau and Jacob was not verified in themselves, but in their posterity. The Edomites were the offspring of Esau, the Israelites were of Jacob; and **who but the Author and Giver of life could foresee that two children in the womb would multiply into two nations?** Jacob had twelve sons, and their descendants were all united and incorporated into one nation; and what an overruling providence was it that two nations should arise from the two sons only of Isaac! and that they should be two such different nations! The Edomites and Israelites have been from the beginning two such different people in their manners, customs, and religion, as to be at perpetual variance among themselves. The children struggled together in the womb, which was an omen of their future disagreement; and when they grew up to manhood, they manifested very different inclinations. Esau was a cunning hunter, and delighted in the sports of the field; Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents - minding his sheep and his cattle. The religion of the Jews is well known; but whatever the Edomites were at first, in process of time they became idolaters. When Amaziah king of Judah overthrew them, he brought their gods, and set them up to be his gods. The king of Edom having refused a passage to the Israelites through his territories on their return from Egypt, the history of the Edomites afterwards is little more than the history of their wars with the Jews.²⁰² Emphasis mine.*

²⁰² Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:23.

Speaking of such prophecies—God knows the end from the beginning. God apprehends all that is within time, and all that is within the borders of space, as He is the inventor of time and space.

Snider gives us a good overall view of what we have studied.

Snider Summarizes Genesis 25:21–23

1. What is not recorded but we find out in vs 26 is that some twenty years have passed since the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah.
2. Isaac is now 59 years old, and we do not given the age of Rebekah at any time in her life.
3. Nothing of any consequence has occurred in the life of Isaac, as I said before he was somewhat spiritually passive.
4. He thought enough about the situation of no children to realize that the next link in the covenant required him to have some.
5. Keep in mind that Abraham is still alive at this point and is most likely the predominant influence in his
6. He had learned enough doctrine to realize that God must intervene and so he entreats God's favor via
7. Isaac must learn as all have to that God's plan is not advanced along purely natural lines.
8. Grace and God's intervention makes the fulfillment of things possible, not merely human effort, ingenuity, etc.
9. Of course his prayer acknowledges this and God responds with a grace answer.
10. Rebekah and Isaac continue to have sex and Rebekah now gets pregnant.
11. Her pregnancy experienced some complications which caused her to be quite concerned about the
12. The movement within the womb by the fetus was abnormal, causing Rebekah to have a very traumatic time.
13. The word which is used to describe what she felt indicated that a struggle, nearly violent, was occurring in her womb.
14. She asks herself first, something like this, "If we prayed about this and it is God's will for me to be pregnant, why are things not going well?"
15. This question has plagued believers in other periods of history as well, and none are exempt from problems simply because they are in God's will. Joseph, Moses, David, Paul, Jesus, Heb. 11:36ff
16. Just because a believer faces difficulty, they should not assume that they are somehow maladjusted or out of God's will.
17. Apparently, Rebekah discerned in the turmoil which was occurring in her womb something of spiritual
18. She gets no answers from anyone in her periphery, so she goes to ask the Lord specifically.
19. This is a good practice when one is confused or concerned with events which are happening in their niche, pray about it.
20. Exactly where she went, or how she inquired of the Lord is not noted.
21. Some suggest that she consulted Shem, or Abraham or some other believer.
22. In any case she receives a Divine answer, and again we are not told how it came to her, whether in a dream, vision, direct word, or through someone else.
23. The Lord reveals to her that there is more than one fetus in the womb.
24. Two distinct nations are said to be in her womb and two distinct peoples.
25. This obviously is not meant to be taken literally, but refers to the future descendants.
26. She will have two sons, and each will head up his own particular people, who will develop into two distinct nations.
27. These two nations will have nothing in common and will be divided by both spiritual and physical
28. This certainly demonstrates that physical relationship does not imply or guarantee spiritual affinity.
29. One group would be stronger than the other, indicating that there would not be equality between the two.
30. Historically the descendants of Esau, the Edomites were subservient to Israel.
31. Esau and his descendants came under temporal and historical cursing due to negative volition.
32. Generally, as we know, the oldest son received the right of primogeniture, called the birthright in this chapter.
33. Of course, they had to be qualified on spiritual grounds, ie. a believer.
34. The natural course of things would be for the oldest to be pre-eminent, and the younger to be

Snider Summarizes Genesis 25:21–23

- submissive to him.
35. She is clearly informed here that the situation is to be completely opposite natural expectations.
 36. The obvious purpose for revelation from God in regard to the future is so that one may be informed and make the appropriate applications.
 37. To assume that Rebekah received this doctrine from the Lord and did not relate it to Isaac is unthinkable.
 38. Both on a purely natural level, as well as on the spiritual level.
 39. We must keep before us the fact that both Isaac and Rebekah knew from the beginning that Jacob was to be the recipient of the birthright and the privileges associated with it.
 40. Failure to believe this and apply it will lead to much harm to their family.
 41. From Paul's use of this verse in Rom. 9:8ff we may also make several observations:
 - 1) In terms of God's plan, the natural man does not possess any advantage simply by birth. The Jews had fallen into the thinking that descent from Abraham was equivalent to SAJG.
 - 2) No one has any leg up, based on physical descent and birth into a certain class or family. Jn. 1:12ff, 3:5-6;
 - 3) It depends on the volition of each individual, and physical relationship does not guarantee spiritual adjustment. vs 11
 - 4) The thesis Paul is proving in this chapter is that not all Israel is Israel. vs 6-7
 - 5) Esau the oldest was rejected and Jacob became the heir of the promises, which was in contrast to the natural order of things.
 - 6) God made this decision before the two boys were born, so it could not have been based on physical descent, nor works.
 - 7) This is based on God's foreknowledge regarding the volitional response of the two boys to his
 - 8) Since He knew that Jacob was positive and Esau was negative, He made decisions before the boys were even born.
 - 9) God's eternal purpose was to make Jacob the heir, which resulted in a plan which stands because it depends on God. vs 11
 - 10) Since God knew each response, it allowed Him to design His own plan, which assigns each one their place.
 - 11) This is not in violation of any attribute, esp. Justice as many claim, esp. Calvinists. vs 14
 - 12) The quote from Malachi 1:2 serves to reinforce the fact that the Esau and his descendants will come under temporal and eternal indignation.
 - 13) So Jacob and his descendants will come under Divine blessing and inherit, while Esau and his descendants will come under Divine hatred and wrath.
 - 14) It is not a contradiction to say that God both loves and hates those who are negative. Jn. 3:16 cf Rom. 12:9
 42. Logically the events transpired as follows:
 - 1) God foreknew in eternity past that Jacob was positive and Esau was negative.
 - 2) He determined to bless Jacob and organized His plan to do so.
 - 3) God picked or elected Jacob to be saved.
 - 4) He assigned Jacob his place in the plan.
 - 5) Jacob heard the gospel in time and believed.
 - 6) He was imputed +R and therefore justified.
 - 7) He made applications in time, which will be rewarded with SG3.
 - 8) He now awaits phase 3 sanctification and his inheritance.
 43. This sequence is confirmed in Rom. 8:28-30 and 1Peter 1:1-2.
 44. No one whom God foreknew would be positive and therefore was elected in eternity past will be overlooked or left out.
 45. As we will see, the plan cannot be frustrated or averted by anyone or anything.
 46. Isaac's failure to believe this and his personal preference for Esau will not frustrate God's plan.
 47. However, it will cause him a lot of personal trauma and will eventually devastate his family.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

And so are fulfilled her days to give birth; and behold, twins in her womb!

Genesis
25:24

Her days were accomplished to give birth, and it became apparent that [lit., *behold*] she was carrying twins [lit., *twins (were) in her womb*].

Her pregnancy went to term, and it became obvious that she was carrying twins.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)
Targum of Onkelos

And so are fulfilled her days to give birth; and behold, twins in her womb!
And the two hundred and seventy days of her being with child were completed to bring forth; and, behold, twins were in her womb.

Latin Vulgate
Peshitta (Syriac)

And when her time was come to be delivered, behold twins were found in her womb.
And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb.

Septuagint (Greek)

And the days were fulfilled that she should be delivered, and she had twins in her womb.

Significant differences: The targum has additional text.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English
Easy English
Easy-to-Read Version
Good News Bible (TEV)
The Message
NIRV

And when the time came for her to give birth, there were two children in her body.
The time came for Rebekah to give birth. There were *twins inside her then.
And when the right time came, Rebekah gave birth to twins.
The time came for her to give birth, and she had twin sons.
When her time to give birth came, sure enough, there were twins in her womb.
The time came for Rebekah to have her babies. There were twin boys in her body.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible
Contemporary English V.
New Berkeley Version
New Century Version
New Life Bible
New Living Translation

When she reached the end of her pregnancy, she discovered that she had twins.
When Rebekah gave birth,...

When her days for delivery were completed, there were indeed twins in her womb.
When the time came, Rebekah gave birth to twins.
When the day came for her to give birth, there were two babies to be born.
And when the time came to give birth, Rebekah discovered that she did indeed have twins!

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

International Standard V
Translation for Translators

Sure enough, when her due date arrived, she delivered twin sons [Lit. *twins from her womb*].
When Rebekah gave birth, it was true! Twin boys were born!

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear
Ferar-Fenton Bible

Her days to beget were filled, and behold, twins from her belly
When her days were full for her delivery there were twins;...

H. C. Leupold Lexham English Bible	When the time for her delivery came, behold, there were twins in her womb. And when her days to give birth were completed, then--behold--twins [were] in her womb.
NIV – UK	When the time came for her to give birth, there were twin boys in her womb.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

American English Bible	Finally, when it came time for her to deliver, she [found that] she had twins in her womb.
The Heritage Bible	And when her days were fulfilled to give birth, behold, there were twins in her womb.
New American Bible (R.E.)	When the time of her delivery came, there were twins in her womb. Hos 12:4.
New Jerusalem Bible	When the time came for her confinement, there were indeed twins in her womb.
New RSV	When her time to give birth was at hand, there were twins in her womb.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation	When the time came for her to give birth, there were twins in her womb.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And when her days were fulfilled to be delivered, hinei, there were twins in her womb.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And when the days were filled for her to give birth, and see, twins were in her womb!

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	When the time came, ·Rebekah gave birth to twins [there were twins in her womb].
Kretzmann's Commentary	Verses 24-28 The Two Sons, Esau and Jacob And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb.
NET Bible®	When the time came for Rebekah to give birth [Heb "And her days were filled to give birth."], there were [Heb "look!" By the use of the particle הִנֵּה (hinneh, "look"), the narrator invites the audience to view the scene as if they were actually present at the birth.] twins in her womb.
The Voice	When it was time for Rebekah to give birth, she saw that she was carrying twins.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And fulfilled are the days of her bearing. And behold! Twins are in her belly.
Context Group Version	And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, look, there were twins in her womb.
English Standard Version	When her days to give birth were completed, behold, there were twins in her womb.
New King James Version	So when her days were fulfilled <i>for her</i> to give birth, indeed <i>there were</i> twins in her womb.
Webster's Bible Translation	And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, [there were] twins in her womb.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	And her days to bear are fulfilled, and lo, twins are in her womb.

The gist of this verse: When she was ready to give birth, it was apparent that she had twins.

Genesis 25:24a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mâlê' (מָלֵא) [pronounced maw-LAY]	<i>to fill, to make full; to be filled, to be full, to fulfill; to be accomplished, to be ended; to consecrate; to fill [the hand]</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4390 BDB #569
yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced yaw-MEEM]	<i>days, a set of days; time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>to give birth, to bear, to be born, to bear, to bring forth, to beget</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #3205 BDB #408

Translation: Her days were accomplished to give birth,...

The wâw consecutive and the imperfect verb introduces some action which will be chronological or coterminous. The phrase used here means that she has brung these infants to term, where she is about to give birth to them.

Genesis 25:24b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced hin-NAY]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
This seems to attempt to take others and put them in the place of the person saying this (so that they see the same thing); or to grab the attention of the reader.			
tôw'im (טֹאֲמִים) [pronounced toh-IHM]	<i>twins</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #8380 BDB #1060
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
beṭen (בֶּטֶן) [pronounced BEH-ten]	<i>womb; belly, stomach [in reference to a man]; inside; appetite, craving</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #990 BDB #105

Translation: ...and it became apparent that [lit., behold] she was carrying twins [lit., twins (were) in her womb].

The word *behold* often grabs a person and puts them into the action, so to speak. It is not clear whether it was obvious by her size that she had twins or whether this takes us to the actual moment of birth and she is obviously delivering twins.

*Barnes: The Lord answers the mother of the promised seed. Two children are in her womb, the parents of two nations, differing in their dispositions and destinies. The one is to be stronger than the other. The order of nature is to be reversed in them; for the older will serve the younger. Their struggles in the womb are a prelude to their future history.*²⁰³

This is the fulfillment of the short-term prophecy that she would have twins.

There are both near and far prophecies throughout the Bible. Since God knows all things in advance, He can choose who and when to tell what the future is. As we have seen, there are a great many prophecies in the book of Genesis, and they continue throughout much of the Bible and even until today.

Genesis 25:24 *Her days were accomplished to give birth, and it became apparent that [lit., behold] she was carrying twins [lit., twins (were) in her womb].* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:24 *Her pregnancy went to term, and it became obvious that she was carrying twins.* (Kukis paraphrase)

Knowing the end from the beginning is a witness to the omniscience of God, as His knowledge transcends time. God invented time, but He is not subject to time (in the same way that He created all the laws of the universe, none of which confine God Himself). Both angels and man are made aware of God's full knowledge of events. As has been discussed on previous occasions, there are a great many things about Jesus Christ which are revealed in the Old Testament. The entire Bible is about Jesus Christ, even though the Bible records about 4000 years of human history before Jesus is born. Because of God's omniscience, the cross is described more clearly in the Old Testament (Genesis 22 Psalm 22 Isaiah 53) than it is in the New Testament.

Much of God's omniscience is revealed to angels just as it is revealed to us. Angels are watching human history play out with these promises and prophecies of God. Angels interact with God, but how do they actually recognize God? How do they know that He is Who He says He is? How do they know that God is of the essence which He claims to be? His purpose, His plan and His character all play out on the stage of human history. Elect angels see continued proof that God is Who He claims to be; and fallen angels view this as well.

Although we do not know the exact nature of Rebekah's interaction with God, it does appear to be a personal interaction without intermediaries (although that is not clear). On the other hand, it appears that in the Church Age, God does not have the same kind of interaction in our lives—we do not witness miracles, we do not see burning bushes, we do not hear voices out of heaven and this is because our lives do not require miracles or prophecies. This is because we have the Holy Spirit and the entire Word of God. Virtually every believer in this dispensation has access to both the Holy Spirit and the complete Word of God (with the exception of some countries, which have been partially successful in outlawing the Bible). In this, we are blessed more than believers in any previous dispensation. Furthermore, we as individual believers potentially have a great spiritual impact, even if most people do not know who we are. In this dispensation, we all have our own spiritual gift or gifts, which function as we grow spiritually. This is the concept of the *invisible hero*.

In v. 25, we have the actual birth of the twins.

²⁰³ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:19–26.

And so comes forth the first, red all of him like a mantle of hair. And so they call his name Esau.

Genesis
25:25

The first came out [quite] red [appearing] as a coat of hair. Therefore, they called his name Esau.

The first child was born looking red and as if covered with a coat of hair. He was therefore named Esau.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so comes forth the first, red all of him like a mantle of hair. And so they call his name Esau.
Targum of Onkelos	And the first came forth wholly red, as a garment of hair: and they called his name Esau, <u>because he was born altogether complete, with the hair of the head, and the beard, and teeth, and grinders.</u>
Jerusalem targum	And the first came forth wholly red, as a garment of hair: and they called his name Esau.
Latin Vulgate	He that came forth first was red, and <u>hairy like a skin</u> : and his name was called Esau. <u>Immediately the other coming forth, held his brother's foot in his hand: and therefore he was called Jacob.</u>
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the first came out red, all covered with ringlets of hair; and they called his name Esau.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the first came out red, hairy all over like a garment; and she called his name Esau.

Significant differences: The targum has additional text. The Latin has *hairy like a skin* rather than *like a mantle of hair*. The Latin also includes a portion of v. 26.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And the first came out red from head to foot like a robe of hair, and they gave him the name of Esau.
Easy English	The first *twin that came out was red. All his body was like a hairy skin. So he was called Esau.
God's Word™	The first one born was red. His whole body was covered with hair, so they named him Esau [Hairy].
NIRV	The first one to come out was red. His whole body was covered with hair. So they named him Esau.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The first came out red all over, clothed with hair, and she named him Esau.
Contemporary English V.	...the first baby was covered with red hair, so he was named Esau.
New Century Version	The first baby was born red. Since his skin was like a hairy robe, he was named Esau [This name may mean "hairy."].
New Life Bible	The first to come out was red and he had hair all over his body. They gave him the name of Esau.
New Living Translation	The first one was very red at birth and covered with thick hair like a fur coat. So they named him Esau [Esau sounds like a Hebrew term that means "hair."].

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	The first came out red and covered with hair all over his skin; and she named him Esau.
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International Standard V	The first son came out reddish-his entire body was covered with hair-so they named him Esau. The Heb. name <i>Esau</i> means <i>hairy</i>
Translation for Translators	The first one born was red, and his body had hair all over it, like a garment made of hair. So they named him Esau, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'hairy.'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The first proceeded all ruddy with a hairy mantle, and they called his name Esau (<i>hairy</i>).
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...and the first born boy came out covered with hair, and she called his name Esau [The Hairy].
Lexham English Bible	And the first came out red, all {his body} [was] like a hairy coat, so they called his name Esau.
HCSB	The first one came out reddish, covered with hair like a fur coat, and they named him Esau.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And the first came out red, all over like a hairy robe, and they called his name Esau.
New Advent Bible	He that came forth first was red, and hairy like a skin: and his name was called Esau.
New American Bible (R.E.)	The first to emerge was reddish [Reddish: in Hebrew, 'admoni, a reference to Edom, another name for Esau (v. 30; 36:1). Edom was also the name of the country south of Moab (southeast of the Dead Sea) where the descendants of Esau lived. It was called the "red" country because of its reddish sandstone. Moreover, "red" points ahead to the red stew in the next scene. Hairy: in Hebrew, se`ar, a reference to Seir, another name for Edom (36:8).], and his whole body was like a hairy mantle; so they named him Esau.
New RSV	The first came out red, all his body like a hairy mantle; so they named him Esau.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	The first to come out was reddish and covered all over with hair, like a coat; so they named him 'Esav [completely formed, that is, having hair already].
exeGesés companion Bible	...and the first comes out ruddy, hairy all over as a mighty mantle; and they call his name Esav...
Kaplan Translation	The first one came out reddish [Either with a ruddy complexion (Ibn Janach; cf. Midrash HaGadol) or with red hair (cf. Torah Sh'lemah 131). Cf. 1 Samuel 16:12. Others translate admoni as 'manly' (Chizzkuni; cf. Josephus, Antiquities 1:18:1). In any case, the word is a play on Edom, see Genesis 25:30.], as hairy [Se`ar in Hebrew, from which Seir is derived (cf. Genesis 32:4; see Josephus, Antiquities 1:18:1; Torah Sh'lemah 141). See Genesis 27:11.] as a fur coat. They named him Esau [Esav in Hebrew; literally 'made' or 'completed' (Rashbam; cf. Lekach Tov).].
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And the first came out admoni (red) all over like a hairy garment; and they called shmo Esav.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	The first baby ·was born [Lcame out] red. Since his skin was like a hairy robe, he was named Esau [Csounds like "hairy" in Hebrew].
Kretzmann's Commentary	And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. So Esau was the first of the twins to be born, and, in allusion to the reddish,

thick growth of hair which even then covered his body like a garment of skins, he was given the name, which means "the hairy one. " Thus early his sensual, hard characteristics, his wildness, became evident.

NET Bible®

The first came out reddish [Reddish. The Hebrew word translated “reddish” is אַדְמוֹנִי; (‘admoni), which forms a wordplay on the Edomites, Esau’s descendants. The writer sees in Esau’s appearance at birth a sign of what was to come. After all, the reader has already been made aware of the “nations” that were being born.] **all over** [Heb "all of him."], **like a hairy** [Hairy. Here is another wordplay involving the descendants of Esau. The Hebrew word translated “hairy” is שֵׁעָר (se’ar); the Edomites will later live in Mount Seir, perhaps named for its wooded nature.] **garment, so they named him Esau** [Heb “And they called his name Esau.” The name “Esau” (עֲשָׂו, ‘esav) is not etymologically related to שֵׁעָר (se’ar), but it draws on some of the sounds].

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

- Concordant Literal Version *And forth is faring the first, ruddy, all of him as a fur robe of hair. And calling are they his name Esau.*
- English Standard Version NASB *The first came out red, all his body like a hairy cloak, so they called his name Esau. Now the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment; and they named him Esau.*
- New King James Version *And the first came out red. He was like a hairy garment all over; so they called his name Esau [Literally Hairy].*
- Webster’s Bible Translation *And the first was born red, all over like a hairy garment: and they called his name Esau.*
- World English Bible *The first came out red all over, like a hairy garment. They named him Esau.*
- Young’s Updated LT *And the first comes out all red as a hairy robe, and they call his name Esau.*

The gist of this verse: Esau emerged with a red epidermis and a great deal of hair, so he was named *Harry*.

Genesis 25:25a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
yâtsâ’ (יָצָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i>]	<i>to go [come] out, to go [come] forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #3318 BDB #422
rî’shônâh (רִשׁוֹנָה) [pronounced <i>ree-show-NAW</i>]	<i>first [in time, in degree, chief, former [in time], ancestors, former things; foremost; beginning</i>	feminine singular adjective acting as a substantive; with the definite article	Strong’s #7223 BDB #911
’ad ^o môwnîy (אֲדֹמֹנִי) [pronounced <i>ad^o-moh-NEE</i>]	<i>red, ruddy</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong’s #132 BDB #10

Gary Everett: Gesenius says the Hebrew word “red” (אֲדֹמֹנִי) (H132) means, “red, i.e. red-haired.”²⁰⁴ It is only found in Genesis 25:25 1Samuel 16:12 17:42 (the latter two are a reference to a young David).

²⁰⁴ Gary H. Everett *Gary Everett’s Bible Commentary*; ©1981-2013; from e-sword, Genesis 25:25.

Genesis 25:25a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced koh/]; also kol (כֹּל) [pronounced kol]	<i>all, all things, the whole, totality, the entirety, everything</i>	masculine singular noun without the definite article; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
'addereth (אֲדָרֶת) [pronounced ad-DEH-reth]	<i>cloak, overcoat, garment [made of fur or fine material], mantle, robe; glory, splendor, magnificence</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #155 BDB #12
sê'âr (שֵׂאֵר) [pronounced say-GAWR]	<i>hair, hairs; hair brisling up</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8181 BDB #972

Translation: The first came out [quite] red [appearing] as a coat of hair.

The first child to be born is Esau, and he is red and he had a lot of hair. The red probably does not refer to blood, but to his skin tone; or to his hair color. The word for coat here is not a rough coat, but a smooth one of fine fur. My point is, this child is not born to be some kind of freak; he did not look like wolverine; he just looked unusual.

This word *red, ruddy* only occurs 3 times in the Old Testament; the other two times are a reference to David (1Samuel 16:17 17:42).

Genesis 25:25b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
'Êsâv (עֵשָׂו) [pronounced gay-SAWV]	<i>handled, made, rough handling; hairy; transliterated Esau</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6215 BDB #796

This is the first time Esau is named in Scripture.

Translation: Therefore, they called his name Esau.

The plural here suggests that both Isaac and Rebekah came up with this name for their first child. The meanings here are all applicable. When he was born, Esau looked to be the result of being roughly handled in birth; and he was covered with hair.

‘Êsâv (עִשָׂו) [pronounced *gay-SAWV*] is said to mean *hairy* or *thick-haired* or it might mean *rough handling* (as in her birth). Strong’s #6215 BDB #796. It is a form of the passive participle of ‘âsah (which means *to make*; however it has a side variety of applications). The Hebrew word for *hairy* is *sê‘âr* (שֶׁעָר) [pronounced *say-GAWR*], which is similar, but not a great deal similar. The *ש* and the *ע* are transposed, the vowel points are the same, and the last letter in one is *ר* (*r*) and in the other, it is *ו* (*v* or *w*). There is a similarity and the hairiness of Esau may have come into play when he was named. Esau was also called Edom (v. 30), and that word means *red* (at least it is much closer to *red* than Esau is to *hairy*).

Esau means *hairy* and possibly *red*. We would assume that this is the color of his skin, as opposed to being covered in blood when he comes out. Otherwise, we would expect Jacob to come out in the same manner. That he is hairy is probably in contrast to the way Jacob looks.

Scott Grant: *The name Edom, is a play on the word “red” (‘adom). Edom’s territory, Seir, is a play on the word “hairy” (se’ir). The narrator will use his description of Esau as being like a “hairy garment” in a later episode (Genesis 27:11, 15).*²⁰⁵

Genesis 25:25 The first came out [quite] red [appearing] as a coat of hair. Therefore, they called his name Esau. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:25 The first child was born looking red and as if covered with a coat of hair. He was therefore named Esau. (Kukis paraphrase)

When parents have twins, what do they try to do? They try to learn how to distinguish the infants from each other, so that can easily distinguish one from the other. So this description indicates an intense study of the first child.

Wenstrom: *The names that the Lord gives to the twins pokes fun at them both since the name “Esau” means, “hairy,” implying an animalistic nature and the name “Jacob” means, “heel,” implying grasping. Jacob has his name changed by the Lord to “Israel” after his return to the land of Canaan from Paddan Aram and his struggle with the preincarnate Christ. The name “Israel” means “the one who struggles with God and humans and who prevails.”*²⁰⁶

Some commentators describe Esau rather negatively: *he would be a shedder of blood, fierce and cruel* (Gill²⁰⁷, paraphrasing Jarchi); *his body was all over full of hair, which stood as thick as a garment made of hair, and was a sign of the roughness of his disposition, as well as of the strength of his body* (Gill again). The Bible does not give us a lot of insight as to Esau’s actual temperament, until Jacob steals his blessing, and then he vows to kill Jacob. Apart from this, we know that Esau became a hunter and enjoyed great fellowship with his father based upon this outdoor activity.

And after then came forth his brother and his hand was holding a heel of Esau. And so is called his name Jacob. And Isaac was a son of sixty a year in a birth of them.

Genesis
25:26

Then his brother came forth and his hand was holding onto Esau’s heel. Therefore he is named Jacob [lit., his name is called Jacob]. Isaac was 60 years old when they were born.

²⁰⁵ From http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99649/4865.pdf accessed July 2, 2015.

²⁰⁶ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

²⁰⁷ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:24.

Then his brother was delivered, and his hand was holding on to Esau's heel. Therefore, he was named Jacob. Isaac was 60 years old when his twins were born.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And after then came forth his brother and his hand was holding a heel of Esau. And so is called his name Jacob. And Isaac was a son of sixty a year in a birth of them.
Targum of Onkelos	Afterward came forth his brother, and his hand had hold on the heel of Esau. And they called his name Jakob (Yaakov). And Izhak was a son of sixty years when he beget them.
Latin Vulgate	Immediately the other coming forth, held his brother's foot in his hand: and therefore he was called Jacob. ²⁶ Isaac was threescore years old when the <u>children</u> were born unto him.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And after him his brother came forth, and his hand held Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob; and Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah bore them.
Septuagint (Greek)	And after this his brother came forth, and his hand took hold of the heel of Esau; and she called his name Jacob. And Isaac was sixty years old when Rebecca bore them.

Significant differences: The word *children* is in the Latin; but not in the Hebrew.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English	And after that, his brother was born. The brother had taken hold of Esau's heel (the back part of his foot). So they called the brother Jacob. Isaac was 60 years old when Rebekah gave birth to the *twins.
Easy-to-Read Version	When the second baby was born, he was holding tightly to Esau's heel. So that baby was named Jacob [This name is like the Hebrew word meaning "heel." It also means "the one who follows" or "tricky."]. Isaac was 60 years old when Jacob and Esau were born.
<i>The Message</i>	His brother followed, his fist clutched tight to Esau's heel; they named him Jacob (Heel). Isaac was sixty years old when they were born.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	The second baby grabbed on to his brother's heel, so they named him Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when they were born.
New Century Version	When the second baby was born, he was holding on to Esau's heel, so that baby was named Jacob.[b] Isaac was sixty years old when they were born.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

International Standard V	After that, his brother came out with his hand clutching Esau's heel, so they named him Jacob [The Heb. name Jacob means heel grabber]. Isaac was 60 years old when they were born.
Today's NIV	After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob.[e] Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to them.
Translation for Translators	Then his brother was born, grasping Esau's heel. So they named him Jacob, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'heel.' Isaac was sixty years old when the twins were born.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Afterward, his brother proceeded with his hand holding Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob (heel). Isaac was a son of sixty years when she begat them.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Then after him came his brother, with his hand holding the heel of Esau, so they called his name Jacob [The Tripper-up].
H. C. Leupold	Next his brother came forth and his hand was holding Esau's heel; so his name was called Jacob (Heeler). And Isaac was sixty years old when they were born.
Lexham English Bible	And afterward his brother came out, and his hand grasped the heel of Esau, so his name was called Jacob. And Isaac {was sixty years old} at their birth.
NIV, ©2011	After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob [Jacob means he grasps the heel, a Hebrew idiom for he deceives.]. Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to them.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And afterward his brother came out, and his hand was holding to Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob; and Isaac was a son of sixty years when she bore them. See Note Hosea 12:3
New Advent Bible	Immediately the other coming forth, held his brother's foot in his hand: and therefore he was called Jacob. ²⁶ Isaac was threescore years old when the children were born unto him. The New Advent Bible divides these verse up differently.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Next his brother came out, gripping Esau's heel [Heel: in Hebrew `aqeb, a wordplay on the name Jacob; cf. 27:36. The first of three scenes of striving with Esau. The second is vv. 27-34, and the third, chap. 27. In all the scenes, Jacob values the blessing more than his ardent but unreflective brother Esau does.]; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when they were born. Mt 1:2.
New Jerusalem Bible	Then his brother was born, with his hand grasping Esau's heel; so they named him Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old at the time of their birth.
New RSV	Afterwards his brother came out, with his hand gripping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob [That is He takes by the heel or He supplants]. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.
Revised English Bible	Immediately afterwards his brother was born with his hand grasping Esau's heel, and he was given the name Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when they were born.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Then his brother emerged, with his hand holding 'Esav's heel, so he was called Ya'akov [he catches by the heel, he supplants]. Yitz'chak was sixty years old when she bore them.
exeGesés companion Bible	...and after that his brother comes out and his hand takes hold on the heel of Esav and they call his name Yaaqov: and Yischaq is a son of sixty years when she births them.
Kaplan Translation	His brother then emerged, and his hand was grasping Esau's heel. [Isaac] named him [(cf. Rashi; Yerushalmi, Berakhoth 1:6). According to others, it was God who named him (Rashi).] Jacob [Yaakov in Hebrew, literally 'he will heel,' because he was grasping Esau's heel. See Genesis 27:36. Also see Hosea 12:4.]. Isaac was 60 years old [Jacob and Esau were therefore born in the year 2108.] when [Rebecca] gave birth to them.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And after that came out his brother, and his yad was grasping on akev Esav; and shmo was called Ya'akov; and Yitzchak was threescore shanah when she bore them.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible	Afterward his brother came forth, and his hand grasped Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob [supplanter]. Isaac was sixty years old when she gave birth to them.
The Expanded Bible	When the second baby [his brother] was born [came out], he [his hand] was holding on to [gripping; grabbing] Esau's heel, so that baby was named Jacob [sounds like Hebrew for "heel"; grabbing a heel is a Hebrew idiom for tricking someone]. Isaac was sixty years old when they were born.
Kretzmann's Commentary	And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob. The name signifies "the holder of the heel," "the cunning one," because he was supposed to have taken advantage of his brother thus early in life. And Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them.
NET Bible®	When his brother came out with [The disjunctive clause describes an important circumstance accompanying the birth. Whereas Esau was passive at birth, Jacob was active.] his hand clutching Esau's heel, they named him Jacob [Heb "And he called his name Jacob." Some ancient witnesses read "they called his name Jacob" (see v. 25). In either case the subject is indefinite.] [The name Jacob is a play on the Hebrew word for "heel" (עָקַב, 'aqev). The name (since it is a verb) probably means something like "may he protect," that is, as a rearguard, dogging the heels. It did not have a negative connotation until Esau redefined it. This name was probably chosen because of the immediate association with the incident of grabbing the heel. After receiving such an oracle, the parents would have preserved in memory almost every detail of the unusual births.] Isaac was sixty years old [Heb "the son of sixty years."] when they were born.
Syndein/Thieme	And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel and his name was called Jacob {name means 'heel holder' and supplanter - came to mean chiseler}. And Isaac was threescore years old {60} when she bore them.
The Voice	His brother followed with his hand clutching Esau's heel, so they named him Jacob. Isaac was 60 years old when Rebekah gave birth to the twins.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Webster's Bible Translation	And after that his brother was born, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac [was] sixty years old when she bore them.
World English Bible	After that, his brother came out, and his hand had hold on Esau's heel. He was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.
Young's Updated LT	And afterwards has his brother come out, and his hand is taking hold on Esau's heel, and one calls his name Jacob; and Isaac is a son of sixty years in her bearing them.

The gist of this verse: The second twins hand was grasping the heel of Esau when he was taken out of the birth canal; so he was named Jacob.

Genesis 25:26a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'achărêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced ah-kuh-RAY]	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29

Genesis 25:26a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced kane]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	properly, an active participle; used primarily as an adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
These two words together literally mean <i>after so</i> ; however, they appear to mean <i>afterward, afterwards, after these things, after this, [and] after that</i> . See Genesis 15:14 23:19 25:26 Leviticus 14:36 Deut. 21:13 1Samuel 10:5.			
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced yaw-TZAWH]	<i>to go [come] out, to go [come] forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
'âch (אָח) [pronounced awhk]	<i>brother, half-brother; kinsman or close relative; one who resembles</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26

Translation: Then his brother came forth...

Esau was delivered first and then his younger brother Jacob was delivered.

Genesis 25:26b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yad]	<i>hand; figuratively for strength, power, control</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
'âchaz (אָחַז) [pronounced aw-KHAHZ]	<i>grasping, taking a hold of, seizing; taking [by hunting, fishing]; holding [something taken]; taking possession of</i>	feminine singular, Qal active participle	Strong's #270 BDB #28
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
'âqêb (אָקֵב) [pronounced gaw-KA ^{BV}]	<i>heel, footprint, hinderpart, and therefore figuratively for a rear guard, troops in the rear</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6119 (and #6120) BDB #784
'Êsâv (עֵשָׂו) [pronounced gay-SAWV]	<i>handled, made, rough handling; hairy; transliterated Esau</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6215 BDB #796

Translation: ...and his hand was holding onto Esau's heel.

There was an oddity in this birth. Little Jacob's hand was grasping Esau's heel. Now, we know that it is normal for a baby, then there is something put in his hand for his to squeeze it. In the way that they came out, there was Esau's heel, and Jacob was grasping it. However, this has been taken as meaningful; as a sign of things to come.

J. Vernon McGee: *Jacob took hold on Esau's heel; so they called him Jacob, meaning the usurper, because he was trying to become the elder or to take his place - but God had already promised that to him.*²⁰⁸

In wrestling, a wrestler will sometimes grab the heel of his opponent in order to throw him off balance. This is a move that might be used by a smaller or weaker opponent to derail his larger or stronger opponent.

Birth of Esau and Jacob by François Maitre from Augustine's La Cité de Dieu (illumination circa 1475-1480, at the Museum Meermanno-Westreenianum)

John Calvin: *the intestine strife in her womb continued to the time of bringing forth; for it was not by mere accident that Jacob seized his brother by the heel and attempted to get out before him. The Lord testified by this sign that the effect of his election does not immediately appear; but rather that the intervening path was strewed with troubles and conflicts.*²⁰⁹

Keil and Delitzsch describe the two men in this way: *When she was delivered, there were twins; the first-born was reddish, i.e., of a reddish-brown colour (1Samuel 16:12 17:42), and "all over like a hairy cloak," i.e., his whole body as if covered with a fur, with an unusual quantity of hair (hypertrichosis), which is sometimes the case with new-born infants, but was a sign in this instance of excessive sensual vigour and wildness. The second had laid hold of the heel of the first, i.e., he came into the world with his hand projected and holding the heel of the first-born, a sign of his future attitude towards his brother. From these accidental circumstances the children received their names. The elder they called Esau, the hairy one; the younger Jacob, heel-holder: בקעי from בקע (denom. of בקע heel, Hosea 12:3), to hold the heel, then to outwit (Genesis 27:36), just as in wrestling an attempt may be made to throw the opponent by grasping the heel.*²¹⁰



Jacob would always be there, hoping to throw Esau off his game; hoping to supplant Esau and whatever privileges he enjoyed as the firstborn.

²⁰⁸ From https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt (Genesis 25); accessed July 1, 2015.

²⁰⁹ John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentary on the Bible*; 2nd beta version from e-Sword, Genesis 25:24.

²¹⁰ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:24-26.

Genesis 25:26c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (אָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lamed]	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
Ya'ăqôb (בְּקָעִי) [pronounced yah-ġuh-KOH ^B V]	supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent and is transliterated Jacob	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3290 BDB #784

This is the first occurrence of Jacob's name.

Gary Everett: Gesenius says the Hebrew name "Jacob" "Ya'aqob" (בְּקָעִי) (H3290) means, "taking hold of the heel, supplanter, layer of snares." Strong says it means, "heel-catcher, supplanter." Strong says it comes from the primitive root (בָּקַעַ) (H6117), which means, "to seize by the heel, to circumvent." One Hebrew derivative (בָּקַעַ) (6119) means, "heel, (figuratively) the last of anything."²¹¹

Translation: Therefore he is named Jacob [lit., his name is called Jacob].

Jacob's name is easier to grasp. In the Hebrew, his name is Ya'ăqôb (בְּקָעִי) [pronounced yah-ġuh-KOH^BV]. This word clearly means, in the Hebrew, *heel, to follow at the heel, to circumvent, to assail insidiously*. Some Bibles call him *supplanter*, which is fine, but euphemistic. Thieme used the word *chisler* to describe Jacob, and that is a bit more accurate. Sometimes life is like a good drama and what precedes foreshadows the future. So it is with Jacob and Esau—Jacob is the *chisler* and he circumvents the established code of the first-born being the principal heir. It is interesting that in the Hebrew, they both chose together the name Esau, but Isaac chose the name Jacob. It was a derogatory name perhaps even eliciting some sympathy from Rebekah.

Clarke, on Jacob's name: *His name was called Jacob - בָּקַעִי Yaccob, from בָּקַעַ akab, to defraud, deceive, to supplant, i.e., to overthrow a person by tripping up his heels. Hence this name was given to Jacob, because it was found he had laid hold on his brother's heel, which was emblematical of his supplanting Esau, and defrauding him of his birthright.*²¹²

Scott Grant: *The second child is born grasping onto the heel of his brother, and the name given to him indicates his posture. The name Jacob is a play on the word "heel" ('aqeb). Esau breaks from the gate first, but Jacob isn't far behind, and in the years to come he will catapult himself to the lead position.*²¹³

Recall that God has already told Rebekah that the younger would take the place of the older; and the younger would be the stronger and the dominant nation. Now, the two are born and little Jacob's hand is grabbing the heel

²¹¹ Gary H. Everett *Gary Everett's Bible Commentary*; ©1981-2013; from e-sword, Genesis 25:26.

²¹² Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:26.

²¹³ From http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99649/4865.pdf accessed July 2, 2015.

of Esau (a natural reflex action) as if to say, “No you don’t; I should have been first.” Therefore, this child was named *supplanter* because he would supplant Esau; the second-born would be seen as superior to the firstborn.

When parents have twins, they carefully examine these children, to determine how they might be different, so that they can differentiate between them. We find this in Genesis 38:28–30, where a red thread was attached to the wrist of one child in order to differentiate him from the other. Knowing that they were about to have twins, Rebekah and Isaac studied these children carefully, and may have even been ready to name them based upon their physical differences. However, it appears that Esau and Jacob looked quite a bit different, even from birth. Therefore, instead of naming them *Timmy and Tommy*, they were named *Esau* and *Jacob*, names which served to differentiate them from one another.

At a later time, Esau will speak of Jacob’s name and its aptness. Gen. 27:36a **Esau said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has cheated me these two times. He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing."** (ESV)

Wenstrom: The Lord’s statement to Rebekah that “two nations are in your womb” implies that she is pregnant with twins and refers to the fact that these twins are twin progenitors of two nations. The oldest son “Esau” would be the progenitor of the Edomites (See Genesis 36:1-43) whereas the younger son “Jacob” would be the progenitor of the Israelites. Jacob would father twelve sons who were heads of the twelve tribes of Israel (1 Chronicles 1:34 2:1-2 Acts 7:8) and through the nation of Israel would come the Savior of the world (John 4:22 Romans 9:3-5). To the nation of Israel would be given the Old Testament Scriptures, the adoption as sons, the Mosaic Law, the Shekinah Glory, the promises and the unconditional covenants (Davidic, Palestinian, New and Abrahamic) (see Romans 9:1-5). The Edomites and the Israelites fought continuously. From Rebekah’s womb, Jacob and Esau would be at odds with each other.²¹⁴

Wenstrom: Both Israel and Edom received judgment from God at the hands of the Babylonians in the sixth century B.C. (Jer. 27:2-8). However, God promised to restore Israel over and over again because of His covenant promises (Deut. 4:29-31; 30:1-10) but He condemned Edom to complete destruction, never to be restored (Jer. 49:7-22; Ezek. 35).²¹⁵

Although this might be better placed in the book of Exodus or at the end of Genesis, this is an interesting footnote of ancient history.

Historical Footnote of the American English Bible

The Hyksos Are the Rulers of the IsraElites While They Were In Egypt

So, you can see how the story that the Egyptians tell, is about their being dominated by the Hyksos, and how they had to fight a war to free themselves. Yet, the Egyptian history of where these people came from, what part of Egypt they lived in, and many more details, proves that Hyksos (Rulers of Foreign Peoples) were the IsraElite Kings who ruled over their people while they were in Egypt. Also, **the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus identified them as such.**

An interesting fact about the Hyksos kings is that they **wore signet rings bearing the name Jacob**; and one was even named Jacob (Jacob-Baal, 16th king of the 16th Egyptian Dynasty), meaning (in Hebrew) 'snatcher of the heel,' referring to Jacob's holding on to the heel of his twin brother during their birth. So, prior to the birth of Jacob (who was renamed IsraEl), there was probably no other person in the world with that name. Therefore, any king of Egypt named Jacob had to be descended from IsraEl, since it was uncommon and unique to the Hebrew language.

²¹⁴ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

²¹⁵ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

Historical Footnote of the American English Bible

Then, why do archeologists claim that the Hyksos weren't the IsraElites? Because, such a conclusion would take the Bible story of the Exodus (and its chronology) from the realm of myth or a minor event, and elevate it to something major that is well documented in history. And so, archeologists prefer to accept the Egyptian description of what happened.

From: http://www.2001translation.com/PharaOh_Exodus.htm#_3 accessed February 21, 2013.

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Genesis 25:26d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Yis ^e châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced <i>yih^s-KHAWK</i>]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
shishshîym (שִׁשְׁשִׁימ) [pronounced <i>shish-SHEEM</i>]	<i>sixty</i>	indeclinable plural noun	Strong's #8346 BDB #995
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i>]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i>]	<i>to give birth, to bear, to be born, to bear, to bring forth, to beget</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
The infinitive construct, when combined with the bêyth preposition, can often take on a temporal meaning and may be rendered <i>when [such and such happens]</i> . It can serve as a temporal marker that denotes an event which occurs simultaneously with the action of the main verb.			
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>them; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to, toward</i>	affixed to a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Translation: Isaac was 60 years old when they were born.

Here is where we get to do a little arithmetic. Isaac was married at age 40 and now he is 60. So he and Rebekah had been married for 20 years, during which time Rebekah did not conceive. So, at some point during those 20 years, Isaac prayed for Rebekah to bear him a child, and God heard and gave them twins.

Arithmetic also tells us that Abraham is still alive. Abraham would have been 160 when these boys are born and he will not die for another 15 years.²¹⁶ So he will get to see these boys enter young adulthood. However, there is no historical recording of any interaction between Abraham and his grandsons.

Genesis 25:26 **Then his brother came forth and his hand was holding onto Esau's heel. Therefore he is named Jacob** [lit., *his name is called Jacob*]. Isaac was 60 years old when they were born. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:26 **Then his brother was delivered, and his hand was holding on to Esau's heel. Therefore, he was named Jacob.** Isaac was 60 years old when his twins were born. (Kukis paraphrase)

Matthew Henry: *Though the accomplishment of God's promise is always sure, yet it is often slow, and seems to be crossed and contradicted by Providence, that the faith of believers may be tried, their patience exercised, and mercies long waited for may be the more welcome when they come.*²¹⁷

These are fairly simple observations:

Snider Summarizes Genesis 25:24–26

1. vs 24-26 relate the information regarding the birth of Esau and Jacob.
2. Rebekah, as we know, had endured a rather turbulent, unsettled pregnancy.
3. After the normal gestation period of 9mos. the boys were born.
4. The first came forth, with a ruddy complexion and covered with an inordinate amount of hair.
5. They named him Esau, which means hairy, as Arabic parallels attest.
6. Once Esau was fully delivered, head first, as is expected, the other son came forth from the womb.
7. The unusual item was that as he came forth, he grabbed his brother by heel, and did not let go.
8. The text does not state that he grabbed the heel before Esau came out, since who would be able to recount this fact?
9. It does say that after the birth of Esau, Jacob reached out and grabbed his heel.
10. Of course this is highly irregular, and he is named in accordance with this fact.
11. It does seem that in the OT, children were not named in advance, but were named upon birth.
12. The name Jacob means supplanter or one who trips or grabs by the heel.
13. These verses do not lend any documentation to the notion that the boys possessed souls in the womb.
14. We are now told that the intervening period between the marriage of Isaac and the birth of the boys was 20 years, Isaac being 60 years old at the time of birth.

From <http://makarios-online.org/notes/genesis/gen25.doc> accessed June 16, 2015.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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God had told these parents about the relationship between Jacob and Esau which would come to pass. Perhaps they separated Jacob and Esau, with the intent of reducing the amount of sibling rivalry. However, God's Word stands, no matter what we do.

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Esau Sells His Birthright to Isaac

²¹⁶ Despite the fact that we have studied his death already in this chapter.

²¹⁷ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:19–26.

We go directly from their birth and their names to an incident which occurs several decades later. This incident will illustrate the meaning of their names, and how their names prophesied their future behavior.

Coffman: *No one can read this simple account without pitying the foolish and reckless son who bartered the incredible blessings of his birthright for a mess of pottage (a single meal). But let all men feel pity also for themselves when tempted to barter life's treasures for a moment of indulgence or pleasure. How strongly do sensual appetites assert their influence over us!*²¹⁸

<p>And so grow [together] the boys and so is Esau a man knowing hunting, a man of [the] field and Jacob a man [with] personal integrity [possibly, <i>ordinary, quiet</i>] inhabiting tents.</p>	<p>Genesis 25:27</p>	<p>The boys grew up [together]. Esau became a man who knew hunting, a man of the open country while Jacob was a quiet man inhabiting tents.</p>
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The two boys grew up together. Esau became a man who learned how to hunt, and man who enjoyed the outdoors; while Jacob was a quiet man who lived in tents.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so grow [together] the boys and so is Esau a man knowing hunting, a man of [the] field and Jacob a man [with] personal integrity [possibly, <i>ordinary, quiet</i>] inhabiting tents.
Targum of Onkelos	And the lads grew; and Esau was a man <u>of idleness</u> to catch birds and beasts, a man going forth into the field <u>to kill lives, as Nimrod had killed, and Hanok his son.</u> But Jakob was a man peaceful <u>in his words, a minister of the instruction-house of Eber, seeking instruction before the Lord.</u>
Latin Vulgate	And when they were grown up, Esau became a skillful hunter, and a husbandman: but Jacob, a plain man, dwelt in tents.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the boys grew up; and Esau became an expert hunter, a man of outdoor life; but Jacob was a simple man, living in a ten.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the lads grew, and Esau was a man skilled in hunting, dwelling in the country, and Jacob a simple man, dwelling in a house.
Significant differences:	The targum has a great deal of additional and misleading text. It leaves out that Jacob is a man of the tent (although <i>the instruction house</i> might be their interpretation of <i>the tent</i>). What Jacob is, is difficult to determine (much discussion will ensure below the actual exegesis).

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And the boys came to full growth; and Esau became a man of the open country, an expert bowman; but Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents.
Easy English	When the boys grew up, Esau was a good hunter. He liked to be outdoors. Jacob was a quiet man, who stayed in the tent.
Easy-to-Read Version	The boys grew up. Esau became a skilled hunter. He loved to be out in the fields. But Jacob was a quiet man. He stayed in his tent.
God's Word™	They grew up. Esau became an expert hunter, an outdoorsman. Jacob remained a quiet man, staying around the tents.
The Message	The boys grew up. Esau became an expert hunter, an outdoorsman. Jacob was a quiet man preferring life indoors among the tents.

²¹⁸ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 30, 2015.

New Simplified Bible The boys grew up. Esau became a skilled hunter, a man who loved the outdoors. Jacob was an upright man who stayed at home.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible **Jacob acquires the oldest son's rights**
When the young men grew up, Esau became an outdoorsman who knew how to hunt, and Jacob became a quiet man who stayed at home.

Contemporary English V. As Jacob and Esau grew older, Esau liked the outdoors and became a good hunter, while Jacob settled down and became a shepherd.

New Berkeley Version As the boys matured, Esau became an expert hunter, a man of the open spaces, while Jacob was of a quiet disposition, living in tents.

New Life Bible When the boys grew older, Esau became a good hunter, a man of the field. But Jacob was a man of peace, living in tents.

New Living Translation **Esau Sells His Birthright**
As the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter. He was an outdoorsman, but Jacob had a quiet temperament, preferring to stay at home.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible These boys grew up, and Esau became a skilled hunter who lived in the country, while Jacob was a simple man who lived in a house.

International Standard V As the boys were growing up, Esau became skilled at hunting and was a man of the outdoors, but Jacob was the quiet type who tended to stay indoors.

Translation for Translators **Esau sold his rights as the oldest son**
When the boys grew up, Esau became a skilled hunter of wild animals. He spent a lot of time out in the fields. Jacob was a quiet man who stayed closed to the campsite.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear The lads grew. Esau was a man knowing game, a man of the field, and Jacob a faultless man, dwelling in tents.

Ferar-Fenton Bible **Esau sells his Birthright foolishly**
When the lads grew up, Esau was a man skillful in hunting, —a man of the field; but Jacob was a quiet man, —a stayer in the tent.

H. C. Leupold And the boys grew up, and Esau became a skilful hunter, a man living in the open country, but Jacob was a man of peaceful habits, as a tent dweller.

Lexham English Bible And the boys grew up. And Esau [was] a skilled hunter, a man of the field, but Jacob [was] a peaceful man, living [in] tents.

HCSB When the boys grew up, Esau became an expert hunter, an outdoorsman, but Jacob was a quiet man who stayed at home.

NIV – UK The boys grew up, and Esau became a skilful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was content to stay at home among the tents.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible And the boys became large, and Esau was an experienced hunter, a man of the field, and Jacob was a complete 27 man, dwelling in tents. 25:27 complete, tam. Its primary meaning is complete, whole, entire, not lacking, found first in the Bible here. This statement by the Word of God emphasizes that Esau had worldly skills, and Jacob had God's whole, well rounded, righteous character. The next place tam is found is Ex 26:24 describing the completing of the boards covering the sides of the Tabernacle. Of the 14 occurrences of tam in the Bible 7 of them are found in

Job. Job was a well rounded, whole, righteous man. Perfect is a correct translation, but we have used complete to translate the word. The emphasis in Gen 25:27 is that Esau had a worldly skill, but was incomplete as a man, whereas Jacob was complete as a man because he was whole in God. This is the way that God's Word presents Jacob throughout his life. God in His Word never finds fault with Jacob as many expositors have in calling him a schemer and making him unrighteous in his relationship to Esau and to Laban. Jacob means supplanter, not schemer. God presented Jacob as righteous in the case of: (1) the birthright which God promised to Jacob which Isaac almost gave to Esau, (2) in the case of his contract to marry Rachel and had Leah forced on him, and (3) in the case of his and Laban's cattle. God always declared that Jacob was righteous and acted in righteousness. We always need to see things the way God sees them, and not impose our opinion upon the Word of God. See Hosea 12:3

New American Bible	As the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter, a man who lived in the open; whereas Jacob was a simple man, who kept to his tents.
New American Bible (R.E.)	When the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country; whereas Jacob was a simple [Simple: the Hebrew word denotes soundness, integrity, health, none of which fit here. Whatever its precise meaning, it must be opposite to the qualities of Esau.] man, who stayed among the tents. Gn 27:6-7.
New Jerusalem Bible	When the boys grew up Esau became a skilled hunter, a man of the open country. Jacob on the other hand was a quiet man, staying at home among the tents.
Revised English Bible	As the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter, an outdoor man, while Jacob lived quietly among the tents.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

JPS (Tanakh—1985)	When the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the outdoors; but Jacob was a mild man who stayed in camp.
Kaplan Translation	The boys grew up. Esau became a skilled trapper, a man of the field. Jacob was a scholarly [(cf. Rashi; Targum Yonathan; Saadia). Tam. in Hebrew, also meaning simple, plain, quiet, perfect (Targum), or simple-minded (Hirsch). See note on Genesis 6:9.] man who remained with the tents.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And the nearim grew: and Esav was a skilled hunter, an ish sadeh; and Ya'akov was an ish tam (quiet man), dwelling in ohalim.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	When the boys grew up, Esau was a cunning and skilled hunter, a man of the outdoors; but Jacob was a plain and quiet man, dwelling in tents.
The Expanded Bible	When the boys grew up, Esau became a ·skilled [experienced] hunter. He ·loved to be out in the fields [·was a man of the fields]. But Jacob was a ·quiet [or mild; or blameless] man ·and stayed among the [·living in] tents.
Kretzmann's Commentary	And the boys grew; and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. The natural wildness of Esau's character was soon revealed in the fact that he became skilful in the chase, loved to roam across the country far and wide for the mere love of killing game. Jacob was the very opposite, a quiet young man, opposed to all violence, much preferring to remain in the tents and tend to the matters at home.
NET Bible®	When the boys grew up, Esau became a skilled [Heb "knowing."] hunter, a man of the open fields, but Jacob was an even-tempered man, living in tents [The disjunctive clause juxtaposes Jacob with Esau and draws attention to the striking contrasts. In contrast to Esau, a man of the field, Jacob was civilized, as the phrase "living in tents" signifies. Whereas Esau was a skillful hunter, Jacob was calm and even-tempered (נָפַ, tam), which normally has the idea of "blameless."].

Syndein/Thieme	And the boys grew. And Esau was a cunning hunter . . . a man of the field. And Jacob was a 'spiritually mature'/complete {tam} man . . . dwelling in prosperity {yashab} in 'nomadic tents' {'ohel}.
The Voice	When the boys grew up, <i>they could not have been more different</i> . Esau became a skillful hunter and preferred to be outdoors. Jacob, on the other hand, grew up to be a contemplative man, content to stay at home.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And growing up are the lads. And becoming is Esau a man, a knowing hunter, a man of the field. Yet Jacob is a flawless man, dwelling in tents.
Darby Translation	And the boys grew, and Esau became a man skilled in hunting, a man of the field; and Jacob was a homely man, dwelling in tents.
LTHB	And the boys grew up. And Esau became a man knowing hunting, a man of the field. And Jacob was a simple man, living in tents.
NASB	When the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the field, but Jacob was a peaceful [Lit complete] man, living [Lit dwelling] in tents.
New King James Version	So the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents.
Webster's Bible Translation	And the boys grew: and Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob [was] a plain man dwelling in tents.
World English Bible	The boys grew. Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field. Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents.
Young's Literal Translation	And the youths grew, and Esau is a man acquainted with hunting, a man of the field; and Jacob is a plain man, inhabiting tents.

The gist of this verse: Esau grew up to be a hunter, a man who loved the outdoors; and Jacob was a man who enjoyed staying at home.

Genesis 25:27a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
gâdal (גָּדַל) [pronounced gaw-DAHL]	<i>to be [become] great; to grow; to be greatly valued [celebrated, praised]; to twist together, to bind together</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1431 BDB #152
na'ar (נָעַר) [pronounced NAH-gahr]	<i>boy, youth, young man; personal attendant; slave-boy</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654

Translation: The boys grew up [together].

The word *to grow* can also mean *to twist together, to bind together*; and, given the circumstances, it is fair to translate this that they grew up together. They are twins, although it is clear from the outset that they are fraternal and not identical twins (given the description of Esau at birth).

Children in the same family do grow up together, with the same parents. However, the interaction which they have with their parents is important. As we will see, this may have had a great affect on how these boys turned out.

As I have suggested, Isaac and Rebekah were warned that these were two struggling peoples within her womb, and that would continue for centuries to come. Perhaps they attempted to keep these boys separate, as much as possible, so that Isaac raised up Esau outside of the home as a hunter; and Rebekah raised up Jacob inside of the home. Nurture may have had a great deal to do with these boys being brought up differently.

Genesis 25:27b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
‘Êsâv (עֵשָׂו) [pronounced gay-SAWV]	<i>handled, made, rough handling; hairy; transliterated Esau</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6215 BDB #796
‘îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
yâda‘ (יָדָעַ) [pronounced yaw-DAHḠ]	<i>knowing, knowing by experience [or practice]; skilled; seeing; recognizing, admitting, acknowledging</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
tsayid (צַיִד) [pronounced TSAH-yihd]	<i>hunting; game [prey] hunted; provisions [especially for a journey], food</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #6718 BDB #845
‘îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular construct (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
sâdeh (שָׂדֵה) [pronounced saw-DEH]	<i>field, land, country, open field, open country</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7704 BDB #961

Translation: [Esau became a man who knew hunting, a man of the open country...](#)

This verse explains quite simply just what Esau was. Furthermore, there is nothing wrong with being a hunter. The Bible never speaks disparagingly of someone who hunts (as did some commentators).

H. C. Leupold on Esau: *Esau develops into a "skilful hunter," literally: "knowing hunting." The parallel expression, "man of the field" ('ish sadheh) cannot mean that he followed agricultural pursuits (ein Ackermann, Luther), but rather the opposite: he was a man who disdained agriculture and was a "man of the open country," i. e., a man roving about everywhere. Examining this description a bit more closely, we notice that he turned his attention not to what would naturally have been his calling but that he loved excitement, activity, change and freedom. Consequently, he grew up to be an undisciplined character. Besides, as the fathers were wont to remark, the continual pursuit of a life of hunting makes*

characters harsh and cruel. The pursuits of it has no ennobling effects when it becomes an obsession.²¹⁹

Gill: *and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field: whose business lay in tilling and sowing it, which his father Isaac followed sometimes; or rather he chose to range about the field and hunt after beasts and birds, in which he was very expert, and contrived traps and snares to catch them in; and this course of life was most agreeable to his temper and disposition, being active, fierce, and cruel.*²²⁰

My father was a hunter and a fisherman; so naturally, he hauled me around with him, to see if I would pick up on it. Now, whereas I loved going out in the woods and hiking around, shooting animals did not appeal to me; nor did sitting for long periods of time being quiet and waiting for fish filled with bones to strike. We are going to see that Isaac favored Esau, and this would mean that Isaac would take this boy out hunting and fishing (at least hunting). Esau, through experience and through teaching, became skilled in this sport/avocation. Therefore, Esau felt at home in the open field; in the out-of-doors.

There was probably a similar relationship between Abraham and Ishmael and between Abraham and Isaac. However, this is never discussed (but it is hinted at). Ishmael became renown for his hunting; and in this narrative, we will see the Isaac greatly enjoys the game that Esau kills.

Again, this could be the result of nurture.

Genesis 25:27c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
The wâw conjunction can be used to mean <i>at the same time, when, while, simultaneously</i> . ²²¹			
Ya'ăqôb (יַעֲקֹב) [pronounced yah-ăuh-KOH ^{BV}]	<i>supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent and is transliterated Jacob</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3290 BDB #784
îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular construct (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
tâm (תָּם) [pronounced tawm]	<i>one who has personal integrity; perfected, completed, finished, innocent, blameless; having no intention to do evil</i>	masculine singular adjective; substantive	Strong's #8535 BDB #1070
The complete set of BDB meanings: 1) <i>perfect, complete</i> ; 1a) <i>complete, perfect</i> ; 1a1) <i>one who lacks nothing in physical strength, beauty, etc</i> ; 1b) <i>sound, wholesome</i> ; 1b1) <i>an ordinary, quiet sort of person</i> ; 1c) <i>complete, morally innocent, having integrity</i> ; 1c1) <i>one who is morally and ethically pure</i> .			

²¹⁹ From <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/leupold/genesis.xxvii.html> accessed June 30, 2015.

²²⁰ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:27. In this same commentary, Gill offers the absurd notion: *according to the Targum of Jonathan, he was also a hunter and slayer of men, Nimrod and Henoch his son.*

²²¹ *At the same time* comes from *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; p. 252; I added in the synonyms.

Genesis 25:27c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
yāshab (יָשַׁב) [pronounced yaw-SHAH ^{AV}]	<i>inhabiting, staying, remaining, dwelling, sitting</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
'ohel (אֹהֶל) [pronounced OH-heh]	<i>tent, tabernacle, house, temporary dwelling</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #168 BDB #13

Translation: ...while Jacob was a quiet man inhabiting tents.

It is not completely clear what it is that Jacob is. The adjective describing Jacob is the Hebrew word *tām* (תָּם) [pronounced *tawm*] and various Bibles translate this as *plain, quiet, peaceful, complete, ready, clever*. As you can see, this little word *tam* is difficult to lay a hold of. *Strong's Concordance* narrows it down considerably, but a quick trip to a Hebrew concordance fixes the meaning. *Tam* is found in Job 1:1 2:3 8:20 9:20–22 Psalms 37:37 64:4 Proverbs 29:10 SOS 5:2 6:9. The concept which this word conveys is *undefiled, upright, complete and spiritually mature*. The translation *undefiled* in the Song of Solomon involves some interpretation whereas it could be translated similarly to the ways it is found in Job and the Psalms: perfect and complete. This would be apropos for such a woman. The Septuagint agrees with this rendering.

On the other hand, Jacob appears to have been brought up by his mother. This does not mean that these boys will be the exact opposites; it simply means that one was taken under the wing of the father and the other under the wing of the mother, which is not unusual for a family.

We have an interesting word in this verse which we have almost seen before. It is closely related to a word that means *perfect, complete, blameless*. The difference is the vowel and the vowel was added later (when this was read publically, everyone knew that these two words, that looked the same—the original Hebrew was written without any vowels—were different words, with a different pronunciation). The word found here is *tām* (תָּם) [pronounced *tawm*], and it is translated by the words *quiet* (ESV, WEB, BBE, God's Word™, HCSB,), *simple* (Green's literal translation, MKJV), and *plain* (AKJV). However, it actually means one who has *personal integrity; perfected, completed, finished, innocent, blameless; having no intention to do evil*. A few translations try to translate this more accurately: *integrity* (ECB), *upright* (NSB), *complete* (Scriptures 1998) and *innocent* (JPCT). Strong's #8535 BDB #1070. This is an interesting description of Jacob, as much of his life, he will be anything but blameless.

This same word is used by God to describe Job in Job 1:1, 8 2:3. We may understand this word to mean spiritually mature, as no one, including Job, reaches some level of perfection.

Genesis 25:27 The boys grew up [together]. Esau became a man who knew hunting, a man of the open country while Jacob was a quiet man inhabiting tents. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:27 The two boys grew up together. Esau became a man who learned how to hunt, and man who enjoyed the outdoors; while Jacob was a quiet man who lived in tents. (Kukis paraphrase)

You will note that many of these commentators exceeded reasonable bounds when it came to determining what kind of a man Jacob was.

Commentators on, What kind of man is Jacob?

Commentator	Commentary
Brown Driver Briggs	The complete set of BDB meanings: 1) <i>perfect, complete</i> ; 1a) <i>complete, perfect</i> ; 1a1) <i>one who lacks nothing in physical strength, beauty, etc</i> ; 1b) <i>sound, wholesome</i> ; 1b1) <i>an ordinary, quiet sort of person</i> ; 1c) <i>complete, morally innocent, having integrity</i> ; 1c1) <i>one who is morally and ethically pure</i> .
Adam Clarke	<i>Jacob was a plain man - אִישׁ תָּמַם ish tam, a perfect or upright man; dwelling in tents - subsisting by breeding and tending cattle, which was considered in those early times the most perfect employment; and in this sense the word תָּמַם tam, should be here understood, as in its moral meaning it certainly could not be applied to Jacob till after his name was changed, after which time only his character stands fair and unblemished.</i> ²²²
John Gill	<i>and Jacob was a plain man; an honest plain hearted man, whose heart and tongue went together; a quiet man, that gave no disturbance to others; a godly man, sincere, upright, and perfect, that had the truth of grace and holiness in him, as well as the perfect righteousness of his Redeemer on him...dwelling in tents; keeping at home and attending the business of the family, as we afterwards find him boiling pottage (Genesis 25:29); or rather this denotes his pastoral life, being a shepherd, he dwelt in tents, which could be removed from place to place for the convenience of pasturage</i> ²²³ .
Guzik	<i>Jacob was a mild man: The Hebrew word for mild has the idea of "wholeness" instead of someone who is weak or effeminate. The Hebrew word tam (mild) is used of Job in Job 1:8: Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?"</i> ²²⁴
H. C. Leupold	<i>Apparently, the word tam in reference to Jacob aims to describe the very opposite traits. Though tam signifies "complete," "perfect," here it means: adequately filling the requirements of his calling, not roving about but "a man of peaceful habits," as we have rendered above. Luther's fromm may cover that, for it does not refer to a pious disposition only. "A plain man" (A. V.) is beside the point; "quiet" (A. R. V.) is better. So, too, "dwelling in tents" (A. V.) misses the point. Why mention at all where he dwelt? Traits are being discussed. Yosebh `ohalim means: as a man dwelling in tents is wont to be, here then: a typical nomad. That thought is to the point; for being destined to live a nomadic life, he gave himself to the pursuits typical to his class. He was intent upon filling well the place in life prepared for him.</i> ²²⁵
William Wenstrom, Jr.	<i>"Peaceful" is the adjective tam (sT*) (tawm), which means that Jacob was a "quiet" or "peaceful" man in the sense that in contrast to his outgoing, adventurous brother, he was a self-contained, detached personality complete in himself who was sensible, diligent, dutiful and peaceful. Usually the adjective tam refers to people like Job who were "upright, righteous, having a clear conscience before God, virtuous" and therefore "spiritually mature" (See Job 1:1, 8; 2:3; 9:22; cf. Genesis 6:9; Psalm 37:37). However, this sense is inappropriate for Jacob at this point in his life since his conduct as recorded in Genesis 27 portrays him as someone who was not "upright, righteous," or "virtuous" and certainly not "spiritually mature."</i> ²²⁶

As you can see, there is not a clear pattern of opinion here.

²²² Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:27.

²²³ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:27.

²²⁴ David Guzik's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; Genesis 25:27–28.

²²⁵ From <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/leupold/genesis.xxvii.html> accessed June 30, 2015.

²²⁶ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Genesis 25:27 And the boys grew. And Esau was a man knowing hunting, and Jacob was a **simple** man, living in tents. Most commentators discuss Jacob and Esau together.

Commentators Comparing Esau and Jacob

Commentator	Commentary
Albert Barnes	<p>Barnes on the temperament of the two men: <i>The brothers prove to be different in disposition and habit. The rough fiery Esau takes to the field, and becomes skilled in all modes of catching game. Jacob is of a homely, peaceful, orderly turn, dwelling in tents and gathering round him the means and appliances of a quiet social life. The children please their parents according as they supply what is lacking in themselves. Isaac, himself so sedate, loves the wild, wandering hunter, because he supplies him with pleasures which his own quiet habits do not reach. Rebekah becomes attached to the gentle, industrious shepherd, who satisfies those social and spiritual tendencies in which she is more dependent than Isaac. Esau is destructive of game; Jacob is constructive of cattle.</i>²²⁷</p>
John Calvin	<p>Calvin presents this as if Moses wrote Genesis (which is the popular belief): <i>Moses now briefly describes the manners of them both. He does not, indeed, commend Jacob on account of those rare and excellent qualities, which are especially worthy of praise and of remembrance, but only says that he was simple. The word תָּם (tam,) although generally taken for upright and sincere, is here put antithetically. After the sacred writer has stated that Esau was robust, and addicted to hunting, he places on the opposite side the mild disposition of Jacob, who loved the quiet of home so much, that he might seem to be indolent; just as the Greeks call those persons οἰκοσιτουσ οἰκοσιτους, who, dwelling at home, give no evidence of their industry. In short, the comparison implies that Moses praises Esau on account of his vigor, but speaks of Jacob as being addicted to domestic leisure; and that he describes the disposition of the former as giving promise that he would be a courageous man, while the disposition of the latter had nothing worthy of commendation.</i>²²⁸</p>
Bob Deffinbaugh	<p><i>[T]he boys had very different dispositions. Esau seems to have been a masculine, outdoor-type man who loved to do the things a father could take pride in. He was a skillful hunter, and he knew how to handle himself in the outdoors...Jacob was entirely different. While Esau seems to have been aggressive, daring, and flamboyant, Jacob appears to be just the opposite: quiet, pensive, more interested in staying at home than in venturing out and making great physical conquests. Not that he had no ambition to get ahead, quite the contrary; but Jacob couldn't see the sense in tracking about the wilderness just to bag some game. In the solitude of his tent Jacob could mentally reason out how to get ahead without getting his hands dirty and without taking dangerous risks.</i>²²⁹</p>

²²⁷ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:27–34.

²²⁸ John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentary on the Bible*; 2nd beta version from e-Sword, Genesis 25:27.

²²⁹ From <https://bible.org/seriespage/26-principle-divine-election-genesis-251-34> accessed July 1, 2015.

Commentators Comparing Esau and Jacob

Commentator	Commentary
S. R. Driver	<p><i>The sacred narrator comments only on the heedlessness with which Esau, for the sake of satisfying an immediate appetite, barter away what would otherwise have been an inalienable right: the modern reader is more impressed by the avarice and selfishness shown by Jacob in taking such a mean advantage of his brother's need. But in truth neither Esau nor Jacob can be called an ideal character. Esau is frank, straight-forward, generous, but without depth of character or farsightedness of aim: he is governed by the impulses and desires of the moment; a "profane" person (Hebrews 12:16), i.e. unspiritual, a man without love or appreciation of worthier possessions, and heedless of what he is throwing away. Jacob is selfish, scheming, and clutches at every advantage; but he looks beyond the immediate moment; he has ambition and perseverance. Jacob's character is thus a deeper one (in both a good and a bad sense) than Esau's; it contains sound and genuine elements, which, when purified from purely personal and selfish aims, are capable of consecration to the service of God and of being made subservient to carrying out His purposes. No doubt, if history told us more about the Edomites, we should find their national characteristics reflected in Esau, as those of Israel are reflected in Jacob.²³⁰</i></p>
John Dummelow	<p><i>The character of Esau has many attractive features; but he cared only for the pleasure of the moment and was without any lofty spiritual aspirations. His generous, warm-hearted spirit attracts sympathy at first sight, when contrasted with the wiles of the cold, calculating Jacob. But judged by a higher standard Esau appears plainly as a worldly, irreligious man, indifferent to his parents' wishes, uninterested in the divine covenant, and unmindful of the privileges and responsibilities which were to distinguish his race: cp. Genesis 26:34; Genesis 27:46. His character is summed up in Hebrews 12:16-17, where he is called a 'profane,' i.e. unconsecrated or. common person.</i></p>
Dummelow (con't)	<p><i>The character of Jacob is in marked contrast to that of Esau. Craftiness and subtility, even meanness and deceit, mark many of his actions; but, on the other hand, his patient endurance, strength of character, and warmth of affection call forth admiration. Long years of suffering and discipline were needed to purify his character from its baser elements, and make him worthier of the divine blessing. And certainly he was worthier than his brother, for he believed in and sought after his father's God, held spiritual things in reverence, and in the chief turning-points of his life, at Bethel, Haran, and Penuel, showed a conviction that God was with him to bless and guide. He stood out at last as one who has conquered himself, and proved himself to be worthy of the divine favour and patience, Israel, a prince with God. These considerations help us to understand why Jacob rather than Esau was selected as heir to the promises.²³¹</i></p>

²³⁰ From <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/hastings/genesis/25-34.htm> accessed July 1, 2015 (Driver is not credited, but these are his words).

²³¹ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/dcb/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 29, 2015.

Commentators Comparing Esau and Jacob

Commentator	Commentary
Matthew Henry	Henry describes the boys in this way: <i>They soon appeared to be of very different dispositions. (1.) Esau was a man for this world. He was a man addicted to his sports, for he was a hunter; and a man who knew how to live by his wits, for he was a cunning hunter. Recreation was his business; he studied the art of it, and spent all his time in it. He never loved a book, nor cared for being within doors; but he was a man of the field, like Nimrod and Ishmael, all for the game, and never well but when he was upon the stretch in pursuit of it: in short, he set up for a gentleman and a soldier. (2.) Jacob was a man for the other world. He was not cut out for a statesman, nor did he affect to look great, but he was a plain man, dwelling in tents, an honest man that always meant well, and dealt fairly, that preferred the true delights of solitude and retirement to all the pretended pleasure of busy noisy sports: he dwelt in tents.</i> ²³² He might be taking a few liberties in this description, but it helps us in distinguishing these men.
Alexander MacLaren	<i>The two types are intensified by civilisation, and the antagonism between them increased. City life tends to produce Jacob's, and its Esau's escape from it as soon as they can. But Jacob had the vices as well as the virtues of his qualities. He was orderly and domestic, but he was tricky, and keenly alive to his own interest. He was persevering and almost dogged in his tenacity of purpose, but he was not above taking mean advantages and getting at his ends by miry roads. He had little love for his brother, in whom he saw an obstacle to his ambition. He had the virtues and vices of the commercial spirit.</i> ²³³
J. Vernon McGee	<p><i>Here they are, twins, but no two boys were ever more different than these two. They not only struggled in the womb, but they are against each other from here on out. They have absolutely different viewpoints, different philosophies of life. Their thinking is different, and their attitudes are different. At the beginning, I must confess, Esau is more attractive than Jacob. But we learn that one can't always judge by the outward sign. We must judge by what takes place on the inside.</i></p> <p><i>"The boys grew." This fellow Esau was a cunning hunter, the outdoor boy, the athletic type. He is the one we would call the all-American boy today. He went in for sports. He went in for everything that was physical, but he had no understanding or capacity or desire for spiritual things. He was only interested in that which was physical. He represents the flesh.</i></p> <p><i>Jacob was a plain man. I think that you can make of that anything you want to. He lived indoors. He was mama's boy and was tied to her apron strings. You will notice that he did what she told him to do. Jacob is really a mama's boy. And this boy Esau is papa's boy.</i>²³⁴</p>
The NET Bible	<i>The disjunctive clause juxtaposes Jacob with Esau and draws attention to the striking contrasts. In contrast to Esau, a man of the field, Jacob was civilized, as the phrase "living in tents" signifies. Whereas Esau was a skillful hunter, Jacob was calm and even-tempered (ἡρε, tam), which normally has the idea of "blameless."</i> ²³⁵

²³² Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:19–28.

²³³ From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/mac/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 18, 2015.

²³⁴ From https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt (Genesis 25); accessed July 1, 2015.

²³⁵ From <http://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen25.htm> accessed February 21, 2013.

Commentators Comparing Esau and Jacob

Commentator	Commentary
The Pulpit Commentary	<i>Esau elected to follow the adventurous and roving life of a hunter; Jacob, the simpler and less exciting occupation of keeping sheep...Esau was a wild man in disposition no less than in action, a youth of strong animal propensities and essentially mundane proclivities. Jacob, without being religious, was quiet, sedate, fond of home life, and studious of peace, though not without a vein of duplicity in his soul's texture.</i> ²³⁶
C. I. Scofield	<i>Esau stands for the mere man of the earth (Hebrews 12:16–17 [(See to it) that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.—ESV]). In many respects a nobler man, naturally, than Jacob, he was destitute of faith, and despised the birthright because it was a spiritual thing, of value only as there was faith to apprehend it.</i>
Waltke	<i>From one human perspective, Esau, who functions as a foil to Jacob, is much more likeable than Jacob. From the divine viewpoint, however, he is rejected because he rejects his right to inherit the divinely given vision of his fathers.</i> ²³⁷
William Wenstrom, Jr.	<i>In order to understand the meaning of tam when used to describe Jacob we must understand that the writer is presenting a contrast between Jacob with his twin brother, Esau. Esau was outgoing, athletic, adventurous, who was never home since he was outdoorsman who loved to hunt wild game. Therefore, the adjective tam is used to present a contrast with Esau and describes Jacob as being peaceful in the sense that was he was a self-contained, detached personality complete in himself who was sensible, diligent, and dutiful.</i>
Wenstrom (con't)	<i>The word describes Jacob as being a “peaceful” individual who could be counted on to attend to the responsibilities of the family business because he was home and not away hunting like Esau. It describes Jacob as being a “cultured” or a “refined” individual, who was thoughtful.</i>
Wenstrom (con't)	<i>The adjective tam describes Jacob as being a “homebody,” which made him the total opposite of his twin brother Esau. Therefore, in Genesis 25:27, the adjective tam should be translated “homebody,” which is someone whose pleasures and activities center around the home. The English noun “homebody” is appropriate since it fits the sense of the adjective tam in Genesis 25:27, which is designed to express a contrast with Esau who was never around the home but out hunting wild game. The fact that Jacob is described as “living in tents” contrasts him with his adventurous brother Esau indicating that Jacob was a herdsman or pastoralist like his father and grandfather.</i> ²³⁸

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Let me suggest that Jacob developed a serious interest in his spiritual heritage. Whether or not the Great Historical Narrative was available to him by scroll or through memorization, he apparently took an interest in it, whereas his brother Esau did not. They both knew about the God of Abraham and the spiritual inheritance which was promised to Abraham. However, this became important to Jacob; and not so much to Esau.

²³⁶ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, from e-sword, Genesis 25:27.

²³⁷ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/dcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 29, 2015. Constable cites Waltke, Genesis, p. 352.

²³⁸ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

This does not mean that Jacob was a nicer person than Esau; nor does it mean that he was always more moral than Esau—we will find out in subsequent passages that he was not.

A boy with his father and a boy with his mother are going to be subjected to a different set of rules, no matter how well these parents try to coordinate their discipline. Isaac is going to encourage his child to be more daring, more active and more risk-taking. Rebekah will raise a son who might be quieter, less-aggressive, less physically active. Esau was at home in the outdoors; Jacob was at home in a tent. The latter was more conducive to learning one's heritage (which, in this situation, meant learning the Revealed Word of God).

Now, hoping not to make this too personal, but I can relate to this as well. On camping trips, two of my brothers would be out with my father catching fish, and I would be back in the tent reading comic books. From a very early age, we all sort of gravitated to other things. In retrospect, I think I would have liked now to learn the things which they learned how to do, but I was quite the headstrong boy. Given our various interests, my guess would be, one of my brothers and I would have been a lot like Jacob, while the other two brothers would have been more like Esau.

As a child, I was more interested in my mother's cooking than I was hunting with my father. Perhaps Jacob was the same in this regard. It was the women who lived in the tents, much as the women of the 1950's ran the household; and it is not out of the question that Jacob was interested in many of the things which his mother did, which would have included cooking. Later in this passage, Jacob will make a lentil soup to die for—so, at some point in time, he did learn how to cook—and he was probably a very good cook.

Despite the fact that there is a clear contrast here between the two men, this does not mean that it is better to be a *quiet* man of the tent, and that it is not as good to be a hunter. This simply tells us what kind of young men these two grew up to be, and confirms their relationships with their parents, Isaac favoring Esau and Rebekah favoring Jacob. Apart from this, there is nothing innately superior about which parent raises which son or daughter; nor is there any sort of advantage that Jacob has over Esau. The only thing that stands out is the spiritual difference between the men, and that difference seems indiscernible in their early years. Rebekah sees the spiritual inheritance as being important, and passes this along to Jacob. Isaac, on the other hand, spends a lot of time hunting with his son Esau.

Being a person who loves the out of doors does not preclude spiritual growth. David, as a boy, spent a great deal of time outdoors with the sheep, and yet, by age 17, when he faced off with Goliath, he was clearly spiritually advanced. Therefore, he had to experience much of his spiritual growth while being in the great outdoors.

I want you to notice just how subtle the Bible is. Many times, we have the phrase *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*; and we know how the promises of God got through these 3 men. However, both Isaac and Rebekah pray to God about different things, and Rebekah appears to have an audible answer. Furthermore, Rebekah will spend a great deal more time with Jacob than Isaac does, and yet Jacob will develop the interest in his spiritual heritage. Furthermore, as we progress in their lives, Rebekah will even encourage Jacob to deceive his father, in order to have the great blessing of his heritage bestowed upon him. So Rebekah, despite her imperfect way of going about things, is apparently quite aware of and quite interested in this spiritual heritage which is the Abrahamic Covenant, even though she became a part of the family decades after God made these promises to Abraham.

Think back to Genesis 24, when the servant of Abraham came to Laban and Bethuel and told them that his meeting with Rebekah at the well was of God. Despite their own personal flaws (and we will come to find that Laban has many), they had a lot of respect toward that claim. Rebekah was also very open to going out west and meeting this man—a distant relative of hers—and marrying him. This had to have some spiritual connotation to her. If you will recall all that the servant said to them before their meal—all of what he was proposing was related to the God of their fathers.

My point in all of this is, Rebekah is very much involved in this spiritual handoff, if you will, from generation to generation. She appears to be more involved, given the history which we read—than Isaac is. This may help you to understand why her prayer to God receives the answer that it does. She knew that there was trouble in her

womb, she prayed, and God (in whatever way) explained to her that this foretold of what was to come between the lines of Jacob and Esau.

On the other hand, the means by which Jacob apprehends his spiritual destiny, reveals character flaws in him and in his mother—which we will study in the next chapter.

Genesis 25:27 And the boys grew. And Esau was a man knowing hunting, and Jacob was a **simple** man, living in tents.

Jacob and Esau

1. *Esau* is the Hebrew word 'Êsâv (עֲשָׂו) [pronounced *gay-SAWV*], and it means *handled, made, rough handling; hairy*; it is transliterated *Esau*. This is pronounced with a very small *g*; it is more of a guttural sound, made by running air across the top of your pallet in back. We do not have an equivalent letter in the English. Strong's #6215 BDB #796.
2. Jacob's name is actually Ya'ăqôb (יַעֲקֹב) [pronounced *yah-ġuh-KOH^BV*], which means, *supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent* and is transliterated *Jacob*. Strong's #3290 BDB #784. Both are quite interesting names to give to one's children. But with Jacob, he is born holding onto the heel of Esau, suggesting that whatever Esau has (he is the firstborn, so the spiritual heritage goes to him), Jacob will take it from him. This is what happens in their lives. It should be clear that neither Jacob nor Esau show great spiritual promise.
3. Jacob appears to be knowledgeable of his spiritual heritage and its importance; and this appears to be less of an issue to Esau.
4. Jacob probably learned much of this from his mother, Rebekah.
5. Although calling Jacob a *simple man* or a *perfect man* is inaccurate; this word is certainly related to his spiritual being and his spiritual heritage (as well as to his knowledge of his spiritual heritage).
6. At this time, the rights and privileges of the firstborn would naturally fall upon Esau; and Jacob was concerned that this rights and privileges would include the promises of God to his grandfather Abraham.
7. Jacob appears to be very concerned about his inheritance from Isaac; Esau less so.
8. None of this means that a person who hunts for wild game is somehow inferior to a boy who spends much of his time with his mother. The key to this is the word *tâm* (תָּם) [pronounced *tawm*], which does not appear to mean that Jacob has reached some great spiritual plateau, but that Jacob does have a legitimate interest in the promises of God; and his brother Esau does not.
9. Their other interests, as well as their parental alliances, simply set up their early adult lives and their interaction with one another.
10. Even though the line of promise will go through Isaac, this does not mean that he is superior morally to Esau. Some believers are quite confused about this. Morality is important, and morality is one of the things which holds a society together. However, morality is not the Christian way of life. Nor is morality the sum total of the Old Testament spiritual life.

J. Vernon McGee: *Now we will look at these two boys as they grow up in this home. Here they are, twins, but no two boys were ever more different than these two. They not only struggled in the womb, but they are against each other from here on out. They have absolutely different viewpoints, different philosophies of life. Their thinking is different, and their attitudes are different. At the beginning, I must confess, Esau is more attractive than Jacob. But we learn that one can't always judge by the outward sign. We must judge by what takes place on the inside. We learn that in this particular case.*²³⁹

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Before we go any further, let's look at the concept of human morality. The Doctrine of **Human Good and Morality** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)); both originally found in **Genesis 3** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

²³⁹ From https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt (Genesis 25) accessed June 14, 2015.

The Doctrine of Morality

1. One of the areas of confusion for believers is the concept of morality. Many believers and unbelievers think that morality is the spiritual life. You first get saved and then you start acting moral. However, the Christian way of life is growing **in grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ** (2Peter 3:18). As a new believer, you must first learn how to get back into fellowship (after you sin, you name that sin to God; or, after you commit a variety of sins, you name them to God—1John 1:9). At the point of salvation, we are given the grace assets by which we may grow spiritually (a human spirit, the filling of the Holy Spirit, and the ability to understand, categorize and store doctrine). As we begin to grow spiritually, we will begin producing divine good, which is not the same as human good and is not the same as human morality.
2. God designed morality for the human race as morality protects and perpetuates the human race.
3. God has ordained 5 divine institutions: the individual person (or soul), employment, marriage, family and nation. There is a moral code for each of these divine institutions. These are institutions which will continually be under satanic attack.
4. Take marriage, for instance: infidelity, spousal abuse, lack of commitment are acts or attitudes which destroy a marriage, and, in turn, impact a family (if there are children involved; and divorce within a family often affect the siblings of those who divorced¹). The result could be the dissolution of the marriage, and children raised by a single parent are much more likely to be involved in drugs, underage drinking, teen pregnancy and crime, all of which negatively impact the nation. This is applicable to believer and unbeliever alike. The family is the key to the stability of a national entity; destroy the family and it will destroy the nation from within.
5. Commandments 4–10 of the Ten Commandments (found in Exodus 20) are an example of a basic moral code, which can be applied to believers and unbelievers alike in any nation. This is why it is appropriate to have the Ten Commandments displayed in any courtroom and classroom.
 - 1) Commandment 4: **Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you will labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a Sabbath to Yahweh your God: you will not do any work.** Although the Sabbath was given to the Jews of Israel specifically, there are aspects of it which are important to all men. Man needs a day off; he needs to recharge his batteries. Ideally speaking, man ought to turn toward God as well on a regular basis. Because creation is fundamental to all mankind, the 7-day work week is a part of almost every culture. Interestingly enough, providing more and more time off does not make a people any happier (as has been shown in Europe).
 - 2) Commandment 5: **Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which Yahweh your God gives you.** Again, even though this was specifically given to the Jews of Israel (this prepared them for establishing the nation Israel), this commandment is fundamental to all societies. A child may have some pretty lousy parents, but even lousy parents tend to have more wisdom than their own children. A child who listens to and obeys his parents is going to be a happier, more well-adjusted child, and society will benefit from this. Furthermore, in most cases a normal parent wants to raise his own children well.
 - (1) This concept is constantly under satanic attack. Some examples are:
 - (2) The anti-capitalism, pro-socialism indoctrination which has found its way into our public school system.
 - (3) Politicians, political activists, and propagandists often appeal to children, suggesting that they are wiser than their parents and know things which their parents do not.²
 - (4) Schools are continually introducing materials into the youngest grades possible which are contrary to the concept of family.³
 - 3) Commandment 6: **You will not murder.** The Bible is very clear on the sin of murder; this is not the same as executing a criminal nor is this the same as killing in war (also covered in the book of Exodus). This is intentional murder of another person, whether done during a crime or to eliminate this person from your life. You remove this person from this life when you murder them, which is the first divine institution. A society cannot be run by vigilantes or by criminal organizations. When using the oft-quoted phrase **An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth**, the Bible is referencing a system of organized justice, and not justifying vigilantism.
 - 4) Commandment 7: **You will not commit adultery.** The 2nd divine institution, marriage, must be protected. It does not matter that a male's normal inclination is *to wander*; there are boundaries to

The Doctrine of Morality

- the institution of marriage, and sexual fidelity is a fundamental boundary.
- 5) Commandment 8: **You will not steal.** Men (and women) are allowed to accumulate wealth, possessions and land. This commandment protects property rights. Individuals should not steal from others nor should the government steal from its citizens.
 - 6) Commandment 9: **You will not bear false witness against your fellow man.** You do not lie about someone else. Lying, as we have seen, is what led man to sin.
 - 7) Commandment 10: **Never desire to take your neighbor's household away from him. Never desire to take your neighbor's wife, his male or female slave, his ox, his donkey, or anything else that belongs to him.** Having an intense desire for the things which belong to your neighbor is a sin which plagues mankind, and today, in the United States, this is rampant. Some people actually believe that they have the right to determine how much income is too much and how this income ought to be used. At this point in time (2009), it is this very sin which threatens to undo the economy of the United States. Rather than being satisfied with what he has, Charlie Brown thinks that it is the government's job to take a large chunk of hedge-fund trader Lucy's wealth and to properly distribute it to those who deserve it (this is called *redistribution of wealth, spreading the wealth around, or economic justice*). What is most disconcerting is, there are actually churches which teach this.
6. A nation depends upon its citizenry as a whole to exhibit some reasonable amount of morality. If murder, stealing, and lying are rampant, that nation will destroy itself from within. A nation cannot simply survive based upon Christians alone exhibiting morality (however, mature believers in a nation will positively impact that nation).
 7. The unbeliever who goes from immorality to morality will have a better life, and sometimes people are confused by this. Let me explain: a person may become a Jehovah Witness, a scientologist or a Buddhist, and their lives may improve, and their family and friends must grudgingly admit their lives have improved. It is not because these organizations are good organizations; it is because the person involved is now engaging in moral behavior rather than immoral behavior.
 8. In the end, morality will make for better volitional choices, a better family life, and a more stable nation, but morality will not save. No one is moral enough to be saved. Luke 18:18–23 Titus 3:5 Ephesians 2:8–9

The Bible also speaks to the care and provision of the *helpless* and the Bible speaks of legitimate taxation in both the Old and New Testaments. All of this must be taken in balance.

¹ Statistically, there is a greater chance for a couple to divorce if one of their siblings has also divorced.

² Two examples of many: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XhCobR5QI_k
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbXxFUjDMiE>

³ <http://takeyourkidsoutofpublicschool.com/2009/06/and-tango-makes-three-%E2%80%93-a-long-way-from-dick-and-jane/>

Therefore, a nation ought to be moral and a nation must establish law within its borders, as the human race is preserved (and even protected from itself) by laws and morality. However, the ultimate conflict, since the fall of man, is between man and God. Nothing is quite right until this conflict is resolved. The key is first to resolve man's sinfulness before God.

So far, we have studied Genesis 25:19–27:

These [are] generations [genealogies, families, history, origin] of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham became the father of Isaac. Isaac was 40 years old when he took Rebekah—the daughter of Bethuel the Aramæan from Paddan-Aram, the sister of Laban the Aramæan—as his wife. Isaac entreated Y^ehowah on behalf of his wife because she [is] barren. Therefore, Y^ehowah was supplicated by him and Rebekah, Isaac's wife, conceived. The sons within her struggled together, so she said, "Behold, therefore, why [is] this [happening to] me?" Therefore, she went to consult Y^ehowah. Y^ehowah said to her, "[There are] two nations in your womb and the two peoples inside of you will be divided. [One] people will be stronger than [the other] people; and the elder will serve the younger one." And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, twins were in her womb! And the first

came out red, all over like a hairy garment. And they called his name Esau. And after that his brother came out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel. And his name was called Jacob. And Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them. And the boys grew. And Esau was a man knowing hunting, and Jacob was a simple man, living in tents.

Jacob is in the chosen line; Esau is not. One commentator that I will not name suggests that God is always for the underdog; that when faced with two people, one of whom is an underdog, God chooses the underdog. This is not it at all. God knows in advance all of the decisions that each of us will make. He knew in the line of Abraham that His Word would be retained and passed along by Isaac, but that it would not be by Ishmael (faith in the Revealed God continued for a few generations, but then disappeared from Ishmael's line). What a person chooses; what a person thinks in his soul, that is what is key—not whether he is the underdog or not. Sure, David versus Goliath, the natural underdog is David. However, when Solomon was made king, he had both his mother (Bathsheba) and his father (King David) behind him; and God chose Solomon. So, even though there were others who wanted the throne, one could hardly call Solomon the underdog. Now, if one wants to understand *underdog* to refer to a person who is grace oriented; then that is quite a different thing. God certainly favors the grace oriented believer over the legalistic believer and over the unbeliever.

To the unlearned, it may appear as if I am splitting hairs, and I am. Being the underdog in some kind of a contest or a comparison has no bearing on the spiritual life. Being grace oriented does. These are two different concepts in the spiritual life; and so, they need to be distinguished.

And so loves Isaac Esau because of game in his mouth, and Rebekah is loving Jacob.	Genesis 25:28	Isaac loved Esau because he ate his wild game [lit., <i>because of animal game in his mouth</i>], but Rebekah loved Jacob.
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Isaac loved Esau because he ate the wild game that Esau killed; but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so loves Isaac Esau because of game in his mouth, and Rebekah is loving Jacob.
Targum of Onkelos	And Izhak loved Esau, for <u>words of deceit</u> were in his mouth; but Rivekah loved Jakob.
Latin Vulgate	Isaac loved Esau, because he ate of his hunting; and Rebecca loved Jacob.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Isaac was fond of Esau, because he ate of Esaus game; but Rebekah was fond of Jacob.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Isaac loved Esau, because his venison was his food, but Rebecca loved Jacob.
Significant differences:	The targum has <i>words of deceit</i> rather than <i>game</i> or <i>venison</i> .

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Now Isaac's love was for Esau, because Esau's meat was greatly to his taste: but Rebekah had more love for Jacob.
Easy English	Isaac loved Esau, because Esau hunted. But Rebekah loved Jacob.
God's Word™	Because Isaac liked to eat the meat of wild animals, he loved Esau. However, Rebekah loved Jacob.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Isaac preferred Esau, because he enjoyed eating the animals Esau killed, but Rebecca preferred Jacob.

NIRV Isaac liked the meat of wild animals. So Esau was his favorite son. But Rebekah's favorite was Jacob.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V. Esau would take the meat of wild animals to his father Isaac, and so Isaac loved him more, but Jacob was his mother's favorite son.

New Berkeley Version Isaac favored Esau, for he enjoyed the taste of his game; and Rebekah favored Jacob. Until modern times favoritism in the home has been a serious trouble, aggravated by the naming of children after kin on either side of the family

New Life Bible Isaac showed favor to Esau, because he liked to eat the meat of the animals Esau killed. But Rebekah showed favor to Jacob.

New Living Translation Isaac loved Esau because he enjoyed eating the wild game Esau brought home, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible And although Isaac loved Esau (because he enjoyed venison), Rebekah loved Jacob.

International Standard Version Isaac loved Esau, because he loved to hunt, while Rebekah loved Jacob.
Translation for Translators Isaac liked Esau more, because he enjoyed the taste of the meat of the animals that Esau killed. But Rebekah liked Jacob more.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ferrar-Fenton Bible So Isaac loved Esau for he hunted with him; but Rebekah loved Jacob.

H. C. Leupold And Isaac loved Esau, for game pleased him. But Rebekah loved Jacob.

Lexham English Bible And Isaac loved Esau because {he could eat of his game}, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

NIV – UK Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible And Isaac loved Esau because he ate his venison, and Rebekah loved Jacob.

New Advent Bible Isaac loved Esau, because he ate of his hunting; and Rebecca loved Jacob.

Christian Community Bible Isaac who had a liking for game loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

New American Bible (R.E.) Isaac preferred Esau, because he was fond of game; but Rebekah preferred Jacob.

New RSV Isaac loved Esau, because he was fond of game; but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Revised English Bible Isaac favoured Esau because he kept him supplied with game, but Rebecca favoured Jacob.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible Yitz'chak favored 'Esav, because he had a taste for game; Rivkah favored Ya'akov.
exeGesés companion Bible ...and Yischaq loves Esav,
because of the hunt in his mouth;
and Ribqah loves Yaaqov.

Kaplan Translation Isaac enjoyed eating Esau's game and favored him [Isaac saw that Esau was careful to honor his parents, and could therefore be trusted to keep the tradition from previous generations (see note on Genesis 27:4). Others interpret this sentence, 'Isaac loved Esau because he was a trapper with his mouth,' that is, a smooth talker (Tanchuma 8; Rashi; Hirsch).], but Rebecca favored Jacob [Rebecca thus knew that Jacob would be the chosen one. This explains Genesis 25:28 and 28:5].

Orthodox Jewish Bible And Yitzchak loved Esav, because he did eat of his wild game; but Rivkah loved Ya'akov.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

- The Amplified Bible* And Isaac loved [and was partial to] Esau, because he ate of Esau's game; but Rebekah loved Jacob.
- The Expanded Bible Isaac loved Esau because he hunted the wild animals that Isaac enjoyed eating [game was in his (Isaac's) mouth]. But Rebekah loved Jacob.
- Kretzmann's Commentary And Isaac loved Esau because he did eat of his venison, literally, game, the result of the chase, was in his mouth, he was very partial to its wild taste; but Rebekah loved Jacob, partly because she remembered the promise of the Lord, partly because of his love for the quiet life of the home.
- NET Bible® Isaac loved Esau because he had a taste for fresh game [Heb "the taste of game was in his mouth." The word for "game," "venison" is here the same Hebrew word as "hunter" in the last verse. Here it is a metonymy, referring to that which the hunter kills.], but Rebekah loved [The disjunctive clause juxtaposes Rebekah with Jacob and draws attention to the contrast. The verb here is a participle, drawing attention to Rebekah's continuing, enduring love for her son.] Jacob.
- Syndein/Thieme And Isaac loved Esau . . . because he did eat of his venison. But Rebekah loved Jacob. {not good to show favoritism for one child over the other - will always cause strife between them}.
- The Voice Esau was Isaac's favorite because he was fond of good meat, but Jacob was Rebekah's favorite.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

- Context Group Version Now Isaac gave allegiance to Esau, because he ate of his venison. And Rebekah gave allegiance to Jacob.
- Darby Translation And Isaac loved Esau, because venison was to his taste; and Rebecca loved Jacob.
- English Standard Version Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.
- Green's Literal Translation And Isaac loved Esau, for game was in his mouth. And Rebekah loved Jacob.
- NASB Now Isaac loved Esau, because he had a taste for game [Lit game was in his mouth], but Rebekah loved Jacob.
- Webster's Bible Translation And Isaac loved Esau, because he ate of [his] venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.
- World English Bible Now Isaac loved Esau, because he ate his venison. Rebekah loved Jacob.
- Young's Updated LT And Isaac loves Esau, for his hunting is in his mouth; and Rebekah is loving Jacob.

The gist of this verse: Isaac favored Esau because he loved the wild game that Esau killed; and Rebekah favored Jacob.

Genesis 25:28a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

Genesis 25:28a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'âhêb (אָהֵב) [pronounced aw-HAYV ^B]	<i>to desire, to breathe after; to love; to delight in; human love [for another] [familial, sexual]; human love [desire, appetite] for [food, drink, sleep, wisdom]; human love [for, to God]; God's love [toward men, people of Israel, righteousness]; to like</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #157 BDB #12
Yis'châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced yihs ^e -KHAWK]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'Êsâv (עֵשָׂו) [pronounced éy-SAWV]	<i>handled, made, rough handling; hairy; transliterated Esau</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6215 BDB #796
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
tsayid (צַיִד) [pronounced TSAH-yihd]	<i>hunting; game [prey] hunted; provisions [especially for a journey], food</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6718 BDB #845
The NET Bible: <i>The word for "game," "venison" is here the same Hebrew word as "hunter" in the last verse. Here it is a metonymy, referring to that which the hunter kills.</i> ²⁴⁰			
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
peh (פֶּה) [pronounced peh]	<i>mouth [of man, animal; as an organ of speech]; opening, orifice [of a river, well, etc.]; edge; extremity, end</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #6310 BDB #804

Translation: Isaac loved Esau because he ate his wild game [lit., because of animal game in his mouth],...

Although Isaac and Rebekah shouldn't have, they each played favorites. Isaac and Esau were both outdoors men, and Esau apparently had become quite good at killing wild game. You can hardly blame Isaac for loving Esau's BBQ.

Most translations are rather free here, including the usually literal KJV in explaining why Isaac loved Esau. There are only two Hebrew words, besides a conjunction and a preposition, here. The first word is *hunting*, which is translated *game*²⁴¹ (along with the conjunction *because* or *for*). Then we have the preposition *in* and the Hebrew word *peh* (פֶּה) [pronounced *peh*], which simply means *mouth*. Gen. 25:28a actually reads: *Now Isaac loved Esau*

²⁴⁰ From <http://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen25.htm> (footnote) accessed February 22, 2013.

²⁴¹ Here, the act of hunting is a metonymy for that which is caught, namely *the game*

because the game in his mouth (*his* comes from the 3rd masculine suffix added to *peh*). What is missing is a verb, so that our attention is drawn to this phrase. It is called ellipsis and we supply the verb, recognizing that there is emphasis placed upon this short phrase. What you, the reader, should get from this is: *how extremely superficial of Isaac*. Maybe I am being too harsh here?

In any case, some commentators take Esau to task for killing wild game. That is ridiculous! Barnes writes, among other things, *Esau is destructive of game; Jacob is constructive of cattle*.²⁴² The author (probably Isaac) is making some simple observations which have nothing to do with good and evil. Esau is not some sort of evil person because he hunts game and eats it. Jacob is not somehow morally superior because he is a shepherd (which animals are also eaten as food). This is simply a set up for what is to come.

Genesis 25:28b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Rib ^e qâh (רִיבְקָה) [pronounced <i>rihb-KAW</i>]	<i>ensnarer; a noose; fat, fattened; a quarrel appeased; which is transliterated Rebekah, Rebekkah, Rebecca</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #7259 BDB #918
'âhêb (אָהֵב) [pronounced <i>aw-HAYV^B</i>]	<i>desiring, breathing after; loving; delighting in</i>	feminine singular, Qal active participle	Strong's #157 BDB #12
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Ya'ăqôb (יַעֲקֹב) [pronounced <i>yah-ġuh-KOH^{BV}</i>]	<i>supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent and is transliterated Jacob</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3290 BDB #784

Translation: ...but Rebekah loved Jacob.

On the other hand, Rebekah loved Jacob more; and they spent more time together. As things unfold, you may want to ask yourself, at any point is Esau approaching things from a man's point of view and Jacob approaching things from a woman's point of view? These are their influences.

Genesis 25:28 Isaac loved Esau because he ate his wild game [lit., *because of animal game in his mouth*], but Rebekah loved Jacob. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:28 Isaac loved Esau because he ate the wild game that Esau killed; but Rebekah loved Jacob. (Kukis paraphrase)

Here is a serious problem revealed by Isaac's own hand. Both he and his wife had favorites. Personally, I never had a clue as to who my father loved the most out of four boys and I could only guess with my mother.²⁴³ Despite their differences in temperament and interests, what is important is for the parents to express unconditional love toward their children. There should not be a situation where one child is clearly favored over another. This confuses the children. It is normal to love one child more than another just as it is to love one friend more than

²⁴² Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:28.

²⁴³ Which I believe varied from time to time.

another friend. However, a parent should not reveal such a prejudice to a child. It was no wonder that both boys grew up in opposition to one another, uncooperative and always in competition.

Both parents made the mistake of having favorites and allowing their children to be aware of their favoritism. Isaac, as is said here, likes wild game. This and being in the great outdoors became a very important part of his relationship with Esau.

Rebekah, as the woman, would have spent more time in tents, cooking, or overseeing the cooking; and her awareness of the spiritual heritage of Abraham suggests that she either read or learned about what God promised to Abraham.

J. Vernon McGee: *"The boys grew." This fellow Esau was a cunning hunter, the outdoor boy, the athletic type. He is the one we would call the all-American boy today. He went in for sports. He went in for everything that was physical, but he had no understanding or capacity or desire for spiritual things. He was only interested in that which was physical. He represents the flesh. Jacob was a plain man. I think that you can make of that anything you want to. He lived indoors. He was mama's boy and was tied to her apron strings. You will notice that he did what she told him to do. Jacob is really a mama's boy...Here is the problem in the home. You feel that under these circumstances they are going to have trouble, and they are. When one parent is partial to one child and the other parent is partial to the other child, you have trouble. That is exactly what took place here...Isaac loved him because he ate of his venison. Esau went out hunting, and he always got something when he went hunting. He brought home the venison. Isaac liked that, and he liked this outdoor type of boy. Rebekah loved Jacob because he was a mama's boy.*²⁴⁴

As mentioned previously, this may have all been intentional. Hearing the Word of God, about the fighting that would occur between the two children in Rebekah's womb, perhaps Isaac and Rebekah, at some point, began to keep the boys apart and raise them up individually. Young boys often fight—probably Esau and Jacob especially—so that Isaac and Rebekah decided to separate them. By this time, each boy may have already indicated areas of interest—whether they enjoyed being inside or outside.

John Calvin is mistaken to write: *the adoption of Jacob was founded on the sole good pleasure of God, it is an intolerable presumption to suppose it to depend upon the will of man; or to ascribe it, in part, to means, (as they are called,) and to human preparations.*²⁴⁵ God is sovereign over all; that does not mean that He does not allow for our free will. That does not mean that His sovereign will specifically excludes our free will.

Calvin, in this same passage, berates Isaac for liking venison more than the holy plan of God. God nowhere calls for Esau to be abandoned, and Jacob only to be nourished.

Similarly, Clarke writes: *Rebekah loved Jacob; more than Esau, being more at home with her, and of a milder disposition; and more especially being a good man, a partaker of the grace of God, and to whom she knew by the oracle the blessing and promise belonged.*²⁴⁶ Now, disposition-wise, Jacob may have been more similar to his mother. However, the only promise that we are aware of is not as clear as Clarke presents it to be.

H. C. Leupold: *Strange to say, Isaac loved Esau. The reason assigned is: "game pleased him"—literally, "(was) in his mouth," bephîw. It would hardly have gotten into his mouth if he did not like it; consequently our translation. Luther has about the same: ass gervon seinem Weidwerk. So A.V. is meant. This cannot be the only thing that bound these two characters closely together. In itself this*

²⁴⁴ From https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt (Genesis 25) accessed June 14, 2015 and July 1, 2015.

²⁴⁵ John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentary on the Bible*; 2nd beta version from e-Sword, Genesis 25:28.

²⁴⁶ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:28.

fact suggests a character unduly given to the things that tickle the palate. But besides, the more passive Isaac finds himself attracted to the more active and bold Esau just because he himself lacks these qualities. Whereas Rebekah understands and loves the diligent and dutiful Jacob better. Rebekah had spiritual ambitions, in a good sense. They prompted her originally to cast in her lot with Isaac. Jacob had a kindred spirit. This kinship was the bond uniting the two. Luther's remarks cover the rest of the case: "Just as mothers are wont to love the sons who are of a more quiet and friendly disposition rather than those who are wild and bold, so fathers love those sons who are a bit more lively and bold." No inferior ground is adduced in referring to Rebekah's love for Jacob. Still, on the whole, a measure of partiality was involved on the part of both parents. We take this verse to imply a rebuke for both parties.²⁴⁷

Wenstrom also suggests some negativity regarding this favoritism: *Isaac loved Esau because of his own taste for wild game. Therefore, Esau's nature and occupation were favored by Isaac because of the satisfaction of his palate. On the other hand, Jacob was loved by Rebekah. This was probably due to the prophecy that she received from the Lord that Esau and his descendants would serve Jacob's descendants and that Jacob would be in the line of Christ. The other reason why Rebekah favored Jacob over Esau was that Jacob was a homebody. He also appears to have been a "momma's boy" as demonstrated by he and Rebekah conspiring together against Esau. Therefore, we see that the Word of God describes Esau as an outdoor-type man who loved to do the things a father could take pride in. He was a skillful hunter, and he knew how to handle himself in the outdoors. In our culture I believe Esau would have been a football star in high school and college and might have played in the pros. He was a real macho man, the kind of son a father would swell with pride to talk about among his friends. Jacob was entirely different. While Esau seems to have been aggressive, daring, and flamboyant, Jacob appears to be just the opposite in that he was quiet, thoughtful and more interested in staying at home than in venturing out and taking part in great physical endeavors. This is not to say that Jacob had no ambition, on the contrary. It was that Jacob couldn't see the sense in roaming the wilderness just to bag some game. In the solitude of his tent Jacob could mentally reason out how to get ahead without getting his hands dirty and without taking dangerous risks. Esau was the kind of son that Isaac could proudly take with him wherever he went. Rebekah, on the other hand, favored Jacob. She probably thought Esau was crude and uncultured. Jacob was a much more refined person, gentle and kind, the type of son a mother would be proud of. Jacob spent more time at home than Esau did. Each parent seems to have identified too much with a particular son, thus creating divisions which were devastating. This favoritism also brought about disharmony between Isaac and his wife.²⁴⁸*

The only thing that God says related to these two boys is, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger." (Genesis 25:23b; ESV) Because the older will serve the younger, do we now conclude that Esau ought to be treated less than Jacob as a son? We, as believers, know the overall narrative (some of us, anyway); we know that God later said, "Jacob I loved and Esau I hated." But Isaac does not necessarily know this. Rebekah does not necessarily know this. As parents, they had certain preferences, and possibly because of conflicts between their sons, they raised these boys separately, taking into account their own personal interests. They perceived potential conflicts, based upon what God had said, so they simply kept the boys mostly separated. None of that is necessarily sinful. The *only* problem that occurs to me is, it is clear to these boys (young men by now) who favors whom.

Although this may not be the perfect solution to their perceived problems, this does not mean that Isaac and Rebekah were bad parents or made a lot of bad decisions. This is how they chose to deal with their two sons, who appear to be antagonistic toward one another, as most brothers are.

Would it have been better for these boys to have switched back and forth between parents? Certainly. Every child learns very specific things from his father simply because his father is a male; and from his mother because she

²⁴⁷ From <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/leupold/genesis.xxvii.html> accessed June 30, 2015.

²⁴⁸ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

is a female. A more balanced approach would have been better; but the berating of Isaac by Calvin, Clarke and others is simply unwarranted.

Along the same lines, Matthew Henry praises Rebekah: *Rebekah was mindful of the oracle of God, which had given the preference to Jacob, and therefore she preferred him in her love. And, if it be lawful for parents to make a difference between their children upon any account, doubtless Rebekah was in the right, that loved him whom God loved.*²⁴⁹ Henry is just wrong here. Not every commentator makes remarks like these, by the way.

What we know about the brothers from God's words to Rebekah is not enough to disregard one son and prefer the other. And even though we later read, "**Jacob I loved and Esau I hated;**" Rebekah does not know this. Isaac does not know this. These proclamations are made much later in time. The line of promise went through Jacob; but this does not mean that God completely and totally abandoned Esau. Esau and his children and some of their children will be named. This implies that these are all believers. The line of promise does not go through Esau, but that should not have precluded spiritual training for him.

Benson: *The conduct of both these parents was blameable: they had but these two children, and the father was peculiarly attached to the one, and the mother to the other. And this improper partiality gave occasion to that strife which once threatened their being deprived of them both. Such partiality should be carefully guarded against in parents, as being both sinful in itself, and of dangerous tendency. It is true some children may be of a much more amiable spirit and conduct than others of the same family; yet all ought to have a due share of parental regard, and none be in any manner slighted or neglected.*²⁵⁰

The line of promise is both real and illustrative. This is the real line of man, going from Adam to Noah, from Noah to Abraham, from Abraham to David, and from David to our Lord Jesus. That is the line of promise and the line of regeneration. That does not mean that every other son (descendant) of Abraham is worthless and will be cast into the Lake of Fire. By illustration, Jacob, in the line of promise, is loved by God; Esau outside of the line of promise is hated by God. That is the illustration; that is the general principle. Nevertheless, that does not mean that Esau did not believe in the God of Abraham. Esau's line, at some point, would reject the Revealed God. That is the point of the illustration.

There may also be some interaction which occurs that is not recorded in the Bible. Abraham is actually still alive when Esau and Jacob are born. Abraham will live to age 175; Isaac sires these twins at age 60, so Abraham will die about the time the twins are 15. We do not know how much interaction there is between Abraham and these boys or between Abraham and Rebekah. However, it will become quite clear that Rebekah knows all about the spiritual inheritance promised by God to Abraham through Isaac, and that this is important to her.

More from Wenstrom: *Now, remember, Isaac and Rebekah's marriage was made in heaven since the Lord's will was for Rebekah to marry Isaac. Yet, even though the marriage was made in heaven, it was still dysfunctional since Isaac, Rebekah, Esau and Jacob possess old Adamic sin natures. The marriage and family of Rebekah and Isaac was dysfunctional as demonstrated by Isaac's love for Esau over Jacob because Esau's pursuits satisfied his palate's desire for wild game! Although Isaac was a spiritual man he developed a taste for Esau's wild game, which blinded him to the point that he preferred Esau over Jacob.*²⁵¹

²⁴⁹ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:19–28.

²⁵⁰ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/rbc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 30, 2015.

²⁵¹ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

Snider Summarizes Genesis 25:27–28

1. We have been told via the prophecy about the two twins that there would be no equality between them.
2. Neither would they share anything in common save their physical relationship.
3. As the boys grew older, it became increasingly apparent that they were two complete opposites.
4. Keep in mind that they were twins, and normally twins share a lot in common, even down to thought.
5. As they grew, Esau was attracted to the outdoors and the lifestyle of the sportsman.
6. He developed his skills and became an avid hunter, spending much of his time alone and away from the.
7. He was a loner, who would just as soon be out in the woods pursuing game as doing anything else.
8. As we noted, Isaac had a bit of a tendency to seek solitude and in this regard may have shared a similar characteristic with Esau.
9. Isaac definitely was a man who liked wild game, and Esau appealed to him since he could provide him something which he desired.
10. Jacob, on the other hand, was not a one dimensional character, but pursued the normal lifestyle of the nomad, which Abraham and Isaac had pursued.
11. He was a well rounded individual, who could do many things well, including domestic chores. see vs
12. It is clearly stated that favoritism developed within the family, which is going to create an unhealthy
13. The Word of God states that Isaac was partial to Esau based on his physical exploits and what he could provide in terms of game.
14. We are not told why Rebekah was partial to Jacob.
15. In any case partiality is soon evident within the household, and this is an unhealthy situation.
16. Parents should in no way demonstrated partiality toward children based on physical compatibility or overt pursuits.
17. Children should be treated equally as much as possible, and given equal affection and discipline.
18. You cannot discipline one child for something and tolerate it in another.
19. As a parent you should strive to be like God and not be a respecter of persons.
20. Perhaps Jacob and Rebekah had spiritual ambitions and this is the reason she gravitated toward him.
21. Some suggest that she had in mind the prophecy and gravitated to Jacob for purely spiritual reasons.
22. The pursuit of a quiet, domestic lifestyle would have certainly not bother a normal mother.
23. Mothers tend to gravitate to sons who are more domestic, whereas fathers tend to respect and admire a more wild, adventuresome type son.
24. In certain cases, parents attempt to live their lives vicariously through their children.
25. They are impressed when their child does something that they wish they could have done, or that they did when they were young.
26. This is a great evil in our society, parents pursuing satisfaction for themselves through the lives of their children. this is how I see Isaac, Esau was all he wasn't, outgoing, fearless, etc., where Isaac was passive and somewhat reticent.

From <http://makarios-online.org/notes/genesis/gen25.doc> accessed June 16, 2015.

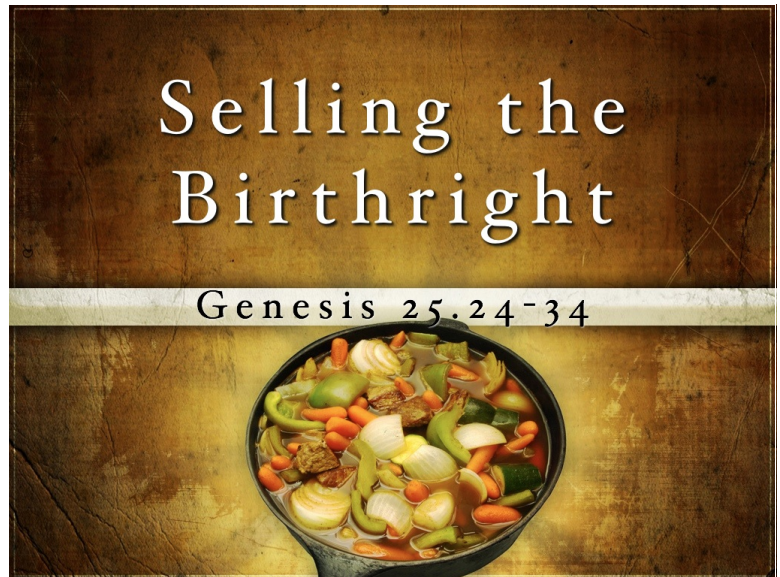
[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Selling the Birthright (a graphic); from **Berean Bible Study Group**; accessed July 3, 2015. Properly, Genesis 25:24–34 is all about Jacob and Esau, beginning with them in the womb and proceeding to the selling of the birthright (which is, properly, vv. 29–34).

Genesis 25:24–34 When her days to give birth were completed, behold, there were twins in her womb. The first came out red, all his body like a hairy cloak, so they called his name Esau. Afterward his brother came out with his hand holding Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them. When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents. Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob. Once when Jacob was cooking stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was exhausted. And

Esau said to Jacob, "Let me eat some of that red stew, for I am exhausted!" (Therefore his name was called Edom.) Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright now." Esau said, "I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?" Jacob said, "Swear to me now." So he swore to him and sold his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright. These verses tell us what we have already studied and what we will study until the end of this chapter.



And so is boiling Jacob soup and so comes in Esau from the field and he [is] famished.

Genesis 25:29

While Jacob is boiled up a bean soup, Esau comes in from the open country and he [is] famished.

While Jacob was cooking up a bean soup, Esau comes in from being out in the open country, and he is famished.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so is boiling Jacob soup and so comes in Esau from the field and he [is] famished.

Targum of Onkelos

On the day that Abraham died, Jakob dressed pottage of lentiles, and was going to comfort his father. And Esau came from the wilderness, exhausted; for in that day he had committed five transgressions: he had worshipped with strange worship, he had shed innocent blood, he had gone in unto a betrothed damsel, he had denied the life of the world to come, and had despised the birthright.

Latin Vulgate

And Jacob boiled pottage: to whom Esau, coming faint out of the field.

Peshitta (Syriac)

And Jacob cooked pottage, and behold, his brother Esau came in from the field, and he was very hungry.

Septuagint (Greek)

And Jacob cooked a stew, and Esau came from the plain, and he was weary.

Significant differences:

A lot of weirdness to be found in the targum. The Hebrew word for *famished* can also mean *exhausted*.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And one day Jacob was cooking some soup when Esau came in from the fields in great need of food;...
Easy-to-Read Version	One time Esau came back from hunting. He was tired and weak from hunger. Jacob was boiling a pot of beans.
<i>The Message</i>	One day Jacob was cooking a stew. Esau came in from the field, starved.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V. New Century Version	One day, Jacob was cooking some stew, when Esau came home hungry... One day Jacob was boiling a pot of vegetable soup. Esau came in from hunting in the fields, weak from hunger.
New Life Bible	As Jacob was getting food ready one day, Esau came in from the field and was very hungry.
New Living Translation	One day when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau arrived home from the wilderness exhausted and hungry.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then [one day], Jacob had cooked up some stew. And when Esau came in from the plains tired and weak,...
Beck's American Translation	Once Jacob was cooking some food when Esau came in from the field, feeling exhausted.
International Standard V	One day, while Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau happened to come in from being outdoors, and he was feeling famished.
Translation for Translators	One day while Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came home from the field, very hungry.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Ferar-Fenton Bible	Stew revolted Jacob. Esau came from the field, and he was tired. Once when Jacob was boiling porridge, Esau came from the field, and he was exhausted,...
Lexham English Bible	Once Jacob cooked a thick stew, and Esau came in from the field, and he was exhausted.
NIV – UK	Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came in from the open country, famished.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	Once when Jacob was making a stew, Esau came back from the country and he was famished;...
The Heritage Bible	And Jacob boiled soup, and Esau came from the field, and he was faint;...
New Jerusalem Bible	Once, when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau returned from the countryside exhausted.
New RSV	Esau Sells His Birthright Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was famished.
Revised English Bible	One day Jacob was preparing broth when Esau came in from the country, exhausted.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible	And Yaaqov seethes pottage: and Esav comes from the field, languid:...
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Kaplan Translation [Jacob was once simmering a stew](#) [According to tradition, this was the consolation meal prepared after Abraham's death (Targum Yonathan; Bava Bathra 16b). See Yov'loth 24:3.], [when Esau came home exhausted from the field](#) [There is a tradition that he had just killed Nimrod (Genesis 10:8. See Baaley Tosafoth. Also see Rashi, Pesachim 54b s.v. Bigdo).].

Orthodox Jewish Bible [And Ya'akov cooked stew: and Esav came from the sadeh, and he was famished.](#)

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible [Jacob was boiling pottage \(lentil stew\) one day, when Esau came from the field and was faint \[with hunger\].](#)

The Expanded Bible [One day Jacob was boiling a pot of vegetable soup \[or preparing stew\]. Esau came in from hunting in the fields, weak from hunger \[famished; starving\].](#)

Kretzmann's Commentary **Verses 29-34**

Esau Sells His Birthright

[And Jacob sod pottage](#), he cooked a dish of lentils; [and Esau came from the field](#), where he had evidently been engaged in his favorite occupation, [and he was faint](#), ravenously hungry after his strenuous exertions.

NET Bible® [Now Jacob cooked some stew, and when Esau came in from the open fields, he was famished.](#) Jacob cooked some stew. There are some significant words and wordplays in this story that help clarify the points of the story. The verb "cook" is [רִד](#) ([zid](#)), which sounds like the word for "hunter" ([צַיִד](#), [tsayid](#)). This is deliberate, for the hunter becomes the hunted in this story. The word [רִד](#) means "to cook, to boil," but by the sound play with [צַיִד](#) it comes to mean "set a trap by cooking." The usage of the word shows that it can also have the connotation of acting presumptuously (as in boiling over). This too may be a comment on the scene. For further discussion of the rhetorical devices in the Jacob narratives, see J. P. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art in Genesis* (SSN).

Syndein/Thieme [And Jacob boiled up pottage/soup. And Esau came from the field, and he was exhausted/weary.](#) {Esau was a hunter out hunting unsuccessfully apparently. He was mentally and physically exhausted - and very very hungry}.

The Voice [One day, while Jacob was cooking a stew for dinner, Esau came in from the field. He was tired and hungry.](#)

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

American KJV [And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint:...](#)

Concordant Literal Version [And stewing is Jacob a stew. And coming is Esau from the field and is faint.](#)

Darby Translation [And Jacob had cooked a dish; and Esau came from the field, and he was faint.](#)

English Standard Version [Once when Jacob was cooking stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was exhausted.](#)

Green's Literal Translation [And Jacob boiled soup. And Esau came from the field, and he was faint.](#)

New King James Version **Esau Sells His Birthright**

[Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary.](#)

World English Bible [Jacob boiled stew. Esau came in from the field, and he was famished.](#)

Young's Updated LT [And Jacob boils pottage, and Esau comes in from the field, and he is weary.](#)

The gist of this verse: Jacob is making soup and Esau comes in front hunting, exhausted, hungry and without any game.

Genesis 25:29a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
zûd (זד) [pronounced zood]	<i>to cook; to seethe, to act proudly, to act presumptuously, to act with insolence</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #2102 BDB #267
This is also spelled zîyd (זיד) [pronounced zeed].			
Ya'ăqôb (יַעֲקֹב) [pronounced yah-ăguh-KOH ^{BV}]	<i>supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent and is transliterated Jacob</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3290 BDB #784
nâgîyd (נִגְיָד) [pronounced naw-ZEED]	<i>boiled food, soup, boiled, pottage</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5138 BDB #268

Translation: While Jacob is boiled up a bean soup,...

Jacob and Esau are both being true to form here. Jacob is at home making up a soup. It's probably a bean soup, but we don't know for certain. It probably did not have any wild game in it.

This soup or pottage is some form of boiled lentils²⁵² (similar to beans) and Jacob, being the kind of person who hung around the tent a lot and was a complete man, was apparently quite a cook. He did not have the kind of relationship with Esau where Esau could come in from a hunt, offer Jacob some meat and in turn, be offered boiled beans. They were raised in competition with one another. There is not even a trade-off, let alone a hint of grace in their relationship. Whereas any well-brought up brothers would think nothing of immediately offering one another food, this does not occur to Jacob and Esau obviously does not expect it. The favoritism expressed by the parents put these young men at odds with one another. We would certainly like to place the blame for their unnatural brotherhood upon Esau, but it will become obvious that Jacob, if anyone, was the most petty and devious of the two.

Wenstrom on lentils: *A "lentil" is a small annual legume of the pea family and its lens-shaped edible seed is rich in protein and is one of the most ancient of cultivated foods. The red pottage of lentils, which Esau sold his birthright for probably was made from the red Egyptian lentil.*²⁵³

The Bible Illustrator gives probably the best information about lentils: *Lentils were and are extensively and carefully grown in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria; those of Egypt were, at a later period, particularly famous; and the manner of cooking them is even immortalized on monuments. They are not only used as a pottage, but in times of scarcity, and more generally by the poor, they are baked into bread, either alone or mixed with barley. Lentils and rice, boiled in equal quantities, form still one of the favourite dishes in many parts of the East. When cooked, they are of a yellowish brown colour, approaching to red; some species, growing on a red soil, have this colour naturally; and hence Esau, in his haste, calls the dish simply the red one. The fact, that lentils were among the cheapest and most common articles of vegetable food, enhances the force and point of our narrative.*²⁵⁴

²⁵² This is found in vv. 29 and 34

²⁵³ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

²⁵⁴ From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/tbi/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 14, 2015.

Dr. Shaw: *Beans, lentils, kidney beans, and garvancos are the chiefest of their pulse kind; beans, when boiled and stewed with oil and garlic, are the principal food of persons of all distinctions; lentils are dressed in the same manner with beans, dissolving easily into a mass, and making a pottage of a chocolate color. This we find was the red pottage which Esau, from thence called Edom, exchanged for his birthright.*²⁵⁵ This does not strike me as particularly appetizing; but then, I am not hungry right this moment (although I am a fan of various bean soups).

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown: *made of lentils or small beans, which are common in Egypt and Syria. It is probable that it was made of Egyptian beans, which Jacob had procured as a dainty; for Esau was a stranger to it. It is very palatable; and to the weary hunter, faint with hunger, its odor must have been irresistibly tempting.*²⁵⁶

The NET Bible makes some interesting observations at this point: *Jacob cooked some stew. There are some significant words and wordplays in this story that help clarify the points of the story. The verb “cook” is רָד (zid), which sounds like the word for “hunter” (צַיִד, tsayid). This is deliberate, for the hunter becomes the hunted in this story. The word רָד means “to cook, to boil,” but by the sound play with צַיִד it comes to mean “set a trap by cooking.” The usage of the word shows that it can also have the connotation of acting presumptuously (as in boiling over). This too may be a comment on the scene. For further discussion of the rhetorical devices in the Jacob narratives, see J. P. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art in Genesis* (SSN).²⁵⁷*

The rabbinical tradition is that this took place on the day that Abraham died; which tradition is preserved in the targum. I do not necessarily buy into that. That would make the boys both 15. When Jacob leaves Canaan suddenly, in the chapter coming up, he will be considerably older.

Genesis 25:29b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
Ēsâv (עֲשָׂו) [pronounced gay-SAWV]	<i>handled, made, rough handling; hairy; transliterated Esau</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6215 BDB #796
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
sâdeh (שָׂדֵה) [pronounced saw-DEH]	<i>field, land, country, open field, open country</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7704 BDB #961

Translation: ...Esau comes in from the open country...

²⁵⁵ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:29. He cites Shaw's Travels, p. 140, 4th. edition.

²⁵⁶ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, Genesis 25:29.

²⁵⁷ From <http://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen25.htm> (footnote) The Net Bible®; © 1996-2006 by Biblical Studies Press (BSP); accessed February 22, 2013.

Esau has been out hunting, and, apparently, he was out for some time without it being fruitful. He had no animals to bring in, dress and cook. Therefore, he was starved. He did not even take down a single squirrel.

Esau certainly must have reasoned that something would be cooking at home.

Genesis 25:29c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûw' (הוא) [pronounced <i>hoo</i>]	<i>he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one)</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>is</i> , is implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
'âyêph (אֵיִף) [pronounced <i>gay-YAYF</i>]	<i>famished; tired, weary, faint, worn out, exhausted, languishing [from toil or thirst]; knackered</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #5889 BDB #746

Translation: ...and he [is] famished.

Esau was 'âyêph [אֵיִף] [pronounced *aw-yafe'*] which means *to be exhausted (which can be a result of hunger and/or hard physical work or exercise)*. It is the state of mind where the body is so in need of food and rest that the mind no longer functions properly. The physical needs overpower the mind.

We are told that Esau is famished. This tells us that he had nothing to eat or drink, and he was weak from lack of nourishment. If he did not get himself even a squirrel, then he would be starving. Whereas, he often returned with game which he would bbq up; this time, he came back hungry and empty-handed.

Genesis 25:29 [While Jacob is boiled up a bean soup, Esau comes in from the open country and he \[is\] famished.](#) (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:29 [While Jacob was cooking up a bean soup, Esau comes in from being out in the open country, and he is famished.](#) (Kukis paraphrase)

This food appears to be a trap laid by Jacob for Esau. Jacob will use this food to get from Esau what he wants, which is the spiritual heritage of Abraham and Isaac. Esau is so hungry, he will enter the trap willingly.

<p>And so says Esau unto Jacob, "Give me to eat, please, from the red the red the this for famished I [am]." Upon this he called his name Edom.</p>	<p>Genesis 25:30</p>	<p>Esau said to Jacob, "Please give me to eat from that red, red for I [am] famished." Therefore, Jacob [lit., he] called his name Edom.</p>
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Esau made an urgent request to Jacob, "Please let me have some of that red bean soup to eat, because I am famished." Therefore, Jacob renamed him Edom, which means *red*; and this nickname stuck with him.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Esau unto Jacob, "Give me to eat, please, from the red the red the this for famished I [am]." Upon this he called his name Edom.
Targum of Onkelos	And Esau said to Jakob, Let me now taste that red pottage, for I am faint,--therefore he called his name Edom.
Latin Vulgate	Said: Give me of this red pottage, for I am exceeding faint. For which reason his name was called Edom.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Esau said to Jacob, Give me some of that pottage, for I am famished; that is why he was called Edom.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Esau said to Jacob, Let me taste of that red stew, because I am fainting; therefore his name was called Edom.
Significant differences:	For some reason, <i>Esau to Jacob</i> is missing in the Latin.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And Esau said to Jacob, Give me a full meal of that red soup, for I am overcome with need for food: for this reason he was named Edom.
Easy English	Esau said to Jacob, 'Let me have some of that red *stew. I am starving.' (So Esau was called Edom also.).
Easy-to-Read Version	So Esau said to Jacob, "I am weak with hunger. Let me have some of those red beans." (That is why people call him Edom [This name means "red."].)
God's Word™	So Esau said to Jacob, "Let me have the whole pot of red stuff to eat-that red stuff-I'm exhausted." This is why he was called Edom.
NIRV	He said to Jacob, "Quick! Let me have some of that red stew! I'm very hungry!" That's why he was also named Edom.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	...and said to Jacob, "I'm starving! Let me devour some of this red stuff." That's why his name is Edom [Or red].
Contemporary English V.	...and said, "I'm starving to death! Give me some of that red stew right now!" That's how Esau got the name "Edom."
New Berkeley Version	...and he said to Jacob, "Let me drink some of that red, that red there, for I am famished" —hence his name Edom.
New Century Version	So Esau said to Jacob, "Let me eat some of that red soup, because I am weak with hunger." (That is why people call him Edom [This name sounds like the Hebrew word for "red."].).

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	...he said to Jacob, 'Let me have a taste of that red stew, because I'm weak.' (That's when he started to be called Edom [or Red]).
Beck's American Translation	"Please let me swallow some of that red food there—I'm exhausted." Esau told Jacob. This is why his name was Edom [Red].
International Standard V	Esau told Jacob, "Let me gobble down some of this red stuff, since I'm starving." (That's how Esau got his nickname "Edom". [The Heb. name <i>Edom</i> means <i>red</i>])
Translation for Translators	He said to Jacob, "Give me some of that red stew to eat right now, because I am very hungry!" (That is why Esau's other name was Edom, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'red.')

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Esau said to Jacob, "Please indulge this human, for I <i>am</i> tired and stained-red ." So over this, his name is called Edom (<i>red</i> ; <i>South-Jordan</i>).
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Ferar-Fenton Bible	...so Esau said to Jacob, "Feed me now with the red porridge, for I am exhausted" therefore they call his name "red-soup [Edom]."
H. C. Leupold	And Jacob boiled pottage and Esau came from the field faint with hunger, and Esau said to Jacob: Let me swallow, please, some of that red stuff there, for I am faint with hunger. (That is why he is called Edom-Red). V. 29 is included for context.
Lexham English Bible	And Esau said to Jacob, "Give me {some of that red stuff} to gulp down, for I am exhausted!" (Therefore his name was called Edom).
NIV – UK	He said to Jacob, 'Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I'm famished!' (That is why he was also called Edom [Edom means red].)

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And Esau said to Jacob, Let me eat now this red red soup because I am faint; therefore his name was called Edom. 25:30 red red, adom adom, a form of the word Adam which means red. What Esau said to Jacob was, Let me eat this red red. We have added the word soup, because it is evident from verse 34 that what he ate was soup of lentils.
New American Bible (R.E.)	He said to Jacob, "Let me gulp down some of that red stuff;* I am famished." That is why he was called Edom.
New Jerusalem Bible	Esau said to Jacob, 'Give me a mouthful of that red stuff there; I am exhausted' -- hence the name given to him, Edom.
New RSV	Esau said to Jacob, 'Let me eat some of that red stuff, for I am famished!' (Therefore he was called Edom [That is Red].)
Revised English Bible	He said to Jacob, 'I am exhausted; give me a helping of that red both.' That is why he was called Edom.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	...and said to Ya'akov, "Please! Let me gulp down some of that red stuff - that red stuff! I'm exhausted!" (This is why he was called Edom [red].).
exeGesés companion Bible	...and Esav says to Yaaqov, Feed me, I beseech you, of that red, red; for I languish: - so they call his name Edom/Red.
Kaplan Translation	Esau said to Jacob, 'Give me a swallow of that red stuff! I'm famished!' (He was therefore given the name Edom [Literally red. See Genesis 25:25. Also see Genesis 32:4, 36:1, 36:8, 36:19, etc. In later times, the Greeks called Edom, Idumia (Josephus, Antiquities 2:1:1).]).
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Esav said to Ya'akov, Let me eat now some of the adom (red stew); for I am famished; therefore was shmo called Edom.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Esaw said to Ya'aqob, "Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary." That is why his name was called Edom.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And Esau said to Jacob, I beg of you, let me have some of that red lentil stew to eat, for I am faint and famished! That is why his name was called Edom [red].
The Expanded Bible	So Esau said to Jacob, "Let me eat [gulp down] some of that red soup [or stuff], because I am weak with hunger [famished; starving]." (That is why people call him Edom [sounds like Hebrew for "red"].)
Kretzmann's Commentary	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 (red). So great was his craving for food that he was ready to swallow the entire mess of pottage at one gulp, that he could

not even think of the name of the vegetables whose sight made him so hungry, but merely referred to that red mess.

NET Bible®

So Esau said to Jacob, "Feed [The rare term טָעַל (la'at), translated "feed," is used in later Hebrew for feeding animals (see Jastrow, 714). If this nuance was attached to the word in the biblical period, then it may depict Esau in a negative light, comparing him to a hungry animal. Famished Esau comes in from the hunt, only to enter the trap. He can only point at the red stew and ask Jacob to feed him.] me some of the red stuff - yes, this red stuff - because I'm starving!" (That is why he was also called [The verb has no expressed subject and so is given a passive translation.] Edom [Esau's descendants would eventually be called Edom. Edom was the place where they lived, so-named probably because of the reddish nature of the hills. The writer can use the word "red" to describe the stew that Esau gaped for to convey the nature of Esau and his descendants. They were a lusty, passionate, and profane people who lived for the moment. Again, the wordplay is meant to capture the "omen in the nomen."].)

Syndein/Thieme

And Esau said to Jacob, "Feed me, please/'I pray you', with that same red/ruddy {soup/pottage} . . . for I am exhausted/weary {starving to death}. Therefore was his name called Edom {name means 'red' - Esau had red hair at birth, now is giving up his heritage for a bowl of red-leafed vegetable soup - His descendants will be called 'Edomites'}.

The Voice

Esau (to Jacob): ³⁰ Please let me have some of that red stew you have there. I'm famished!
(That's why he was nicknamed Edom, which means "red.").

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Context Group Version

And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I beg of you, with that same red [pottage]. For I am exhausted. Therefore his name was called Edom.

Darby Translation

And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with the red -- the red thing there, for I am faint. Therefore was his name called Edom.

English Standard Version

And Esau said to Jacob, "Let me eat some of that red stew, for I am exhausted!" (Therefore his name was called Edom.)

Green's Literal Translation

And Esau said to Jacob, Please let me eat of the red, this red *soup*, for I am faint. On account of this his name is called Edom.

NASB

...and Esau said to Jacob, "Please let me have a swallow of that red stuff there [Lit the red, this red], for I am famished [Lit weary]." Therefore his name was called Edom [I.e. red].

New King James Version

And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary." Therefore his name was called Edom [Literally Red].

Webster's Bible Translation

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.

World English Bible

Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am famished." Therefore his name was called Edom.

Young's Updated LT

And Esau says unto Jacob, "Let me eat, I pray you, some of this red, red thing, for I am weary;" therefore has one called his name Edom Red .

The gist of this verse:

Esau, famished, asks to eat some of the red stew that Jacob is making; he is so famished as to be unable to even recall its name.

Genesis 25:30a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'Êsâv (עשו) [pronounced <i>gay-SAWV</i>]	<i>handled, made, rough handling; hairy; transliterated Esau</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6215 BDB #796
'el (אל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Ya'ăqôb (יעקב) [pronounced <i>yah-ġuh-KOH^BV</i>]	<i>supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent and is transliterated Jacob</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3290 BDB #784
lâ'aṭ (לאט) [pronounced <i>law-ĠAHT</i>]	<i>give to eat; cause to eat [swallow] [greedily]; to make devour</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperative with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #3938 BDB #542
nâ' (נא) [pronounced <i>naw</i>]	<i>now; please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you</i>	a primitive particle of incitement and entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609
<p>Nâ' is used for a submissive and modest request. It is used to express a wish (Job 32:21: "Oh, that I may not respect any man's person"); to incite or to urge (Jer. 5:24); it is depreciatory when affixed to the 2nd person with a particle of negation (do not, I implore you—see Genesis 33:10 19:18); with the it expresses a wish or request (Psalm 124 129:1 SOS 7:9), a challenge (Jer. 17:15), asking leave (Genesis 18:4), and depreciation with a negation (Genesis 18:32). In many of these examples, we would express this with the addition of the word <i>let</i>.</p>			
min (מן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'âdôm (אדם) [pronounced <i>aw-DOME</i>]	<i>red, ruddy, reddish-brown (chestnut)</i>	masculine singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #122 BDB #10
'âdôm (אדם) [pronounced <i>aw-DOME</i>]	<i>red, ruddy, reddish-brown (chestnut)</i>	masculine singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #122 BDB #10
zeh (זה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i>]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260

Translation: Esau said to Jacob, "Please give me to eat from that red, red,..."

The doubling of the word *red* here supplements the Hebrew language, which has no superlative. The food seemed to be so good by its aroma that Esau expresses this by the doubling of the noun. For the grammarian out there, this is called epizeuxis [pronounced *ep'-i-zeux'-is*].

Almost every English translation cleans this translation up, so that it makes good English sense, but it literally reads, “Please give me to eat from the red, the red, the that [or, *that red-red*].” Have you ever been so tired and worn out and hungry, that your mind did not work anymore? So Esau sees this bean soup, but he forgets the name of it—he forgets that this is *Cajun-style Red Beans and Rice*—and he is pointing at it, calling it *the red, the red*; because the 3rd or 4th word that Esau learned was probably *red (actually chestnut)*; which is also the color of this bean soup. So he is pointing and calling it *the red, this red*; because his brain cannot at this time process a greater vocabulary than this, because he is so famished.

Not only does Esau call the bean soup *red-red*; but he also uses an unusual word for *eat* as well. It is a word often used of an animal devouring its food. This could be a word that Esau used a lot, as he hunted animals. Best way to hunt an animal is to lay a trap of food for them. So he may have used this word a great deal. However, his hunger at not getting any game has actually short-circuited his brain. So he uses a couple of words which are simply odd for him to use in this circumstance.

The NET Bible makes this comment: *The rare term לָאָץ (la'at), translated “feed,” is used in later Hebrew for feeding animals. If this nuance was attached to the word in the biblical period, then it may depict Esau in a negative light, comparing him to a hungry animal. Famished Esau comes in from the hunt, only to enter the trap. He can only point at the red stew and ask Jacob to feed him.*²⁵⁸

Jacob got a kick out of this, his brother not being able to say the word *soup*, but repeating the word *red*; so Jacob nicknames his brother *red (Edom)*, a name which has stuck with him to this day. This would not have really worked if *the red, the red* was just a common way of referring to this soup. If you came home and told your wife you a famished for a steak; “I really want a steak; a thick, juicy steak.” She would not call you *steak-boy* after that, because you have spoken correctly. Esau did not. He sounded a little goofy—probably from being so hungry—and Jacob rubs it in.

One argument in favor of Esau and Jacob being relatively young would be that Jacob is able to give Esau a nickname based upon this incident and the nickname sticks.

This soup, by the way, is made of lentils, as we find in v. 34. Gill: *Egypt [was] abounding with lentiles; and particularly Alexandria was famous for them, from whence they were carried into other countries.*²⁵⁹ Gill quotes a half dozen authors on lentils on material which is barely relevant.

Genesis 25:30b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
‘âyêph (אָיֵף) [pronounced <i>gay-YAYF</i>]	<i>famished; tired, weary, faint, worn out, exhausted, languishing [from toil or thirst]; knackered</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #5889 BDB #746

²⁵⁸ From <http://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen25.htm> (Footnote) The Net Bible®; © 1996-2006 by Biblical Studies Press (BSP); accessed February 22, 2013.

²⁵⁹ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:30. He references Austin Commentary in Psalm xlv. tom. 8. p. 174.

Genesis 25:30b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'ânôkîy (אָנֹכִי) [pronounced awn-oh-KEE]	<i>I, me;</i> (sometimes a verb is implied)	1 st person singular personal pronoun	Strong's #595 BDB #59

Translation: ...for I [am] famished.”

On the way back from hunting (being in the open field), Esau kept telling himself, “I am so hungry; just let me see a squirrel that I can kill and skin and eat.” Anything. So the word famished was in his vocabulary because he was so hungry.

The word for *famished* can mean, *famished; tired, weary, faint, worn out, exhausted, languishing [from toil or thirst]; knackered.*

One commentator, Dr. Lightfoot,²⁶⁰ suggests that this is taking place during the famine spoken of in Genesis 26:1. This would make Esau's circumstance much more dire (and Jacob's refusal to share much more cold-hearted).

J. Vernon McGee: *This incident reveals the nature of both of these men. Esau came from the field. He had been outdoors, and he was tired. He was not starving to death as some would imply. No one who had been brought up in the home of Abraham would starve to death. There would always be something for him to eat. The thing was that there was nothing prepared right at that moment but this pottage, this stew, which Jacob had made. Jacob was the indoor boy. Evidently he was a good chef.*²⁶¹

Genesis 25:30c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'al (עַל) [pronounced gah]l]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced kane]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
Together, 'al kên (עַל כֵּן) mean <i>so, upon the ground of such conditions, therefore, on this account, on account, for this reason.</i>			
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027

²⁶⁰ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:32.

²⁶¹ From https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt (Genesis 25) accessed June 14, 2015.

Genesis 25:30c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʿĔdōwm (אֲדוֹם) [pronounced <i>eh-DOHM</i>]; also ʿĔdōm (אֲדָם) [pronounced <i>eh-DOHM</i>]	<i>reddish</i> ; and is transliterated <i>Edom, Edomites</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #123 BDB #10

This is the first occurrence of this proper noun in the Word of God.

Translation: Therefore, Jacob [lit., *he*] called his name Edom.

When identifying the soup, Esau twice uses the word ʾădōm (אֲדָם) [pronounced *aw-DOME*], which means *red, ruddy, reddish-brown (chestnut)*. Strong's #122 BDB #10. Therefore, Esau is called ʿĔdōm (אֲדָם) [pronounced *eh-DOHM*], which means *reddish*; and is transliterated *Edom*. Strong's #123 BDB #10. In order for this name to stick, Isaac probably told this story to everyone, so that Esau became known to many as *Edom*. Therefore, his ancestors are called *Edomites*, rather than *sons of Esau*.

Genesis 25:30 Esau said to Jacob, “Please give me to eat from that red, red for I [am] famished.” Therefore, Jacob [lit., *he*] called his name Edom. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:30 Esau made an urgent request to Jacob, “Please let me have some of that red bean soup to eat, because I am famished.” Therefore, Jacob renamed him Edom, which means *red*; and this nickname stuck with him. (Kukis paraphrase)

Keil and Delitzsch: *The difference in the characters of the two brothers was soon shown in a singular circumstance, which was the turning-point in their lives. Esau returned home one day from the field quite exhausted, and seeing Jacob with a dish of lentils, still a favourite dish in Syria and Egypt, he asked with passionate eagerness for some to eat: “Let me swallow some of that red, that red there;” אַדָּם, the brown-red lentil pottage. From this he received the name Edom, just as among the ancient Arabians persons received names from quite accidental circumstances, which entirely obscured their proper names.*²⁶²

Throughout Scripture, we often find two names for the same person. Most Bible translations do not reveal this (unless there is a narrative like this to go along with it). So, you may not realize that there are two names for Joshua and two names for Jonathan and two names for quite a number of the Old Testament believers. There are at least 3 reasons for having two different names in the Old Testament: (1) In the case of Joshua and Jonathan, it appears that there is a formal version of their names (like *Robert*); as well as a less formal version (like *Bob* or *Bobby*). (2) In some situations, God renames a person—Abram is renamed *Abraham*. (3) Finally, in some cases, something a person does ends up giving him a second name—for whatever reason—as we have with Esau being called *Edom*. He simply becomes known by a different name at some point in his life—different from the name given to him by his parents. From time to time, you may know what the meaning of a person's name is in the Bible, and you think, “That seems just a little too accurate.” It is not necessarily that the parents named the child and that name became a self-fulfilling prophecy. Because of the sort of person that child became, he simply became known by a name which was more descriptive than his given name.

Jacob is able to give Esau this nickname, and it stays with him not just for his life, but those who come after him will be known as the Edomites (Genesis 36:1, 9 2Kings 8:20). The significance of this is, to remind everyone that he sold his birthright for a bowl of red-red.

²⁶² Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:29–34.

From *The Pulpit Commentary*: *There is no discrepancy in ascribing his name both to his complexion and the color of the lentil broth. The propriety of a name may surely be marked by different circumstances.*²⁶³

Barnes goes into much more detail: *The origin of surnames, or second names for the same person or place, is a matter of some moment in the fair interpretation of an ancient document. It is sometimes hastily assumed that the same name can only owe its application to one occasion; and hence a record of a second occasion on which it was applied is regarded as a discrepancy. But the error lies in the interpreter, not in the author. The propriety of a particular name may be marked by two or more totally different circumstances, and its application renewed on each of these occasions. Even an imaginary cause may be assigned for a name, and may serve to originate or renew its application. The two brothers now before us afford very striking illustrations of the general principle. It is pretty certain that Esau would receive the secondary name of Edom, which ultimately became primary in point of use, from the red complexion of skin, even from his birth. But the exclamation "that red red," uttered on the occasion of a very important crisis in his history, renewed the name, and perhaps tended to make it take the place of Esau in the history of his race.*²⁶⁴

Barnes similarly speaks to Jacob's name: *Jacob, too, the holder of the heel, received this name from a circumstance occurring at his birth. But the buying of the birthright and the gaining of the blessing, were two occasions in his subsequent life on which he merited the title of the supplanter or the holder by the heel Genesis 27:36. These instances prepare us to expect other examples of the same name being applied to the same object, for different reasons on different occasions.*²⁶⁵

Jacob now springs the trap:

And so says Jacob, "Sell as the day your birthright to me." Genesis 25:31 **Jacob said, "Sell to me today your birthright."**

Jacob said to Esau, "Sell me your birthright, right now."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Jacob, "Sell as the day your birthright to me."
Targum of Onkelos	And Jakob said, Sell to-day, as (on this very) day, <u>what you would hereafter appropriate</u> , your birthright, unto me.
Latin Vulgate	And Jacob said to him: Sell me your first birthright.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Jacob said, Sell me this day your birthright.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Jacob said <u>to Esau</u> , Sell me this day your birthright.

Significant differences: The targum has additional text; the Greek adds *to Esau*.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

<i>The Message</i>	Jacob said, "Make me a trade: my stew for your rights as the firstborn."
NIRV	Jacob replied, "First sell me the rights that belong to you as the oldest son in the family."

²⁶³ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, from e-sword, Genesis 25:30.

²⁶⁴ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:29–34.

²⁶⁵ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:29–34.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

New Century Version	But Jacob said, "You must sell me your rights as the firstborn son." Usually the firstborn son had a high rank in the family. The firstborn son usually became the new head of the family.
New Living Translation	"All right," Jacob replied, "but trade me your rights as the firstborn son."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible Beck's American Translation	And Jacob replied to Esau, 'Then sell me your right [to be the firstborn]. right now!' "First sell me your rights as the oldest son," Jacob answered. When the father died, the oldest son became head of the family and generally got twice as much of the inheritance as each of the other children (Deut. 21:15–17). Here this also meant God's promise to Abraham would be fulfilled through Jacob as the ancestor of Jesus and inheritor of Canaan.
International Standard V Translation for Translators	But Jacob responded, "Sell me your birthright. Do it now [Lit. today]." Jacob said, "I will give you some if you sell me <your birthright/the privileges you have because you are the firstborn son>."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Lexham English Bible	Then Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright {first}."
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Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible New American Bible	And Jacob said, Sell me this day your right as firstborn. But Jacob replied, "First give me your birthright in exchange for it." Birthright: the privilege that entitled the first-born son to a position of honor in the family and to a double share in the possessions inherited from the father.
New American Bible (R.E.)	But Jacob replied, "First sell me your right as firstborn." Right as firstborn: the privilege that entitled the firstborn son to a position of honor in the family and to a double share in the possessions inherited from the father. There is a persistent wordplay between bekorah, "right of the firstborn," and berakah, "the blessing." Contrary to custom, the preference here is for the younger son, as it was in the choice of Isaac over Ishmael. Scriptural reference: Dt 21:17.
New Jerusalem Bible	Jacob said, 'First, give me your birthright in exchange.'

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation	'First sell me your birthright [This meant that Jacob would now be the primary heir and would also serve as the family priest (Rashi).],' replied Jacob.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Ya'akov said, First sell me today thy bechorah (birthright, right of the firstborn).

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i> The Expanded Bible	Jacob answered, Then sell me today your birthright (the rights of a firstborn). But Jacob said, "-First [^L As the day; ^C an idiom meaning, "First of all."] ·sell [or exchange with] me your ·rights as the firstborn son [birthright; ^C the firstborn had special inheritance rights and became the head of the family in the next generation]."
Kretzmann's Commentary	And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. This was not a low form of cunning which took advantage of the opponent's weakness, but the believing Jacob made

use of the opportunity to acquire legally what belonged to him by the promise of the Lord.

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But Jacob replied, "First [Heb "today."] sell me your birthright."
Jacob sees Esau's weakness and decides to take advantage of the situation.
Jacob: First, you have to sell me your birthright.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And saying is Jacob to Esau, "Sell, as of today, your birthright to me.
Emphasized Bible	And Jacob said,—Come sell, just now, thy birthright unto me.
English Standard Version	Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright now."
Green's Literal Translation	And Jacob said, Sell me your birthright today.
New King James Version	But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day."
World English Bible	Jacob said, "First, sell me your birthright."
Young's Updated LT	And Jacob says, "Sell to-day your birthright to me."

The gist of this verse: Jacob demands, right then and there, for Esau to sell him his birthright.

Genesis 25:31			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Ya'âqôb (יעקב) [pronounced <i>yah-âuh-KOH^BV</i>]	<i>supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent and is transliterated Jacob</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3290 BDB #784
mâkar (מכר) [pronounced <i>maw-KAHR</i>]	<i>to sell, to sell [betrot] [a daughter]; to sell [deliver over] [a people]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative with the cohortative hê	Strong's #4376 BDB #569
The cohortative hê simply makes this an imperative.			
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced <i>k^e</i>]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
The kaph preposition can be used of time, and translated <i>about, at; as, when, at the time of</i> . ²⁶⁶			
yôwm (יומ) [pronounced <i>yohm</i>]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
Literally, the kaph preposition and day mean <i>as the day</i> . According to Gesenius, together, they mean <i>in this day, at this time, now</i> .			
'êth (את) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

²⁶⁶ As per *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; p. 454.

Genesis 25:31

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b ^e kôwrâh (בְּכֹרֶת) [pronounced b ^e koh-RAW]	<i>rights and responsibilities of the firstborn, privileges of the firstborn, birthright [of the firstborn], primogeniture</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1062 BDB #114
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: Jacob said, "Sell to me today your birthright."

In the Hebrew, we have kaph prefix, which means *like* or *as*. It normally sets up a simile. However, Jacob is not using a simile here. He means this very day. I believe the sense taken here is that this is a softening of what he is asking for. He wants that birthright and he wants it that very day, but he softens this requirement was saying, *as this day*. *Sell me, perhaps even today, your birthright* might give the gist of what Jacob is saying. The approach is as though *today* is almost an afterthought, the timing being represented as not all that important, whereas it was of primary importance to Jacob.

Esau Selling His Birthright, by Hendrick ter Brugghen, c. 1627. From [Wikipedia](#); accessed July 3, 2015. Jacob and Esau inspired artists for centuries.

Genesis 25:31 Jacob said, "Sell to me today your birthright." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:31 Jacob said to Esau, "Sell me your birthright, right now." (Kukis paraphrase)



Scott Grant: *Esau may have been a skillful hunter and a man of the field, but in this story, Esau is the prey, and he is "out skilled" by his brother, who goes hunting for the birthright. Jacob is described with the word translated "quiet" (tam). It appears in opposition to the description of Esau as a "skillful hunter" and may mean something along the lines of "complete." It may indicate that Jacob was skilled in his own right, but in a different sort of way. The story, of course, bears out the skills of Jacob.*²⁶⁷

As the oldest, Esau had headship over his younger brother, he would be the one to assume his father's official authority upon the death of his father; and a double portion was due the first-born under the Mosaic law (there may have been a similar situation here). The spiritual benefits were even more important: (1) it is possible that the family priesthood was bestowed upon the older; (2) the seed of the Messiah was to come through Abraham,

²⁶⁷ From http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99649/4865.pdf accessed July 2, 2015.

making it logical that the first-born would be able to inherit this privilege; (3) the first-born would be in the direct line of Abraham as the recipient of the promises of God concerning the land and his progeny.

Various Commentators on the Rights of the Firstborn

Commentator	Commentary
Barnes	<i>In after times the right of primogeniture consisted in a double portion of the father's goods Deut. 21:17, and a certain rank as the patriarch and priest of the house on the death of the father. But in the case of Isaac there was the far higher dignity of chief of the chosen family and heir of the promised blessing, with all the immediate and ultimate temporal and eternal benefits therein included. Knowing all this, Jacob is willing to purchase the birthright, as the most peaceful way of bringing about that supremacy which was destined for him.</i> ²⁶⁸
Clarke	<i>What the הרחב bechorah or birthright was, has greatly divided both ancient and modern commentators.</i>
Clarke (con't)	It is generally supposed that the following rights were attached to the primogeniture: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Authority and superiority over the rest of the family. 2. A double portion of the paternal inheritance. 3. The peculiar benediction of the father. 4. The priesthood, previous to its establishment in the family of Aaron.
Clarke (con't)	Calmet controverts most of these rights, and with apparent reason, and seems to think that the double portion of the paternal inheritance was the only incontestable right which the first-born possessed; the others were such as were rather conceded to the first-born, than fixed by any law in the family. However this may be, it appears, <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the first-born were peculiarly consecrated to God, Exodus 22:29. 2. Were next in honor to their parents, Genesis 49:3. 3. Had a double portion of their father's goods, Deut. 21:17. 4. Succeeded him in the government of the family or kingdom, 2Chronicles 21:3. 5. Had the sole right of conducting the service of God, both at the tabernacle and temple; and hence the tribe of Levi, which was taken in lieu of the first-born, had the sole right of administration in the service of God, Num. 8:14–18; and hence we may presume, had originally a right to the priesthood previous to the giving of the law; but however this might have been, afterwards the priesthood is never reckoned among the privileges of the first-born.
Clarke (summation)	That the birthright was a matter of very great importance, there can be no room to doubt; and that it was a transferable property, the transaction here sufficiently proves.

²⁶⁸ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:29–34.

Various Commentators on the Rights of the Firstborn

Commentator	Commentary
The Expository Files	<i>In ancient times, the birthright was a very important and sacred thing. It belonged to the firstborn. The family name and titles were to pass along to the eldest son. He would also receive a chief portion of the inheritance. But it was more than just a title to the physical assets of a family. It was also a spiritual position, and in the case of the people of God, God would lead the family through patriarchs, or fathers (Hebrews 1:1-2). Additionally, in the special case of Esau and Jacob, that meant the one to whom belonged the birthright was the one through who the covenant promise made to their grandfather, Abraham, would be realized. Ultimately, the Messiah would come through the holder of the birthright and bless the nations of the earth. Esau was the firstborn, and the birthright was his. But like many, he failed to appreciate its value and sacredness.²⁶⁹</i>
John Gill	<i>[This birthright] had many privileges annexed to it, as honour and authority in the family next to parents; a double portion of inheritance; some say the exercise of priesthood, but that is questioned; the parental blessing, and especially in this the promises of the Messiah, and of inheritance of the land of Canaan, and which was typical of the heavenly inheritance: all which Rebekah knew by the divine oracle were designed for Jacob, and which no doubt she had acquainted him with, and advised him to deal with his brother about parting with his birthright as he had opportunity; and very likely they had talked together about it before in a distant manner, and Esau had shown some indifference to his right, and made no great account of it; and now, an opportunity offering to get him in the mind to part with it, he takes it, and moves for a sale of it immediately, at once, without any more delay, and even before he had his pottage; thus taking the advantage of his brother's necessity: or, sell it me "as the day" (x), let the bargain be as clear as the day, as Jarchi interprets it; let it be made in plain and full terms, that there may be no dispute about it hereafter, or any revocation of it: but the former sense seems best, as appears from Genesis 25:33, where the same way of speaking is used.²⁷⁰</i>
Keil and Delitzsch	<p>Jacob made use of his brother's hunger to get him to sell his birthright.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The birthright consisted afterwards in a double portion of the father's inheritance (Deut. 21:17). 2. With the patriarchs it embraced the chieftainship, the rule over the brethren and the entire family (Genesis 27:29). 3. It includes the title to the blessing of the promise (Genesis 27:4, Genesis 27:27–29), which included the future possession of Canaan and of covenant fellowship with Jehovah (Genesis 28:4).
Keil and Delitzsch (con't)	Jacob knew this, and it led him to anticipate the purposes of God. Esau also knew it, but attached no value to it. There is proof enough that 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 in his estimation, in the words he made use of: "Behold I am going to die (to meet death), and what is the birthright to me?" The only thing of value to him was the sensual enjoyment of the present; the spiritual blessings of the future his carnal mind was unable to estimate

²⁶⁹ From <http://www.bible.ca/ef/expository-genesis-25-29-34.htm> accessed July 1, 2015.

²⁷⁰ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:31.

Various Commentators on the Rights of the Firstborn

Commentator	Commentary
J. Vernon McGee	<i>Let's stop and look for a minute at the value of the birthright and what it means. It means that the one who had it was the head of the house. It also means that the one who had it was the priest of the family. In this particular family, it means that the one who had it would be the one who would be in the line that would lead to Christ. Do you think that Esau had valued it at all? Jacob knew that he didn't. He attached no importance to it, and he didn't want to be the priest of the family. In fact, that's the last thing that he wanted to be.²⁷¹</i>
The Pulpit Commentary	The right of primogeniture in the family of Abraham implied (1) succession to the earthly inheritance of Canaan; (2) possession of the covenant blessing transmitted through the paternal benediction; and (3) progenitorship of the promised seed.
The Pulpit Commentary (con't)	Under the Mosaic institute the privileges of the firstborn were clearly defined. They involved succession to (1) the official authority of the father; (2) a double portion of the father's property; and (3) the functions of the domestic priesthood (vide Genesis 27:4, Genesis 27:19, Genesis 27:27–29; Genesis 49:3; Exodus 22:29; Num. 8:14–17; Deut. 21:17)
William Wenstrom, Jr.	The firstborn had a privileged status (See Genesis 43:33; 49:3) and the right of succession (2 Chronicles 21:3) and received a double portion of his father's inheritance (Deut. 21:17). The father's inheritance was divided among his sons and the firstborn always has right to two of these portions. If there are ten sons, the firstborn receives two portions and the other nine split eight portions. If there are only two sons then the firstborn inherits everything.
Wenstrom (con't)	With this privileged status came responsibility in that the firstborn was the protector of the family and leader. Not only did the firstborn have the responsibility of providing leadership and material things in Isaac's family but also he had the responsibility to provide spiritually for his family. Spiritual responsibilities were paramount in the family of Abraham and Isaac. The selling of the birthright demonstrated that Esau rejected those responsibilities and was thus not only an irresponsible person but also an unbeliever.

Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:31.

Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:29–34 (slightly edited).

The Pulpit Commentary; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, from e-sword, Genesis 25:31.

From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

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We have a dual weakness in these young men: to Esau, his birthright is not as important as his immediate needs; and to Jacob, he would rather bribe and swindle Esau to obtain this birthright rather than to use honorable means. Jacob's desire for the birthright was a sign of regeneration; his means of obtaining same belies his spiritual shallowness. God, in Scripture, tells us that Esau took his potential spiritual heritage lightly. Hebrews 12:15–17 reads: *See that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it, may become defiled; that [there be] no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a meal. For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.* There was a spiritual inheritance to come through Abraham and Isaac and that came with belief in Jesus Christ, Yahweh of the Old Testament. Esau's

²⁷¹ From https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt (Genesis 25) accessed June 14, 2015.

birthright as firstborn is tied to this spiritual blessing. However, Esau, being extremely hungry, disregards that birthright and sells it for very little. This indicates that Esau is, at this time, an unbeliever. Jacob, although not a better person by any means, is a believer in Jesus Christ.

Guzik: Esau's character as a fornicator and profane person (Hebrews 12:16) shows God was entirely correct in choosing Jacob over Esau to carry on the birthright, even though Jacob was younger. Though Esau's character was not the basis for God's choosing (He chose Jacob over Esau before they were born), Esau's character showed the ultimate wisdom of God's choice.²⁷²

Application: Today, in the United States (I write this in 2015), we have a significant portion of our population which does not fully realize and certainly does not appreciate the blessings God has showered upon the United States. In fact, many of these people are angry, and are continually pushing a liberal political agenda, trying to establish some kind of nirvana within a nation which is the greatest and most prosperous nation on earth. These are people who absolutely reject the God of the Bible; they reject Jesus Christ as Savior; and they have absolutely no understanding of history or of the incomparable blessing which we enjoy here in these United States. Although Esau is a believer, he does not value the spiritual heritage which might be potentially his. He favors a bowl of pottage over his spiritual heritage. And so God, in Hebrews 12:16, calls him *godless, immoral or profane*. The idea is, there is the spiritual realm and there is the physical realm—Esau greatly enjoyed the physical realm, but never understood that God created that and God blessed their family with great blessings. What God did for him was simply not an important issue to him.

Earlier, I suggested that the parents did not fully understand what would happen between these two men. God had told Rebekah that they were struggling in her womb and that they would continue to struggle, and that the elder would serve the younger—but no time frame was given to this. In fact, first the people coming from Esau and Jacob were spoken of, so the older serving the younger would have logically applied not to Jacob and Esau, but to their descendants (which is the correct understanding of that prophecy). Although the prophecy may have implied the preeminence of Jacob, that would occur down the line. So, Jacob making a play here to be preeminent is not necessarily related to their subsequent descendants, but this more related to the young men as brothers. Furthermore, Esau and Jacob may not have even known about this prophecy (at some point Jacob did; but he may not have known at this time).

So, Jacob wanted what was rightfully Esau's. He wanted the double portion and the preeminence. My point being, Jacob's demand here might not have anything to do with the spiritual battle related to these brothers. It might reasonably be seen as symbolic of the spiritual struggle between them; but this does not mean that Jacob has all of this great spiritual insight into the future. Bear that in mind, regarding some of the comments which I will make. God the Holy Spirit includes this sort of information because of the importance of the spiritual inheritance. That does not mean that Jacob or Esau full apprehend or appreciate it.

However, on the other side of this argument, Jacob's mother will goad him into stealing Esau's blessing from Isaac, which suggests that she has taught him on many occasions about this blessing.

The less exact translation might even better relay what is being said: **Jacob said to Esau, "Sell me your birthright, right now."** God has made promises to Abraham which would flow to Isaac and then to Esau, as Esau is the firstborn, if only by a few minutes. Now, you may recall that most of these promises which God made to Abraham were centered on his having a son, and these promises would be bestowed upon Abraham's descendants. God was not making these promises only to Abraham that He was going to give him a sports car and big mansion with a house filled with children. Most of what God promised Abraham (apart from the birth of Isaac) would be given to Abraham's children's children down the line. Jacob saw that being in this particular line was a good thing; Esau believed that too, but not as much in this extreme state of hunger.

Quite obviously, Jacob and Esau are both aware of this birthright, and that it naturally falls upon the firstborn. However, the spiritual birthright are promises which would be fulfilled hundreds and thousands of years later. That is something that they may or may not be fully aware of. So Esau has to consider, "I am so hungry right now, I

²⁷² David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; Genesis 25:29–34.

cannot even talk” as over against some promise, this pie-in-the-sky guarantee for centuries later. Whatever he expects in the future from his birthright is meaningless to him if he dies of hunger.

It appears that the tradeoff here is the food for the birthright; there does not appear to be any other cost.

The Expository Files: There you have it. For a pot of stew, poor, hungry Esau sold his birthright. Such crass behavior would be a little like selling your wedding ring for a hamburger cause you had not eaten all day, only worse. It tells of Esau's attitude toward the things of God; His purpose and His will. It shows a lack of reverence and respect. It shows the same thing we see in too many people today when it comes to how little they regard the Lord.²⁷³

Application: This is a test that all believers face, and sometimes often. You have a want or a desire but then there are the Scriptures which tell you not to fulfill it—what do you do? This can be anything from cheating on your taxes, to cheating on your wife, to skipping doctrine for an evening. Often, it is simply a choice between doing the right thing and doing the expedient thing.

Esau wanted, more than anything else in this world, a bowl of Jacob’s red-red. This promise of his birthright was really nothing to him, not compared to the here and now of his own needs. The birthright was some promise that extended out many years—perhaps many generations—into the future (it is not clear exactly how much they each knew of their future and God’s promises to them through Abraham). Esau’s hunger was right now. That whole spiritual thing which seemed to have more going on in the future than in the present—it did not compare to Esau’s hunger in the here and now.

We need to understand what is going on. Jacob recognizes the importance of the inheritance and Esau really doesn’t. This does not mean that Jacob gaining this inheritance by evil means is okay. You cannot function in God’s plan illegitimately. Wanting the birthright shows that Jacob recognizes God’s promises as real and important. However, getting the promises transferred by illegitimate means is wrong. In the spiritual life, divine good is a result of doing a right thing in a right way. There is no spiritual benefit in doing a right thing in a wrong way (giving money to your church when out of fellowship); doing a wrong thing in a right way (giving money to some liberal cause while in fellowship); or doing a wrong thing in a wrong way (committing a sin). The narrative here simply describes what happened. In no way does the Bible endorse the behavior of either Isaac or Esau. It simply records this event.

For most people, Jacob’s insistence on Esau selling him the birthright is quite unusual. It is reasonable to ask, *what is this all about?*

Jacob and the Birthright Part I: Who Taught this to Jacob?

1. We have to bear in mind relationships—Esau is closely associated with his father Isaac and Jacob is closely associated with his mother, Rebekah. Therefore, there must have been some strong influence upon Jacob from Rebekah.
2. This is confirmed when Isaac believes he is going to give his final blessing to Esau—Rebekah will convince Jacob to pretend to be Esau in order to take away this blessing.
3. All of this is carefully recorded in Scripture—the closeness and preference of the parents and the urging of Rebekah to a very adult Jacob to steal away Esau’s blessing.
4. Prior to the birth of the twins, Rebekah was told by God that there were warring peoples in her womb and that the older would serve the younger. Although this suggests the preeminence of Jacob, it could merely refer to the preeminence of his people later down the line.
5. At the same time, remember how God answered the prayers of Isaac—Rebekah became pregnant. So, Rebekah got some sort of audible answer from God, and Isaac was given what he prayed for. I suspect that Rebekah’s answer from God caused her to study *the History of God and Man* (that is, the book of Genesis) as far as it had been written. Leaving aside, for a time, that this book may be transmitted orally,

²⁷³ From <http://www.bible.ca/ef/expository-genesis-25-29-34.htm> accessed July 1, 2015.

Jacob and the Birthright Part I: Who Taught this to Jacob?

Rebekah would logically develop an interest in it. If God spoke to you, would you not also want to know how He has revealed Himself in the past? It is not as if God came to Rebekah and spoke to her often; insofar as we know, there is this one time only.

6. This is the reason why Rebekah probably studied and now knows the book of Genesis up to her life. Since Jacob is her favorite son, she looks to tip the scales in his favor. She would be the person telling him about Abraham; she would be the person reciting and teaching him *the History of God and Man*.
7. Recall that we had some difficulty understanding, what was Jacob like? What does it mean that *he was a quiet man*? And *what does it mean that he lived in tents*?
8. Let me suggest that this involved teaching from his mother from the Word of God (the book of Genesis to that point in time). As many of us know, teaching a child the Word of God does not necessarily result in the child having positive volition toward Bible doctrine; and we will find that Rebekah is not above using duplicity in order to get what she wants. So, she is certainly an imperfect teacher of truth to Jacob.
- 9.

I realize that it seems logical that Rebekah taught Jacob; but this gives a fuller background to that view.

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Now we need to determine, just exactly what did Rebekah teach Jacob? Jacob will twice try to usurp blessing from Esau; so there has to be a reason that he does this; there must be some motivating factors.

Jacob and the Birthright Part II: What Did Jacob Actually Know?

1. Clearly, Jacob has been taught that there is some kind of competition between himself and his brother. His actions in relationship to Esau reveal that mental attitude.
2. Where did he learn this? From his mother (see Part I). His mother, because God spoke to her directly, apparently developed a serious interest in *the History of God and Man* (the book of Genesis thus far). How she heard it and from who is unknown. Did she get this from her father-in-law Abraham? Did she get it from her husband Isaac? However, based upon the previous doctrine, she apparently had an interest and she learned the material.
3. So, she would have known much of what God had promised to Abraham and to the line of promise.
 - 1) Genesis 12:2–3 **And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.** (ESV)
 - 2) Genesis 13:14–17 **Yahweh said to Abram, after Lot was separated from him, "Now, lift up your eyes, and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, for all the land which you see, I will give to you, and to your offspring [= seed] forever. I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then your seed may also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it to you."**
 - 3) Genesis 15:2–5a, 18–21 **Abram said, "Lord Yahweh, what will you give me, seeing I go childless, and he who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" Abram said, "Behold, to me you have given no seed: and, behold, one born in my house is my heir." Behold, the word of Yahweh came to him, saying, "This man will not be your heir, but he who will come forth out of your own body will be your heir." Yahweh brought him outside, and said, "Now look toward the sky, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." In that day Yahweh made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."**
 - 4) Genesis 17:4–8 **"Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make**

Jacob and the Birthright Part II: What Did Jacob Actually Know?

you into nations, and kings shall come from you. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.” (ESV)

4. What Rebekah would have noticed in her reading of Scripture is, Abraham’s son, Ishmael, would not be the heir of God’s particular covenant to Abraham; but his yet unborn son, Isaac, would be. Genesis 17:15–22
5. Because Rebekah and Isaac clearly were playing favorites, Rebekah decided that it is her son that ought to be the beneficiary of the Abrahamic Covenant.
6. Although Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are in the line of the Messiah, it is not completely clear to me that Jacob wanted to be a part of that. I don’t know that he understood, that was part of the blessing of his line.
7. This is curious—why would she have the understanding that God’s covenant to Abraham would only go through one of the sons?
8. Let me suggest that the words God spoke to her indicated that these two sons would not work as a team, but that they would be at odds with one another—and that two peoples would come from them.
9. Therefore, putting 2 and 2 together, Rebekah would have assumed that the covenant of Abraham would only be passed along to one son.
- 10.

Insofar as I know, I don’t believe that I have read a commentator who puts all of this together. It is easy for us, looking back, to understand that the covenant of God to Abraham goes through Isaac and then to Jacob. We know that in retrospect and God has known that in eternity past; but why does Rebekah appear to know this as well? That is what these doctrines hopefully answered.

The entire **Abrahamic Covenant** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

For many of us, knowing a great deal about Jacob and the kinds of things that he does are reassuring. We all know about Abraham and Moses, and their faithfulness and dedication is certainly something to behold. But, most of us do not live the life of an Abraham or a Moses. On a good day, we might live the life of a Jacob.

And so says Esau, “Behold me going to die; and for what to me a birthright?”

Genesis
25:32

Esau replied [lit., *said*], “Listen, I am going to die; so for what purpose [is] a birthright to me?”

Esau thought out loud, “Listen, I am about to die; of what value is this birthright to me?”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)
Targum of Onkelos

And so says Esau, “Behold me going to die; and for what to me a birthright?”
And Esau said, Behold, I am going to die, and in another world I will have no life;
and what then to me is the birthright, or the portion in the world of which you speak?
He answered: Lo I die, what will the first birthright avail me?

Latin Vulgate
Peshitta (Syriac)

And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point of death; and what profit shall a birthright be to me?

Septuagint (Greek) And Esau said, Behold, I am going to die, and for what good does this birthright belong to me?

Significant differences: The targum has additional text. The Greek and Syriac both add additional words, but words which are at least implied by the text.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And Esau said, Truly, I am at the point of death: what profit is the birthright to me?
Easy English	Esau said, 'I am dying, so my *birthright is no use to me.'
Easy-to-Read Version	Esau said, "I am almost dead with hunger. If I die, all of my father's wealth will not help me. So I will give you my share."
<i>God's Word</i> TM	"I'm about to die." Esau said. "What good is my inheritance to me?"
Good News Bible (TEV)	Esau said, "All right! I am about to die; what good will my rights do me?"
<i>The Message</i>	Esau said, "I'm starving! What good is a birthright if I'm dead?"
NIRV	"Look, I'm dying of hunger," Esau said. "What good are those rights to me?"

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Esau said, "Since I'm going to die anyway, what good is my birthright to me?"
Contemporary English V.	"I'm about to die," Esau answered. "What good will those rights do me?"
New Berkeley Version	Esau said, "Look here! I am starving; then what good will my birthright do me!"
New Century Version	Esau said, "I am almost dead from hunger. If I die, all of my father's wealth will not help me."
New Life Bible	Esau said, "See, I am about to die. So what good is my birth-right to me?"

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And Esau said, 'Look, I'm about to die! What good does this right [of the firstborn] mean to me?'
International Standard V Translation for Translators	"Look! I'm about to die," Esau replied. "What good is this birthright to me?" Esau replied, "Well, I am about to die from being so hungry. If I die now, ◀my birthright will not benefit me./what good will my birthright be to me?▶" [RHQ]

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Esau said, "I am going to die here: What is this birthright to me?"
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Then Esau answered, "Now I am going to die—what is that Birthright to me?"
H. C. Leupold	And Esau said: Behold, I for my part am going to meet death; of what use is the birthright to me?
Lexham English Bible	And Esau said, "Look, I am going to die; now what [is] this birthright to me?"

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	Esau said, "Since I am to die soon, what good is my right as the first-born to me?"
The Heritage Bible	And Esau said, See, I am dying walking, and what is this right of the firstborn to me?
New Advent Bible	He answered: Lo I die, what will the first birthright avail me?
New American Bible	"Look," said Esau, "I'm on the point of dying. What good will any birthright do me?"
New American Bible (R.E.)	"Look," said Esau, "I am on the point of dying. What good is the right as firstborn to me?"
New Jerusalem Bible	Esau said, 'Here I am, at death's door; what use is a birthright to me?'
Revised English Bible	Esau replied, 'Here I am at death's door; what use is a birthright to me?'

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	"Look, I'm about to die!" said 'Esav. "What use to me are my rights as the firstborn?"
exeGesés companion Bible	And Esav says, Behold, I am going to die: and what profit is this firstrights to me?
Kaplan Translation Orthodox Jewish Bible	'Here I'm about to die!' exclaimed Esau. 'What good is a birthright to me?' And Esav said, Hinei, I am at the point of death; and what profit shall this bechorah do to me?
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Ésav said, "Look, I am going to die, so why should I have birthright?"

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Esau said, See here, I am at the point of death; what good can this birthright do me?
The Expanded Bible	Esau said, "I am ·almost dead from hunger [·going to die]. ·If I die, all of my father's wealth will not help me [·What will my birthright be to me?]."
Kretzmann's Commentary	And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die; and what profit shall this birthright do to me? The character of Esau was evidently such as to make him think lightly of the great privilege of being the first-born, since his question conveys the idea: I'm dying of hunger; and why should I worry about my birthright, anyway? Thus he yielded the entire higher import of his birthright, the specific blessing of Abraham, the inheritance of his posterity, the right and land of the covenant: all for the satisfaction of a moment.
NET Bible®	"Look," said Esau, "I'm about to die! What use is the birthright to me [Heb "And what is this to me, a birthright?"]?"
The Voice	Esau: ³² Look! I am about to die <i>of starvation!</i> What good is my birthright to me <i>if I am dead?</i>

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

A Conservative Version	And Esau said, Behold, I am about to die, and what profit shall the birthright do to me?
Context Group Version	And Esau said, Look, I am about to die. And what profit shall the birthright be to me?
Darby Translation	And Esau said, Behold, I am going to die, and of what use can the birthright be to me?
English Standard Version	Esau said, "I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?"
The Geneva Bible	And Esau said, Behold, I [am] at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? The reprobate do not value Gods benefits unless they feel them presently, and therefore they prefer present pleasures.
Green's Literal Translation	And Esau said, Behold, I <i>am</i> going to die, and what good <i>is</i> this, a birthright to me?
NASB	Esau said, "Behold, I am about to die; so of what use then is the birthright to me?"
New King James Version	And Esau said, "Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to me?"
Webster's Bible Translation	And Esau said, Behold, I [am] at the point to die: and what profit shall this birth-right bring to me?
World English Bible	Esau said, "Behold, I am about to die. What good is the birthright to me?"
Young's Updated LT	And Esau says, "Lo, I am going to die, and what is this to me—birthright?"

The gist of this verse: Esau, believing that he will die of hunger, sees no value in his birthright.

Genesis 25:32a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'Êsâv (עשׂו) [pronounced <i>gay-SAWV</i>]	<i>handled, made, rough handling; hairy; transliterated Esau</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6215 BDB #796
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
This seems to attempt to take others and put them in the place of the person saying this (so that they see the same thing); or to grab the attention of the reader.			
'ânôkîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced <i>awn-oh-KEE</i>]	<i>I, me; (sometimes a verb is implied)</i>	1 st person singular personal pronoun	Strong's #595 BDB #59
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>is walking, is going, is departing, is advancing, is traveling</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mûwth (מוֹת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>]	<i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

Translation: Esau replied [lit., said], "Listen, I am going to die;...

The demonstrative particle often tries to take the hearer and put him into the place of the speaker; or it is used to get the attention of the hearer. As we have already observed, Jacob's ability to speak is diminished because of his great thirst and hunger. He himself thinks that he is about to die, or, he overstates this.

Robert Dean: *[Esau] is being very dramatic. He is not close to death but is thinking he is close to death. At this point he just doesn't care, he is focusing more on satisfying his immediate needs, taking care of his immediate physical needs, rather than that which has a long-range, long-term benefit to him. One of the keys to any kind of maturity is that a person is able to postpone gratification. So even if Esau is passed his teenage years he is not able to postpone gratification. There is a lack of maturity here, he can't focus on that which has a long-range benefit because he is more concerned about satisfying the immediate need of his flesh. He thinks that this bowl of lentil soup is more valuable than the double portion of his inheritance.*²⁷⁴

²⁷⁴ From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen119.htm> accessed June 17, 2015 (link missing on [main page](#)).

Genesis 25:32b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâh (מַה) [pronounced <i>maw</i>]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
Lâmed + mâh can be rendered <i>why, for what reason, to what purpose, for what purpose</i> , indicating an interrogatory sentence. BDB also offers the rendering <i>lest</i> . Gesenius, perhaps for this passage alone (1Chronicles 15:13), offers the rendering <i>on account of [that] which, because that</i> .			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
b ^e kôwrâh (בְּכוֹרָה) [pronounced <i>b^ekoh-RAW</i>]	<i>rights and responsibilities of the firstborn, privileges of the firstborn, birthright [of the firstborn], primogeniture</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #1062 BDB #114

Translation: ...so for what purpose [is] a birthright to me?"

So Esau thinks out loud, "What use is this birthright to me? I am about to die anyway." From the standpoint of human viewpoint, Esau knows that if he dies without children, the birthright transfers to Jacob anyway. So, does he trust God to fulfill His promises or does he go with human viewpoint and trade whatever he has to stay alive? If God is to fulfill His promises to Abraham, then He cannot just let Esau die as the one who holds the birthright to the promises of God. How much Esau reasoned through this, we do not know. My guess is, he did not think his way through this very far. He was too hungry to. What he chose spoke more to his values and the amount of trust that he had on what God had promised.

Genesis 25:32 Esau replied [lit., said], "Listen, I am going to die; so for what purpose [is] a birthright to me?" (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:32 Esau thought out loud, "Listen, I am about to die; of what value is this birthright to me?" (Kukis paraphrase)

Much of this birthright was a matter of being a part of the promises that God made to Abraham, many of which would not be fulfilled immediately. Jacob still seemed to be interested in being in that line; but Esau did not show the same interest. "For what purpose [is this] birthright to me?" This is the problem for many unbelievers (or believers without doctrine²⁷⁵). *What's in it for me?* they ask. At this point, Esau sees nothing in the birthright for him, as he is about to die.

Scott Grant: *The question before Esau is whether he will forfeit a spiritual future by responding to the need of the moment. He opens himself up to the need of the moment by concluding that the future would be closed off to him anyway. He reasons that without food, he will die. Of course, he's not so*

²⁷⁵ Generally speaking, a believer without doctrine will be indistinguishable from the unbeliever.

*on the verge of death that he can't negotiate with Jacob. He overstates his plight in order to justify getting what he wants.*²⁷⁶

Application: Although it is highly unlikely that any one of us will face this circumstance, death versus a myriad of promises from God; we may face the trade-off of, what are we willing to do to stay alive. What values are we willing to compromise in order to keep breathing?

Esau does not fully understand or appreciate this birthright. His birthright would be the promises of God to Abraham, and then to Isaac. Abraham appreciated these promises, and for at least 25 years of his life, he depended upon these promises from God, even though there was absolutely no manifestation of them in any way—apart from his speaking to God and the temporal blessings which he received.

*Gill: as for the promises of the Messiah, and of the land of Canaan, made to Abraham and his seed, these seemed to be at a great distance.*²⁷⁷

*Wenstrom: The selling of the birthright demonstrated that Esau was a psuchikos, "soulish" man and not a pneumatikos, "spiritual" man since he was expressing his dislike of the plan of God for the patriarchs that was expressed in the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant. 1Corinthians 2:14, "But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised."*²⁷⁸

This birthright is not meaningful to Esau. He only appreciates whatever temporal benefits that it might bring with it; and these temporal benefits are lost when a person dies. The spiritual benefits are not given any consideration by Esau. Right now, Esau believes that he is going to die.

Application: How do we relate to this? God has made promises to us concerning our birthright, which will be heaven and eternity with God. We have some general promises about there being **no more sorrow, no more tears, the old things have passed away**; and we know that in this place, **there are many dwelling places**. Furthermore, given what we know about Adam on earth, in the garden, it is likely that we will have work to do as well. The quality of our lives in eternity will be related to our learned Bible doctrine and applying God's Word to our lives (also known as, *living in the Word*). For some believers, this has meaning. For other believers, this means very little. Some believers are concerned with the here and now; others live knowing that this is a step toward eternity. Our concept and thoughts concerning eternity are very much like Jacob and Esau's attitude toward this birthright. Jacob wanted it and Esau was willing to live without it.

So that there is no misunderstanding, God does not take away your salvation for leading a dismal spiritual life. God does not look down at Charlie Brown and remark, "That Brown kid never did get with the program; he defines spiritual mediocrity. I need to revoke his salvation." God does not do that and He cannot do that. **He cannot deny Himself** (2Timothy 2:13b).

Application: Despite Jacob's sinful manipulation, the lesson is still clear: what is important? The transitory things of life (and what could be more transitory than a single meal?), or God's eternal promises? Is life simply about what we have here on earth, and nothing else matters? Or are there more important issues in our existence beyond day-to-day needs?

When it comes to eternity future as compared to the here and now, one could make a similar contrast between believers and unbelievers; between that which God has promised versus the here and now.

So far, we have studied Genesis 25:19–32:

²⁷⁶ From http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99649/4865.pdf accessed July 2, 2015.

²⁷⁷ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:32.

²⁷⁸ From http://www.gracenotes.info/BIBLE_STUDIES/GENESIS.pdf (Genesis 25) accessed June 16, 2015.

These [are] generations [genealogies, families, history, origin] of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham became the father of Isaac. Isaac was 40 years old when he took Rebekah—the daughter of Bethuel the Aramæan from Paddan-Aram, the sister of Laban the Aramæan—as his wife. Isaac entreated Y^ehowah on behalf of his wife because she [is] barren. Therefore, Y^ehowah was supplicated by him and Rebekah, Isaac's wife, conceived. The sons within her struggled together, so she said, "Behold, therefore, why [is] this [happening to] me?" Consequently, she went to consult Y^ehowah. Y^ehowah said to her, "[There are] two nations in your womb and the two peoples inside of you will be divided. [One] people will be stronger than [the other] people; and the elder will serve the younger one." And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, twins were in her womb! And the first came out red, all over like a hairy garment. And they called his name Esau. And after that his brother came out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel. And his name was called Jacob. And Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them. And the boys grew. And Esau was a man with a thorough knowledge of hunting, and Jacob was a simple man, living in tents. Now Isaac loved Esau, for he ate the wild game that Esau killed. But Rebekah loved Jacob.

We have very little information about Esau and Jacob growing up, apart from one of them being close to Isaac and the other one being close to Rebekah.

One day, Jacob was making soup as Esau came from the field, and he was faint. Esau said to Jacob, "I beg you, Let me eat of the red, this red [soup], for I am faint." Therefore his name was called Edom. And Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright today." And Esau said, "Behold, I am at the point of dying, and what profit is this birthright to me?"

This birthright is the responsibilities and privileges of the firstborn; and Esau was the firstborn, even though they were twins. Furthermore, because he is Isaac's favorite son, Isaac is going to want the privileges of the firstborn to fall upon him.

The complete **Doctrine of the Firstborn** is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)); this is the abbreviated version.

The Abbreviated Doctrine of the Firstborn

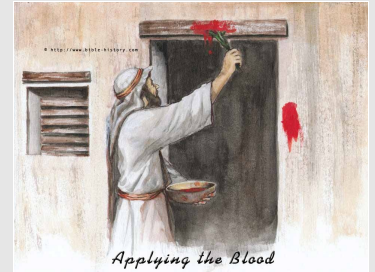
1. Two of the related Hebrew words are:
 - a. In the Hebrew, the word *firstborn* is b^ekôwr (בְּכֹרִית) [pronounced b^eKOHR]. Metaphorically, this word is used for *anything which is chief or first* of its kind Strong's #1060 BDB #114.
 - b. The feminine noun is b^ekôwrâh (בְּכוֹרָה) [pronounced b^ekoh-RAW], which means *rights and responsibilities of the firstborn, privileges of the firstborn, birthright [of the firstborn]; primogeniture*. By virtue of being born first, each firstborn has certain rights and privileges which are bestowed upon him. We have several instances in the Bible where this is taken away. There was never, by God's Law, a set of definite rights and responsibilities which belonged to the firstborn. That was a matter of tradition and culture, but not Law. See Genesis 29:26. Strong's #1062 BDB #114.
2. The related Greek words:
 - a. The noun/adjective prôtotokos (πρωτοτόκος) [pronounced *proh-tot-OK-oss*], which means *firstborn [of man or animals]; the beginning [first] [of a new series]*. Used as an adjective only in Luke 2:7; elsewhere as a noun. Strong's #4416.
 - b. The neuter noun: prôtotokia (πρωτοτόκια) [pronounced *proh-toht-OHK-ee-ah*], which means *birthright, right [or privilege] of primogeniture, the right or advantages of the firstborn son*. This references the religious leadership of a family (the firstborn belongs to God); and the double-portion of the father's wealth went to him. Strong's #4415.
3. Webster gives us two sets of definitions for *first-born*, which is important in order to interpret the next point:
 - a. First brought forth; first in the order of nativity; eldest; as the first-born son.
 - b. Most excellent; most distinguished or exalted. Christ is called the first-born of every creature.¹
4. It is very important in the Bible, the first time a word is used. This often sets the tone and/or the parameters for the word.
 - a. When the first man born to a woman occurs in Scripture, he is named Abel but he is not called

The Abbreviated Doctrine of the Firstborn

- Adam and Eve's firstborn. We associate this term with the firstborn of Abel's flock which he brings to God to be sacrificed, a sacrifice which God respects (which sacrifice speaks of Jesus Christ). Genesis 4:4
- b. The first time *firstborn* is used in the New Testament (Luke 2:7), it also refers to Jesus Christ (the only use of that term in the gospels).
5. It is in Genesis 25 where we have our first indication that being the firstborn carries with it some privileges. This is the chapter where Esau, the firstborn, and Jacob interact with Isaac, their very old and mostly blind father. Jacob is after the blessing of the firstborn. As we go over the sub-points, bear in mind that the Mosaic Law is not been spoken yet and what we are examining here is all about tradition.
 - a. Esau and Isaac were twins, with Esau being delivered first. Isaac came out next, holding onto the heel of Esau. God spoke to Rebekah concerning these two, saying that they would become two nations who would struggle against one another and that the older would eventually serve the younger (Genesis 25:22–26).
 - b. Unfortunately, both Isaac and Rebekah developed favorites—Isaac preferred his firstborn, Esau, the hunter; and Rebekah preferred Jacob, who apparently learned to cook (Genesis 25:27–29).
 - c. When Esau came in from the field, he was starving—hungry to the point of great weakness. Jacob had made a stew. When Esau asked for some, Jacob made Esau give up his birthright for a bowl of stew. Esau's rationalization is that he was so hungry, he was about to die and what good is a birthright after death? Just exactly what this birthright entailed is not told to us. We also do not know who was later told about the exchange of the birthright. It is never disclosed whether this was simply between Esau and Jacob, or whether Jacob informed his parents of this information; however, it is implied that this was known in their family in Genesis 27:36. Genesis 25:29–34
 - d. In Genesis 27, Jacob steals the blessing of his father to Esau. He pretends to be Esau (at the urging and help of his mother), and receives the blessing from Isaac that was meant for Esau. This is not necessarily related to one being firstborn or not. Isaac simply, prior to his death, was going to bless Esau, but he blessed Jacob instead. Jacob, when masquerading as his brother, identified himself several times to his father as his *firstborn*.
 6. Jacob, when he becomes old, also blesses his own sons, referring to Reuben as his firstborn. Then he tells Reuben that he is spineless. Reuben lacked character and judgment and leadership. When he comes to Judah, Jacob says that his brothers would praise him and bow down to him, meaning that the descendants of his brothers would bow down and praise his Descendant. Actually, this has a double-fulfillment: it is fulfilled in the royal line which extends David to the last king of Judah; and this is fulfilled in our Lord as well, Whose humanity is in the line of Judah (Luke 3:23–33). What had happened was that Reuben, due to his lack of leadership, particularly with regards to the brothers' treatment of Joseph, lost his birthright. He lost the leadership aspect of his birthright to Judah and the double portion to Joseph. We touch on this in **1Chronicles 5:1–2** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).
 7. Although, traditionally, the firstborn was seen as the primary continuation of the line of the father, and often due more blessing and inheritance, God blessed men based upon their regeneration and cursed men if they were negative toward Him. Genesis 41:51 49:3–4 1Chronicles 5:1–2
 8. The Passover: The final judgment against Egypt was to kill their firstborn. The Passover is a type of Christ; it looks forward to the crucifixion. Exodus 11–12 Num. 8:16–18 9 Deut. 16:1–6 Psalm 105:36 135:8 136:10 (which passage associates God's love with striking them down) 1Corinthians 5:7 Hebrews 11:28
 - a. God calls Israel His *firstborn* in Exodus 4:22. The implication is that there could be another born of God. However, God used it in this way: Pharaoh was to let God's firstborn go or He would kill Pharaoh's firstborn (Exodus 4:23).
 - b. God has Moses threaten the Pharaoh with this in Exodus 11:4–6.

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- c. Death of the firstborn is a type of Christ, as Christ is the Firstborn of God. 1Corinthians 5:7 Hebrews 1:6
- d. Prior to the carrying out of this curse, God instructs Moses in the Passover. All of Israel is to, by household, slaughter a lamb. What God says is chilling: **“The whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight.”** (Exodus 12:6b). The blood of the lamb is then smeared on both sides and at the top of the door frame (Exodus 12:7, 22). The location of this blood would foretell the crucifixion of Jesus, as it matched the blood on our Lord’s hands, head and feet.
- e. That believers were passed over because of the blood about their door, is a picture of God not judging us because He has judged His Firstborn in our stead. When God saw the blood of the Passover at the entrance of the house, God would not go into the house and kill the firstborn (Exodus 12:13, 23). Then they were to roast the lamb with fire without removing any part of it, and then to eat the lamb (Exodus 12:7–11). Fire speaks of God’s judgment, which is put upon His Lamb rather than upon mankind, who deserves death.
- f. Easton tells us about the Egyptian Pharaoh who was probably the one whose firstborn died during this time: *Menephtah is probably the Pharaoh whose first-born was slain. His son did not succeed or survive his father, but died early. The son's tomb has been found at Thebes unfinished, showing it was needed earlier than was expected. Some of the records on the tomb are as follows: “The son whom Menephtah loves; who draws towards him his father's heart, the singer, the prince of archers, who governed Egypt on behalf of his father. Dead.”*²
9. The Levites were taken as God’s firstborn, instead of the firstborn from every family, as a tribe dedicated to Him. Num. 3:12, 45, 50 The close association with the number of Levites as compared to the number of firstborn was to indication (1) that redemption was involved in setting apart the firstborn; (2) setting apart the Levites as firstborn was analogous to God setting apart Jesus as His firstborn; and (3) the redemption had to be exactly the right amount. Jesus could not just go and suffer on the cross for awhile, and that would do the trick; He had to pay for the sins of all mankind.
- a. *Redemption*, by the way, means *payment*.
 - b. The Mosaic Law required that the firstborn to be redeemed. Num. 18:15
 - c. Again, the idea was to connect redemption with the firstborn with a specific amount (a specific redemption amount).
10. Jesus Christ is called the firstborn in Psalm 89:26–27. **“He [Jesus, David’s descendant] will call to Me [God], ‘You are My Father, My God, and the Rock of My salvation!’ I will also appoint Him [as] My firstborn, [He will be] the highest of the kings of the earth.**
11. Jesus is called the *firstborn* in the New Testament:
- a. The first occasion, already mentioned, is Luke 2:7.
 - b. Paul associates Christ as the firstborn of many brothers with election. **For those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that He might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom He predestined He also called, and those whom He called He also justified, and those whom He justified He also glorified (Romans 8:29–30).**
 - c. Jesus is called the *firstborn of all creation* in Colossians 1:15–16: **He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things were created through Him and for Him.**
 - d. He is also called the *firstborn from the dead* in Colossians 1:18–20: **And He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross. He has this same title in Revelation 1:5**
 - e. Hebrews 1:5–6: **For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son, today I have**



Graphic from **Bible-history**; accessed May 13, 2014.

The Abbreviated Doctrine of the Firstborn

begotten you"? Or again, "I will be to him a father, and He shall be to Me a son"? And again, when He brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "Let all God's angels worship Him." (Psalm 2:7 2Samuel 7:14 Deut. 32:43 LXX?).

- f. We should glean two things from these references: Jesus is not actually born or created, but He is preeminent among all that which has been created. Secondly, His title *Firstborn* is also to tie Him to the Passover event, where the death of the firstborn, redemption, the blood of the Lamb and the passing over all those under His blood are all gathered together as a type, for which Jesus is the antitype.

This is the abbreviated version of this doctrine.

The Bridgeway Bible Commentary gives an excellent abbreviated view: *The right of the firstborn was to become family head and receive a double share of the inheritance. In the wider view of the covenant promises given to Abraham, the inheritance involved headship of the nation Israel and possession of the land of Canaan.*²⁷⁹

¹ Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary of American English from e-sword; topic: first-born.

² M.G. Easton M.A., D.D., *Illustrated Bible Dictionary*; 1897; from e-Sword, topic: first-born.

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Here is a more abbreviated doctrine of the above.

Robert Dean on the Rights and Privileges of the Firstborn

- 1) The firstborn is stated to be given by God and to be consecrated to God. Exodus 22:29, "You shall not delay to offer the first of your ripe fruits, and of your liquors: the firstborn of your sons shall thou give unto me."
- 2) They stood in honor next to their parents. In other words, all the other children had to respect that firstborn almost as much as they respected their parents. Genesis 49:3, "Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power." So the firstborn had a special place of privilege and respect over all the other offspring.
- 3) The firstborn had a double portion in the paternal inheritance. They received twice as much simply because they were the firstborn. Deuteronomy 21:17, "But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his." So the firstborn had a double inheritance. This is important to understand what goes on when we get into the New Testament and start talking about the two different kinds of inheritance that goes to the believer. We are heirs of God under one category and joint heirs with Christ under another category. All believers are heirs of God, but not all believers are joint heirs of Christ.
- 4) The firstborn succeeded in the government of the family or the kingdom. They follow the father's footsteps. 2 Chronicles 21:3, "And their father gave them great gifts of silver, and of gold, and of precious things, with fenced cities in Judah: but the kingdom gave he to Jehoram; because he was the firstborn."
- 5) The firstborn were honored with the office of priesthood and the administration of the public worship of God. So that the priesthood passed also to the firstborn.

From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen119.htm> accessed June 17, 2015 (link missing on [main page](#)).

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Poole: *The first-born was a special type, both of Christ, who was to be a first-born; and of the church, which is called God's first-born, as Exodus 4:22; and of the great privileges of the church, particularly*

²⁷⁹ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bbc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 30, 2015.

of adoption and eternal life. See Hebrews 12:23. And therefore he is justly called profane (Hebrews 12:16), for slighting so sacred and glorious a privilege.²⁸⁰

Genesis 25:29–32 One day, Jacob was making soup as Esau came from the field, and he was faint. Esau said to Jacob, “I beg you, Let me eat of the red, this red [soup], for I am faint.” Therefore his name was called Edom. And Jacob said, “Sell me your birthright today.” And Esau said, “Behold, I am at the point of dying, and what profit is this birthright to me?”

And the master of brevity:

Scofield on the Birthright

The "birthright" had three elements:

- (1) Until the establishment of the Aaronic priesthood the head of the family exercised priestly rights.
- (2) The Abrahamic family held the Edenic promise of the Satan-Bruiser (Gen_3:15). -- Abel, Seth, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Esau.
- (3) Esau, as the firstborn, was in the direct line of the Abrahamic promise of the Earth-Blessor (Gen_12:3).

For all that was revealed, in Esau might have fulfilled those two great Messianic promises. This birthright Esau sold for a momentary fleshly gratification. Jacob's conception of the birthright at that time was, doubtless, carnal and inadequate, but his desire for it evidenced true faith.

C. I. Scofield, *Scofield Notes from the Scofield King James' Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:31.

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And so says Jacob, “Swear to me as the day.” And so he swears to him and so he sells his birthright to Jacob.

Genesis
25:33

Jacob then said, “Swear [this] to me today.” So Esau [lit., he] swore to him and sold his birthright to Jacob.

Jacob then said, “Swear this to me right now, if you want to eat.” So Esau swore to Jacob, thereby selling him the birthright.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Jacob, “Swear to me as the day.” And so he swears to him and so he sells his birthright to Jacob.
Targum of Onkelos	And Jakob said, Swear to me to-day that so it shall be. And he sware to him, and sold his birthright to Jakob.
Latin Vulgate	Jacob said: Swear therefore to me. Esau swore to him, and sold his first birthright.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Jacob said to him, Swear to me this day; and he swore to him; and he sold his birthright to Jacob.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Jacob said to him, Swear to me this day; and he swore to him; and Esau sold his birthright to Jacob.

²⁸⁰ Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:31 (slightly edited).

Significant differences: The Latin lacks *as the day*. The Latin also leaves out Jacob's name in the final sentence.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And Jacob said, First of all give me your oath; and he gave him his oath, handing over his birthright to Jacob.
Easy English	Jacob said, 'Make a very serious promise to me first.' So Esau made a very serious promise to Jacob, and he sold his *birthright to Jacob.
Easy-to-Read Version	But Jacob said, "First, promise me that you will give it to me." So Esau made a promise to Jacob. Esau sold his part of their father's wealth to Jacob.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Jacob answered, "First make a vow that you will give me your rights." Esau made the vow and gave his rights to Jacob.
<i>The Message</i>	Jacob said, "First, swear to me." And he did it. On oath Esau traded away his rights as the firstborn.
NIRV	But Jacob said, "First promise me with an oath that you are selling me your rights." So Esau promised to do it. He sold Jacob all of the rights that belonged to him as the oldest son.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Jacob said, "Give me your word today." And he did. He sold his birthright to Jacob.
Contemporary English V.	But Jacob said, "Promise me your birthrights, here and now!" And that's what Esau did.
New Century Version	But Jacob said, "First, promise me that you will give it to me." So Esau made a promise to Jacob and sold his part of their father's wealth to Jacob.
New Life Bible	Jacob said, "First give me your promise." So Esau promised, and sold his birth-right to Jacob.
New Living Translation	But Jacob said, "First you must swear that your birthright is mine." So Esau swore an oath, thereby selling all his rights as the firstborn to his brother, Jacob.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And Jacob said to him, 'Swear to me right now!' And he swore to him.
Beck's American Translation	"Swear to me first," Jacob said. Esau swore to him, and he sold his rights to Jacob.
International Standard V	But Jacob insisted, "Swear it by an oath right now." So he swore an oath to him and sold his birthright to Jacob.
Translation for Translators	Jacob said, "«Swear to/Solemnly promise» me that you are giving me your birthright!" So that is what Esau did. He sold his birthright to Jacob.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ferar-Fenton Bible	So Jacob said, "Swear to me now at once." And he swore to him, and sold his Birthright to Jacob.
H. C. Leupold	And Jacob said: Give me an oath on this first, and he gave him an oath. So he sold his birthright to Jacob.
Lexham English Bible	Then Jacob said, "Swear to me {first}." And he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	Then, Jacob said, "Give me your oath first." So he swore to him and sold his first-born right to Jacob.
The Heritage Bible	And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore to him, and he sold his right as the firstborn to Jacob.

New American Bible (R.E.)	But Jacob said, "Swear to me first!" So he sold Jacob his right as firstborn under oath. Heb 12:16.
New RSV	Jacob said, 'Swear to me first [Heb., <i>today</i>].' So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible	And Yaaqov says, Oath to me this day. - and he oaths to him and he sells his firstrights to Yaaqov:...
Kaplan Translation	'Make an oath to me right now,' said Jacob. He made the oath, and sold his birthright to Jacob.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Ya'akov said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him; and he sold his bechorah unto Ya'akov.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Jacob said, Swear to me today [that you are selling it to me]; and he swore to [Jacob] and sold him his birthright.
The Expanded Bible	But Jacob said, "First [v. 31], ·promise [swear to] me that you will give it to me." So Esau ·made a promise to Jacob [^L swore to him] and ·sold [exchanged] his ·part of their father's wealth [^L birthright] to Jacob.
Kretzmann's Commentary	And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him; and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Thus Jacob pursued the advantage which he had gained to the point where he was sure of his gain, for the oath of Esau ratified his promise.
NET Bible®	But Jacob said, "Swear an oath to me now [Heb "Swear to me today"]." So Esau [Heb "and he"; the referent (Esau) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] swore an oath to him and sold his birthright [And sold his birthright. There is evidence from Hurrian culture that rights of inheritance were occasionally sold or transferred. Here Esau is portrayed as a profane person who would at the moment rather have a meal than the right to inherit. He will soon forget this trade and seek his father's blessing in spite of it.] to Jacob.
The Voice	Jacob: ³³ Swear to me first! And so Esau swore to Jacob and handed over his rights as the firstborn son.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And saying is Jacob to him, "Swear to me as of today.And swearing is he to him. And selling is Esau his birthright to Jacob.
English Standard Version	Jacob said, "Swear to me now." So he swore to him and sold his birthright to Jacob.
The Geneva Bible	And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he I sold his birthright unto Jacob. Thus the wicked prefer their worldly conveniences over Gods spiritual graces: but the children of God do the opposite.
New King James Version	Then Jacob said, "Swear to me as of this day." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob.
Third Millennium Bible	And Jacob said, "Swear to me this day." And he swore unto him, and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.
World English Bible	Jacob said, "Swear to me first." He swore to him. He sold his birthright to Jacob.
Young's Updated LT	And Jacob says, "Swear to me to-day;" and he swears to him, and sells his birthright to Jacob.

The gist of this verse: Esau agrees to sell Jacob his birthright.

Genesis 25:33a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Ya'ăqôb (יעקב) [pronounced yah-ăuh-KOH ^b V]	<i>supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent and is transliterated Jacob</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3290 BDB #784
shâba' (שבא) [pronounced shaw ^b -VAHG]	<i>to swear, to imprecate, to curse, to swear an oath, to take a solemn oath, to swear allegiance</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Niphal imperative with the voluntative hê	Strong's #7650 BDB #989
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
yôwm (יומ) [pronounced yohm]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

Literally, the kaph preposition and day mean *as the day*. According to Gesenius, together, they mean *in this day, at this time, now*.

Translation: Jacob then said, "Swear [this] to me today."

Jacob seems to have grown into his name, which means *supplanter, swindler*. He has Esau on the ropes, and makes this demand.

I do recall one of the things which was a theme of stories and even some movies is, Satan comes to a man and says, "I will give you what you want; just sell your soul to me." That probably started with *Dr. Faustus* (a story I don't think I have ever read). This seems to have all the elements of such a transaction. However, Esau is not selling his soul; only his birthright, which to him right now, is of very little value.

Poole: *Jacob acted subtly in this affair; he knew that delays were dangerous; and Esau's consideration, or second thoughts, might have spoiled his bargain, and therefore he requires haste, as in the sale, so in his oath.*²⁸¹

²⁸¹ Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, Genesis 24:33.

Genesis 25:33b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâba' (שָׁבַע) [pronounced shaw ^b -VAHG]	to swear, to imprecate, to curse, to swear an oath, to take a solemn oath, to swear allegiance	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #7650 BDB #989
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	to, for, towards, in regards to	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: So Esau [lit., he] swore to him...

Esau agrees to Jacob's terms.

Barnhouse: History shows that men prefer illusions to realities, choose time rather than eternity, and the pleasures of sin for a season rather than the joys of God forever. Men will read trash rather than the Word of God, and adhere to a system of priorities that leaves God out of their lives. Multitudes of men spend more time shaving than on their souls; and multitudes of women give more minutes to their makeup than to the life of the eternal spirit. Men still sell their birthright for a mess of pottage.²⁸²



Esau and Jacob, an oil painting by Matthias Storm; from [Wikiart](#); accessed July 3, 2015; Gallery: Hermitage, St. Petersburg, Russia. Storm appears to be a contemporary artist.

Genesis 25:33c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mâkar (מָכַר) [pronounced maw-KAHR]	to sell, to sell [betroth] [a daughter]; to sell [deliver over] [a people]	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4376 BDB #569

²⁸² David Guzik's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; Genesis 25:29–34.

Genesis 25:33c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
b ^e kôwrâh (בְּכוֹרָה) [pronounced <i>b^ekoh-RAW</i>]	<i>rights and responsibilities of the firstborn, privileges of the firstborn, birthright [of the firstborn], primogeniture</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1062 BDB #114
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Ya'ăqôb (יַעֲקֹב) [pronounced <i>yah-ġuh-KOH^{BV}</i>]	<i>supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent and is transliterated Jacob</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3290 BDB #784

Translation: ...and sold his birthright to Jacob.

For this bowl of beans, Esau sells his birthright to Jacob. On his scale of values, the birthright is far below what a meal means to him. From the New Testament Scripture which we will glance at, it does not appear that anything else was involved in this transaction—just the red beans for the birthright.

Genesis 25:33 **Jacob then said, “Swear [this] to me today.” So Esau [lit., he] swore to him and sold his birthright to Jacob.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:33 **Jacob then said, “Swear this to me right now, if you want to eat.” So Esau swore to Jacob, thereby selling him the birthright.** (Kukis paraphrase)

So, for a mess of pottage (that is, a bowl of bean soup), Esau sold his birthright to Jacob. This birthright of being the firstborn and receiving the promises which God gave to Abraham were sold for this bowl of bean soup. Jacob valued this birthright and Esau did not. Esau reasoned, *if I die from hunger, what good is some inheritance from a God I have never met?* Jacob, on the other hand, saw this birthright as a thing of value, to be gotten by any means possible.

John Wesley: The birthright was typical of spiritual privileges, those [belonging both to Israel and later] ...the church...Esau was now tried how he would value those, and he shows himself sensible only of present grievances: may he but get relief against them, he cares not for his birthright. If we look on Esau's birthright as only a temporal advantage, what he said had something of truth in it, that our worldly enjoyments, even those we are most fond of, will stand us in no stead in a dying hour...[this birthright] being of a spiritual nature, his undervaluing it, was the greatest profaneness imaginable.²⁸³

Matthew Henry: Esau's profane contempt of the birthright, and the foolish sale he made of it. He is called profane Esau for it (Hebrews 12:16), because for one morsel of meat he sold his birthright, as dear a morsel as ever was eaten since the forbidden fruit; and he lived to regret it when it was too late. Never was there such a foolish bargain as this which Esau now made.²⁸⁴

The fundamental concept of being profane is valuing what is here on earth more than what God has promised us. It is placing value on the transitory as opposed to on the eternal.

²⁸³ John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible*; courtesy of e-sword, Genesis 25:31.

²⁸⁴ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:29–34. Edited.

I believe that the story below is more illustrative than true.

Our Daily Bread, on Esau Selling his Birthright

For one morsel of food [Esau] sold his birthright. -Hebrews 12:16

A story is told of a man who loved old books. He met an acquaintance who had just thrown away a Bible that had been stored in the attic of his ancestral home for generations. "I couldn't read it," the friend explained. "Somebody named Guten-something had printed it." "Not Gutenberg!" the book lover exclaimed in horror. "That Bible was one of the first books ever printed. Why, a copy just sold for over two million dollars!"

His friend was unimpressed. "Mine wouldn't have brought a dollar. Some fellow named Martin Luther had scribbled all over it in German."

This man treated as worthless that which was valuable. So did Esau. Although he was a nice fellow who enjoyed hunting and fishing and the great outdoors, Esau was "profane" because he sold his spiritual birthright "for one morsel of food" (Heb. 12:16). Only when it was too late to undo his wretched bargain did Esau realize that he had sacrificed the permanent on the altar of the immediate

From <http://odb.org/1994/06/07/whats-worth-keeping/> accessed July 2, 2015.

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Again, recall who has raised these boys into manhood—Rebekah spent her time with Jacob and Isaac spent his time with Esau. This suggests that Rebekah understood, to some degree, the value of this birthright and how it related to the divine promises made to Abraham, and she taught this to Jacob. Esau was obviously aware of it, but it was not as greatly valued by him.

Barnes: [Jacob] availed himself of a weak moment to accomplish by consent what was to come. Yet he lays no necessity on Esau, but leaves him to his own free choice. We must therefore beware of blaming him for endeavoring to win his brother's concurrence in a thing that was already settled in the purpose of God. His chief error lay in attempting to anticipate the arrangements of Providence. Esau is strangely ready to dispose of his birthright for a trivial present gratification. He might have obtained other means of recruiting nature equally suitable, but he will sacrifice anything for the desire of the moment. Any higher import of the right he was prepared to sell so cheap seems to have escaped his view, if it had ever occurred to his mind. Jacob, however, is deeply in earnest. He will bring this matter within the range of heavenly influence. He will have God solemnly invoked as a witness of the transfer. Even this does not startle Esau. There is not a word about the price. It is plain that Esau's thoughts were altogether on "the morsel of meat." He swears unto Jacob.²⁸⁵

J. Vernon McGee: Jacob sees this, and he says to him, "I'll tell you what I'll do, if you'll give me your birthright, I'll give you a bowl of stew." Esau was very happy with the bargain. He said, "I'll be very happy to do it; what profit is the birthright to me? What do I care about the birthright? I'd rather have a bowl of stew." That is the value which he attached to spiritual things. Let us remember that Jacob also was wrong in what he did. God had promised, "The elder shall serve the younger." The birthright is coming to Jacob in God's own time. Jacob can't wait; so he reaches out to take that which God has promised him. He takes it in a clever, tricky fashion. He should have waited for God to give it to him. This man operated on the principle that he would do what he could for himself. He thought that as long as he could help himself there was no reason to look to God to perform it. He felt thoroughly capable of taking care of his business. At the beginning he really did rather well as far as the world would measure him. But there came a day when God sent this man off to college, and Uncle Laban was the president of the college. It was known as the college of hard knocks, and Jacob was going to learn

²⁸⁵ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:29–34.

*a few things in the college of hard knocks. But here he is still operating on the principle that he is clever enough to get what is coming to him.*²⁸⁶

The Expository Files: *Many centuries later, Edom was eventually destroyed by decree of God (Isaiah 34:5,6; 63:1; Obadiah 1-21; Malachi 1:3). It became a symbol of the earthly, non spiritual people of the world. People who care little for God and His will, but instead are carnal, greedy, and even treacherous are as the Edomites were, and as their ancestor, Esau, was. Even in the New Testament, Esau is looked upon as a profane person who foolishly squandered his life and the blessings of God, unable or unwilling to appreciate them or truly be thankful for them.*²⁸⁷

Part of the right of the firstborn might have been understood to include the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant.

Quick Review of the Abrahamic Covenant, by Robert Dean

- 1) The overall covenant promises a land, a seed, and a blessing. The preview is given in Genesis 12:1-3.
- 2) The emphasis on the land. Genesis 12:7 reiterates the land promise. In Genesis 13:5 God expanded this to "all the land that you can see." In Genesis 15:18 He gives the boundaries, from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates. Genesis 17:8 defines it as "the whole land of Canaan." God gives that title deed, their foundation for their claim to the land.
- 3) The descendants are going to be a great nation, Genesis 12:2. In Genesis 13:16 they would be described as numerous as the dust of the earth. In Genesis 15:5, like the stars in the sky. In Genesis 16 the descendants would be innumerable. In Genesis 17, a multitude of nations. "Kings shall be descended from you." That is one of the reasons there is the genealogy given at the beginning of Genesis 25, these are the nations that are coming forth from Abraham as God promised. So again and again we see this promise and fulfillment. God is faithful to His Word.
- 4) There is divine protection, Genesis 12:2. God will curse those who treat Abraham lightly. This is the scourge of anti-Semitism. Today we see anti-Semitism in a new guise, that rather than having hatred towards Jews individually they guise of anti-Semitism today is against Jews having a right to the land today. This is an extremely subtle form of anti-Semitism.
- 5) In chapter fourteen there was a warning to Abraham that there would be a future slavery but there would be deliverance. In chapter 17:7 God reminded him that this was an eternal covenant, there would be no change.

From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen112.htm> accessed June 17, 2015.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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And Jacob gave to Esau bread and a soup of lentils. And so he eats and so he drinks and so he rises up and so he goes. And so despises Esau his birthright.

Genesis
25:34

Then Jacob gave bread to Esau along with [lit., and] a lentil soup. Esau [lit., he] ate and he drank, and [finally] he rose up and went. Therefore, Esau despised his birthright.

Then Jacob gave bread and a lentil soup to Esau to feast upon. Esau ate and drank, and finally he rose up and went his way. By this, Esau revealed that he despised his birthright.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

²⁸⁶ From https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt (Genesis 25) accessed June 14, 2015.

²⁸⁷ From <http://www.bible.ca/ef/expository-genesis-25-29-34.htm> accessed July 1, 2015.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And Jacob gave to Esau bread and a soup of lentils. And so he eats and so he drinks and so he rises up and so he goes. And so despises Esau his birthright.
Targum of Onkelos	And Jakob gave to Esau bread and pottage of lentiles. And he ate and drank, and arose and went. And Esau scorned the birthright, <u>and the portion of the world that comes.</u>
Jerusalem targum	And he arose, and went. And Esau despised the birthright, <u>and vilified the portion in the world that cometh, and denied the resurrection of the dead.</u>
Latin Vulgate	And so taking bread and the pottage of lentils, he ate, and drank, and went on his way; making little account of having sold his first birthright.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage; and he ate, and drank, and rose up and went his way; thus Esau despised his birthright.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Jacob gave bread to Esau, and a stew of lentiles; and he ate and drank, and he arose and departed; thus Esau despised his birthright.
Brenton's Septuagint	And Jacob gave bread to Esau, and pottage of lentiles; and he ate and drank, and he arose and departed; so Esau slighted his birthright.
Significant differences:	The Jerusalem targum may or may not have the beginning that we see in the Hebrew. ²⁸⁸ Both targums add a lot of stuff at the end. In the Latin, Jacob is not said to <i>give the bread and pottage to Esau</i> . The Latin lacks one of the 4 verbs in the second to the last set of verbs (it does not have that <i>he rose up</i>).

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English	Then Jacob gave bread to Esau. And Jacob gave to him *stew that he (Jacob) had made from lentils (vegetable seeds). Esau ate and he drank. Then he went out. So Esau did not care about his *birthright.
Easy-to-Read Version	Then Jacob gave Esau bread and food. Esau ate and drank and then left. So Esau showed that he did not care about his rights as the firstborn son.
God's Word™	Then Jacob gave Esau a meal of bread and lentils. He ate and drank, and then he got up and left. This is how Esau showed his contempt for his rights as firstborn.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Then Jacob gave him some bread and some of the soup. He ate and drank and then got up and left. That was all Esau cared about his rights as the first-born son.
NIRV	Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. Esau ate and drank. Then he got up and left. So Esau didn't care anything at all about the rights that belonged to him as the oldest son.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	So Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew. He ate, drank, got up, and left, showing just how little he thought of his birthright.
Contemporary English V.	Jacob then gave Esau some bread and some of the bean stew, and when Esau had finished eating and drinking, he just got up and left, showing how little he thought of his rights as the first-born.
New Berkeley Version	Then Jacob dished Esau bread and lentil stew. He ate and drank, then got up and went his way. Thus lightly did Esau esteem his birthright.
New Century Version	Then Jacob gave Esau bread and vegetable soup, and he ate and drank, and then left. So Esau showed how little he cared about his rights as the firstborn son.
New Life Bible	Then Jacob gave Esau bread and vegetables, and Esau ate and drank. Then Esau stood up and went on his way. So Esau hated his birth-right.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

²⁸⁸ I don't have the full Jerusalem targum; only snippets as it disagrees with the Targum of Onkelos.

American English Bible	So, Esau sold his birthright to Jacob, ³⁴ then Jacob gave Esau bread and some lentil stew. He ate it and drank, and then he got up and left. And that's how Esau [showed little regard for] his birthright. A portion of v. 33 was included for context.
Beck's American Translation	Jacob gave Esau bread and lentils he had cooked. He ate and drank, got up, and went away. And so Esau thought little of his right as the firstborn.
International Standard V	Then Jacob gave Esau some of his food, along with some boiled stew. So Esau ate, drank, got up, and left, after having belittled his own birthright.
Translation for Translators	Then Jacob gave to Esau some bread and some stew made of lentils/beans. Esau ate and drank, and then he got up and left. By doing that, Esau showed that he ◀was not interested in/did not value▶ his birthright.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ferar-Fenton Bible	Thus Jacob gave to Esau bread and lentil porridge, and he ate, and he drank, and he rose up, and went. Thus Esau was careless about his Birthright.
H. C. Leupold	Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils, and he ate and drank and arose and went his way. So Esau despised his birthright.
Lexham English Bible	Then Jacob gave Esau bread, and thick lentil stew, and he ate and drank. Then he got up and went away. So Esau despised his birthright.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community Bible	Esau ate and drank and then got up and went his way. So it was that Esau thought nothing of his right as the first-born.
The Heritage Bible	And Jacob gave Esau bread and soup of lentils, and he ate, and drank, and rose up, and walked; and Esau despised the right of the firstborn.
New Advent Bible	And so taking bread and the pottage of lentils, he ate, and drank, and went on his way; making little account of having sold his first birthright.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Jacob then gave him some bread and the lentil stew; and Esau ate, drank, got up, and went his way. So Esau treated his right as firstborn with disdain.
New Jerusalem Bible	Then Jacob gave him some bread and lentil stew; he ate, drank, got up and went away. That was all Esau cared about his birthright.
Revised English Bible	Then Jacob gave Esau bread and some lentil broth, and he ate and drank and went his way. Esau showed by this how little he valued his birthright.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Then Ya'akov gave him bread and lentil stew; he ate and drank, got up and went on his way. Thus 'Esav showed how little he valued his birthright.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Jacob then gave Esau bread and lentil stew; he ate and drank, and he rose and went away. Thus did Esau spurn the birthright.
Kaplan Translation	Jacob then gave Esau bread and lentil stew. [Esau] ate it, drank, got up and left. He thus rejected the birthright.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Then Ya'akov gave Esav lechem and adashim (lentils) stew; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way; thus Esav despised his bechorah.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Then Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils, and he ate and drank and rose up and went his way. Thus Esau scorned his birthright as beneath his notice.
The Expanded Bible	Then Jacob gave Esau bread and ·vegetable soup [stew], and he ate and drank, and then left. So Esau ·showed how little he cared about his rights as the firstborn son [^L despised/showed contempt toward his birthright; Heb. 12:16-17].
Kretzmann's Commentary	Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright. So it was not a mere

momentary whim of Esau, for his contempt of his birthright continued even after he had eaten and drunk his fill and was restored to his normal frame of mind. Thus Jacob was filled with a holy seriousness concerning the privileges of the birthright, realizing how much depended upon it in the family of Abraham, while Esau considered the entire matter a joke and acted accordingly. Jacob is a type and example of those that seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness first, while Esau represents such as renounce the eternal blessings for the sake of temporal gain and enjoyment.

NET Bible®

Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and lentil stew; Esau ate and drank, then got up and went out [The style here is typical of Hebrew narrative; after the tension is resolved with the dialogue, the working out of it is recorded in a rapid sequence of verbs ("gave"; "ate"; "drank"; "got up"; "went out"). See also Gen 3:1-7 for another example.]. So Esau despised his birthright. So Esau despised his birthright. This clause, which concludes the episode, is a summary statement which reveals the underlying significance of Esau's actions. "To despise" means to treat something as worthless or with contempt. Esau's willingness to sell his birthright was evidence that he considered it to be unimportant.

Syndein/Thieme

Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils. And he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. Thus Esau 'regarded with contempt' {bazah} his birthright.

The Voice

Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and lentil stew. Esau ate and drank. When he was satisfied, Esau went his way as if nothing had happened. Esau treated his valuable birthright contemptuously.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version

And Jacob gives Esau bread and stewed lentils. And eating is he and drinking, and rising and going. And despising is Esau the birthright.

Context Group Version

And Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils. And he ate and drank, and rose up, and went his way. So Esau ignored his birthright.

English Standard Version

Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

Webster's Bible Translation

Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he ate and drank, and rose and went his way: thus Esau despised [his] birth-right.

World English Bible

Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils. He ate and drank, rose up, and went his way. So Esau despised his birthright.

Young's Updated LT

And Jacob has given to Esau bread and pottage of lentils, and he eats, and drinks, and rises, and goes; and Esau despises the birthright.

The gist of this verse:

Jacob gave Esau the red beans he had baked, along with some bread. Esau ate it and then left. By doing this, Esau showed how little his birthright meant to him.

Genesis 25:34a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Ya'ăqôb (יַעֲקֹב) [pronounced <i>yah-ăuh-KOH^{BV}</i>]	<i>supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent and is transliterated Jacob</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3290 BDB #784
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i>]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678

Genesis 25:34a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Ēsâv (עֲשָׂו) [pronounced <i>gay-SAWV</i>]	<i>handled, made, rough handling; hairy; transliterated Esau</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6215 BDB #796
lechem (לֶחֶם) [pronounced <i>LEH-khem</i>]	literally means <i>bread</i> ; used more generally for <i>food</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3899 BDB #536
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâgîyd (נִגְיָד) [pronounced <i>naw-ZEED</i>]	<i>boiled food, soup, boiled, pottage</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5138 BDB #268
ādâshîym (עֲדָשִׁימ) [pronounced <i>guh-daw-SHEEM</i>]	<i>lentils</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #5742 BDB #727

Translation: Then Jacob gave bread to Esau along with [lit., and] a lentil soup.

Jacob had some understanding of the importance of the birthright promised by God, and this was his opportunity to take it. Esau agreed to Jacob's terms, so Jacob brought out a substantial meal to Esau, which included bread and the lentil soup.

In India, this food is considered cheap and common and used in various expressions which indicate this. This testifies to this day the impact that this simple act had upon language. Esau will sell his birthright, which means very little to him, for a bowl of this soup.

Genesis 25:34b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
âkal (אָכַל) [pronounced <i>aw-KAHL</i>]	<i>to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #398 BDB #37
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâthâh (שָׁתָּה) [pronounced <i>shaw-THAW</i>]	<i>to drink [actually or metaphorically]; to drink together [at a banquet]; to feast; to sit</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8354 BDB #1059

Translation: Esau [lit., he] ate and he drank,...

The figure of speech used here becomes rather technical when analyzed. Polysyndeton [pronounced *pol'y-syn'-de-ton*] is when many *ands* are used and it is in contrast to an Asyndeton [pronounced *a-syn'-de-ton*] which is *no-ands*. The latter helps explain the former. The latter leads us past information which is not all that important and culminates in the statement where the emphasis is to be placed. We are hurried along, as it were, to the conclusion. With the continued use of *and*, everything is of equal importance. In reality, it is not. This has the added figure of speech *understatement*. To Esau, everything was of equal importance—eating, drinking, his birthright. God the Holy Spirit communicates to us that his spiritual inheritance was unimportant to him, which is why Esau was a Gentile and Jacob was a Jew.



Esau and Jacob. Artist Andrey N. Mironov 2014.

Canvas, oil. 80 x 90. From [Wikipedia](#); accessed July 3, 2015. This is apparently a contemporary artist; possibly Russian.

Genesis 25:34c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qûwm (קום) [pronounced <i>koom</i>]	<i>to stand, to rise up, to get up; to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229

Translation: ...and [finally] he rose up and went.

Many times when we have this verb *to rise up*, it suggests that someone has a purpose in mind when they are going to go somewhere or to do something. However, here, it simply means that Esau gets up and he unceremoniously departs. Life simply goes on, except that Esau no longer has claim to his birthright; Jacob does.

This suggests that these are young men at this point, and each has his own tent.

Gill: *[Esau then went on his own way] without any remorse of conscience, reflection of mind, or repentance for what he had done; for though he afterwards carefully sought the blessing with tears he had parted with, yet not until his father was upon his deathbed (Hebrews 12:17).*²⁸⁹

Robert Dean: *Watch the verbs here: he [Esau] ate, he drank, he arose, he went his way. He doesn't stop, he doesn't talk about it, he doesn't get refreshed and just stay and talk to his brother, he just gets up and leaves. After his talking about everything earlier, his silence at this point stands out as a stark contrast. Does he care about the birthright? Does he have any regrets now that his stomach is full? Or is bitterness already starting to spring up? Is he already starting to resent what just happened? The Hebrew word translated "despise" is the word bazah which means to treat with contempt or to despise. He treated it lightly, it had no value for him, and he is going to reap the consequences for that, both in terms of his relationship with his brother and in terms of his relationship with his father.*²⁹⁰

Genesis 25:34d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bâzâh (בָּזָה) [pronounced baw-ZAW]	<i>to despise, to regard with contempt, to hold in contempt</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #959 BDB #102
This is the first occurrence of this verb in Scripture.			
Ēsâv (עֵשָׂו) [pronounced gay-SAWV]	<i>handled, made, rough handling; hairy; transliterated Esau</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6215 BDB #796
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
b ^e kôwrâh (בְּכוֹרָה) [pronounced b ^e koh-RAW]	<i>rights and responsibilities of the firstborn, privileges of the firstborn, birthright [of the firstborn], primogeniture</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1062 BDB #114

Translation: Therefore, Esau despised his birthright.

Jacob and Esau came to an agreement. Jacob would give Esau the soup; Esau gave his birthright to Jacob.

Alexander MacLaren: *Many scoffs have been directed against this story, as if it were unworthy of credence that eating a dish of lentils should have shaped the life of a man and of his descendants. But is it not always the case that trifles turn out to be determining points? Hinges are very small, compared with the doors which move on them. Most lives are moulded by insignificant events. No temptation is small, for no sin is small; and if the occasion of yielding to sense and the present is insignificant, the yielding is not so.*²⁹¹

MacLaren continues: *But the main lesson is, as already noted, the madness of flinging away greater future good for present gratifications of sense. One cannot suppose that the spiritual side of the*

²⁸⁹ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:34.

²⁹⁰ From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen119.htm> accessed June 17, 2015 (link missing on [main page](#)).

²⁹¹ From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/mac/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 18, 2015.

birthright' was in the thoughts of either brother. Esau and Jacob alike regarded it only as giving the headship of the family. It was merely the right of succession, with certain material accompanying advantages, which Jacob coveted and Esau parted with. But even in regard to merely worldly objects, the man who lives for only the present moment is distinctly beneath him who lives for a future good, however material it may be. Whoever subordinates the present, and is able steadily to set before himself a remote object, for which he is strong enough to subdue the desire of immediate gratifications of any sort, is, in so far, better than the man who, like a savage or an animal, lives only for the instant.²⁹²

The emphasis here is not upon Jacob's scheming, but upon Esau's own attitude toward his birthright. This is why God chose Jacob over Esau, knowing their attitudes from eternity past.

J. Vernon McGee: *"Esau despised his birthright" is the important thing to see at this juncture. So Esau sat down and ate his stew. He had surrendered his birthright because it meant nothing to him. Nothing that was spiritual meant anything to him. Unfortunately, I'm afraid we have church members like that. They have no spiritual capacity and no understanding of spiritual truths. I believe that the mark of a true Christian is one whom the Spirit of God can teach and guide. It is as if a man today had a very valuable heirloom, let's say an old family Bible which had belonged to his grandfather. Another grandson wants it and offers to give him a quarter for it. So the owner says, "Give me the twenty-five cents because I was going to throw the old thing away anyway." That is exactly what Esau would have done.²⁹³*

Clarke: *On this account the apostle, (Hebrews 12:16), calls Esau a profane person, because he had, by this act, alienated from himself and family those spiritual offices connected with the rights of primogeniture. While we condemn Esau for this bad action, (for he should rather have perished than have alienated this right), and while we consider it as a proof that his mind was little affected with Divine or spiritual things, what shall we say of his most unnatural brother Jacob, who refused to let him have a morsel of food to preserve him from death, unless he gave him up his birthright? Surely he who bought it, in such circumstances, was as bad as he who sold it. Thus Jacob verified his right to the name of supplanter, a name which in its first imposition appears to have had no other object in view than the circumstance of his catching his brother by the heel.²⁹⁴*

It is possible that Esau *despising* his birthright did not indicate necessarily some great welling up of emotion on Esau's part; it simply reveals that Esau did not value his birthright enough to retain it.

Matthew Henry: *Esau ate and drank and pleased his palate, he satisfied his cravings...and then carelessly rose up and went his way, without any serious reflections upon the bad bargain he had made, or any show of regret. Thus Esau despised his birthright; he used no means at all to get the bargain revoked, made no appeal to his father about it, nor proposed to his brother to compound the matter; but the bargain which his necessity had made (supposing it were so) his profaneness confirmed ex post facto - after the deed; and by his subsequent neglect and contempt he did, as it were, acknowledge a fine, and by justifying himself in what he had done he put the bargain past recall. Note, People are ruined, not so much by doing what is amiss, as by doing it and not repenting of it, doing it and standing to it.²⁹⁵*

The end of v. 34 reads: **Esau [lit., he] ate and he drank, and [finally] he rose up and went. Therefore, Esau despised his birthright.**

Then what follows are 5 actions which take place sequentially (or coterminously). That is, when wâw consecutives are strung together a series of imperfect verbs, then each verb describes a subsequent (or, coterminous) action

²⁹² From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/mac/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 18, 2015.

²⁹³ From https://archive.org/stream/01_Genesis/01-GENESIS_djvu.txt (Genesis 25) accessed June 14, 2015.

²⁹⁴ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:34.

²⁹⁵ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:29–34 (slightly edited).

to the previous verb. So Esau eats and drinks. The latter verb can indicate sitting down at a banquet, rather than drinking per se. Esau, perhaps even before sitting down, shovels some large mouthfuls of lentil soup into his starving self. As he is doing this, Jacob prepares a place for him to eat, or Esau takes the bowl over to this place. There seems to be no ceremony to this eating; what Jacob had, Esau wanted more than anything else in the world right then. And Jacob wanted that birthright.

We continue with the wâw consecutive followed by an imperfect verb. In all of this, coterminous with the action, and subsequent to his eating and leaving, Esau despises his birthright. Prior to the meal, Esau thought little of this birthright; following the meal, Esau hated his forfeited birthright.

Have you ever seen a guy who is jilted by his girl, and then, instead of pining away for his old girlfriend, he hates her and says ugly things about her? This is Esau's reaction. He did not value the birthright much in the first place; and now this lack of valuation has become animosity, insofar as one can have animus toward a promise.

Ellicott: He did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way.-These words graphically describe Esau's complete indifference to the spiritual privileges of which he had denuded himself. There is no regret, no sad feeling that he had prolonged his life at too high a cost. And if Jacob is cunning, and mean in the advantage he took of his brother, still he valued these privileges, and in the sequel he had his reward and his punishment. He was confirmed in the possession of the birthright, and became the progenitor of the chosen race, and of the Messiah.²⁹⁶

What is unclear is, *just exactly what did this birthright entail?* Nowhere in previous passages is it clearly delineated that *such and such* is the birthright of Esau specifically. Even if we assume that it is related to the rights and privileges of the firstborn, we really do not know what those are either, as they have not been spelled out as of yet (although we have some ideas as to what these **rights and privileges** were). It is in this chapter that we are studying that we begin to put together what these rights and privileges are. It is likely that, in that culture, these rights and privileges were better understood; and that most of them were cultural in nature. The line of promise did not go through the firstborn—there are innumerable examples of that (Seth is younger than Cain; Jacob is a few minutes younger than Esau; Jesus comes from the tribe of Judah and not the tribe of Reuben; etc.).

What seems to be the most reasonable is that God has made specific promises to Abraham and that some of these promises would be received not by all of his descendants but by a particular line. “**And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your visiting, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.**” (Genesis 17:7–8). Then God promised that these blessings would be fulfilled in a son by Sarai (who was 90 and barren at the time): “**And I will bless her and I will certainly give you a son by her. Then I will bless her, and she will be a mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her...Sarah your wife will bear to you a son and you will name him Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.**” (Genesis 17:16, 19). Since Isaac had two sons, it is unclear whether this promise extends to both sons or simply to the firstborn. Jacob, in this chapter, has sought to secure whatever blessing God has promised through his father's father.

Keil and Delitzsch summarize this final section.

Keil and Delitzsch summarize the exchange of the birthright for a mess of pottage

Jacob knew this [the importance of his birthright], and it led him to anticipate the purposes of God. Esau also knew it, but attached no value to it. There is proof enough that 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 in his estimation, in the words he made use of: “Behold I am going to die (to meet death), and what is the birthright to me?” The only thing of value to him was the sensual enjoyment of the present; the spiritual

²⁹⁶ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/ebc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 29, 2015.

Keil and Delitzsch summarize the exchange of the birthright for a mess of pottage

blessings of the future his carnal mind was unable to estimate. In this he showed himself to be βέβηλος (Hebrews 12:16), 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” (Genesis 25:34). With these words the Scriptures judge and condemn the conduct of Esau. Just as Ishmael was 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 frivolity with which he sold his birthright to his brother for a dish of lentils, rendered him unfit to be the heir and possessor of the promised grace.

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.

Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 25:29–34.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

All v. 34 reads: Then Jacob gave bread to Esau along with [lit., and] a lentil soup. Esau [lit., he] ate and he drank, and [finally] he rose up and went. Therefore, Esau despised his birthright.

Genesis 25:34 Then Jacob gave bread to Esau along with [lit., and] a lentil soup. Esau [lit., he] ate and he drank, and [finally] he rose up and went. Therefore, Esau despised his birthright. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 25:34 Then Jacob gave bread and a lentil soup to Esau to feast upon. Esau ate and drank, and finally he rose up and went his way. By this, Esau revealed that he despised his birthright. (Kukis paraphrase)

What should come to mind is the warning of Jesus Christ: “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?” (Matthew 16:26; ESV)

Essentially, we are looking at the difference between the temporal and the spiritual, and the value system of these two brothers. To Esau, his life was worth far more than his birthright, and that is what he believed was at stake. Jacob, on the other hand, was willing to do whatever it took to take this birthright to himself. Jacob obviously went about this in the wrong way, but he understood what was important.

Graphic of Esau selling his birthright to Jacob for a mess of pottage. Illustrators of the 1728 *Figures de la Bible*, Gerard Hoet (1648-1733) and others, published by P. de Hondt in The Hague in 1728.



An illustration of Esau selling his birthright to Jacob for a mess of pottage. Taken from:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Figures_Esau_Sells_His_Birthright_for_Pottage_of_Lentils.jpg

The New Testament makes reference to this event in Hebrews 12:14–17 **Pursue peace with all men, and separation without which no one will see the Lord; watching carefully that no one fall short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and through this many become defiled. [See to it] that there be no prostitute or profane person like Esau, who for a single meal gave away his birthright. For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for a change of mind, though he sought it diligently with tears.** Hebrews 12 appears to be a final list of admonishments, which include **rebound** (naming your sins to God and being restored to fellowship) and a return to the **production of divine good** (Hebrews 12:12–13). Believers are not to attempt to alienate every person that they meet; we are to pursue peace with all men (which includes, of course, women). Every person is to pursue holiness as well, which is first, salvation through faith in Christ; and secondly, a life marked by the production of divine good (which comes from knowing the Word of God and allowing the Holy Spirit to work through you).

God's grace is overwhelming and available to all believers; and the writer of Hebrews warns us not to fall short of it. When sins crop up, such as a root of bitterness, this is what causes trouble, and through bitterness, which sin is used here as an example, many people are defiled.

The writer gives two examples of those who fall short of the grace of God: the person who is sexually immoral and men who are simply ungodly or profane, and then the example of Esau is given. Esau falls short of the grace of God. For a mess of pottage, for a meal of lentil bean soup, Esau sold his birthright. In the context of Hebrews 12, we are not speaking of unbelievers, but believers who are sexually immoral and believers who are ungodly—they can fall short of the grace of God. Esau illustrates this: he does believe in the Revealed Lord; but he has taken his life no further. God gave him an inheritance as the firstborn, and Esau saw this one meal as being more important.

The Expository Files: We do not usually use the word today for what it originally meant. Today, we immediately think of coarse, suggestive, lewd, vulgar language. Well, those things are profanities, but the definition of profane as used in Scripture is much wider than that. It means a lack of holiness. If you take something holy and good, and treat it with contempt, then you have profaned it. To treat the things of God as ordinary is to profane or despise them. It shows a lack of godliness. And that is what the New Testament says about Esau. He was immoral, and lacked concern for pleasing God. His spiritual blessings and responsibilities meant nothing to him. The Lord tells us to be sure we are not like Esau in this, that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. (Hebrews 12:16).²⁹⁷

Application: We learn his a bitter lesson between the things of the earth and the things of the spirit. We all live in the physical world, and we are subject to time and space and to our own infirmities. However, the promises of God—the promises of Jesus Christ Himself—inform us that we are not of this world, but only in it, and that God has prepared so much greater for us upon our natural exit from this earth. None of that is at issue with Esau; he is hungry, his birthright may seem to be more symbolic than real, and he is willing to set this aside to satisfy his appetite right now. We face this same sort of temptation almost daily. Our eyes are to be heavenward (that is, we are to be thinking doctrine). We need to focus on Jesus Christ. Quite obviously, we cannot see Him and we have no idea what He looks like, so that we must focus upon Him from our soul—more accurately, from our human spirit. Of course there are temptations of life before us, all designed to derail our spiritual lives—but our focus should be upon the Risen Lord, to guide us through this battlefield of mines.

What would have happened had Esau not done this? In the short term, Esau probably would have fainted before Jacob, and then Jacob would have to determine whether or not to try to revive him. I suspect that, whether they were alone at this time or with family, Jacob could not simply allow his brother to die. Therefore, the worst case scenario for Esau would be to faint in front of Jacob, and this would require Jacob to revive him.

Genesis 25:34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and soup of lentils. And he ate and drank, and rose up and went his way. And Esau despised his birthright.

²⁹⁷ From <http://www.bible.ca/ef/expository-genesis-25-29-34.htm> accessed July 1, 2015.

The final phrase is quite interesting. Years later, when receiving the blessing from their father Isaac, Jacob again supplanted Esau, receiving the greater blessing from their father Isaac. However, there was no undoing what Isaac said in blessing Jacob, despite the emotional investment of Esau. See Genesis 27:27–41 (which passage we will exegete in the future).

Matthew Henry: *If we look on Esau's birthright as only a temporal advantage, what he said had something of truth in it, namely, that our worldly enjoyments, even those we are most fond of, will stand us in no stead in a dying hour (Psalm 49:6-8); they will not put by the stroke of death, nor ease the pangs nor remove the sting: yet Esau, who set up for a gentleman, should have had a greater and more noble spirit than to sell even such an honour so cheaply. But, being of a spiritual nature, his undervaluing it was the greatest profaneness imaginable. Note, It is egregious folly to part with our interest in God, and Christ, and heaven, for the riches, honours, and pleasures, of this world, as bad a bargain as his that sold a birthright for a dish of broth.*²⁹⁸

I have quoted from Mal. 1 thrice already; and, now that we have read and studied the end of this chapter, let me repeat this great quote from Newell: "A woman once said to Mr. Spurgeon, 'I cannot understand why God should say that He hated Esau.' 'That,' Spurgeon replied, 'is not my difficulty, madam. My trouble is to understand how God could love Jacob.'"²⁹⁹

Robert Dean: *Hebrews 12:15, "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled." What is the relationship of looking diligently [carefully] with the main verb which appears in the previous verse. This is an adverbial participle of means, and any participle that comes along after an imperative verb is going to tell us something about how to achieve, to implement the mandate in the imperative verb. One way we pursue peace with all is by looking carefully at our own lives, to give close examination to what is going on inside of our own soul. Because what happens when there are people tests, when people don't treat us the way we should be treated, we have a tendency to react with anger, with resentment, with bitterness, with hostility. When we react, we fall short of grace orientation, we fall short of applying the grace of God in that situation. The "root of bitterness" is a root that sinks down in the soil of mental attitude sins that then bears fruit in many other mental attitude sins.*³⁰⁰

Dean continues: *The illustration of the person who responds in bitterness is Esau. Hebrews 12:16, "Lest there be any fornicator, or godless person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." The...word "fornicator" is...generally translated "immoral" but it is a word that relates to a male or female that has prostituted themselves for personal gain, and this is exactly what Esau does by selling his birthright. He is more concerned about his own immediately pleasure and selling his birthright for personal gain than he is for the long-range value of his birthright. The second word "godless" is the Greek word BEBELOS [bebhløj], a word that is used in contrast to HAGIOS [a(gioj)] or holy, which means to be set apart for the service of God and thus is holy. Something that is not set apart for the purpose of God but was for everyday use, that people used in any situation, is something that would be called profane or common. Thus the word BIBELOS means something that is used in a common or profane manner. That is, either pointless or worthless, in other case that which is worldly, that lacks eternal values or lacks God's values. So what Hebrews 12:16 is saying is, Lest there be anyone among you who is prostituting or selling their birthright for personal gain and the immediate present, or a person who has values inconsistent with their position in God's royal family, like Esau who for a morsel of food sold his birthright. As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ we are members of the royal family of God and we have a royal identity, and God has given us a destiny to rule and reign with the Lord Jesus Christ. When we get involved in mental attitude sin and sins of the*

²⁹⁸ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:29–34.

²⁹⁹ David Guzik's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; Genesis 25:19–26. Taken from Newell in *Romans, Verse by Verse*.

³⁰⁰ From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen119.htm> accessed June 17, 2015 (link missing on [main page](#)).

tongue, in any kind of carnality, what we are doing is we are prostituting our future position with Christ for satisfying present fleshly [i.e. sin nature] satisfaction. That is the picture of Esau.

And Dean concludes: Hebrews 12:17, *"For you know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."* He has entered into a contract by swearing to Jacob that he would give him the birthright, and that is what it means that he found no place for repentance [change]. There could not be a reversal of the deal. Afterward he understood what he had done, what he had lost, but he couldn't reverse it. And this is a picture of what is going to happen with a vast number of believers who, according to 1 John 2:28, are going to have shame and embarrassment at the judgment seat of Christ, they are going to have all of their works burned up, and they are going to enter heaven "yet as through fire," and it is because they were more concerned with satisfying the immediate trends of their sin nature, the lust patterns of their sin nature, rather than focusing on eternal priorities and postponing gratification for the Millennial kingdom.³⁰¹

Wenstrom: Esau never did understand the spiritual issues involved since he was soulish man and uninterested in the things of the Lord as manifested in his exchanging his birthright for a bowl of red lentil soup. The fact that Esau was a naturally minded or soulish man and not a spiritual man is the reason why he never understood spiritual issues. 1Corinthians 2:14, *"But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised."*³⁰²

In this chapter, Jacob gains the birthright of Esau in exchange for a mess of pottage (some lentil soup). In the next chapter, Jacob will supplant Esau by pretending to be him, and gain this birthright again through deception.

The Bible Query on, *Did Jacob gain his birthright by buying or lying?*

Q: In Gen 25:31-33, was Jacob's birthright gained by buying, or by lying?

A: Both.

1. Jacob "bought" it from Esau for a bowl of lentils (Genesis 25:29-34).
2. Jacob later deceived Isaac to the birthright Esau had already chosen to relinquish. (Genesis 27:19) Haley's Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible p.345 points out that Jacob bought only the birthright, but lied to get the blessing.

Independent of both the purchase and the deception, God chose to have His people, the Jews, come through Jacob Genesis 26:24-24).

Bible Query; March 2006 version. Copyright (c) Christian Debater(tm) 1997-2006.; from e-Sword, Genesis 25:31.

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When Critics Ask answers the same question.

When Critics Ask, *Did Jacob purchase his birthright or get it by deception?*

GENESIS 25:31–33 —Did Jacob purchase the birthright or get it by deception?

PROBLEM: This text says Esau was asked by Jacob to "sell" him the birthright. But Genesis 29:1ff tells how he got it by deception.

SOLUTION: Jacob purchased the "birthright," but he got the "blessing" by deception. These are distinct things. So there is no real discrepancy.

³⁰¹ From <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen119.htm> accessed June 17, 2015 (link missing on [main page](#)).

³⁰² From https://www.gracenotes.info/bible_studies/genesis.pdf (Genesis 28:8–9); accessed May 28, 2017.

Normal Geisler and Thomas Howe, *When Critics Ask*; Victor Books; taken from e-Sword, Genesis 25:31.

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The ESV is used below.

Blessing Enjoyed by the Believer in Jesus Christ in the Church Age

Eph 1:3–4a Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as He [God the Father] chose us in Him [Jesus Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.

God the Father is the subject of the verbs here. He blesses us in Christ with every spiritual blessing, meaning that we are equipped for life spiritually and will enjoy great blessing in eternity.

Ephesians 1:4b–6 In love He predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which He has blessed us in the Beloved.

God intended from eternity past to adopt us as His sons; but this is due to the work of Christ Jesus.

Eph 1:7–10 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of His will, according to His purpose, which He set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Him, things in heaven and things on earth.

Jesus Christ purchased us with His blood (His spiritual death before God).

Eph 1:11–12 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of His glory.

God also gives to us an inheritance, which is received partially on earth; and partially in eternity future.

Eph 1:13–14 In Him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in Him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (ESV; capitalized)

God the Holy Spirit has sealed us at the moment of faith in Jesus Christ.

Esau set aside his spiritual blessing for a mess of pottage. Paul tells us about our great spiritual inheritance in this passage.

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Snider summarizes the final section.

Snider Summarizes Genesis 25:29–34

1. vs 29-34 contain an incident which occurred at some point in the lives of the two boys.
2. The incident may have appeared to be trivial or inconsequential at the time, but was fraught with tremendous ramifications.
3. Jacob is around the tent doing his normal thing and has prepared a meal.
4. Esau has been out in the field doing his normal thing, hunting, etc. and returns very hungry.
5. With a ravenous appetite, Esau could not restrain himself, and can think of nothing but getting food into

Snider Summarizes Genesis 25:29–34

- his stomach.
6. He does not use the normal word for eat, but a word which means to gulp or swallow down
 7. He is in such a hurry to eat, he does not even name the food, but just says give me some of that red
 8. Moses inserts a note here that he came to be known as Edom, based on this incident.
 9. We already know that he was a red head, so this name is doubly accurate for him.
 10. We know that Rebekah and Isaac knew the prophecy about the two boys and their respective futures.
 11. What we do not know is whether or not they related these facts to the boys.
 12. If Jacob knew the prophecy, which would seem likely due to his closeness with his mother, all that he does here is unnecessary.
 13. The problem with Jacob, which we will observe over and over is that he thought that he had to help God fulfill His promises.
 14. This is exactly what we see in this incident.
 15. He is desirous of the birthright, which indicates his understanding of the importance of the spiritual promises made to Abraham.
 16. His desire is an evidence of his faith in doctrine and the fact that he believed the promises.
 17. How he goes about achieving a bonafide goal is another matter.
 18. He offers to give food to Esau, for the trade of the birthright.
 19. Esau, on the other hand, evidences his mentality by the priority of the physical and the subordination of the spiritual.
 20. For Esau the important things in life were hunting, fishing, eating, drinking and fornication.
 21. He is a perfect example of the negative unbeliever who can only see the here and now, with no perception of that which is truly valuable.
 22. He believes that man can live by bread alone.
 23. While Jacob had distinct spiritual aspirations, Esau had none.
 24. The statement about impending death does not mean that Esau thought he was on the verge of death.
 25. It does indicate that he knew that his profession was dangerous and that he could be killed at any time.
 26. His final statement in vs 32 displays his true MA in regard to spiritual things.
 27. He had no desire for or appreciation of any spiritual advantage which the birthright brought him.
 28. He disdains that which is spiritual and not tangible, and seems to espouse the idea that death is final, indicating a lack of belief in resurrection and SG3.
 29. For that type of person the WOG and spiritual issues have no meaning, their mentality is eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die.
 30. Jacob wants to insure that a hasty promise is not soon regretted or forgotten, so he commands Esau to swear an oath.
 31. Even the very serious thought of making an oath does not bother Esau, he just wants his food.
 32. He voluntarily swears away the birthright to his twin, Jacob.
 33. Jacob fulfills his obligation and gives Esau a meal of bread and the stew which he had been cooking.
 34. The casual way in which Esau eats and drinks, rises and moves on indicates that nothing of any consequence had occurred.
 35. Jacob has attempted to purchase that which was already truly his, and Esau has sold what he never
 36. The final comment in vs 34 gives the true MA of Esau in regard to the birthright.
 37. Heb. 12:16-17 give further information as to the character of Esau:
 - 1) He was an immoral person concerned with temporary gratification. Gen. 26:34-35, 28:6-9
 - 2) He rejected his parents authority in regard to women and pursued those he desired.
 - 3) He was a profane person keyed in to the temporal cosmic view and not concerned or interested in spiritual matters.
 - 4) All that was truly important, he swapped for a single meal.
 38. This explains why God had chosen Jacob and not Esau, based on his foreknowledge of the type of person Esau was.
 39. Jacob is not condemned by the WOG for this activity, Esau is severely criticized by the WORD OF GOD.
 40. While Esau will later complain of Jacob's attempt to supplant him, it must be noted that he gave away

Snider Summarizes Genesis 25:29–34

his birthright, Jacob did not steal it.

From <http://makarios-online.org/notes/genesis/gen25.doc> accessed June 16, 2015.

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Wenham: *[T]he author of Genesis has deliberately split the Jacob-Joseph story into two parts by putting the family history of Esau Genesis 36:1 to Genesis 37:1 in the middle. This allows him to alternate the genealogies of the non-elect lines of Ishmael (Genesis 25:12-18) and Esau (Genesis 36:1 to Genesis 37:1) with the fuller family histories of the chosen lines of Terah (Abraham) (Genesis 11:27 to Genesis 25:11), Isaac (Jacob) (Genesis 25:19 to Genesis 35:29), and Jacob (Joseph) (Genesis 37:2 to Genesis 50:26) to produce a total of five patriarchal family histories. This matches the five family histories of pre-patriarchal times.*³⁰³ Although that is an interesting take, the patriarchal period mostly covers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and Joseph. The two lines not related to promise are interspersed.

These were very odd things to add by way of commentary.

Trapp's Very Weird Commentary

Genesis 25:33 [And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.](#)

Trapp: *Esau to go a hunting: but yet the more he used it the more profane he grew by it, and came at length to condemn his birthright. Adrian the emperor was a great hunter; broke his leg in hunting; called a city that he built in Mysia, by the name of Adrian's huntings: but how little care he took for his poor soul, that Animula vagula blandula of his, abundantly testifieth. The maddest hunter that ever I read of was Mithridates; who was so set upon it, that he came not into any house, either of city or country for seven years together. To lawful delights and recreations, God allows men to stoop, for their bodies' sake; as the eagle to the prey, or as Gideon's soldiers, to soop their handful, not to gorge their bellyful. An honest man's heart is where his calling is: such a one, when he is elsewhere, is like a fish in the air, whereunto if it leap for recreation or necessity, yet it soon returns to its own element.*

Genesis 25:34 [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.](#)

Trapp: *Wine is a prohibited ware among Turks; which makes some drink with scruple, others with danger. The baser sort, when taken drunk, are often caned on the soles of their bare feet. And I have seen some, saith mine author, after a fit of drunkenness, lie a whole night, crying and praying to Mohammed for intercession, that I could not sleep near them; so strong is conscience, even where the foundation is but imaginary, to the shame of many profligate professors - cauterised Christians.*

From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jtc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 14, 2015 I removed Trapp's reference and footnotes, which can be found on that page. This comments just seemed quite weird to me and I had to share them.

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³⁰³ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/dcc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=25> accessed June 29, 2015. Constable cites Wenham, Genesis 16-50, p. 168.

A Set of Summary Doctrines and Commentary

An Abbreviated Exegesis of Genesis 25:

Bible translation used: The Scriptures 2009. Unless otherwise noted, all other quotations will be taken from this translation as well.

In the Scriptures 2009, instead of *God*, we have the word *Elohim*, which is a transliteration from the Hebrew. The other name for God, YHWH (or Jehovah, Yahweh, Adonai, Lord, JHWH, Y^ehowah) is represented with the actual Hebrew יהוה. The reason for there being so many different words used here is interesting. Originally, the Hebrew was written without vowels—not just YHWH, but every single Hebrew word. Because the Hebrew Scriptures (which we know as the Old Testament) were read aloud so often, the reader could look at the Hebrew consonants and know the word that was there. In fact, the Masoretes, who preserved the Bibles' pronunciation, introduced diacritical marks in the 7th century A.D. (these are vowel points, which was added above and below the original Hebrew text). Up to that time, every word in the Bible was read aloud except for one, and that was YHWH. When the Jews came to this proper name, they said, *Adonai* (= *Lord*). As a result, the Jews preserved the pronunciation of the Biblical text for all but one word. Of the nearly 100 translations of the Old Testament to which I refer, any one of those eight forms may be found—and one of them, the Message (I believe) uses *GOD*. Furthermore, Bible translations are not necessarily consistent at this point. One place we may read *Lord*, and elsewhere we may read *Jehovah* in the same translation.

This is a chapter with a variety of diverse topics.

The Various Topics of Genesis 25

vv. 1–6	Abraham's Arabic Descendants
vv. 7–11	Abraham's Death and Burial
vv. 12–18	The Line of Ishmael
vv. 19–26	The Birth of Jacob and Esau
vv. 27–34	Esau Sells His Birthright to Jacob for some Bean Soup

Abraham's Arabic Descendants

God promised Abraham that he would be the father of many nations. Today, these nations make up the middle east.

Genesis 25:1 **And Abraham took another wife, whose name was Qeturah [= Keturah].**

Sarah has died, but God restored Abraham's sexual ability and so he remarried. He married a woman named Keturah and he has six children by her.

Genesis 25:2 **And she bore him Zimran, and Yoqshan, and Medan, and Midyan, and Yishbaq, and Shuwaḥ.**

The six children are Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah (you will see these spellings more often; but the spellings of the Scriptures 2009 are closer to the Hebrew).

Genesis 25:3 **And Yoqshan brought forth Sheḇa and Deḏan. And the sons of Deḏan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Le'ummim.**

Isaac and Ishmael when they were young, these problems appear to have been set aside for the death of their father.

Genesis 25:11 And it came to be, after the death of Abraham, that Elohim blessed his son Yitshaq. And Yitshaq dwelt at Be'ēr Laḥai Ro'i.

God blessed Isaac and he lived in Beer-lahai-roi.

The Line of Ishmael

Genesis 25:12 And this is the genealogy of Yishma'el [= Ishmael], Abraham's son, whom Haḡar the Mitsrian [= Egyptian], Sarah's female servant, bore to Abraham.

I don't think that someone decided, *now is a great place for a genealogy, so let's add in Ishmael's*. Ishmael was a believer in the Revealed God and so were these sons. Even though Ishmael was not in the line of promise, this does not mean that he was somehow an awful person and an unbeliever to boot. He had twelve sons and a nation or nations came from him. No doubt, his sons named below believed in the Revealed God as well.

So, why did God reject Ishmael—a believer in Him—but accept Isaac? When God looked at Ishmael and Isaac, He does not look at their day-to-day life, their victories and their lapses in faith. God sees them, their son(s), and their descendants for as far as God wants to see. Isaac's line leads the Jesus Christ. That is the line of promise. Ishmael's line does not. So the promises do not go with Ishmael. There is every indication that, for a time, Ishmael and his sons led good and successful lives, and some of their names even survive to this day in the Middle East.

Genesis 25:13–15 And these were the names of the sons of Yishma'el, by their names, according to their generations: The first-born of Yishma'el, Nebayoth; then Qēḡar, and Adbe'el, and Mibsam, and Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, Ḥaḡar, and Tēma, Yetur, Naphish, and Qēḡemah.

The ESV on the names of Ishmael's sons: Nebaioth, the firstborn of Ishmael; and Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

Genesis 25:16 These were the sons of Yishma'el and these were their names, by their towns and their settlements, twelve chiefs according to their tribes.

Great cities and settlements came from these various sons.

Genesis 25:17 And these were the years of the life of Yishma'el: one hundred and thirty-seven years. And he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people.

Ishmael lived to age 137. He also lived a long full life.

Genesis 25:18 And they dwelt from Ḥawilah [= Havilah] as far as Shur, which is east of Mitsrayim [= Egypt] as you go toward Asshur [= Assyria]. He settled before all his brothers.

He probably refers to Ishmael and *brothers* can be translated *kinsmen, relatives*. His family was very successful in this region.

The Birth of Jacob and Esau

Genesis 25:19 And this is the genealogy of Yitshaq [= Isaac], Abraham's son. Abraham brought forth Yitshaq.

The line of promise goes through Abraham to Isaac.

Genesis 25:20 And Yitshaq was forty years old when he took Ribqah [= Rebekah] as wife, the daughter of Bethu'el the Aramean of Paddan Aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean.

The relations in the Haran region are given in several places in the Bible. This family has believed in the Revealed God, but their genealogy will apparently not go anywhere unless connected to Abraham's direct descendants.

Genesis 25:21 And Yitshaq prayed to הוהי [= YHWH, Y^ehowah] for his wife, because she was barren. And הוהי answered his prayer, and Ribqah his wife conceived.

There was a period of about 20 years during which Rebekah was barren.

Genesis 25:22 And within her the children struggled together, and she said, "If all is right, why am I this way?" So she went to ask הוהי.

When she became pregnant, it was as if her two sons were struggling together inside of her. She knows that this is God's will to have sons, but she asks, "Is this right, for me to have all of this trouble?"

Genesis 25:23 And הוהי said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples shall be separated from your body. And one people shall be stronger than the other, and the older serve the younger."

God tells her that this foretells the future, that her two sons will be at odds with one another, but the older will serve the younger.

Interestingly enough, she will favor the younger son and Isaac the older.

Genesis 25:24 And when the days were filled for her to give birth, and see, twins were in her womb!

She gives birth to twins.

Genesis 25:25 And the first came out red all over, like a hairy garment, so they called his name Ęsaw.

The first comes out of the womb red all over and covered with hair. He is called Esau, which I believe means, *red, reddish brown*.

Genesis 25:26 And afterward his brother came out, with his hand holding on to Ęsaw's heel, so his name was called Ya'aqob [= Jacob]. And Yitshaq [= Isaac] was sixty years old when she [Rebekah] bore them.

Jacob will exit her womb after Esau, and his hand is holding onto his brother's heel.

Isaac married Rebekah at age 40; and he sires these two sons at age 60.

Esau Sells His Birthright to Jacob for some Bean Soup

Genesis 25:27 And the boys grew up. And Ęsaw became a man knowing how to hunt, a man of the field, while Ya'aqob was a complete man, dwelling in tents.

Esau grew up to be a hunter and Jacob lived in tents.

It says here that Jacob is a complete man. The word is rendered, *quiet, simple, plain, ordinary, flawless*. As we will see, Jacob is anything but flawless. He will become spiritually mature, but not until the end of the book of Genesis. Notice we are only about halfway through this book right now.

At this point in time, Jacob appears to be quiet, simple and ordinary. He hung out mostly with his mother.

Genesis 25:28 And Yitshaq loved Ęsaw because he ate of his wild game, but Ribqah loved Ya'aqob.

Isaac loved eating the wild game that Esau hunted; and Rebekah favors Jacob.

Genesis 25:29 *And Ya'aqob* cooked a stew, and *Ĕsaw* came in from the field, and he was weary.

Not every hunting venture was successful. Esau went out on one and went for days without a full meal. He returned home starving and tired.

Genesis 25:30 *And Ĕsaw* said to *Ya'aqob*, "Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary." That is why his name was called *E*dom.

Esau sees the red bean stew that Jacob has made and he wants it badly.

Genesis 25:31 *But Ya'aqob* said, "Sell me your birthright today."

Jacob tells him, "Sell me your birthright, and this will be all you can eat."

Genesis 25:32 *And Ĕsaw* said, "Look, I am going to die, so why should I have birthright?"

Esau, as the eldest, recognizes that his birthright is no good if he dies. So he is willing to give it to Jacob, so that he might live another day.

Genesis 25:33 *Then Ya'aqob* said, "Swear to me today." And he swore to him, and sold his birthright to *Ya'aqob*.

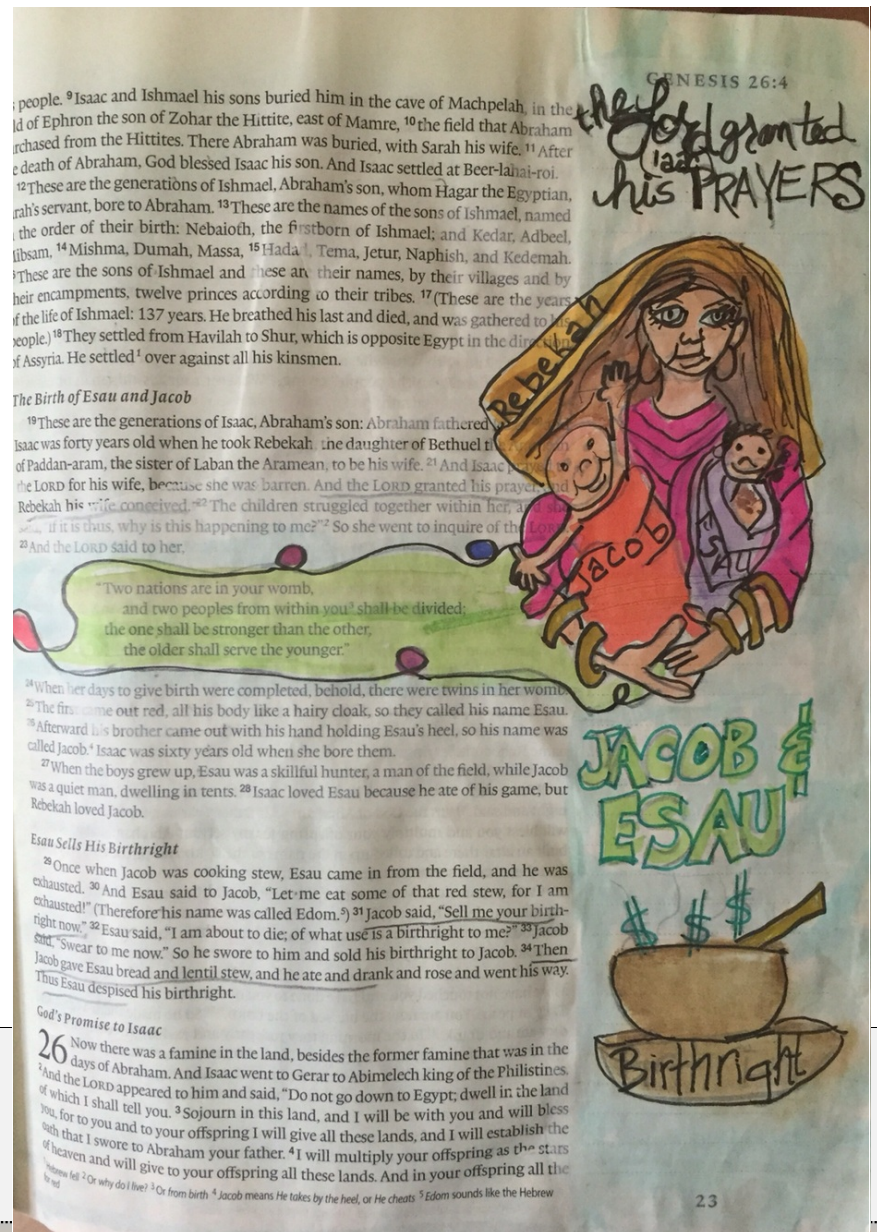
Esau sells his birthright to Jacob for some bean soup and bread.

Genesis 25:34 *Ya'aqob* then gave *Ĕsaw* bread and stew of lentils. And he ate and drank, and rose up and left. Thus *Ĕsaw* despised his birthright.

Having eaten the meal that Jacob made, Esau ate it, was satisfied, and left. He is apparently angry about his birthright.

Addendum

Jacob and Esau—Bible Art possibly by Linda Lawson (a graphic); from Pinterest; accessed June 5, 2017.



There appears to be a much larger chiasm, spread over several chapters. It is difficult to determine where to place this particular chiasm. I will probably place it at the end of Genesis 35 as well.

Constable and Fishbane on the Chiasm of Genesis 25:19–35:22

- A Oracle sought; Rebekah struggles in childbirth; bekorah birthright; birth; themes of strife, deception, fertility (Genesis 25:19-34).
- B Interlude: strife; deception; berakah blessing; covenant with foreigner (Genesis 26).
- C Deception; berakah stolen; fear of Esau; flight from land (Genesis 27:1 to Genesis 28:9).
- D Encounter with the divine at sacred site near border; berakah (Genesis 28:10-22).
- E Internal cycle opens: arrival; Laban at border; deception; wages; Rachel barren; Leah fertile (Genesis 29:1 to Genesis 30:21).
- F Rachel fertile; Jacob increases the herds (Genesis 30:22-43).
- E' Internal cycle closes: departure; Laban at border; deception; wages (Genesis 31).
- D' Encounters with divine beings at sacred sites near border; berakah (Genesis 32).
- C' Deception planned; fear of Esau; berakah gift returned; return to land (Genesis 33).
- B' Interlude: strife; deception; covenant with foreigner (Genesis 34).
- A' Oracle fulfilled; Rachel struggles in childbirth; berakah; death resolutions (Genesis 35:1-22)."

Constable: *The Flood story also has a palistrophic structure, and both stories have a similar statement at the middle (turning point): God remembered Noah (Genesis 8:1) and God remembered Rachel (Genesis 30:22). This emphasizes that God controls events and saves His people.*

Wenham: *the author of Genesis has deliberately split the Jacob–Joseph story into two parts by putting the family history of Esau Genesis 36:1 to Genesis 37:1 in the middle. This allows him to alternate the genealogies of the non–elect lines of Ishmael (Genesis 25:12–18) and Esau (Genesis 36:1 to Genesis 37:1) with the fuller family histories of the chosen lines of Terah (Abraham) (Genesis 11:27 to Genesis 25:11), Isaac (Jacob) (Genesis 25:19 to Genesis 35:29), and Jacob (Joseph) (Genesis 37:2 to Genesis 50:26) to produce a total of five patriarchal family histories. This matches the five family histories of pre–patriarchal times.*

Constable's Commentary, accessed June 29, 2015; and he appears to be citing Ross *Creation and Blessing*; and Fishbane, p. 42; Wenham, Genesis 16–50, p. 169; Waltke, Genesis, p. 352.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

This breaks down the sections almost identically to above, but has better summaries, which are more obviously parallel.

Scott Grant: A Better Chiasm of Genesis 25:19–35:22

- A Births / Jacob and nation chosen (25:19–24)
 - B Digression: Isaac (and Rebekah) vs. the Philistines (26:1–33)
 - C Jacob steals Esau's blessing (26:34–28:9)
 - D Encounter with angels at Bethel (28:10–22)
 - E Arrival at Haran / Conflict with Laban (29:1–30)
 - X Rachel vs. Leah: Birth of sons (29:31–30:24)
 - E' Defeat of Laban / Departure from Haran (30:25–31:55)
 - D' Encounter with angels at Mahanaim and Peniel (32:1–32)
 - C' Jacob reconciles with Esau (33:1–17)
 - B' Digression: Dinah (and Jacob) vs. Hivites (33:18–34:31)
- A' Births and deaths / Establishment of chosen nation (35:1–29)

From http://www.pbc.org/system/message_files/99649/4865.pdf accessed July 2, 2015.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

The idea here is, there are things which we find in this chapter which are extremely important.

Why Genesis 25 is in the Word of God

1. Abraham's children, who became the Arab peoples, is recorded.
2. God promised Abraham that kings and kingdoms would come from him (Genesis 17:4–6). Even though there is very little information provided here, these children will become kings and kingdoms in the near future.
3. Abraham's death is recorded. Both Isaac and Ishmael reunite for his funeral; and there appears to be no antagonism between them (most of the antagonism would have been between their mothers).
4. Ishmael's children will also be listed; and they also become the leaders of Arabic groups and peoples.
5. Ishmael's death is recorded.
6. Interestingly enough, Rebekah prays to God and receives what appears to be a direct answer from the Revealed God (in Genesis 25:23). God also spoke directly to Hagar, many years previous to this. This is another example where the Bible would be seen to be very pro-woman.
7. The birth of Jacob and Esau is recorded.
8. Some of the characteristics of Jacob and Esau are noted, which help to explain subsequent narratives in this chapter and the next. These characteristics are carried over into their descendants, who become

Why Genesis 25 is in the Word of God

more antagonistic toward each other than Jacob and Esau were.

9. Jacob purchases Esau's birthright from him for the cost of a meal. This has very long-term spiritual implications, some of which are discussed in the New Testament (2000 years later).

As you can see, this is a very important chapter in the Word of God, with both prophecies and prophecy fulfillments.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

These are things which we learn while studying this particular chapter.

What We Learn from Genesis 25

1. We saw how Keturah was probably Abraham's wife *after* Sarah had died.
2. We saw how dramatically United States culture has changed over the past 50 years, and how we have moved away from the gospel and from Bible teaching.
3. We've examined the descendants of Keturah.
4. We have examined the Bible and what it teaches about wealth and spreading the wealth around.
5. Abraham lives a good, full life, and enjoys dying grace as well.
6. We extensively study Abraham's name in the New Testament, and how he is spoken of. Nearly every reference to Abraham is studied (excluding those passages which have been previously studied).
7. We studied the Coniah Curse, which is a marvelous illustration of the old sin nature.
8. We studied how the sadducees asked questions of Jesus about things they did not really believe in. They simply came up with an argument that seemed too good. We have several contemporary applications of this used by political liberals.
9. We studied the narrative of Jesus and the rich tax collector; a story rarely recounted today.
10. We saw just how incredible some miracles were—those done by Jesus and those done by the Apostles.
11. We saw how many Old Testament passages are given a new meaning in the New Testament; but not one which necessarily nullifies their meaning from the Old.
12. We spend a little time studying European socialism and the history of the United States and our founders.
13. We examined the concept of repentance of sins, as found in the Bible.
14. We spent some time on the establishment of the New Testament, and how this was an organic process, not some decision handed down from some powerful religious organization.
15. The Law is a barrier between us and God; Jesus is our Mediator.
16. We saw how the Ark of the Covenant was a type of Christ.
17. We also studied the Tabernacle and the Temple, and why God chose Solomon to build the Temple.
18. We studied the two kinds of genealogies and briefly studied the children of Ishmael.
19. We studied the doctrine of the human soul and the human spirit.
20. We discussed 5 point Calvinism versus the concept of free will.
21. We viewed the doctrine of morality.
22. We tried to determine what the rights of the firstborn actually were; and what Jacob actually understood at this time.
23. We saw how the emphasis on Jacob and Esau was not really on Jacob, but upon Esau's regard for his birthright.

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The ancient historian Josephus seems to take the Old Testament texts at face value and uses them to record the history of this era.

Josephus' History of this Time Period

CHAPTER 17. CONCERNING THE DEATH OF ABRAHAM

A LITTLE while after this Abraham died. He was a man of incomparable virtue, and honored by God in a manner agreeable to his piety towards him. The whole time of his life was one hundred seventy and five years, and he was buried in Hebron, with his wife Sarah, by their sons Isaac and Ismael.

CHAPTER 18. CONCERNING THE SONS OF ISAAC, ESAU AND JACOB; OF THEIR NATIVITY AND EDUCATION

1. NOW Isaac's wife proved with child, after the death of Abraham; (30) and when her belly was greatly burdened, Isaac was very anxious, and inquired of God; who answered, that Rebeka should bear twins; and that two nations should take the names of those sons; and that he who appeared the second should excel the elder. Accordingly she, in a little time, as God had foretold, bare twins; the elder of whom, from his head to his feet, was very rough and hairy; but the younger took hold of his heel as they were in the birth. Now the father loved the elder, who was called Esau, a name agreeable to his roughness, for the Hebrews call such a hairy roughness [Esau, (31) or] Seir; but Jacob the younger was best beloved by his mother.

2. When there was a famine in the land, Isaac resolved to go into Egypt, the land there being good; but he went to Gerar, as God commanded him. Here Abimelech the king received him, because Abraham had formerly lived with him, and had been his friend. And as in the beginning he treated him exceeding kindly, so he was hindered from continuing in the same disposition to the end, by his envy at him; for when he saw that God was with Isaac, and took such great care of him, he drove him away from him. But Isaac, when he saw how envy had changed the temper of Abimelech retired to a place called the Valley, not far from Gerar: and as he was digging a well, the shepherds fell upon him, and began to fight, in order to hinder the work; and because he did not desire to contend, the shepherds seemed to get the him, so he still retired, and dug another and when certain other shepherds of Abimelech began to offer him violence, he left that also, still retired, thus purchasing security to himself a rational and prudent conduct. At length the gave him leave to dig a well without disturbance. He named this well Rehoboth, which denotes a large space; but of the former wells, one was called Escon, which denotes strife, the other Sitenna, name signifies enmity.

3. It was now that Isaac's affairs increased, and in a flourishing condition; and this his great riches. But Abimelech, thinking in opposition to him, while their living made them suspicious of each other, and retiring showing a secret enmity also, he afraid that his former friendship with Isaac would not secure him, if Isaac should endeavor the injuries he had formerly offered him; he therefore renewed his friendship with him, Philoc, one of his generals. And when he had obtained every thing he desired, by reason of Isaac's good nature, who preferred the earlier friendship Abimelech had shown to himself and his father to his later wrath against him, he returned home.

4. Now when Esau, one of the sons of Isaac, whom the father principally loved, was now come to the age of forty years, he married Adah, the daughter of Helon, and Aholibamah, the daughter of Esebeon; which Helon and Esebeon were great lords among the Canaanites: thereby taking upon himself the authority, and pretending to have dominion over his own marriages, without so much as asking the advice of his father; for had Isaac been the arbitrator, he had not given him leave to marry thus, for he was not pleased with contracting any alliance with the people of that country; but not caring to be uneasy to his son by commanding him to put away these wives, he resolved to be silent.

5. But when he was old, and could not see at all, he called Esau to him, and told him, that besides his blindness, and the disorder of his eyes, his very old age hindered him from his worship of God [by sacrifice]; he bid him therefore to go out a hunting, and when he had caught as much venison as he could, to prepare him a supper (32) that after this he might make supplication to God, to be to him a supporter and an assister during the whole time of his life; saying, that it was uncertain when he should die, and that he was desirous, by prayers for him, to procure, beforehand, God to be merciful to him.

Josephus' History of this Time Period

6. Accordingly, Esau went out a hunting. But Rebeka (33) thinking it proper to have the supplication made for obtaining the favor of God to Jacob, and that without the consent of Isaac, bid him kill kids of the goats, and prepare a supper. So Jacob obeyed his mother, according to all her instructions. Now when the supper was got ready, he took a goat's skin, and put it about his arm, that by reason of its hairy roughness, he might by his father be believed to be Esau; for they being twins, and in all things else alike, differed only in this thing. This was done out of his fear, that before his father had made his supplications, he should be caught in his evil practice, and lest he should, on the contrary, provoke his father to curse him. So he brought in the supper to his father. Isaac perceivest to be Esau." So suspecting no deceit, he ate the supper, and betook himself to his prayers and intercessions with God; and said, "O Lord of all ages, and Creator of all substance; for it was thou that didst propose to my father great plenty of good things, and hast vouchsafed to bestow on me what I have; and hast promised to my posterity to be their kind supporter, and to bestow on them still greater blessings; do thou therefore confirm these thy promises, and do not overlook me, because of my present weak condition, on account of which I most earnestly pray to thee. Be gracious to this my son; and preserve him and keep him from every thing that is evil. Give him a happy life, and the possession of as many good things as thy power is able to bestow. Make him terrible to his enemies, and honorable and beloved among his friends."

7. Thus did Isaac pray to God, thinking his prayers had been made for Esau. He had but just finished them, when Esau came in from hunting. And when Isaac perceived his mistake, he was silent: but Esau required that he might be made partaker of the like blessing from his father that his brother had partook of; but his father refused it, because all his prayers had been spent upon Jacob: so Esau lamented the mistake. However, his father being grieved at his weeping, said, that "he should excel in hunting and strength of body, in arms, and all such sorts of work; and should obtain glory for ever on those accounts, he and his posterity after him; but still should serve his brother."

8. Now the mother delivered Jacob, when she was afraid that his brother would inflict some punishment upon him because of the mistake about the prayers of Isaac; for she persuaded her husband to take a wife for Jacob out of Mesopotamia, of her own kindred, Esau having married already Basemmath, the daughter of Ismael, without his father's consent; for Isaac did not like the Canaanites, so that he disapproved of Esau's former marriages, which made him take Basemmath to wife, in order to please him; and indeed he had a great affection for her.

From: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/josephus/ant-1.htm> accessed February 24, 2013. Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews*; Book 1, Chapters 17–18.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Alfred Edersheim wrote a book called *The Bible History, Old Testament*, which is very similar to Josephus, where he simply rewrites much of what is in the Bible, and adds in notes and comments as he deems to be relevant.

This comes from Chapter 15, entitled *The Marriage of Isaac - Birth of Esau and Jacob - Esau sells his Birthright - Isaac at Gerar - Esau's Marriage*. (Genesis 24; 25:19-26:35)

Edersheim Summarizes Genesis 25

In the quiet retirement of his old age Abraham not only witnessed the married happiness of his son, but even lived fifteen years beyond the birth of Esau and Jacob. As for Isaac, he had settled far from the busy haunts of the Canaanites, at the well Lahai-Roi a retreat suited to his quiet, retiring disposition. For twenty years the union of Isaac and Rebekah had remained unblest with children, to indicate that here also the heir to the promises must be a gift from God granted to expectant faith. At last Jehovah listened to Isaac's "entreaty," "for his wife," or rather, literally, "over against his wife," for, as Luther strikingly remarks: "When I pray for any one, I place him right in view of my heart, and neither see nor think of anything else, but look at him alone with my soul;" and this is true of all intercessory prayer. Rebekah was now to become the mother of twin sons.

Edersheim Summarizes Genesis 25

But even before their birth a sign occurred which distressed her, and induced her "to inquire of Jehovah" its meaning, though we know not in what precise manner she did this. The answer of God indicated this at least quite clearly, that of her children "the elder shall serve the younger;" that is, that, contrary to all usual expectation, the firstborn should not possess the birthright which the Divine promise had conveyed to the family of Abraham. The substitution of the younger for the elder son was indeed in accordance with God's previous dealings, but it seemed strange where the two were sons of the same parents. It is not only reasonable, but quite necessary for the understanding of the subsequent history, to believe that Rebekah communicated the result of her inquiry to her husband, and that afterwards both Esau and Jacob were also made acquainted with the fact.

This alone fully accounts for the conduct of Jacob and of his mother in seeking to appropriate the birthright, contrary to what would otherwise have been the natural arrangement. When the two children were born, the red and hairy appearance of the elder procured for him the name of Esau, or "hairy;" while the younger was called Jacob, or he "who takes hold by the heel," because "his hand took hold by Esau's heel" - a name which afterwards was adapted to mean "a supplanter," (Genesis 27:36) since he who takes hold by the heel "trips up" the other.

The appearance of the children did not belie their character when they grew up. The wild disposition of Esau, which found occupation in the roaming life of a hunter, reminds us of Ishmael; while Jacob, gentle and domestic, sought his pleasures at home. As is so often the case, Isaac and Rebekah made favorites of the sons who had the opposite of their own disposition. The quiet, retiring Isaac preferred his bold, daring, strong, roaming elder son; while Rebekah, who was naturally energetic, felt chiefly drawn to her gentle son Jacob. Yet at bottom Esau also was weak and easily depressed, as appeared in his tears and impotent reproaches when he found himself really deprived of the blessing; while Jacob, too, like his mother, impetuous, was ever ready to take matters into his own hands. We repeat it, that all parties must at the time have been aware that, even before the birth of the children, the word of God had designated Jacob as heir of the promises. But Isaac's preference for Esau made him reluctant to fall in with the Divine arrangement; while the impetuosity of Rebekah and of Jacob prompted them to bring about in their own way the fulfillment of God's promise, instead of believingly waiting to see when and how the Lord would do it. Thus it came that Jacob, watching his opportunities, soon found occasion to take advantage of his brother. One day Esau returned from the chase "faint" with hunger. The sight of a mess of lentils, which to this day is a favorite dish in Syria and Egypt, induced him, unaccustomed and unable as he was to control the desires of the moment, to barter away his birthright for this "red" pottage. The circumstances become the more readily intelligible when we remember, besides the unbridled disposition of Esau, that, as Lightfoot has pointed out, it was a time of commencing famine in the land. For, immediately afterwards (Genesis 26:1), we read that "there was a famine in the land," greater even than that at the time of Abraham, and which compelled Isaac for a season to leave Canaan. From this event, so characteristic and decisive in his history, Esau, after the custom of the East, obtained the name of Edom, or "red," from the color of "the mess of pottage" for which he had sold his birthright.

In regard to the conduct of the two brothers in this matter, we must note, that Scripture in no way excuses nor apologizes for that of Jacob. According to its wont, it simply states the facts, and makes neither comment nor remark upon them. That it leaves to "the logic of facts;" and the terrible trials which were so soon to drive Jacob from his home, and which kept him so long a bondsman in a strange land, are themselves a sufficient Divine commentary upon the transaction. Moreover, it is very remarkable that Jacob never in his after-life appealed to his purchase of the birthright. But so far as Esau is concerned only one opinion can be entertained of his conduct. We are too apt to imagine that because Jacob wronged or took advantage of Esau, therefore Esau was right. The opposite of this is the case. When we ask ourselves what Jacob intended to purchase, or Esau to sell in the "birthright," we answer that in later times it conveyed a double share of the paternal possessions. (Deuteronomy 21:17) In patriarchal days it included "lordship" over the rest of the family, and especially succession to that spiritual blessing which through Abraham was to flow out into the world (Genesis 27:27, 29), together with possession of the land of Canaan and covenant communion with Jehovah. (Genesis 28:4) What of these things was spiritual, we may readily believe, Esau discredited and despised, and what was temporal, but yet future, as his after conduct shows, he imagined he might still obtain either by his father's favor or by

Edersheim Summarizes Genesis 25

violence. But that for the momentary gratification of the lowest sensual appetites he should have been ready to barter away such unspeakably precious and holy privileges, proved him, in the language of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Hebrews 12:16), to have been "a profane person," and therefore quite unfitted to become the heir of the promises. For profanity consists in this: for the sensual gratification or amusement of the moment to give up that which is spiritual and unseen; to be careless of that which is holy, so as to snatch the present enjoyment, - in short, practically not to deem anything holy at all, if it stands in the way of present pleasure. Scripture puts it down as the bitter self-condemnation which Esau, by his conduct, pronounced upon himself: "and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way; thus Esau despised his birthright."

Before farther following the history of Isaac's trials and joys, it seems desirable to make here a few general remarks, for the purpose of explaining the conduct alike of Isaac and of Jacob, and its bearing on the history of the covenant. It has been common to describe Abraham as the man of faith, Isaac as the model of patient bearing, and Jacob as the man of active working; and in the two latter cases to connect the spiritual fruits, which were the outcome of their faith, with their natural characters also. All this is quite correct; but, in our opinion, it is necessary to take a broader view of the whole matter. Let it be borne in mind, that God had both made and established His covenant with Abraham. The history of Isaac and Jacob, on the other hand, rather represents the hindrances to the covenant. These are just the same as we daily meet in our own walk of faith. They arise from opposite causes, according as in our weakness we either lag behind, or in our haste go before God. Isaac lagged behind, Jacob tried to go before God; and their history exhibits the dangers and difficulties arising from each of these causes, just as, on the other hand, God's dealings with them show how mercifully, how wisely, and yet how holily He knew to remove these hindrances out of the way, and to uproot these sins from their hearts and lives. Accordingly, we shall consider the history of Isaac and Jacob as that of the hindrances of the covenant and of their removal.

Viewed in this light we understand all the better, not only Jacob's attempt to purchase the "birthright" - as if Esau had had the power of selling it! - but what followed that transaction? It seems that a grievous famine induced Isaac to leave his settlement, and it naturally occurred to him in so doing to follow in the wake of his father Abraham, and to go into Egypt. But when he had reached Gerar, the residence of Abimelech, king of the Philistines, where Abraham had previously sojourned, "Jehovah appeared unto him," and specially directed him to remain there, at the same time renewing to him the promises He had made to Abraham. Both in this direction and in the renewal of blessing we recognize the kindness of the Lord, Who would not expose Isaac to the greater trials of Egypt, and would strengthen and encourage his faith. Apparently, he had on reaching Gerar not said that Rebekah was his wife; and when he was, at last, "asked" about it, the want of courage which had prompted the equivocation, ripened into actual falsehood. Imitating in this the example of Abraham, he passed off his wife as his sister. But here also the kindness of the Lord interposed to spare him a trial greater than he might have been able to bear. His deceit was detected before his wife had been taken by any one; and an order given by Abimelech - whether the same who ruled at the time of Abraham, or his successor - secured her future safety. The famine seems now to have become so intense, that Isaac began to till land for himself. And God blessed him with an unusually large return - still further to encourage his faith amidst its trials. Commonly, even in very fruitful parts of Palestine, the yield is from twenty-five to fifty times that which had been sown; and in one small district, even eighty times that of wheat, and one hundred times that of barley. But Isaac at once "received an hundredfold" - to show him that even in a year of famine God could make the most ample provision for His servant. The increasing wealth of Isaac excited the envy of the Philistines. Disputes arose, and they stopped up the wells which Abraham had digged. At last, even Abimelech, friendly as he was, advised him to leave the place. Isaac removed to the valley of Gerar. But there also similar contentions arose; and Isaac once more returned to Abraham's old settlement at Beersheba. Here Jehovah again appeared unto him, to confirm, on his re-entering the land, the promises previously made. Beersheba had also its name given it a second time. For Abimelech, accompanied by his chief captain and his privy councilor, came to Isaac to renew the covenant which had formerly been there made between the Philistines and Abraham. Isaac was now at peace with all around. Better still, "he builded an altar" in Beersheba, "and called upon the name of Jehovah." But in the high day of his prosperity fresh trials awaited him. His eldest son Esau, now forty years old, took two Canaanitish wives, "which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah." Assuredly, if Isaac had not "lagged far behind," he would in this have recognized the final and full unfitness of Esau to have "the birthright." But the same

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tendency which had hitherto kept him at best undecided, led, ere it was finally broken, to a further and a far deeper sorrow than any he had yet experienced.

From <http://www.lewendwater.org/books/v1bhot.pdf> accessed .

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

It may be helpful to see this chapter as a contiguous whole:

A Complete Translation of Genesis 25

A Reasonably Literal Translation

A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase

Abraham's Second Family

Abraham added and took [another] wife, and her name [is] Keturah. She bore to him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah.

Abraham took another wife whose name was Keturah. She gave Abraham 6 male children: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah.

Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan. The sons of Dedan are the Asshurim, the Letushim and the Leummim. The sons of Midian [are] Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida and Eldaah. All of these [are] descendants [lit., *sons*] of Keturah.

Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. Dedan's sons are the Asshurim, the Letushim and the Leummim. The sons of Midian are Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All of sons listed here are descendants of Keturah.

Abraham gave all that [was] his to Isaac; but to the sons of his [lit., *the*] mistresses, Abraham gave gifts [or, *bribes*]. Then Abraham sent them away from Isaac his son, while he was yet living [lit., *in his yet living*], eastward to the land of the east.

Abraham gave all that was his to Isaac; however, he gave expensive bribes to the sons of his mistresses and then sent them far away from his son Isaac eastward to the land of the east (Abraham did this while he was still alive, of course).

Abraham dies and is buried

And these are the days of the years of the life of Abraham which [he] lived: 175 years. Abraham [lit., *he*] draws his last breath and he dies in a good old age. [He is both] elderly and satisfied [with his life]. Therefore, he is gathered to his people.

Abraham lived for 175 years. He drew his last breath and died at a good age, being both elderly and satisfied with his life. Therefore, he is gathered to his people.

Isaac and Ishmael, Abraham's [lit., *his*] sons, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zophar the Hittite, which [is] facing [or, *overlooking*] Mamre—the [same] field that Abraham acquired from the Hittites. There, Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried. And it is after the death of Abraham that Elohim blessed Isaac, Abraham's [lit., *his*] son. Isaac lived near Beerlahairoi [which means, *The Well of the Living One Who Sees Me*].

Isaac and Ishmael, Abraham's sons, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zophar the Hittite, which cave is facing Mamre—this is the same field that Abraham purchased from the Hittites. It was there that Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried. After the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac, Abraham's son. During this time period, Isaac was living near Beerlahairoi [which means, *The Well of the Living One Who Sees Me*].

The sons of Ishmael

A Complete Translation of Genesis 25	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
<p>These [are] the generations [genealogies, families; history, origin] of Ishmael, a son of Abraham, whom Hagar, the Egyptian woman, Sarah's maidservant, bore to Abraham. These [are] the names of the sons of Ishmael by their names in order of their births [lit., <i>by their names for their generations</i>]: Nebaioth (the firstborn of Ishmael), Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad [or, <i>Cheder</i>], Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kederman. These [are] they—the sons of Ishmael—and these [are] their names by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes.</p>	<p>What follows is the family line for Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar bore to Abraham (Hagar was the Egyptian girl who was Sarah's personal servant). This is a list of the sons of Ishmael, in order by their birth: Nebaioth (Ishmael's firstborn), Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kederman. These were the names of Ishmael's sons, who are 12 princes over their own villages and encampments, according to their clans.</p>
<p>These [are] the years of Ishmael's life: 137 years. He breathed his last breath, died and was gathered to his people. Ishmael's sons resided from Havilah to Shur, which [is] facing [or, <i>east of</i>] Egypt [as] you go towards Assyria. He fell before all his peoples.</p>	<p>Ishmael lived a full life of 137 years before he breathed his last breath, died, and was gathered to his people. Ishmael's sons resided all the way from Havilah to Shur, east of Egypt, along a trade route which goes to Assyria. Ishmael settled before all his relatives.</p>
Isaac and Rebecca have twin sons	
<p>These [are] generations [genealogies, families, history, origin] of Isaac, Abraham's son:</p>	<p>What follows is the family line for Isaac, Abraham's son:</p>
<p>Abraham became the father of Isaac. Isaac was 40 years old [lit., <i>a son of 40 years</i>] when he took Rebekah—the daughter of Bethuel the Aramæan from Paddan-Aram, the sister of Laban the Aramæan—as his wife [lit., <i>to him for a wife</i>].</p>	<p>Abraham was the father of Isaac. Isaac was 40 years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel and the sister of Laban (both of them Aramæans from Paddan-Aram) as his wife.</p>
<p>Isaac entreated Y^ehowah on behalf of his wife because she [is] barren. Therefore, Y^ehowah was supplicated by him and Rebekah, Isaac's [lit., <i>his</i>] wife, conceived.</p>	<p>Isaac prayed to Jehovah for his wife because she is barren. Jehovah heard his prayer and, as a result, his wife conceived.</p>
<p>The sons within her struggled together, so she said, "Behold, therefore, why [is] this [happening to] me?" Therefore, she went to consult Y^ehowah. Y^ehowah said to her, "[There are] two nations in your womb and the two peoples inside of you will be divided. [One] people will be stronger than [the other] people; and the elder will serve the younger one."</p>	<p>When her sons struggled together inside of her, she cried out, "Listen, why is this happening to me?" Therefore, she went to speak to Jehovah. Jehovah replied to her, "There are two nations at war in your womb; the two infants inside of you will be divided one from the other. One of them will dominate the other—in fact, the oldest one will serve the youngest one."</p>

A Complete Translation of Genesis 25	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
<p>Her days were accomplished to give birth, and it became apparent that [lit., <i>behold</i>] she was carrying twins [lit., <i>twins (were) in her womb</i>]. The first came out [quite] red [appearing] as a coat of hair. Therefore, they called his name Esau. Then his brother came forth and his hand was holding onto Esau’s heel. Therefore he is named Jacob [lit., <i>his name is called Jacob</i>]. Isaac was 60 years old when they were born.</p>	<p>Her pregnancy went to term, and it became obvious that she was carrying twins. The first child was born looking red and as if covered with a coat of hair. He was therefore named Esau. Then his brother was delivered, and his hand was holding on to Esau’s heel. Therefore, he was named Jacob. Isaac was 60 years old when his twins were born.</p>
Esau sells his birthright for a mess of pottage	
<p>The boys grew up [together]. Esau became a man who knew hunting, a man of the open country while Jacob was a quiet man inhabiting tents. Isaac loved Esau because he ate his wild game [lit., <i>because of animal game in his mouth</i>], but Rebekah loved Jacob.</p>	<p>The two boys grew up together. Esau became a man who learned how to hunt, and man who enjoyed the outdoors; while Jacob was a quiet man who lived in tents. Isaac loved Esau because he ate the wild game that Esau killed; but Rebekah loved Jacob.</p>
<p>While Jacob is boiled up a bean soup, Esau comes in from the open country and he [is] famished. Esau said to Jacob, “Please give me to eat from that red, red for I [am] famished.” Therefore, Jacob [lit., <i>he</i>] called his name Edom. Jacob said, “Sell to me today your birthright.” Esau replied [lit., <i>said</i>], “Listen, I am going to die; so for what purpose [is] a birthright to me?” Jacob then said, “Swear [this] to me today.” So Esau [lit., <i>he</i>] swore to him and sold his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave bread to Esau along with [lit., <i>and</i>] a lentil soup. Esau [lit., <i>he</i>] ate and he drank, and [finally] he rose up and went. Therefore, Esau despised his birthright.</p>	<p>While Jacob was cooking up a bean soup, Esau comes in from being out in the open country, and he is famished. Esau made an urgent request to Jacob, “Please let me have some of that red bean soup to eat, because I am famished.” Therefore, Jacob renamed him Edom, which means <i>red</i>; and this nickname stuck with him. Jacob said to Esau, “Sell me your birthright, right now.” Esau thought out loud, “Listen, I am about to die; of what value is this birthright to me?” Jacob then said, “Swear this to me right now, if you want to eat.” So Esau swore to Jacob, thereby selling him the birthright. Then Jacob gave bread and a lentil soup to Esau to feast upon. Esau ate and drank, and finally he rose up and went his way. By this, Esau revealed that he despised his birthright.</p>
Chapter Outline	Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Doctrinal Teachers* Who Have Taught Genesis 25		
Series	Lesson (s)	Passage
<p>R. B. Thieme, Jr. has referred tot his passage where Esau sells his birthright for a mess of pottage on many occasions, but I cannot find this chapter listed anywhere as having been covered by Bob.</p>		
Ken Reed	https://www.lakeeriebiblechurch.org/exegesis/	Genesis 38–50
Dr. Robert Dean	https://deanbible.org/old-testament-menuitem/genesis-menuitem	Genesis 1–50

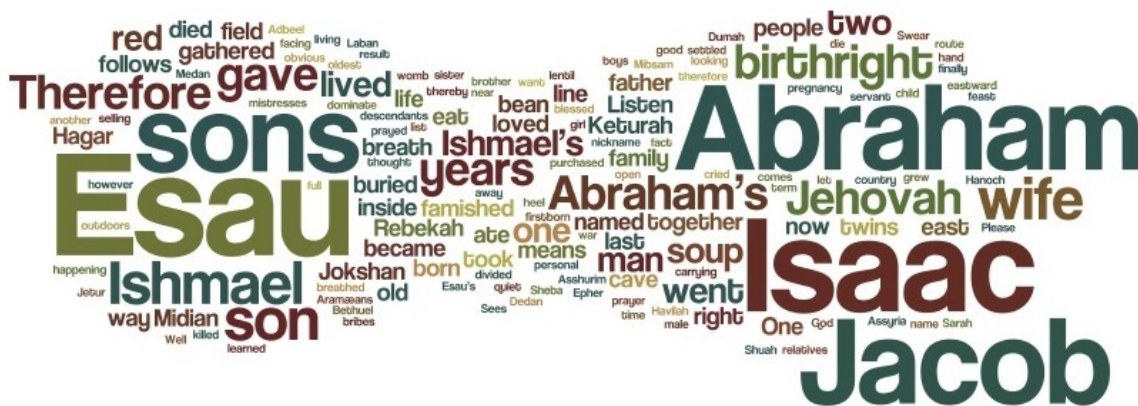
Bill Wenstrom	https://www.wenstrom.org/index.php?option=com_libwritten&view=libwritten&selCat=2&Itemid=124	Genesis 1–50
Jack M. Ballinger	http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/genesisindex.html	Genesis 1–49
Ron Snider	http://www.makarios-bible-church.org/oldtest.html	Genesis 1–50

* By doctrinal teacher, I mean a man whose primary focus is the teaching of the Word of God, verse-by-verse and book by book. A believer under the teaching of such a man should fully understand the gospel and rebound after less than a month in attendance.

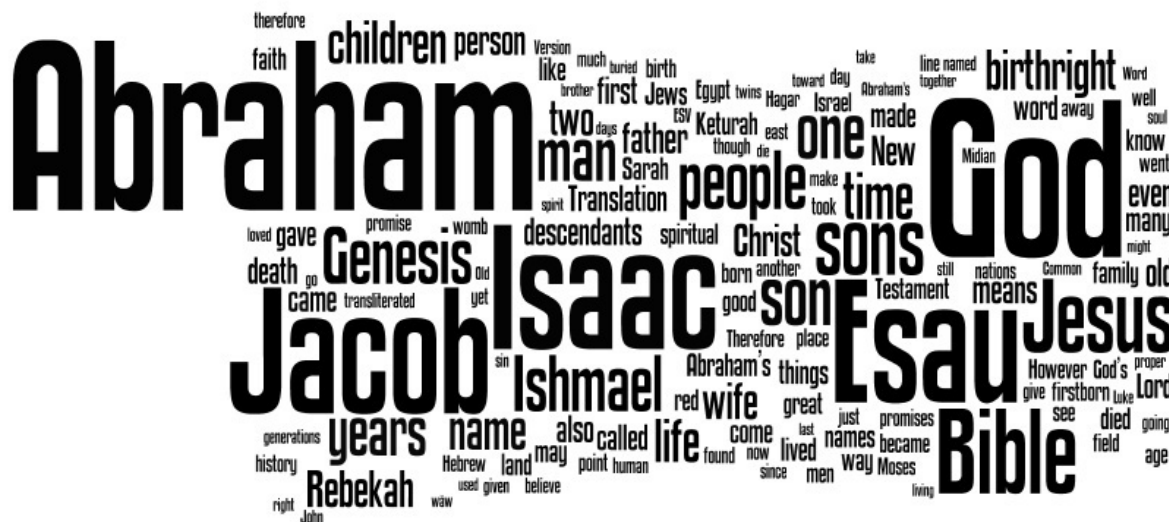
When it comes to teaching, I should think that a 45 minute teaching session would be the bare minimum; and that, at least 3x a week (with provisions for getting teaching in some way on the other days of the week). Although this man may interact or even learn from other teachers, he should clearly be the authority over his church; and the authority over him is the Word of God and God the Holy Spirit (Who guides the pastor in his study).

ICE teaching would also be a part of the package, ICE being an acronym standing for Isagogics (a teaching of the history of that time in order to understand the context of a passage), Categories (a study of categories of Bible doctrine), and Exegesis (a close study of each passage, word-by-word whenever necessary).

Word Cloud from a Reasonably Literal Paraphrase of Genesis 25



Word Cloud from Exegesis of Genesis 25³⁰⁴



These two graphics should be very similar; this means that the exegesis of Genesis 25 has stayed on topic and has covered the information found in this chapter of the Word of God.

Chapter Outline	Charts, Graphics, Short Doctrines	
Beginning of Document	Definition of Terms	Introduction and Text
Chapter Summary	Addendum	A Complete Translation
www.kukis.org	Exegetical Studies in Genesis	

³⁰⁴ Some words have been left out of this graphic; including *Strong*, *BDB*, and *pronounced*.