

Genesis 25-26

Worldview: God's Electing Purpose

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." (Rom 9:6-12)

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! For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. (Rom 9:13-16)

The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps. (Pro 16:9)

Charleston Confession Chapter 3: Of God's Decree

3. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated, or foreordained to eternal life through Jesus Christ, to the praise of his glorious grace; others being left to act in their sin to their just condemnation, to the praise of his glorious justice.

(I Tim. 5:21; Matt. 25:34; Eph. 1:5, 6; Rom. 9:22, 23; Jude 4)

Thesis: All men are condemned based on their works. The work of Christ saves some men from their works.

Part 1: Election in the Death of Abraham

1. Abraham took another wife – Keturah. **Question: was she his wife or his concubine?**

The sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bore Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. The sons of Jokshan: Sheba and Dedan. (1Ch 1:32)

2. Like Ishmael, Abraham sends his children by Keturah away.
3. Abraham gave all he had to Isaac
4. Abraham died in a good old age

As for yourself, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. (Gen 15:15)

5. The sons of Ishmael are twelve princes. Note the contrast between the twelve tribes of Israel.

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 princes**, and I will make him into a great nation. (Gen 17:20)

Part 2: Election in the Birth of Esau and Jacob

1. Rebekah is barren – once again, Divine intervention is needed to continue the Promise.
2. Two nations – two directions – are represented by the struggles in Rebekah’s womb.
3. The older shall serve the younger – in order that God’s purpose of election might continue – not because of works but because of him who calls – see Romans 9:11-12
4. Jacob’s role as a supplanter is established at his birth.
5. She gives birth when Isaac is 60 – they married at 40. **Question: Are you patient enough to wait 20 years for God to fulfill His promises?**
6. We are told that Isaac prefers Esau over Jacob. We will see how Isaac’s preference for Esau plays into who receives the birthright in chapter 27.

Part 3: Election in the Selling of a Birthright

1. Esau gets a name change because of stew – not because of his hair – Edom.
2. Jacob convinces Esau to sell his birthright to appease his momentary hunger.
3. Thus, we are told that Esau despised his birthright.

Part 4: Election in the Prospering of Isaac

Like father, like son: note the similarities (and differences) between Isaac’s life and Abraham’s:

1. Famine in the land
2. Isaac doesn’t go to Egypt like his father, but he ends up in Gerar like his father.
3. God makes the same promises to Isaac as his father.
4. He lies like his father – and in Isaac’s case, Rebekah is not even his half-sister.
5. God protects Rebekah through Abimelech.
6. God prospers Isaac just like Abraham – including finding water in the same location.
7. Isaac becomes so prosperous, he ends up moving to avoid confrontation with the Philistines who become jealous.
8. Abimelech strikes a pact with Isaac: “We see plainly that the Lord has been with you.”

Part 4: Election in the Marrying of Esau to a Hittite

Now Abraham was old, well advanced in years. And the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things. And Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh, that I may make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell, but will go to my country and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son Isaac." (Gen 24:1-4)

When Esau was forty years old, he took Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite to be his wife, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and they made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah. (Gen 26:34-35)

Next Week: Genesis 27-28