

January 14

Scriptures: Read Genesis 25 & 26

Key Verse: “But they said, ‘We have certainly seen that the Lord is with you’...
(Genesis 26:28)

Overview

Abraham married Katurah after Sarah’s death, and even though his body was considered “dead” since he was 100 (Romans 4:19; Genesis 17:17), he was blessed by the Lord with six more sons. However, Isaac remained his sole heir since God had established His covenant with him, and through him would come the promised Seed (Jesus Christ) that would bless all the earth (Genesis 17:19; 26:4; Galatians 3:8). To his other children Abraham gave gifts and sent them eastward so that the territory of Canaan would remain for Isaac. The descendants of those other sons became the Midianites. Ishmaels, Abraham’s son from the maidservant Hagar, lived to the southeast of Canaan in the large territory called the Arabian Peninsula. The Lord blessed Ishmael with 12 sons, as the prophecy had foretold and they did, in fact become a great nation (Genesis 17:20).

Abraham, the greatest and most venerated of the patriarchs, lived a long, successful life, pleasing unto the Lord. At the age of 175, this “friend of God” and “father of the faithful” went on to an even closer fellowship with the Lord in glory. Ishmael must have loved his father dearly, for he, along with Isaac, returned to bury him. Thirty-eight years after Sarah’s death, Abraham was buried beside her in the cave of Machpelah.

God’s blessing was passed down from Abraham to Isaac, who greatly increased in wealth. However, his wife Rebekah was barren and unable to bear children for 20 years, but God heard Isaac’s desperate prayers and she became pregnant. After she conceived, God foretold that these twins would be two different nations and the elder would serve the younger (25:23). A fulfillment of this prophecy is seen when King David, Jacob’s descendant, subjected the Edomites, Esau’s descendants (2 Samuel 8:14). The Apostle Paul speaks of God’s predestination on the basis of foreknowledge and illustrates it with the prophecy about Jacob and Esau (Romans 9:10-13).

Esau’s, the firstborn, was entitled to the “birthright”, which meant he would receive a double portion of his father’s inheritance. However, in the patriarchal line, this included the spiritual blessing and privilege of carrying on the Messianic lineage as well. We are told Esau cared nothing for his birthright. He was ungodly and not interested in its significance, so he took an oath and sold it for a bowl of lentil stew (cf. Hebrews 12:16, 17).

Twice in chapter 26 the Lord confirms the same promise of blessing that He had made to Abraham. An example of God’s blessing is that, during the famine, He told Isaac not to go to Egypt. Because of his obedience, God blessed him and during that year he sowed and reaped a hundredfold (26:12), which made the Philistines in the land very jealous. They caused him much trouble concerning his wells, yet rather than fighting and quarreling, Isaac proved to be peace-loving and gracious moved on until he dug a well that was not disputed. Abimelech, king of the Philistines, must have feared Isaac since he was mightier than they and sent him away from their

territory (26:16). Later, upon clearly seeing that the Lord God was with him, Abimelech journeyed to meet Isaac and made a treaty with him, wanting to befriend him. This was wise, for as the promise was to Abraham, so it was to Isaac, “I will bless those who bless you... curse him who curses you” (12:3). The Lord honors those who honor Him and this is evidenced in the life of Isaac.

Prayer

Father God, we honor You for who You are. Help us to live in such a way that the people around us will honor You also.