

8 • The Beginning of Strife Between Esau & Jacob

When Abraham was old, well advanced in years, he made his oldest servant swear “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” (24:1-4). Genesis 24 documents that

servant leaning on the LORD to find a beautiful woman named Rebekah, who agrees to go back with Abraham’s servant to the land of Canaan. At the end of Genesis 24, Isaac and Rebekah are married.

Genesis 25 begins by tracing the various branches of Abraham’s family tree, with specific emphasis on Ishmael and especially Isaac.

These are the days of the years of Abraham’s life, _____ years. Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people. Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah... After the death of Abraham, God blessed _____ his son. (25:7-11)

Genesis 25 also gives details about twin boys that Rebekah was eventually expecting with Isaac.

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 _____ 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 _____.” (25:22-23)

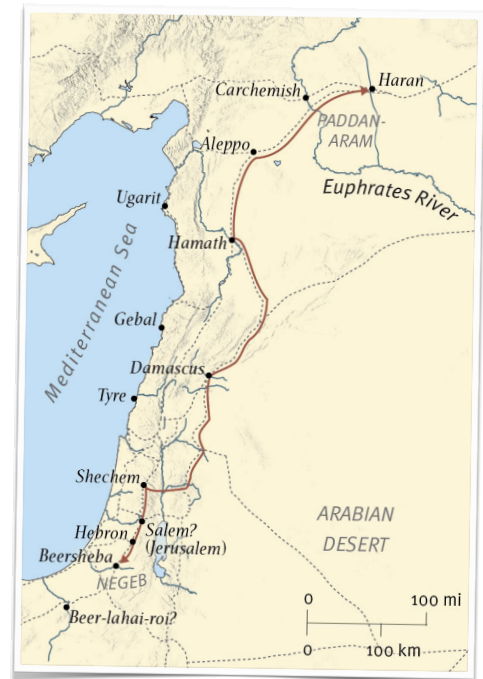
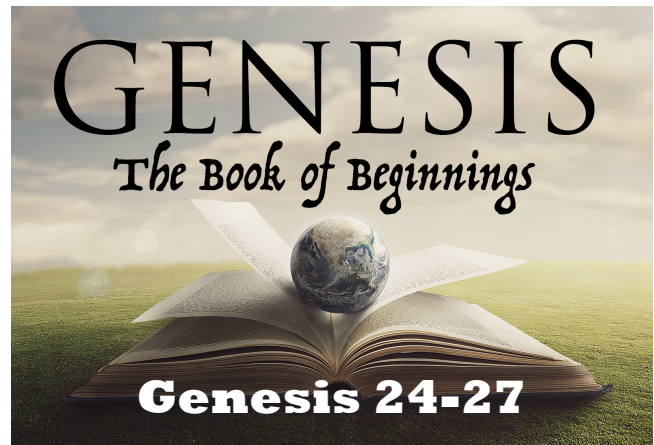
Her firstborn son was named _____. The second, who

grabbed Esau’s heel during birth, was named _____ (which means *he takes by the heel*, or *he _____*). Esau grew to be a skillful hunter, while Jacob was “a quiet man, dwelling in tents.”

Isaac loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob (25:27-28). One day, in Genesis 25:29-34, Esau came in from the field exhausted and hungry. When he asked his brother for some of the stew he had been cooking, Jacob offered it in return for Esau’s _____. Esau agreed.

As Genesis 26 describes a famine in the land, the LORD appears to Isaac and tells him not to go down to Egypt; “dwell in the land of which I shall tell you” (26:1-2). As Isaac settles among the Philistines, he struggles with fear (26:6-11), is richly blessed by the LORD, and becomes very wealthy (26:12-14) to the point that the Philistines envy him and gradually push him out of their land (26:15-22). As Isaac settles in Beersheba, the LORD describes himself as “the God of _____ your father” and reiterates the promise of blessing to come through this family line (26:23-25).

In Genesis 27, aged Isaac expresses his intention to bless Esau before he dies, but with the help of Rebekah, Jacob deceives his father and receives the blessing instead. As Esau plots to kill his brother, Jacob is encouraged by his mother to flee to _____, her brother in Haran.



For Class & Family Discussion:

- Why would Abraham have been worried about his son taking a wife from the daughters of the Canaanites (24:1-4)?
- As you scan those early verses of Genesis 24, do you see any signs of growth in Abraham's faith in God since Genesis 12?
- Did the blessing pronounced on Rebekah in 24:60 come to pass? If so, in what way?
- What do we need to see and remember from the details provided in 25:1-20?
- What is the LORD foretelling in 25:23?
- *Esau* (who is also called *Edom*) means what?
- What's the significance of what we're being told in 25:29-34? What does Hebrews 12:15-17 add to our understanding?
- What should we make of first Abraham (12:10-20; 20:1-18) then Isaac (26:6-11) struggling with fear and deceiving the powerful men around them?
- What do we learn about Esau in 26:34-35 and why does it matter?
- What was the significance of Isaac wanting to bless Esau before he died in Genesis 27?
- How would you summarize the blessing of Isaac pronounced in 27:27-29?
- "Is he not rightly named Jacob?" (27:36). What did Esau mean by that question?
- As you reflect on Genesis 27, is there anything we can learn?