

# Genesis: From Creation to New Creation

## Genesis 25:1-25

"Obey God, Not Your Appetite"—April 23, 2023



### **Introduction**

Funerals are, in many respects, horrible. It is a time of grief and sorrow. Yet as tough as they are, they help us remember the loved one who has gone. Funerals are a reminder that life is short and uncertain. We can only see down the street, but God sees around the corner. He sees all things; we do not. We walk by faith, not by sight. But that is often difficult. Not knowing what is around the corner can leave us anxious, weary, and discouraged. Is this where you are this today? How do you respond? This text in Genesis will give us an eternal perspective, calling us to trust God when life is difficult.

### **Sermon Outline**

1. Wait patiently on God. Vs. 1-18
2. Pray fervently to God. Vs. 19-26
3. Look to Jesus, the Fulfillment of God's promises. Vs. 27-34

### **Read & Discuss**

#### **1. Read vs. 1 – 18**

Here we see the funeral of Abraham and the funeral of Ishmael. Ishmael represents the world - what we can do in our own strength, apart from God. He was Abraham's son, but not the child of promise. His name means, "God hears" - a reminder of God's faithfulness and care to His people. God promised to bless him and turn him into a great nation. He had 12 sons who were kings leading their own nations. They are listed here as a contrast to the offspring of Abraham. Here, we see the wicked, worldly prospering while God's people struggle. When you see the worldly prosper are you tempted to envy the wicked? When you look at the big picture and see the end of the wicked, you will pity them. In the end, they will be punished. The righteous will be rewarded with a rich heavenly reward.

We are called to wait. There is a difference between waiting and patience. Patience is waiting with hope that is based on the sure promises of God. Abraham knew waiting, hostility, and war, yet he died "full of years" - satisfied with life. He had to wait, but he came to a point of satisfaction, contentment and patience. How did he get there? By faith; by trusting God. ([Genesis 15:6](#)) God shepherded him through the ups and downs of life. He knew a profound freedom because of His faith. God is so faithful that even death did not mean the end of His promises. Abraham had resurrection hope. This hope was more than wishful thinking. It was based on God's word. Do you see your faith growing toward satisfaction, contentment and patience? How is that being accomplished?

Abraham sent the offspring of Ishmael, as well as his sons with Keturah, to the East. But God has a plan for these people and His people. ([Isaiah 60:6](#)) Do you see what is being proclaimed in this verse? God has promised a Messiah. We see His lineage traced through Abraham and now to Isaac.

**Additional Reading:** Psalm 73; Hebrews 11

#### **2. Read vs. 19 – 26**

Are you hurting? Are you struggling? Are you happy? Whatever your situation, pray fervently to God. God had promised Abraham blessing, land, and offspring. ([Genesis 12](#)) Here, it is passed on through the family of Abraham to Isaac. Through this line, God would raise up a serpent-crushing Savior. ([Genesis 3:15](#))

But Rebekah struggled for 20 years with barrenness. These years were difficult. What did Isaac do? He prayed to the Lord for his wife. He prayed for 20 years. She did conceive, but she had a difficult pregnancy. The twins were struggling within her. She was in despair, so she goes to God with her struggle? Can you relate with Rebekah? Have you ever known trials so dark and hopeless that you wonder if there is any point going on? When life hurts and the struggle is difficult, the Devil can whisper to us that ending our life is a reasonable escape. **It is NOT.** If you struggle with this, reach out for help.

God told her that the struggle in the womb was just the beginning of two nations that will be in hostility with each other. The older child usually received the birthright and the responsibility of leading the family after the

death of the father. But God switches the order here. This goes against what the world expects. [Verse 23](#) emphasized God's grace. Grace is not based on merit - it is freely given. ([Romans 9:10-12](#)) God did not choose Jacob for any earthly reason. God did it because of His sovereign grace which resounds with the praise of God. ([Eph. 1:5-6](#)) Why pray if God is sovereign? Why not just wait? Are you tempted to think that prayers are pointless? God is sovereign and faithful to His word, so we can pray confidently. There is mystery in how God's sovereignty and human responsibility fit together. God is in control, but prayer is the means by which His will is accomplished. God promised offspring to Isaac, and God granted according to Isaac's prayer.

James reminds us that we do not have because we do not ask. ([James 4:2](#)) We pray because God commands us to pray. He hears us when we pray and promises to give us what is good. We hide God's word in our heart so we know what to pray. God answers because He is sovereign. There is no trial too impossible. There is no struggle too great. So PRAY. Cast your burdens on the Lord through prayer. Prayer is the language of dependence and reliance on God. How has God answered your some of your prayers?

### **3. Read vs. 27 – 34**

If you think that Esau is the victim here, you will need to reconsider your thinking. The details about his physical appearance and talent for hunting make him seem to be "animal-like." In contrast, Jacob was a "quiet man living in tents." The word "quiet" can be translated "blameless" which contrasts to Esau's wildness. Jacob saw the value of the birthright, and in that sense he was blameless. He just went about getting it the wrong way. Esau wanted to satisfy his appetite. He was not only hungry, but also exhausted. To satisfy his physical desires, he made a rash decision. We can learn here not to make big life decisions when exhausted. If we are not careful, desires will take over and lead to worse circumstances.

The rapid fire conversation and subsequent actions reveal Esau's character. He despised his birthright. Why? Isaac favored Esau because Esau could satisfy Isaac's desire for game. This fed Esau's value for what HE could do. What do you prioritize, value and celebrate in your kids? That will be what your kids prioritize, value and celebrate.

When God blesses someone else with the life you want and don't have, how do you feel? Perhaps you don't like the path that God has for you. You might be tempted to push God away. In [Psalm 73:21-22](#), the psalmist described himself as bitter and brutish toward God. Are you struggling to trust God? Is there bitterness in your heart? Are you upset about the path God has for you? Are you struggling with God's timetable? In those moments of difficulty, don't be like Esau. Don't trade eternity for a bowl of soup. Don't take the shortcuts.

What DO we do? Look to Jesus. ([Heb. 12:2](#)) Esau was shortsighted, but Jesus was not. Jesus saw the joy set before Him in eternity even though knew what the cross and its shame held for him. Jesus endured the cross, despised the shame and did what He came to do. No one who trusts God will be put to shame. ([Romans 5:3-5](#)) Jesus will get us all the way home. We can trust Him.

### **Prayer of Response**

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand*, *believe*, *desire*, or *do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come. If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at

<b>Next week's sermon text:</b> we turn to <a href="#">Genesis 26:1 – 35</a> "Learning to Trust...Again"
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