

Commentary Genesis Chapters 25 by Chuck Smith 3.19.25

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January 2025 memory verse (NKJV)

Luke 24:45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

February 2025 memory verse

Luke 24:46 (NKJV) Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,

March 2025 memory verse

Luke 24:47 (NKJV) and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

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Abraham [after Sarah's death] took another wife, her name was Keturah. [The name means, "mother of us all".] And she bare him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, Shuah. And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim. And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher (Gen 25:1-4),

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 'cause 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.

Back here in Genesis, this story is about Jesus Christ. And we're gonna come on down the line that's gonna lead us to Jesus Christ. We're gonna let the others go. We might follow them for a generation or two, but we're gonna let them go, they're not important. It's whole story centers around the person of Jesus Christ. We say His-story. What is history? It is His story. The story of Jesus; that's what history is all about. And so that's what this record is all about. It's all about Jesus. And it's only gonna center in the one person, Jesus. It'll let the others go; go quickly. We'll have a name or two thrown in and then that's the end of it. We're gonna let them go because we want to center in-we want to concentrate on the central person of history. So follow out the rest of Abraham's children for just a ways.

And Abraham [and this is the important one, verse five] gave all that he had unto Isaac (Gen 25:5).

Isaac's the son of promise. All that he had went to Isaac.

But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts (Gen 25:6),

Gave gifts to them, but everything that he had went to Isaac.

And he sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, to the east country (Gen 25:6).

So he gave gifts to them, sent them away. Isaac is the one in whom the story is going to center because Isaac comes in the line that's gonna bring us to Jesus Christ.

Now these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, a hundred and seventy-five years. Then Abraham gave up the ghost [or his spirit, literally] and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and he was gathered to his people (Gen 25:7-8).

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.

So now this was before Jesus Christ made access into heaven. So Abraham did not go into heaven, but he went into the grave, into Hades where he became the master comforter of all of those who went into Hades, waiting for the promise of God. So in the sixteenth chapter of Luke we find Abraham in Hades comforting Lazarus. And we find the rich man talking to Abraham and Abraham responding with him.

Now when Jesus died, before he ascended into heaven, he first of all descended into the lower parts of the earth. And he preached to those souls that were imprisoned, the spirits, Abraham's spirit, down there in prison. Jesus preached to him and to all of those who with Abraham were waiting for the promise of God, the Messiah to come. And so the prophecy of Isaiah, concerning Jesus Christ is that he would open the prison doors to those who were bound. That's the prison door of death, where these people were bound and he opened the doors so that when he ascended he led the captives from their captivity.

So that now as a child of God, when my spirit leaves this tent, because of the way that Jesus Christ has made for me, when my spirit leaves this tent, it's going into a new house that is not made with hands, a building of God, eternal in the heavens. I'm moving out of this old tent into a new house that the Lord said he had gone to prepare

for me. For he said, "In my Father's house there are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2). He's preparing me a new body. It is a building of God. It's not made with hands. It's eternal. This one is temporary. It'll never see the number of years that Abraham's body saw. That would be to me the worse thing that could ever happen to me, would be to live to be a hundred and seventy-five.

In fact, I don't even want to see the seventy-five! If God so wills it, fine, but I don't think I'll ever see it, because as this tent wears out, the Lord's already prepared a new building for my spirit, a new house, not a tent anymore. I'm getting sort of tired of the tent. The tent's getting sort of tired, too. The tent's good for awhile, but after awhile you begin to realize that there's not just the conveniences in a tent that you'd like to have. You get longing to move into a house. And one of these days I'm gonna move into a brand new house, a building of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

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 be 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.

Abraham gave up the ghost. Or his spirit left his body after dwelling in it for a hundred and seventy-five years. Good old age. An old man. Full, and he was gathered to his people.

And his sons Isaac and Ishmael (Gen 25:9)

Notice they are joined together now. You know, there was that animosity that existed between them, but it seems that at least at their father's death they were brought together. And at their father's death they joined together. Ishmael is still there, and they buried Abraham in that cave at Machpelah, the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is there before Mamre; And that field which Abraham purchased. Now these are the generations of Ishmael (Gen 25:9-10, 12),

And so we'll follow Ishmael for just, you know, a little ways, and then we're gonna drop him because Ishmael isn't important to the story. And so he gives us the name of Ishmael's descendants and they are no more important to you as are the descendants of Abraham's concubines, and so I'm not gonna wrestle with those names. You can wrestle with them if you want.

Verse sixteen, it says,

And these are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and their castles; twelve princes according to their nations. And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, he lived to be a hundred and thirty-seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people. And they dwelt from Havilah to Shur, that is

before Egypt, as you go to Assyria: and he died in the presence of all of his brothers. And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son (Gen 25:16-19):

Now we come to the one that's important, the one we will follow.

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. And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren (Gen 25:19-21):

Now he married her, but yet she was unable to bear children. And so Isaac prayed for her, that God would heal and allow her to bear children. It is interesting how many children we have running around Calvary Chapel that are answers to prayer. Couples that could not have children, who came to the elders and were prayed for and God blessed them and now we have so many little children who are running around here that are just true answers to prayer. They're little miracle babies that God has given. And it is scriptural that Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife.

And the LORD was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her; and she said, Why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the LORD (Gen 25:21-22).

My, there was just all kinds of-she was pregnant, and man, there was more than just a baby kicking or moving. This was a real fight going on in there.

They were struggling in her womb. And when they were born, as soon as they were born, the one little guy reached out and grabbed the other guy's heels, still struggling with him. Fight's still going on and it really never did stop. So, she was concerned with all of this movement and so she prayed about it. "Lord, what's going on?"

And the LORD said to her, Two nations are in your womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from [their birth, or from] your bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger (Gen 25:23).

Now this is before they were ever born. Before they ever did anything. How is it that God could already make this prediction? Is their fairness with God? Is it fair for God to say, "Well, the elder's going to serve the younger?" before they were ever born?

Paul takes this up in Romans; the sovereignty of God in election. But we must always remember that God's election is always premised upon His foreknowledge. "Whom He did foreknow, those He did also predestinate that they should be conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8:29).

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.

Esau was that way. 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.

And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first one came out red, all over like a hairy garment (Gen 25:24-25);

So it's just a little kid covered with hair, and so appropriately, they called his name Hairy. That's what Esau means. And that was very common in those days. You would name your child after a circumstance of his birth.

After that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel (Gen 25:26);

And that was probably exciting. Oh look, he grabbed his brother's heel. And then someone said, "well then, call him heel-catcher". And Jacob literally means "heel-catcher". That's the literal interpretation. It came to mean "surplanter", but the literal meaning is "heel-catcher".

And Issac was sixty years old when she bare them (Gen 25:26).

So they went twenty years without any children. Forty when he was married, sixty before the children were born. So there are twenty years and he prayed and God gave her children, gave her twins.

And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field [An outdoors man]; but Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents (Gen 25:27).

Now I'm afraid that the translators have done Jacob a bad turn in translating this "a plain man". The word that they translated was the Hebrew word "tam". They translated it "plain". The word other places in the Old Testament has been translated "perfect". You remember when God said to Satan concerning Job "Have you considered my servant Job, a perfect man?" That's the same Hebrew word, "tam." Concerning Job, it was translated "perfect". And so the translators have done Jacob sort of a bad turn, calling

him a plain man. The scripture's actually saying he was a perfect man, or a complete man, but he dwelt in tents.

Now we have a tendency to really put Jacob down, and I have to confess that I done my share of putting this guy down because of some of the tricks that he's pulled. But in reality, he was the man that God had chosen. And the interesting thing is that God never put him down.

So Jacob was not a plain man, he was a "tam" man. "Perfect", actually or complete man. And he dwelt in tents. His brother, outdoors; Jacob loved the tent life.

And Isaac loved Esau, [But for base reasons] because he ate his barbecued venison (Gen 25:28):

Now that's no reason for loving one son above another, just 'cause the guy's a good hunter and can bring in some venison. You get hooked on venison and so he loved Esau because he ate the venison.

But Rebekah loved Jacob (Gen 25:28).

So sad, but true, that with the parents there was a displaying of favoritism among the children.

And Jacob was fixing some pottage: and Esau came in from the field, and he was faint. And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with some of that red pottage, for I am faint: and therefore his name was called [from then on "Red"] Edom [means "Red"] (Gen 25:29-30).

And his descendants were called the Edomites, because he wanted this red pottage. He was hungry and fainting.

And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Hey, I'm ready to die: what profit is a birthright to me? (Gen 25:31-32)

He was very flippant about it. Hey man, what about the birthright? I'm ready to die; I want your pottage. But Jacob pressed the point.

And Jacob said, Swear to me then this day; and he sware unto him: and thus he sold his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau the bread and the pottage of lentils; which he did eat and drink, and they rose up, and he rose up and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright (Gen 25:33-34).

He didn't really care about the birthright at all. He wasn't interested in spiritual things. He could care less about birthright. He hated it; he wasn't interested in it. And thus he despised his birthright.