

A Priest and a Rabbi Walk into a Classroom

Calvary Episcopal Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Genesis 25



Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. ² She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. ³ Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. The sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim. ⁴ The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah. ⁵ Abraham gave all he had to Isaac. ⁶ But to the sons of his concubines Abraham gave gifts, while he was still living, and he sent them away from his son Isaac, eastwards to the east country.

⁷ This is the length of Abraham's life, one hundred and seventy-five years. ⁸ Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people. ⁹ His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite, east of Mamre, ¹⁰ the field that Abraham purchased from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried, with his wife Sarah. ¹¹ After the death of Abraham God blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac settled at Beer-lahai-roi.

¹² These are the descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's slave-girl, bore to Abraham. ¹³ These are the names of the sons of Ishmael, named in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the firstborn of Ishmael; and Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, ¹⁴ Mishma, Dumah, Massa, ¹⁵ Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. ¹⁶ These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes. ¹⁷ (This is the length of the life of Ishmael, one hundred and thirty-seven years; he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people.) ¹⁸ They settled from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt in the direction of Assyria; he settled down alongside all his people.

¹⁹ These are the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham was the father of Isaac, ²⁰ and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, sister of Laban the Aramean. ²¹ Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord granted his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived. ²² The children struggled together within her; and she said, 'If it is to be this way, why do I live?' So she went to inquire of the Lord. ²³ And the Lord said to her,

‘Two nations are in your womb,
and two peoples born of you shall be divided;
one shall be stronger than the other,
the elder shall serve the younger.’

²⁴ When her time to give birth was at hand, there were twins in her womb. ²⁵ The first came out red, all his body like a hairy mantle; so they named him Esau. ²⁶ Afterwards his brother came out, with his hand gripping Esau’s heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.

²⁷ When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents. ²⁸ Isaac loved Esau, because he was fond of game; but Rebekah loved Jacob.

²⁹ Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was famished. ³⁰ Esau said to Jacob, ‘Let me eat some of that red stuff, for I am famished!’ (Therefore he was called Edom.) ³¹ Jacob said, ‘First sell me your birthright.’ ³² Esau said, ‘I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?’ ³³ Jacob said, ‘Swear to me first.’^l So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. ³⁴ Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank, and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.w