

## Birthright

*Genesis 25:1-34*

*“Abraham truly looked beyond this world, to the ultimate city. He died as ‘an old man and full of years’—an expression that indicates that life is limited, that a span of life is allotted to us all. Abraham’s time had come, to borrow Pascal’s phrase, as ‘an intervention of providence decreed from all eternity to take place in the fullness of time.’ And so it will be for all of us. All our days are numbered. Our full complement of years is already determined. None of us die too soon, whether we die at nine months or ninety years. As the Psalmist wrote: In your book were written, everyone one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there were none of them. (Psalm 139:16) Scriptural wisdom demands that we number our days. So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom (Psalm 90:12) O Lord, make me know my end and what is the measure of my day; let me know how fleeting I am! (Psalm 39:4)*

*What a gift it is to embrace our mortality and to understand that we have an allotted number of days, especially for those who are young. Such understanding can serve to bring a graced wisdom to our lives and to focus our energy so as to yield eternal fruit. Further, Abraham’s satisfaction did not come from living 175 years but from a century of faith.” Kent Hughes*

- I. The way Abraham lived his life, his faith, his love for the Lord, his godliness, his approach to life, his friendship with God, and his obedience to God’s will left a **strong spiritual legacy** that has effected mankind up to this day. it speaks of how Abraham responded to the way God moved in his heart to prosper him in righteousness. We must never underestimate the power of living well for the Lord and the influence it will have on family, friends, community, coworkers, etc. Like with Abraham, we have been given the power to leave as a legacy the influence of faith itself, the influence of putting our faith into action, and the influence of standing firm in the faith by fixing our eyes on Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith.

Gen. 25:1-11

Rom. 4:3, 23-24

James 2:21-22

Matt. 13:23

Heb. 11:8-20

**Heb. 12:1-3** *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

- II. We hear nothing of the life of Isaac and Rebekah as a married couple for 20 years. When we do hear of them again, we find Isaac in prayer for his wife and her barrenness. They knew of the covenant promises given to his father Abraham. They knew that Isaac was a miracle child and that they had been chosen by God to be a part of fulfilling the promise of becoming of a great nation and that the Messiah would come through their offspring. When we think about Isaac's intercession for his wife, God's answer to his prayer, and about Rebekah's entreaty concerning the twins jostling in her womb, we see a godly couple bowing before God with dependence in their hearts for help and understanding. There's so much in Scripture about prayer, but I love that God gives us the example of a godly couple determined to lean on God knowing that they could depend on Him to work for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose (Rom. 8:28).

Gen. 25:19-26

Phil. 4:6-7

Matt. 6:6

**2 Chron. 20:12** "... We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."

**Gen. 22:17-18** *17 I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, 18 and through your offspring[a] all nations on earth will be blessed,[b] because you have obeyed me."*

- III. Many churches today are where Esau was when he sold his birthright without any regard for what that meant for him. Boice challenges those who claim to know Christ this way. *"Are you one of those persons? Are you despising your birthright, choosing instead the savory but passing pottage of this world? If you have not committed yourself fully to Christ and are not going on with him with all the strength at your disposal, that is precisely what you are doing. You are an Esau, whom the author of Hebrews calls a 'godless' person. Let me describe the birthright you are forfeiting. First, you are forfeiting the benefits of Jesus' death... Will you sell the privilege of becoming a Christian for the secular stew the world has to offer? Second, if you have not yet fully committed yourself to Christ and begun to go on with him with all the strength at your disposal, you are forfeiting the benefits of God's written Word, the Bible."* Boice doesn't mince words concerning the seriousness of what it means to call oneself a born-again Christian. Our birthright guarantees us an inheritance in the kingdom of God. How we choose to live it speaks volumes of how seriously we take the privilege of knowing Him.

Gen. 25:27-34

Rom. 9:1-16

Heb. 12:15-17

Gal. 3:26-29