

THE SOVEREIGN HAND OF GOD

Lesson Aim: Even though you are not perfect, seek to be like Christ, and God will bless you.

Suggestion: Have the students read the Scriptures and answer the questions in the student lesson and insert the following questions where they fit the lesson for class discussion.

The sovereignty and foreknowledge of God work together. By His sovereign decree He commands sinners to seek Him when He is near (Isa 55:6). By His foreknowledge He knows those who will obey Him and He elects them (1 Pet 1:2). This explains why He chose Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who were far from perfect, to be the forefathers of His people. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom 8:29-30).

Why did Abraham treat Isaac differently than his sons by Keturah? Gen 25:1-6

Isaac was the son that God promised to give to Abraham. Though he was not perfect, God used him to test Abraham's faith and obedience before he was born and later in his youth. Much later, He would use Isaac in the sons born to him, especially Jacob. Above all, God told Abraham that Isaac would receive the covenant that He made with him. So Abraham's sons by Keturah were given gifts and sent away to show that Isaac was the heir that God had chosen for Abraham.

How do the ages of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob help us in our study of the Bible?

The ages of these men are recorded with important events, which give us a true historical perspective. Abraham came into the land God promised him when he was 75 (12:4) and lived 175 years (25:7), so he lived in the land for 100 years, but did not receive the land during his lifetime. Abraham was 86 when Ishmael was born (16:3; 17:24-25) and 100 (17:17) when Isaac was born; Ishmael was 14 years older than Isaac. Sarah was 127 when she died (23:1), 37 years after Isaac was born. Isaac was 40 when he married Rebekah (25:20), but was 60 before Esau and Jacob were born (25:26). Isaac lived with Abraham for 75 years, so the twins were 15 when Abraham died. Ishmael died when he was 137 (25:17), so Isaac was 123 when Ishmael died. Jacob left home when he was about 77 (30:25; 31:41; 41:29-30, 46; 45:6; 47:9), so Isaac was about 137 when he blessed Jacob and died at 180 (35:28-29).

What did the LORD tell Rebekah about her pregnancy? Gen 25:23

The LORD told Rebekah that two nations were in her womb. The people of one nation would be stronger than the other. The people of the elder brother would serve the people of the younger one. God foreknew the decisions that these twins and their descendants would make, so He made a sovereign decree that Esau's descendants would serve Jacob's descendants.

How did Jacob get Esau's birthright? Gen 25:29-34

Jacob had prepared a tasty meal for himself and Esau came home famished from his hunting. He asked Jacob to give him some of his meal. Jacob took this opportunity to make a bargain. He would give Esau his meal, if he would give him his birthright. Esau agreed and the deal was settled.

How did Isaac sin in the land of the Philistines? 26:6-7

He told the men that Rebekah was his sister, so the men would not kill him. He did what Abraham did.

What is the difference between a birthright and a blessing? Gen 27:1-4

The birthright belonged to the first born son. He would receive twice the amount that the other brothers would receive of the inheritance when their father died and he would be the leader of his family. He could lose his birthright through sin against the father or he could sell it; Esau sold his birthright to Jacob. The blessing was given by the father to confirm the birthright of the son that owned it.

What sins are recorded in Genesis 27?

Esau sold his birthright to Jacob, but Isaac decided to bless Esau instead of Jacob anyway (1-4).

Rebekah sinned against Isaac, her husband, by planning and helping Jacob to deceive him (5-17).

Jacob sinned against Isaac, his father, by lying to him (19, 20, 24).

Esau sinned against Jacob by hating his brother and was planning to kill him (41).

Rebekah deceived Isaac to think she wanted Jacob to get a wife, when she wanted to separate Esau from Jacob so he could not kill Jacob (42-46).

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