

# The Birth of a Nation

## A Study in Genesis 25-36

Two Nations  
Genesis 25:19-34  
February 7, 2021

“Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger. **-Genesis 25:23**

### I. EMPTY TO FULL: THE STORY OF GOD’S PEOPLE

- The *toledot* or “generations” of Isaac appears scant when compared to that of Ishmael, yet in time God’s wisdom is displayed (cf. Gen. 25:12-15).
- For twenty years Isaac and Rebekah wait for a child. It is a common theme in the storyline of redemption (Gen. 11:30, 16:1-2, 25:21, 29:31; Judges 13:2-3; Ps. 113:9; Isa. 54:1; Luke 1:7).
- God blesses Rebekah through the prayers of Isaac (Gen. 25:21).

### II. THE BATTLE BEGINS

- Rebekah seeks the Lord for answers to the drama unfolding in her womb (Gen. 25:22-23).
- God’s answer demonstrates his foreknowledge, and his sovereignty (Gen. 25:23).
- Two boys, who will father two nations that will be divided, struggle from conception onward (Gen. 25:22-26; Hos. 12:2-3).
- Esau emerges first. Jacob follows quickly, grasping the heel of his brother (Gen. 25:25-26).

### III. DESPISING WHAT IS SACRED

- A somewhat innocuous story holds long-lasting implications (Gen. 25:29-34).
- Jacob demonstrates that his name is best understood to mean “deceitful” rather than merely “heel grabber.” He is ready at a moment’s notice to take advantage of his brother (Gen. 25:31).
- For a momentary satisfaction, Esau barter away his inheritance (Heb. 12:15-17).
- Jacob’s dishonesty is not to be emulated, but his shrewdness is a quality that can be redeemed (Matt. 10:16; Luke 16:1-9).
- Hold on to what is sacred. Do not give it away as cheap, or discard it thoughtlessly (Matt. 7:6; Mark 14:21; Luke 9:62; John 15:5-6).

**KNOW:** There remains in this world sacred concepts. We should consider them sacred and not despise them. The gospel is near the top of the list of sacred ideas.

**DO:** Hold what is sacred as sacred. Honor God above all things.

### Suggested Reading:

*A Gospel Primer for Christians* by Milton Vincent  
(LifePoint Library #248.4 VIN)

### Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

#### Please Read Genesis 25:19-34

1. Why is Isaac’s “generations” so much shorter than that of Esau’s? What is God doing here, do you think?
2. What is significant about the fact that Esau and Jacob struggle beginning in the womb?
3. Anything strike you about the reality that Jacob emerges from the womb grasping at his brother’s heel?
4. Do Isaac and Rebekah show favorites when it comes to the love of their sons? What does this lead to?
5. What do you think about Jacob’s behavior?
6. What do you think about Esau’s behavior?
7. In what ways do we, at times, despise what is sacred?
8. What are your takeaways from Sunday’s passage?