



# and that's... **The Gospel Truth!!** with Pat Corn

*a brief message of encouragement to make your day just a little bit brighter*

It appears that things are not cooling down at all in the East. This third installment called "Two Brothers" should wrap up the reason for the devastation of human life in the Middle East.

Just to recap the previous two installments let me remind you of a few items. Beginning in Genesis Chapter 16 the story begins with Abraham (then known as Abrahm), already in his nineties, fathering a child with Hagar, his wife Sarai's (later to be known as Sarah) maid servant Hagar. The son was named Ishmael.

Genesis 18 begins the account of the forthcoming son through Sarai, who was barren and far past the age of child bearing, already into her eighties, until the word of the Lord instructed her that she would bare a child named Isaac.

God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will co come from her."

Isaac was born and when he was weaned Abraham had a celebration and Ishmael was mocking Isaac and Sarah insisted that Hagar and Ishmael be sent away. Abraham did exactly that. God instructed Abraham that each child would father many nations. Hagar and Ishmael fled to the open desert lands away from the homeland of Abraham (which means Israel). Hagar was told that Ishmael's descendents would be hated by many.

"The angel of the LORD also said to her (Hagar): "You are now with child and you will have a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the LORD has heard of your misery. He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers."

Okay, the first two brothers of contrast are Ishmael and Isaac. Ishmael is taken to desert by his mother and Isaac stays with his natural parents in Israel (the land of Abraham). Ishmael is to be hated and in constant conflict and the other is to be loved and nurtured as the natural son of Abraham and Sarah.

Upon the death of Abraham, his entire estate went to Isaac and he was sent to the east to reside.

Isaac married Rebekah and had twin sons, Jacob and Esau. The LORD said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger." Ishmael had thirteen sons and lived on the borders of Egypt on constant hostility with their neighboring nations.

Now, the rest of the story. The children of Isaac were completely opposite. Esau, the elder, loved the open lands and was an avid hunter, Jacob...well...in all honesty was a mama's boy. He was a mama's boy, but a smart mama's boy who could negotiate. He actually negotiated Esau out of his "birthright" which was the rights of the elder son. A person's birthright was a tremendously valuable asset, but Esau traded his birthright for a bowl of stew. Maybe...that's where the word STEW-pid comes from!??

Shortly before Isaac's death he was blind and his wife Rebekah, who greatly favored Jacob, developed a plan for Jacob to steal his brother's "blessing" to be given to eldest son by his father Isaac. He is how it went down recorded in Genesis 27.

"When Isaac was old and his eyes were so weak that he could no longer see, he called for Esau his older son and said to him, "My son." "Here I am," he answered. Isaac said, "I am now an old man and don't know the day of my death. Now then, get your weapons—your quiver and bow—and go out to the open country to hunt some wild game for me. Prepare me the kind of tasty food I like and bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my "blessing" before I die."

Now Rebekah was listening as Isaac spoke to his son Esau. When Esau left for the open country to hunt game and bring it back, Rebekah said to her son Jacob, "Look, I overheard your father say to your brother Esau, 'Bring me some game and prepare me some tasty food to eat, so that I may give you my blessing in the presence of the LORD before I die.' Now, my son, listen carefully and do what I tell you. Go out to the flock and bring me two choice young goats, so I can prepare some tasty food for your father, just the way he likes it. Then take it to your father to eat, so that he may give you his blessing before he dies."

Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, "But my brother Esau is a hairy man, and I'm a man with smooth skin. What if my father touches me? I would appear to be tricking him and would bring down a curse on myself rather than a blessing." His mother said to him, "My son, let the curse fall on me. Just do what I say; go and get them for me."

So he went and got them and brought them to his mother, and she prepared some tasty food, just the way his father liked it. Then Rebekah took the best clothes of Esau her older son, which she had in the house, and put them on her younger son Jacob. She also covered his hands and the smooth part of his neck with the goatskins. Then she handed to her son Jacob the tasty food and the bread she had made.

He went to his father and said, "My father." "Yes, my son," he answered. "Who is it?" Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn. I have done as you told me. Please sit up and eat some of my game so that you may give me your blessing." Isaac asked his son, "How did you find it so quickly, my son?" "The LORD your God gave me success," he replied. Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Come near so I can touch you, my son, to know whether you really are my son Esau or not."

Jacob went close to his father Isaac, who touched him and said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau." He did not recognize him, for his hands were hairy like those of his brother Esau; so he blessed him. "Are you really my son Esau?" he asked. "I am," he replied.

Then he said, "My son, bring me some of your game to eat, so that I may give you my blessing." Jacob brought it to him and he ate; and he brought some wine and he drank. Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come here, my son, and kiss me." So he went to him and kissed him. When Isaac caught the smell of his clothes, he blessed him and said, "Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that the LORD has blessed. May God give you of heaven's dew and of earth's richness, an abundance of grain and new wine.

May nations serve you and peoples bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed."

After Isaac finished blessing him and Jacob had scarcely left his father's presence, his brother Esau came in from hunting. He too prepared some tasty food and brought it to his father. Then he said to him, "My father, sit up and eat some of my game, so that you may give me your blessing."

His father Isaac asked him, "Who are you?" "I am your son," he answered, "your firstborn, Esau." Isaac trembled violently and said, "Who was it, then, that hunted game and brought it to me? I ate it just before you came and I blessed him—and indeed he will be blessed!"

When Esau heard his father's words, he burst out with a loud and bitter cry and said to his father, "Bless me—me too, my father!" But he said, "Your brother came deceitfully and took your blessing." Esau said, "Isn't he rightly named Jacob? He has deceived me these two times: He took my birthright, and now he's taken my blessing!" Then he asked, "Haven't you reserved any blessing for me?"

Isaac answered Esau, "I have made him lord over you and have made all his relatives his servants, and I have sustained him with grain and new wine. So what can I possibly do for you, my son?" Esau said to his father, "Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me too, my father!" Then Esau wept aloud.

His father Isaac answered him, "Your dwelling will be away from the earth's richness, away from the dew of heaven above. You will live by the sword and you will serve your brother.

Many nations in the Middle East have sprung from Ishmael and Esau.....lands of constant hatred, turmoil, conflict, and poverty. And we wonder why they are hacked off at the land of "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob"???? A stolen birthright and blessing (equivalent to a deed) by a mama's boy and ordained by God to be in conflict forever. Pretty low blow, huh?

But, oddly enough the Israelites are God's chosen people and we are admonished to pray for Israel. We must, to be in His will. We cannot abandon Israel.

God works in mysterious ways.....???

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