

The Issue of the Single Parents Part 2 The Marriage of Abraham with Keturah

“1 Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. 2 And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. 3 And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim. 4 And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Ephher, and Hanoah, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah. 5 And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. 6 But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.” (Genesis 25:1-6 KJV)

This chapter of **Genesis 25** contains an account of Abraham’s marriage with another woman, and of the children he had by her and of their posterity. Isaac married three years after the death of his mother, Sarah. Therefore in this chapter, as Isaac was married and Abraham alone and at the age of hundred and forty years, it comes to us the story of the marriage of Abraham to Keturah. The Scripture does not tell us her origin or how her marriage came to Abraham as the story that we have with Hagar. Now, the marriage of Abraham to that woman, if it were after Sarah, we can say it is eligible for him to marry because his wife is dead. But there is a reservation for that also because although Sarah was dead we do not know if Hagar was still alive. If Hagar was still alive, he cannot go for another marriage, otherwise it will be adultery. We cannot assume the reality, but since Abraham resorted to send the sons of Keturah while he was still alive away from Isaac, as he did with Hagar and Ishmael, then most likely it was a similar story of Hagar and Ishmael, and that Keturah was sent with her children, otherwise which mother will agree to stay with a man who had sent her children away.

Abraham married concubines as we read here, ***“6 But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.” (Genesis 25:6 KJV)*** What is mentioned in the Scriptures are these two, Hagar and Keturah but he might marry others and the Scriptures do not mention.

The Scriptures speak further about Keturah the following: ***“32 Now the sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bare Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And the sons of Jokshan; Sheba, and Dedan.” (1 Chronicles 1:32 KJV)*** If she is named here as a concubine, then most likely Abraham got her before Sarah’s death and that would make of Abraham, not a good example for men to follow today. That is why the Scripture speaks Abraham sent his descendent from Keturah and most likely with Keturah while he was alive, away from Isaac, who was the sole heir for Abraham before God.

In addition, if Abraham married Keturah before Sarah’s death then why Sarah tolerated him to have her and have children from her, while Sarah did not tolerate Abraham to have a child from Hagar? It might be due to the attitude of Hagar, who started to despise Sarah when she found herself pregnant, ***“4 And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.” (Genesis***

16:4 KJV) as well as the mocking of Ishmael to Isaac, ***“9 And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. 10 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.” (Genesis 21:9-10 KJV)*** That is why Sarah requested Abraham to send Hagar away. **Whatever the reason and the sequence of events, what we are sure of is that second marriage while the wife is still alive is adultery and that relationship should be terminated.**

The Hebrew meaning of Keturah is ‘**incense**’; but, even with such a name and meaning that does not mean that her relationship with Abraham was acceptable and lawful if Sarah was still alive. Even if we say that Abraham came to know her after Sarah’s death, then still it will be considered adultery if Hagar his second wife was still alive.

Keturah conceived to Abraham, Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. ***“2 And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.” (Genesis 25:2 KJV)*** The first son of Keturah, born to him, was called Zimran, and there were no more details about him in the Scriptures apart of the meaning of his name is ‘**musician**’.

The second son of Keturah, born to Abraham, was called Jokshan. The descendants of Jokshan mentioned to the third generation, ***“3 And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.” (Genesis 25:3 KJV)*** while the descendants of Ishmael mentioned to the second generation only, as we can read here: ***“12 Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham: 13 And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, 14 And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, 15 Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah: 16 These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations.” (Genesis 25:12-16 KJV)*** With such information that the posterity of Keturah recorded to the third generation it might be that Abraham married Keturah earlier before Hagar, but that would contradict what Sarah said to Abraham, ***“1 Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. 2 And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.” (Genesis 16:1-2 KJV)***

“And Jokshan begat Sheba and Dedan” (Genesis 25:3 KJV) The posterity of Sheba is possibly the Sabeans that plundered Job of his cattle, ***“14 And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: 15 And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.” (Job 1:14-15 KJV)*** From Dedan came the Dedanim or the Dedanites, who were in a link with the Arabians in Isaiah, ***“13 The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanim.” (Isaiah 21:13 KJV)*** Sheba and Dedan, both of them mentioned in Ezekiel, ***“13 Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy***

company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?” (Ezekiel 38:13 KJV)

“And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.” (Genesis 25:3 KJV) These names being plural are most likely names of men, but they are also could be descriptive of their places of living, or their businesses.

“2 And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.” (Genesis 25:2 KJV) The third son of Keturah, born to him, was called Medan, but no further Scriptures describe Medan. There are no more details about him apart from the meaning of his name is ‘contention’.

“2 And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.” (Genesis 25:2 KJV) The fourth son of Keturah, born to him, was called Midian. From Midian sprung the Midianites. Let us go through the Scriptures to find more about them.

A. They are the one who took Joseph and brought him down to Egypt and sold him: “28 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt. 36 And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh’s, and captain of the guard.” (Genesis 37:28, 36 KJV)

B. God guided Moses to Midian: “15 Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well. 16 Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. 17 And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock. 18 And when they came to Reuel their father, he said, How is it that ye are come so soon to day? 19 And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew water enough for us, and watered the flock. 20 And he said unto his daughters, And where is he? why is it that ye have left the man? call him, that he may eat bread. 21 And Moses was content to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter.” (Exodus 2:15-21 KJV) Possibly the Midianites who were of the seed of Abraham, few of them had retained the worship of the true God among them, that is why Moses directed by God there to one of them who fear God so that he might have not only a safe but a comfortable settlement among them. In addition, through this country, Moses was afterward to lead Israel. Here, Moses met the daughters of Reuel, the priest of Midian, whom Moses helped them in watering their flocks. Reuel, a descendant of Abraham might have retained the knowledge of the true God, and became a priest of God. When he heard from his daughters about Moses, he requested them to invite the man, and Moses was glad to live with the man who gave Moses Zipporah his daughter to be his wife.

C. The descendants of Midian are five sons: “4 And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Ephraim, and Hanoch, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.” (Genesis 25:4 KJV) These could be from them the five kings of Midian who conspired with the Moabites and hired Balaam to curse the Israelites, who later on the Israelites slew

them in a battle, “8 And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.” (Numbers 31:8 KJV)

D. Ephah is mentioned along with Midian his father: “4 And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Ephraim, and Hanoch, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.” (Genesis 25:4 KJV) Ephah is mentioned along with Midian his father in Isaiah, “6 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD.” (Isaiah 60:6 KJV) But of the rest of the sons of Midian, no further notice is taken from the Scriptures.

“2 And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.” (Genesis 25:2 KJV) The fifth son of Keturah, born to him, was called Ishbak. As for Ishbak, there is no tracing of his name anywhere. The sixth son of Keturah, born to him, was called Shuah. For Shuah probably from him Bildad the Shuhite descended, “11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him.” (Job 2:11 KJV)

With the above description of the children of Keturah, no one but the priest of Midian, the father in Law of Moses and his people were compatible with the people of God, the Israelites. That supports the decision of Abraham to send them away from Isaac. We may even say that Abraham was convicted to repent and he was aware that they will be a source of trouble to Isaac that is why he sent them away from Isaac.

Marriage is not forbidden to old age, but we must discern the other circumstances around it. Truly Abraham had lost Sarah his wife, and Isaac got married to his wife Rebekah, but Hagar was still alive, and if Abraham married Keturah after Sarah’s death while Hagar was still alive, then it is still adultery. Whether his marriage before Sarah’s death or after her death is still adultery because Hagar was alive, therefore, Abraham needed to repent of his sin of the second marriages with concubines.

Marriage with concubines was inexpensive than marrying a wife. It does not need a letter of agreement, nor a dowry, nor marriage ceremony, nor celebration, nor long-term commitment. So they are not treated as wives, and that is another thing that made Abraham moved to put his house in order before his death.

Hagar and Keturah, though they were both called his wives in Scriptures, “3 And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.” (Genesis 16:3 KJV) “1 Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah.” (Genesis 25:1 KJV); yet they were concubines, as we can read here about Keturah, “32 Now the sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bare Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And the sons of Jokshan; Sheba, and Dedan.” (1 Chronicles 1:32 KJV), both of them, Hagar and Keturah, they were concubines, as some used the word, concubine wives; they were half wives or secondary ones: the Jewish writers say the

concubines were espoused, but not by writing, as wives were; they were under the lawful wife, or under a servant in the family, and their children did not and had no right to inherit. **Now, this is correct and directed to everyone who goes after a married man to marry him. Now to those who do such we can say to them the following: You will not be a wife but just a concubine, your relationship with the man is adultery, and you will end up in hell, and your children will not have the right to inherit from the man.**

God had promised Abraham that He will increase his descendants. By his sons from his concubines, Abraham got great posterity, and increased in different directions, as we observed in our descriptions for the children of Hagar and Keturah. However, the covenant of God with Abraham was through Isaac. Therefore, after the birth of these sons, he set his house in order, with prudence and justice. For this purpose Abraham was compelled to do the following:

1. Abraham made Isaac his heir, as he was bound to do: “5 And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac.” (Genesis 25:5 KJV) By his last will, Abraham, while he lived after he reserved some for himself and gifts to his other children, he gave all to Isaac. That what his servant declared to the parents of Rebekah, **“35 And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses. 36 And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath.” (Genesis 24:35-36 KJV)** Abraham at that time purposed and promised to give all that he had to Isaac, and now he did it. He did that for the following reasons:

a. In obedience to God who promised him that through Isaac whom Sarah will give birth God shall establish his covenant with him and with his seed after him: “19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.” (Genesis 17:19 KJV)

b. As justice to Sarah his first and principal wife:

c. As justice to Rebekah who married Isaac upon the assurance of all what Abraham had was given to Isaac: “35 And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses. 36 And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath.” (Genesis 24:35-36 KJV)

“5 And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac.” (Genesis 25:5 KJV) In this all, which Abraham settled upon Isaac, he included the promise of the land of Canaan to be given to Isaac and to his seed after him. As God has already made Abraham the heir of the promise, Abraham, therefore, made Isaac the heir of his estate.

2. Abraham gave portions to the rest of his children: “6 But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.” (Genesis 25:6 KJV) Our affection and gifts should go along with God's purpose and will. Abraham gave both to Ishmael, though at first he was sent away empty, and to his sons by Keturah. It was justice

to give those gifts as they are his children. As God, dispense his blessings to the children of the world and the common people, Abraham did the same in giving gifts to the sons of the bond-women, his concubines' children.

“6 But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.” (Genesis 25:6 KJV) Abraham gave them money, gold, and silver, of which he had plenty. By this, it appears that though Abraham had sent Ishmael away without anything, yet he afterward gave him a portion with the rest of the children of his concubines. This is to support the opinion that Ishmael was raised by his mother and cared for and provided by God. Some who have a second family and they are convinced to send the second wife, their concubines, away, they will say why then, we will not give them gifts and support them as Abraham did here. There are differences between what they are saying and what Abraham did. Abraham did such, in giving the gifts, to send them away, and to free himself from their responsibilities. To the opposite, this action of Abraham was not to strengthen the relationship with them but to send them away. Abraham did not support his sons born to him from his concubines. Abraham truly repented of his other marriages. The proof for that is that he not only gave them gifts but as well as, he sent them away. Those who still want to support their children from their concubines are not repenting of what they did in the second marriages, they are not repenting of their sins of adultery and they are still not trusting God that in sending their concubines with their children away, God will provide for their concubines and God will help them to care for their children.

3. Abraham sent his sons from his concubines away from Isaac: “6 But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.” (Genesis 25:6 KJV) Abraham did that so that they might not be troublesome to Isaac and his family; and that there might be no contention among them about inheriting the land of Canaan that was given to Abraham and his seed in Isaac. Abraham needed to send them away and it was prudence to settle them in places far distant from Isaac, that they might not pretend to divide the inheritance with him, nor be in any way a burden or expense to him.

4. Abraham sent his sons from his concubines away from Isaac while he was alive: “6 But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.” (Genesis 25:6 KJV) Abraham did it while he was alive otherwise after his death, no separation would have been easily made. By Abraham, their father they were sent away from Isaac. He did this while he was yet lived, lest it should not be done, or not so well done, afterward. In many cases it is wisdom for men to make their own hands their executors, and what they find to do to do it while they live, as far as they can. What I need to say to those who are having concubines and children from their concubines after their first wife, that they need to settle things as we described above as part of their repentance and to please God and to do justice and to have a good outcome and clear teaching. They need to put their homes in order before their death.

5. Abraham sent his sons from his concubines eastward, unto the east country: “6 But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.” (Genesis

25:6 KJV) These sons of the concubines were sent into the country that lay east from Canaan, and their posterity was called the children of the east, famous for their numbers. The place he sent them that is Arabia, and the parts thereof, which lay east from the place where Abraham was; these were the children of the east, mentioned along with the Midianites, who sprung from Keturah, who troubled the Israelites, but later on God raised Gideon who driven them out from the territory of Israel. **“3 And so it was, when Israel had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east, even they came up against them. 4 And they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass. 5 For they came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude; for both they and their camels were without number: and they entered into the land to destroy it. 33 Then all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east were gathered together, and went over, and pitched in the valley of Jezreel.” (Judges 6:3-5, 33 KJV)**

My dear and beloved: Let us learn from the repentant action of our father Abraham and how he set his house in order before he died; he reserved his covenant blessings for the heir of the promise to Isaac. In the same way now, while we are still alive, let us teach the generation around us with the Word of God that we are learning from the Scriptures. Let us work out with those who are repenting to put their houses in order to do as Abraham did while they are still alive, to send their concubines, their second wives and their children away with gifts, from the children of their first wife, so that troubles will be far away from their descendants. As well as those whom they will be going to send away, they will be blessed by the Lord, as we had observed in the Scriptures that we meditate from the life of Abraham and how led by God to deal with his concubines and the children from them. The children of the concubines were blessed by God and were multiplied as Abraham their father obeyed God.

With what Abraham did, both, Isaac and the rest of his sons of his concubines were blessed by the Lord. Therefore, as long as you are alive and having the same problem in your life as Abraham had, repent and do the same and let the blessing of God flow to your children.

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the Cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word that teaches me your ways and your will.

Confess your sins and renounce them. Renounce the sin of second marriage, and the immoral relationship that you have outside the marriage life. Renounce your non willingness to watch and care for your child or children as a single parent and take the full responsibility on them. Confess and renounce your non willingness to send away your second wife or mistress with her children. Confess and renounce your non willingness to put things in order in your family before your death following the same example of Abraham who sent away his concubines and his children from them before his death. Confess and renounce doing your own will and plan and not the things that God had ordained in His Word as we discussed in this message. Lord forgive me, I repent of the following sins _____ .

Lord I commit myself to abide with your Word and doing your will in regard to the issue of single parents. Lord, as a single parent I am willing to watch over my children _____ . Lord provide for me to achieve that. Lord I am willing to send away my second wife, mistress away with her children as Abraham did. Lord give me the wisdom and the perseverance to do that and to put my house in order before my death as Abraham did. Lord, as I will obey you then fulfill your good promises to me and to my descendants. Lord give me the strength and the good health to continue to serve you and do your will, this all I ask and pray in Jesus name Amen.

Lord thank you for my brothers and sisters who repented of their sins and who committed their lives to do according to your Word in this message. Lord give them wisdom how to put their families in order before their death to do the same as Abraham did in sending away their second wives and mistresses with their children. Lord bless their children and prosper them and make them grow in your grace. Lord bless the single parents, give them the strength and provide for them to continue to care for their children.

Lord bless us as a church, and help us as we continue to implement this teaching of your Word and put families in order. Lord open the hearts of the people who are involved in such sins to receive and apply this in their lives and in the lives of their families and children. Lord refill us once again with the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts that we need to go and serve you. Lord enable us to evangelize and to reach new people with the gospel of Jesus. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God.' Lord help us to plant new Bible studies and new congregations for the church. Lord we pray for more people to get water baptized and receive the Holy Spirit baptism. Lord prepare us for your second coming to go with you when you come to take us. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us, and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all in Jesus name, Amen.

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