

Message Summary

Hebrews 11:20 guides us back to an Old Testament story of a father and his sons (Gen. 27:1-45). Again, we have a clear picture of the Bible as one complete book with both Old and New Testament bearing witness of God and His plan of redemption. Isaac was a future looking father. He trusted, by faith, in the future favor of God upon Jacob and Esau. Isaac is old at the time of Genesis 27 but he was a father that throughout his life had blessed his children and laid his hands on them. He was a man who had loved well and had been loved well by his father Abraham. Abraham, was a great father, but had sinful failures in his life. Yet Isaac had witnessed as a young man the faith of his father Abraham, through his natural provision and God's supernatural provision for his people. Isaac, although a good father, is a man who also had many problems. The Bible is real and doesn't gloss over things. This story and many others in the Old Testament prepare us for our ups and downs and our failures as people. Genesis 27 is a story revealing deception and lies that affect an entire family, but in this we can see how God uses all things for His purposes and plans. God cannot be stopped from accomplishing His purposes.

God's plan and promise for Redemption through His Son Jesus would be brought about through a genealogy that He had foreordained. God promised future blessing to the nations through Abraham, Isaac and the younger son Jacob. See Matthew 1:1-2, and Romans 9:7-13. We often try, sometimes well meaning, to take things into our own hands. Isaac failed to obey God's instruction that Esau as the older brother would serve Jacob who was younger. See Genesis 25:5, 11 and 19-34. God had made it clear to Isaac, but the birthright had been given to Esau. Esau, driven by fleshly desires and passions, sold his birthright for a brief moment of temporary satisfaction gained from earthly food, yet was soon hungry again. Jacob too was a deceiver who operated according to his own desires until he allowed God to control his life. His name was changed to Israel. Jacob was blessed by Isaac and the lineage of Christ would be preserved just as God had planned. Note Genesis 28:1, and 3-4.

The Bible is more than history and a list of names. It may be that you cannot identify with an earthly father who loved you, thought unselfishly about your future, and prayed for you. If you did have (or do have) you are blessed. This is the exception in our day. Regardless of our earthly situation, we are none without hope. Blessing by faith is about a heavenly Father, laying His hands on us in a real way, speaking life, truth, healing and a future favor over us. This is the bigger picture of today's message. There is a greater Abraham, a greater Isaac, and a greater Israel (Jacob) who is Jesus Christ, God's only Son. See Galatians 4:4-7, 21-31, and 5:1. We have a heavenly Father who is good and gracious, who loves us despite our past, who loves us in our present, and who will love us in our future.

WHY IT MATTERS

Digging Deeper

1) Deric stated that the older he gets, the more he loves the Bible. The message on future favor and the significant amount of scripture used reveals so clearly how the Bible is a book about Christ and God's plan to provide for our redemption, beginning in Genesis and ending in Revelation. Do you love the Bible more today than yesterday?

2) At birth Jacob was holding the heel of Esau. He was known at times in his life as a heel grabber – one who by deception tripped up others. Life trips us up at times. Can we see in this story that God loves us and keeps us even when life is grabbing at our heels?

3) Isaac blessed Jacob and asked God to provide the "dew from heaven" and the "fatness of the earth". The land of Palestine can be very dry in certain seasons. God provided miraculously during the dry season. Do we encounter "dry seasons" in our lives? Can we trust God and His provisions?

4) Do we weigh out consequences carefully before making a decision or taking action? Rebekah lost for a season that which she loved the most because of sin and her own attempt at doing things her own way. The same was true in the life of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We can't improve on God's way.

NOW WHAT DO WE DO?

Group Discussion & Application

Use the following questions to examine what the sermon and its text mean, to apply the Word to your life, and to guide how you pray. Please note that you don't have to use all of the questions. These are just options (along with the digging deeper section) to help you frame the family/small group discussion.

- 1) Have you encountered a deceptive person who even brings God into the deception?
- 2) Have you encountered a deceptive person who uses scripture slyly/ wrongly for personal gain?
- 3) Are there instances where God provided for you during a really hard time? (Dry season)
- 4) People of faith have flaws – discuss God's mercy and grace toward his people thru the flawless Son!
- 5) We cannot separate our soul from our actions. Esau was jealous, then angry, then plotted to murder his own brother. Discuss the progression of sin and the consequences. Do little things matter?
- 6) Is our only hope for future favor, future grace, and future blessing in Christ and Christ alone?

Prayer

- Pray for Our Church:
 - Thank God for the cross of Christ, God's perfect plan for the redemption of sinful people. Thank Him that He uses flawed people today to bring about His plan, for His glory and for our good
 - Pray that He would teach our church to trust Him more in every situation. Pray that He would shape our thinking and our actions in the light of the cross of Christ.
- Pray for Our Community:
 - Pray that God would lead us to bold evangelism, and give grace to grow and learn through the trials which often accompany it.
- Pray for Our World:
 - Pray for Jeff and Misti Fairchild in their preparation for the mission field. Pray for effective language acquisition, practical engagement with ministry as they learn, wisdom, strong community, and continued spiritual strengthening and encouragement.
 - Pray for our International Ministry as the world comes to us!