

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**
[Adapted from Bethel Bible-
Presbyterian Church, 10 Downing St.
Oakleigh, Vic., 3166]

DHW BIBLE CLASS

LESSON 20

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

Chapters 26B-27

INTRODUCTION

It is sad to learn that Isaac, a man chosen by God, had a family that was neither harmonious nor happy. This teaches us that after we have taken the step of confessing our sins and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, we must continue to think and walk in the will and ways of God. We must make the right choices in our daily life and take the proper actions.

We learn also that God's eternal program can never be thwarted. Although our foolish actions may jeopardise His plan and purpose, God is still in control. His plan will still be on course. But we must bear the consequences of our own foolish and sinful ways. This is how God teaches us to live godly lives. As Christians we are not absolved from the consequences of our foolish acts. As God's people we must not stoop to gain our desires by deceptive and manipulative schemes. We must

always strive to achieve God's will through proper and righteous ways.

OUTLINE

A Isaac Intended to Bless Esau (26:34-27:1-5).

1. Esau took two Hittite wives (26:34).
2. Esau grieved his parents (26:35).
3. Isaac prepared to die (27:1-2).
4. Isaac intended to bless Esau (27:3-4).
5. Isaac's decision was heard by Rebekah (27:5).

B. Rebekah Schemed with Jacob (27:6-17).

1. Rebekah schemed with Jacob to rob the blessing (27:6-12).
2. Rebekah assured Jacob that all would be well (27:13-17).

C. Isaac Blessed Jacob (27:18-29).

1. Jacob deceived his father (27:18-24).
2. Jacob received his father's blessing (27:25-29).

D. Isaac Blessed Esau (27:30-40).

1. Esau brought his venison to Isaac (27:30-32).
2. Esau discovered the deception (27:33-36).

3. Esau lost his birthright (27:37).
4. Esau received the second blessing (27:38-40).

E. Esau Hated Jacob (27:41-45).

1. Esau purposed to kill Jacob (27:41).
2. Rebekah knew of Esau's intention (27:42).
3. Rebekah planned Jacob's escape (27:43-45).

F. Rebekah Hid the Truth (27:46).

1. Rebekah sought Isaac's consent to send Jacob away (27:46a).
2. Rebekah hid the real reason (27:46b).

COMMENTARY

Living in God's Will

It is a source of sadness and grief to the parents of Esau that he married Hittite women, Judith and Basehemath. Esau's actions showed that he was neither interested nor concerned about continuing the spiritual heritage of the family. His capacity for spiritual values was mournfully deficient.

Isaac felt that his time to die might be soon. His eyes were so dim that he could hardly see. He decided to give the primogeniture blessing to Esau, the firstborn. He told Esau to hunt and prepare venison for him to eat so *that my soul may bless thee before I die* (27:4). This expression is interesting. It is repeated four times (26:4, 19, 25,

31). It is the repetitive and emphatic use of the word 'soul.' This indicates that Isaac wanted to bless Esau with all his resources, that is, with all the blessings he had received, and with all his desire and vitality. In short, he wanted to give Esau the birthright of the firstborn. And he told Esau only. Isaac did not tell nor discuss it with Rebekah. Rebekah overheard their conversation. In other words, Rebekah heard of it by chance (or divine providence).

The fact that Isaac intended to do this secretly intimates that he knew the oracle of God that the elder will serve the younger (25:23). Isaac could not plead ignorance. He knew about it. Even if he were not there when the oracle was given to Rebekah, Rebekah would have told him. His action therefore was in wilful disobedience to the will of God. And the reason was because he loved Esau more than Jacob. He loved Esau for his manliness, his hunting skill and his venison, which he enjoyed very much. Moreover, Esau was the firstborn. In comparison, Jacob was a sissy in his sight.

But God does not allow His plan and purpose to be thwarted by the foolish and sinful acts of man. It was providential that Rebekah overheard Isaac's conversation. Now Rebekah should have confronted Isaac directly and reminded him of the oracle of God. But she did not. There was evidence of either a relationship or a communication breakdown between Isaac and Rebekah.

Scheming to Gain

Instead of talking with Isaac, the quick thinking Rebekah called Jacob. She told Jacob that his father intended

to bless Esau before he died and had asked him to prepare venison for him. Rebekah then revealed her deceptive scheme to Jacob. Jacob did not object to his mother's scheme to deceive his father. His main concern was that Isaac might find out that he was not Esau and that he would be cursed. Rebekah had a ready answer for Jacob. Jacob obeyed his mother and went along with the plan.

Rebekah knew that Jacob was the one whom the LORD had chosen to be the successor of Isaac. As already mentioned she could have warned Isaac, but she did not. She thought of this evil scheme to trick Isaac into blessing Jacob. While she was right in trying to get Jacob blessed, which was the divine will, her means of achieving the end was definitely wrong. God cannot condone their joint action. At the same time we see that Jacob was morally weak for he obeyed his mother unquestionably even though her scheme was evil. He obeyed blindly. Possibly Jacob could have reasoned in his heart that Esau had sold the birthright to him but this was not the way to go about it. They needed to trust God to bring about what He had declared in His time and way.

Lying Is Not God's Way

Jacob presented himself to Isaac. Isaac was surprised that Esau was able to return so soon. Jacob lied on three counts when Isaac questioned him. He lied that he was Esau. Then he lied that he was the firstborn. And he attributed his ability to return so soon to God who had supposedly brought the animal to him. He not only told two blatant lies, he blasphemed God by using the name of God in vain. He did not hunt for the goat. He got it from the family's own

domestic livestock, and Rebekah cooked it. Jacob stooped really low to cheat his father in order to gain the blessing. This is not God's way. God can never be a part of such an evil scheme.

Isaac craved meat to satisfy his gastronomic desire. He depended on his sense of touch, hearing, taste, and smell to confirm it was Esau. This transfer of the blessing of the firstborn was a very important occasion. It was customary to perform such a joyous occasion before the other members of the family and others. But here, it was done privately and secretly between father and son only.

Isaac pronounced the blessing of 'his soul' upon Jacob that his agriculture venture would be successful, that other nations and his brother would serve him, that whoever cursed him would be cursed and whoever blessed him would be blessed. Isaac transferred all his wealth to Jacob. Although Isaac's intended action to bless Esau ran counter to God's revealed will, God's planned and purposes will never be thwarted. God providentially intervened so that Jacob was blessed and not Esau. This teaches us that God is in control over the affairs of man. For that we take much comfort and encouragement.

Repenting & Converting

Esau came back from hunting. He prepared the venison and presented himself before Isaac. When it dawned upon Isaac that he had blessed Jacob instead of Esau, he 'trembled tremblingly and exceedingly.' That is how the Hebrew text reads. Isaac was violently shaken. He was brought to the

realisation that he had sinned and violated the divine oracle. This explains why Isaac told Esau that he had blessed Jacob, and declared that *yea, he shall be blessed* (33). It also explains why Isaac refused to revoke the first blessing and give Esau a similar blessing. Isaac repented for he had stood up against Rebekah who favoured Jacob, had refused to discuss the matter of blessing Esau with Rebekah, knowing that she would object, and he had preferred Esau to Jacob although he was aware of God's will. God cannot be mocked. No one can thwart His plan and purpose. His decrees will take its course regardless of man's attempt to thwart it!

Esau wept bitterly. He claimed that Jacob had supplanted him by taking his birthright and blessing -- the birthright that he had sold to Jacob. In fact, he had no reason to cry and be bitter about it. He should have told his father that he had sold his birthright and blessing to Jacob. But who does not want such a blessing—to inherit all the wealth and blessing of the father, and more (vv 28,29). Nevertheless Isaac blessed Esau and restated the divine oracle that he would serve his younger brother Jacob. It was recorded that “By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come” (Hebrews 11:20). There was no mention of Isaac's faults. God forgives and forgets. Behold the grace of the Lord our God and His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

Taking Revenge

Esau hated Jacob. In a fit of anger, he purposed in his heart to kill Jacob. How true it is that when we are angry we make foolish decisions, which we will later regret. Taking revenge is not God's way. If Esau is right and Jacob has

wrongfully robbed him of his blessing, God will deal with Jacob. Our God is the Judge of the world.

Rebekah quickly told Jacob about his brother's intention and advised him to flee to Laban for the time being. She remarked that if Jacob stayed on she might lose both of them—Esau would kill Jacob and Esau would face the death penalty. Observe that Rebekah attributed the whole thing to Jacob, stating that *which thou has done to him* (45). She put the blame on Jacob. Jacob did not protest. His separation from his mother lasted twenty years. Rebekah never saw him again.

Telling the Whole Truth

Rebekah now had to get Isaac's consent. She did not confess about her scheme with Jacob to deceive him. What excuse could she present to Isaac for Jacob's departure to Paddan-aram? Her quick thinking mind once again prompted her to hide the whole truth. She mentioned that she was afraid that Jacob might marry a Canaanite woman, and that would have grieved her to death. Life was already intolerable with Esau's two Hittite wives. Although that was true, it was not the whole truth. She did not report that Esau was bent on killing Jacob because the latter had supplanted him and robbed him of his blessing. In such a situation involving family members, it is best that the whole truth be brought out into the open and discussed.

A Family Broken

What contributed to the breakdown of the family ties? We have observed that in the beginning, the parents had played favourites. Observe that Esau and Jacob did not meet in this chapter.

In fact, in all the six scenes the family never gathered as an entire family. It was either the meeting of Isaac and Esau together, Rebekah and Jacob, Isaac and Jacob, or Isaac and Rebekah. Rebekah never met Esau and Esau never met Jacob! Communication had broken down. There was tension in the home. There was no trust in one another. They resorted to lies to get their way. This is because they did not trust God as Abraham did. They did not do the will of God and if they did it was done through stealth and deceit.

SUMMARY

Genesis 27 teaches us valuable lessons for a happy and harmonious family. Know God, obey Him, and do things in the way that pleases Him. We need to trust that when we confess our faults one to another, God will bring about peace and harmony in the family. AMEN.

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THE BOOK OF GENESIS

Chapter 26B-27

DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION

QUESTIONS

Daily Readings

Monday: Genesis 26:34-27:5; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:22-6:4.

Tuesday: Genesis 27:6-17; Jeremiah 17:9-10; 2 Thessalonians 2:8-10.

Wednesday: Genesis 27:18-29; Acts 5:1-10; 2 Corinthians 4:2.

Thursday: Genesis 27:30-40; Hebrews 12:15-17

Friday: Genesis 27:41-46; Matthew 18:21-35.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Esau took Hittite wives instead of from among his own people?

2. Why did Isaac wish to bless Esau?

3. Did Isaac's intention to bless Esau run counter to God's Word to them?

6. What was Jacob's fear and anxiety?

4. Was Rebekah wrong in her scheme to rob the blessing from Esau? Does the end justify the means since the end is in accordance to God's will?

7. How did Jacob succeed in deceiving his father Isaac?

5. What should Rebekah have done instead of scheming?

8. What was the blessing that Isaac gave Jacob?

9. Do you think that Jacob deserved the blessing? Please Explain.

10. What was the emotional response of Isaac when he discovered that Jacob had stolen the blessing?

13. What caused the breakdown of family relationships as in this chapter?

11. What was Esau's emotional response to Isaac's blessing of Jacob?

12. What was the blessing that Isaac gave to Esau?
