

Introduction

1. In our passage last week, we saw how Jacob deceived Isaac to acquire the familial blessing, and how it enraged Esau so much that he sought to kill Jacob
2. When Rebekah learned of it, she told Jacob to flee to her brother in her home town of Haran and stay there for a few days until Esau could simmer down
3. Esau's behavior was apparently the last straw for Rebekah because she approached Isaac in what can only be described as despair (READ 27:46):
 - a. The ESV translates the beginning of Rebekah's comment more literally as "**I loathe my life...**" and this is a strong word that means to despise something or be disgusted by it
 - b. Her life was unbearable, and she hated it "**because of the daughters of Heth**":
 - 1) She was referring to Esau's two Hittite wives
 - 2) According to Genesis 26:24-25, these two Canaanite women "**were a spirit of bitterness to Isaac and Rebekah**"
 - 3) They had brought nothing but grief to Rebekah, and for a LONG time (between 23 and 37 years)
 - 4) And now, the thought of Jacob marrying Canaanite women was TOO much: "**if Jacob takes a wife from the daughters of Heth, like these, from the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?**"
4. In our passage today, we see two things:
 - a. The first is Isaac's response which is to send Jacob away to Haran to find a wife and to bless him a second time (27:46-28:5)
 - b. The other thing we see is Esau's response when he discovers Isaac's displeasure with his Hittite wives and marries another wife from among the daughters of Ishmael (28:6-9)

A. Isaac responded to Rebekah's concerns by issuing Jacob a command and giving him a second blessing (READ 28:1-5):

1. Let's first look at the command:
 - a. Isaac's command echoed that of Abraham's to his servant when it came to finding a wife for Isaac (READ Genesis 24:1-9)
 - b. Isaac issued a similar command to Jacob (RE READ 28:1-2):
 - 1) He was not to marry a woman from among the Canaanites as Esau had done
 - 2) Instead, he was to travel back to Mesopotamia to Rebekah's family and find a wife from among the daughters of her brother Laban

- c. It was common in the ANE for men to seek wives from among their own family relatives, but Abraham's and Isaac's commands regarding wives for Isaac and Jacob involve more than this:
 - 1) The Canaanites were polytheistic, worshipping thousands of Gods and engaging in detestable religious practices like human and child sacrifice
 - 2) And, while Rebekah's family may have been influenced by polytheism, they appeared have worshipped Yahweh (Genesis 24:31, 50)
 - 3) So, cultural practices of marrying one's kin may have played a role, but it seems likely that the greater motivation was to find a wife who worshipped Yahweh
2. After issuing the command regarding a wife, Isaac then passed along God's blessing and promises to Jacob (28:3-5):
 - a. This isn't the first time Isaac had blessed Jacob; the first time was after Jacob deceived him (READ 27:27-29):
 - 1) This was the traditional familial blessing that confirmed the birthright
 - 2) The purpose of this blessing was to grant to the firstborn a majority of the family estate and give him authority over the household, including his siblings, servants, etc.
 - 3) When God said to Rebekah in Genesis 25:23 that "**the older will serve the younger**" it has traditionally been interpreted as a reference to the birthright and blessing, meaning that it was God's will for the birthright and blessing to go to Jacob, not Esau
 - 4) However, as we discovered last week, Isaac sought to give this blessing the Esau until he was deceived by Jacob and gave it to him
 - 5) What's interesting about this blessing, however, is that he makes no mention of Abraham, or the promises made to him (with the exception of maybe the blessing/cursing by other nations)
 - 6) This blessing appears to purely be a traditional familial blessing; not a passing on of the Abrahamic promises and blessing
 - b. This second blessing is very different than the first and finally includes God's promises and blessings to Abraham (RE-READ 28:3-5):
 - 1) He referred to God with the same title God used of himself when He called Abraham and made the promises to him: "**God Almighty**" (Hebrew El Shaddai)
 - 2) He called on God to make him fruitful and multiple and make him a "**an assembly of peoples**" (e.g. a great nation)
 - 3) He called on God to give Isaac and his seed the "**blessing of Abraham**" so that they would "**possess the land of your sojournings which God gave Abraham**" (e.g. the land of Canaan)
 - c. It's not clear why Isaac didn't include God's blessing and promises to Abraham when he blessed Isaac the first time, but the important thing is he finally did

3. Takeaway: God fulfills His redemptive plan by having us pass along His blessings and promises to the next generation:
 - a. In the case of Abraham, God specifically expected him to pass along His blessings and promises to his children (Genesis 18:19): **“For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him”**
 - b. Likewise, God expected Isaac to pass along to Jacob the blessing and promises He made to Abraham
 - c. After the Exodus, God had the same expectation of Israel when He commanded them to pass His blessings and promises to their children (READ Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 20-25)
 - d. God expects the same thing of us today when it comes to our own children:
 - 1) Ephesians 6:4 commands us, especially father, **“...do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”**
 - 2) We see a great example of this in Timothy whose understanding of God’s blessings and promises came from his mother and grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5): **“For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well.”**
 - e. However, God’s expectations don’t end with our children because Jesus gave us a new command (Matthew 28:19): **“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”**
 - f. When we do this, there’s another spiritual generation that can then pass along these things to the next generation, and the next, and the next until His redemptive plan has been fulfilled

A. Esau married one of Ishmael’s daughters when he realized Isaac was displeased with his Hittite wives (READ Genesis 28:6-9)

1. The passage doesn’t state what Esau’s motives were in marrying the daughter of Ishmael, so we are left to speculate:
 - a. The text tells us that he just **“saw”** four things:
 - 1) He saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob (this would be the second time)
 - 2) He saw that Isaac sent him away to Haran to find a wife among relatives, and not from among the Canaanites as he had done
 - 3) He saw that Jacob listened to Isaac and Rebekah and set out for Haran to find a wife
 - 4) And finally, he apparently realized for the first time that Isaac wasn’t too fond of his two Hittite wives; this seems a bit dense because he somehow missed the fact that his wives **“were bitterness in spirit to Isaac and Rebekah”** (26:35) and had brought Rebekah to utter despair (27:46); how do you miss that, especially when they were all still a part of the same household???

- b. Esau's response when he discovered all this was to go out and marry a relative:
 - 1) I believe the most plausible reason is that he was trying to appease his parents
 - 2) He already lost his birthright and blessing to Jacob, and just learned that his parents didn't like his wives, what was it going to be like when Jacob returned?
 - 3) It might have also been a last-ditch effort to receive a blessing
 - 4) We just don't know what his motives were but based on everything the Bible reveals about Esau, it's unlikely his motives were pure

- 2. Takeaway: I believe we see in Esau the same kind of response we see from many people in our own society and culture to the Gospel:
 - a. The author of Hebrews reveals how we are to view Esau (READ Hebrews 12:16-17)
 - 1) Esau despised his birthright but still wanted the blessing and promises associated with it
 - 2) But, he was an immoral and godless man who found no place for repentance

 - b. Our world is filled with people just like Esau:
 - 1) They despise (think little of) the Gospel but still expect God's blessings
 - 2) Worse yet, many mistakenly think they have His blessing in spite of their immorality and godlessness
 - 3) Like Esau, they find no place for repentance

 - c. It's easy to get discouraged with people like this, isn't it?

Getting discouraged going door to door in the dorms

 - d. But here's the thing, we shouldn't be discouraged by such people:
 - 1) If anything can cut through the ignorance, the blindness, the stubbornness, and the hard heart, it's the Word of God and the Gospel
 - 2) Isaiah 55:10-11 says, **"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it."**
 - 3) Psalm 19 says that it has the power to restore the soul, make simple minded people wise, cause the heart to rejoice, enlighten eyes, discern errors, acquit of hidden faults, and keep people from presumptuous sins
 - 4) Hebrews 4:12 says, **"For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."**
 - 5) Of all people, the Apostle Paul had reason to be discouraged because of the constant rejection and persecution he faced, and yet he wrote in Romans 1 that

because he was under obligation to both Greeks and barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish, he was eager to preach the Gospel because he was not ashamed of it, for “it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.

May we be like Isaac and pass God’s promises and blessing on to others through the Gospel and not be discouraged by people like Esau