

**Genesis 27: 1-29: “Jacob Steals the Blessing”, Sermon # 80 in the series – “Beginnings”,
Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on February 11th, 2018,
in the Morning Worship Service.**

We see here in this text, that Rebekah and Jacob do not believe that Jacob is going to obtain the good things that God had promised to bring about years before, unless they act to prevent it, and see the blessing transferred by Isaac, to Jacob. Isaac had evidently heard Rebekah relate the words of God to her; how it was God's decreative will that the elder would serve the younger. But he personally did not believe it. Or he did not want to believe it. It says in Genesis 25, verse 28 that Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

The blessing of God upon the future life of her son Jacob, the son that she loved and favored, was at stake here. She knew that Isaac favored Esau and he would most certainly give him the blessing unless somehow she intervened. If she didn't intervene, she thought, Jacob would be left with a second best portion of the inheritance. Rebekah felt that she had to intervene. She wrongly came to the conclusion that the only way to obtain this blessing was by stealing it.

It is apparent that God would have us come to understand the sinfulness of Rebekah's and Jacob's actions so that we will not seek for blessings in the wrong way. Let's think about this together: Can a person seek the blessings of God in a wrong way? The answer is – Yes you can. You can seek for blessings in the wrong way when you develop sinful strategies to obtain them. Let me show you the 4 ways which Rebekah and Jacob used to sinfully obtain this blessing from Isaac.

1st – They took advantage of the blindness of one who was a husband and a father.
(verses 1-5)

This incident took place it says when Isaac was old and his eyes were so dim that he could not see. It is amazing that even though Isaac thought that he was drawing near to death at this time, he actually lived 43 more years after this. But we should understand that sometimes, when a man loses his ability to see, he may wrongly conclude that his life is coming to a close. It is so important for a person to be able to see, to see clearly, so that they can make right decisions about things around them. Isaac thought that he was making the right decision about giving his patriarchal and spiritual blessing to Esau, even though it was God's will that Jacob would have it.

Isaac was swayed by what he should have not been swayed by, in this; earthly considerations. He loved the fact that Esau continually supplied him with savory food. He had eaten of his game for many years. He evidently was impressed with Esau's manliness and his ability to hunt. And Esau knew that this was what his father liked. And so he worked hard at winning his father's approval, in just this very way. Isaac gives instructions to Esau in verse 2. He says – Behold now, I am old. I do not know the day of my death. Now therefore, please take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me. And make me savory food, such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, that my soul may bless you before I die.

Notice that this was not to be just any blessing that Isaac would give him. It was the blessing of his soul that he would give to Esau. Now surely, this was a great mistake in judgment that Isaac was making here. He was going blind in more than one way, in regard to this blessing. He did not have the eyes to see spiritually that God's purpose and plan was different from his own. It was much greater than his own. But Isaac was inclined to bless Esau because he did things for him that he liked, in an earthly sense. He was willing to bless a profane man and a fornicator, as Esau is called in Hebrews 12. He was willing to bless him with the richest blessings of the earth, and the promise of the Messiah.

Surely, Rebekah reasoned, it would be a great favor to God, and to the family for her to be able to turn him away from this course of action. And it was true that Rebekah was providentially in the right place to do this. She could have prayed and asked God for the wisdom to know how to turn her husband aside from his purpose. But we do not read of this. Perhaps she had prayed, but she had not

received an answer. But when she hears these words addressed to Esau, she did not act in faith, or patiently await the outcome of what God would do, to bring about his own decreed will in this matter.

She felt that she had to take matters into her own hands, and use deception against her own beloved husband. She proposes a scheme to Jacob to take advantage of the blindness of her husband. She knew that there was not a moment to lose if she would see Jacob obtain the blessing. Let us understand that it is never right to deceive another person by taking advantage of their physical weaknesses, or their ability to perceive things correctly. But how much more, the husband that you love. Could it really be said that she did this out of love? No, we should realize that this was actually a test of her faith, and she was failing it.

Love does not break the commandments of God in order to obtain blessings. Leviticus 19: 14 says, "You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I am the Lord." Now surely this was a stumbling block. She was trying to get her blind husband to unwittingly to give the most important blessing of his life to the son that he did not want to have it go to. She was going to undertake these actions based upon lies and deception. And Jacob's life would be greatly affected by it as well. Let us understand that God has many ways to accomplish His purposes without our thinking that we have to sin against someone who we are close to, in order that His purposes might be accomplished.

Now, the 2nd sinful strategy was this – Rebekah used her parental authority to command Jacob to deceive his father in order to obtain the blessing. (verses 6-10)

"So Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, 'Indeed I heard your father speak to Esau your brother saying, 'Bring me game and make savory food for me, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of the Lord before my death.'" "Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to what I command you." "Go now to the flock and bring me from there two choice kids of the goats, and I will make savory food from them for your father such as he loves." "Then you shall take it to your father, that he may eat it, and that he may bless you before his death." She doesn't ask Jacob if he think that this would be the right approach.

Instead, she commands him to do it using all the parental authority that she can muster. "Obey my voice according to what I command you", she says. And it certainly is true that children are to obey their parents. But it is "in the Lord" that they are to obey them, it says in Ephesians chapter 6. It is when they are commanding their children to do right things that they are to be obeyed, not when they command them to sin against the other parent. This was not only a sin of bearing false witness, but there would also be a sin of impersonation committed, to steal the blessing. This is what Rebekah was commanding.

It was not right for one who knew the Lord to attempt to bring about the promised blessing by using deceptive means. She was doing this by getting Jacob to live out a lie. But if Rebekah was walking in the Spirit, I believe that she would have said to Jacob: I do not know why it appears that God is going to permit Esau to receive your father's blessing. It contradicts His own word to me that the elder shall serve the younger. But we will pray about this, and lay the matter before the Lord. And He will answer us and give us wisdom. He will intervene to see that His own word is fulfilled. And I believe that God would have done just that.

Let us understand that the Lord is not limited in the means that He uses to accomplish the end that He intends. But this was indeed a test of faith. And Rebekah thought that she was doing the right thing here, to do whatever it took, to obtain the blessing. But the ends never justify using sinful means. And two wrongs do not make a right. Isaac's desire to bless Esau for earthly and personal considerations rather than according to faith in God's revealed word, was not right. But the means that Rebekah used to prevent this were not right either.

It is never right to misrepresent ourselves in order that our personal advancement and blessing may be obtained. Even when the fulfillment of God's Word is at stake. There are ways which only God has, that He can bring these things about, in the right time and the right way. And they are ways which will not involve our sinning against others to obtain them.

The 3rd sinful strategy was this – Jacob heeded Rebekah’s command when she agreed to accept the responsibility for their actions. (verses 11-17)

Jacob had a good opportunity here to resist the temptation to go along with this deception, and not become a deceiver of his father. But he, too, fell prey to his mother’s worldly wisdom and selfish ambition, to obtain this blessing by their own cunning efforts. It was not as though he did not see that there were real problems standing in the way of success. And so he quizzed his mother about them. He said to Rebekah in verse 11: “Look, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth skinned man.” “Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall seem to be a deceiver to him; and I shall bring a curse on myself and not a blessing.”

This would have been reasonable as an objection, except that Jacob had already decided in his heart that the end did indeed justify this kind of means. He says to Rebekah, joining in with her scheme – “What if my father is able to discern that I am not Esau?” “Then I will seem to be a deceiver,” he says. No, Jacob, you will not merely seem to be a deceiver; you really will be deceiving your father. But since you also believe that this is the only way that the blessing can be obtained, you also will go along with the means.

No, we need to understand that Jacob should have taken his stand against his mother’s sinful methods immediately, at that first point. Instead he looks for a further answer from his mother in regard to who will have to accept the consequences of their sinful scheme being found out. He says – “Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall seem to be a deceiver to him; and I shall bring a curse on myself and not a blessing. He was clever enough to think of the consequences. But he was not spiritually discerning enough to resist the answer which came from his mother. She says – Let your curse be on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get them for me.

I think that it was her self-confidence, and the certainty of her words that gave Jacob the confidence to think that what he was going to do was right. Each one of us needs to understand something from this; that is very important to your growth in wisdom, maturity, and holiness in the Christian life, that you do not go along with self-conscious unrighteous reasoning. Just because a person like Rebekah is able to state with self-confident certainty, that what she was doing was right, and that she was willing that the curse should fall upon her, it does not mean that she was right in what she was doing.

I hope that you can see the application here: People can be very sure that they are right in their own eyes in what they are doing, and still be wrong. They will plunge ahead, as these two did, in their wrong actions, because they were not considering the truth that God is just as concerned with how we come to obtain the things that we want in this life, as He is in the fulfilling of His eternal counsel that we shall have them. And so, if we sin in the way that we seek to obtain our blessings, by lying or misrepresenting ourselves to get them, then will not God find this out? And will He not reward us according to our works?

Listen to Psalm 18: 25 and 26. “With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful; with a blameless man You will show Yourself blameless; with the pure You will show Yourself pure; and with the devious You will show Yourself shrewd.” It is not our deviousness that will bring about God’s blessing. If we are devious, then He will have to be shrewd with us. He will reward us according to our works. Rebekah, no doubt, was zealous for the establishment of the Lord’s word to her son Jacob that the elder shall serve the younger. And she was going to see that word fulfilled. But she forgot to consult God in the same way that she did when the twins were struggling in the womb.

She should have inquired of the Lord for wisdom. But we find none of that here. And would she and Jacob really like receiving the curse of Isaac and of God? No, this self-confidence in doing the wrong thing should not have been believed by Jacob. The right way to find God’s blessing is to pray and to be humble, not to assert your willingness to accept the consequences of your own sin, or that of others. Those who were responsible for the death of the Lord Jesus said to Pilate, “His blood be upon us and upon our children.”

They were very confident that they were doing the right thing when they were involved in great wickedness. And so we need to be people who will follow the injunction of the Apostle Paul in Romans 12: 16 if we would find the blessing of God upon our lives. “Be of the same mind toward one another.” “Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble.” “Do not be wise in your own opinion.” This is how to seek and to find the blessing of God your Father.

The 4th sinful strategy was this – Jacob lied to his father in order to obtain the blessing.
(verses 18-29)

Just look at all the lies that Jacob had to tell in order to deceive his father. The first question that Isaac asked Jacob when he came to him with the savory food was: “Who are you my son?” “I am Esau your first-born; I have done just as you told me; please rise, sit and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me.” Then when he was asked by Isaac how he came to find the game so quickly, he not only lies about that, but he attributes what he has lied about to the Lord God bringing it to him! Now Isaac is supposed to believe that the Lord is the One who is helping him on in his wickedness!

Isaac wanted confirmation of this being his son Esau, and so he asks him: Please come near that I may feel you, my son, whether you are my son or not. And Rebekah had not only dressed Jacob up in Esau’s choice clothes, but she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and the smooth part of his neck. What an incredible ruse! Isaac when he hears him, he thinks: It is the voice of Jacob. But when he feels him he thinks – It is the hands of Esau. He even asks one more time – Are you really my son Esau? And Jacob, in cold persuasive sincerity, says to him – I am.

You would think that in his heart Jacob would be grieving over what he was doing to his poor father. But he actually has the confidence to believe that what he was doing was right, because of his mother’s confident assertions that it was so! I am sure that there would be times in the future when God would so order providence in Jacob’s life that he would be in anguish when he remembered this incident. He had deceived his own father, but his sin was plainly seen by God. And yet, the blessing was really coming to him now, and it would not be revoked once it was given. “Come near now and kiss me, my son,” Isaac says.

It was the kiss of betrayal, but the blessing would come to Jacob. There was someone else in the history of redemption that was betrayed with a kiss, and that someone was our Lord Jesus Christ. When Judas came to the garden of Gethsemane that night, he came with an armed band, to take our Lord away to be tried. And as he drew near to kiss Him, it says that our Lord said to him: “Judas are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?” (Luke 22: 47) When Isaac was kissed by Jacob, he was deceived into giving his blessing to him. But when Jesus was betrayed to his death by Judas, it was so that Jacob could be blessed, so that He would inherit all the blessings of salvation.

This incident took place so many years before Christ came into the world, but it was because Jesus suffered the humiliation of being betrayed, and suffered for Jacob there, that is the reason that Jacob was not cursed. Jesus was not deceived by Judas when he kissed him. He knew what Judas came for. And He knew that He must die in the place of Jacob and Rebekah and yes, even Isaac. He must die for all those who would come to realize that they are sinners who need a Savior. That is the beauty of Christ’s death on the cross. He was not deceived by our sinful schemes, to seek for God’s blessings in the wrong way. He died for us so that we could be saved from our self-deception, and the lies that we have lived and perpetrated.

And yet by faith in Christ, we will be forgiven and blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. Isaac may have been blind, but the Lord Jesus Christ was not. Even the greatest of sinners can be forgiven, and blessed if they will come and kiss him. Because of Him Jacob would find that God would give him the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth. Peoples would serve him when he became a nation, and nations would bow down to him. He would be master over his brethren, and his mother’s sons would bow down to him.

And so, it is the Lord Jesus Christ whom we rejoice in, today. We rejoice in Him, because we know that He will not let us succeed in ruining our lives and the lives of others who we are related to, when we plan and scheme to get God’s richest blessings in the wrong way. He will bring us around to

His way of thinking. And His way of doing things, in time. He will give us the blessings, but He will also teach us His ways, which are holy ways. Let us praise Him that it shall be so, for every true believer; every one of God's elect people.