

January 15

Scriptures: Read Genesis 27

Key Verse: “Then Isaac trembled exceedingly and said, ‘... I have blessed him – and indeed he shall be blessed’.”(Genesis 27:33)

Overview

Although Isaac was a peaceful man, at times there was great lack of peace within his home because of the favoritism he and Rebekah showed their sons. Isaac loved Esau who was a strong, masculine-looking hunter, but Rebekah loved Jacob, a mild-mannered homebody (25:27, 28). Another cause of unrest within the home was that Esau, still unconcerned for spiritual things, had married two local Hittite women, thus grieving his parents (26:34, 35), for the Hittites were idolatrous pagans.

The birthright and the blessing are two separate things, but they go hand in hand. Jacob had cunningly taken away from Isaac the birthright, which primarily emphasized the physical inheritance, but the blessing emphasized both physical and spiritual blessing. Esau, as the older of the twins, was entitled to both the birthright and the blessing, but God had a different plan and purpose. Even before their birth, He foresaw their hearts and chose Jacob (25:23).

Isaac wanted to give the blessing to Esau before he died, but Rebekah, overhearing and knowing Jacob earnestly desired it (which was God’s channel of blessing to the whole world), conspired with him to deceive Isaac, now old and blind. Their scheme worked. The way they went about it was wrong, and certainly God could have accomplished it in another and better way, but He permitted it to happen so that Isaac would give Jacob the blessing instead of Esau. We see, however, that Jacob (whose name mean “deceiver”) later on in life paid much for his deception and lies. Isaac should have known from the prophecy (25:23), and from the fact that Esau married outside of the godly line, that Esau could never carry on the promised blessing of the Lord. Maybe Isaac’s love for Esau blinded him from seeing the truth.

The blessing of the patriarchs could not be annulled or changed; that is why Isaac could not change the blessing he had just given to Jacob, even though he desperately wanted to. Esau finally realized what he had despised and now had lost, so he wept and pleaded with his father to bless him also, but what more was there to say? The writer of the book of Hebrews uses this as an illustration, saying because Esau was profane and “found no place for repentance; he was rejected (Hebrews 12:16, 17). Isaac prophesied that although he (i.e. his descendants, the Edomites) would serve his brother, there would come a time when he would throw off his yoke (Israel, Jacob’s descendants – see 2 Kings 8:20-22).

Esau’s anger turned to hate for his brother (27:41) and bitterness so filled his heart that he decided to kill Jacob as soon as their father died. Isaac, however, was not as close to death as he or Esau thought, for he lived about 80 more years after blessing Jacob. It seems God made Isaac well after the blessing was given to the right person, Isaac saw that the will of God was accomplished, even though initially he had been stubborn and tried to stop it.

The plan and purpose of our all-knowing, infinite God is sometimes beyond our finite understanding. If it were according to deeds that Jacob and Esau had done, they would both be rejected. The same would go for us too (Ephesians 2:8, 9; Titus 3:5; Romans 9:10-16). But God does what He pleases and knows what He is doing. His choosing is built on His eternal plan, moral attributes, and character. In His grace and by His will, He has predestined our salvation before the foundation of the world. He has called us His children and heirs, and there is a divine purpose in our calling (Ephesians 1:5, 11). Let us give thanks to the Lord for His grace. Let us live out faithfully the calling that God has for us.

Prayer

Lord, thank You for Your grace in calling me, and help me to live faithfully the calling and purpose You have for my life.