

## A Tale of Two Sons

Genesis 25:19-27

### Introduction

I read a story recently about a little girl who had just heard the fairy tale *Snow White* for the first time. She was so excited about it that she could hardly contain herself. When she got home, she said to her mom, “Mommy, I just heard a wonderful fairy tale of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.”

The little girl retold the story to her mother. I had the facts verified by one of the children in our church, by the way, to make sure I had the story right. I always got *Snow White* confused with *Sleeping Beauty*, as they are a lot alike.

The seven dwarfs had protected Snow White from a wicked queen. One day, they were away at work in the mines and the wicked queen disguised herself and came to the cottage. She enticed Snow White to purchase a poisoned apple. Snow White, of course, bit into it and fell into the sleep of death.

The little girl, with her eyes glistening, told the story of the way Snow White was lying in the glass coffin and Prince Charming comes riding up on his white horse. He spots Snow White, dismounts, and walks over to her. He then, tenderly takes her hand and kisses her back to life.

What an emotion packed story. You know a Baptist did not write that one – it is too emotional!

Snow White comes back to life and the little girl said, “And you know what happened next, Mommy?”

Mommy said, “Sure, they lived happily ever after.”

With childlike innocence, the girl said, “No, Mommy, they got married.”

That little girl, without realizing it, had told a partial truth. That is, getting married and living happily ever after are not necessarily synonymous.

In our last discussion, we left two lovebirds. You may remember Isaac and Rebekah. They had never seen each other prior to becoming husband and wife, as Abraham had told his servant to go to their distant home country to find a bride for his son Isaac. The servant went, and after searching for what seemed to be a brief hour, spotted a beautiful girl who fit his prayer – she gave water to him and his camels to drink. He brought this beautiful young lady back to the home, where Isaac was out in the field meditating. Isaac looks up and sees the caravan coming with this young lady sitting on one of the camels. She sees him as well, and you can almost see them running through the field in slow motion, and embracing. Man!! When we left them, the text read, in Genesis, chapter 25, verse 67,

***Then Isaac . . . took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her . . .***

It is a little sad however, that what had begun as an ideal . . . would become an ordeal. As one man wrote, “Their marriage would become like a violin, the strings were still attached, but the music had stopped.”

Why was it that something so beautiful would end up so marred? Why was it that something that began like a fairy tale would end up as essentially, a disaster? The answers to those questions are found in a tale of two sons.

### The Birth and The Divisions

The first chapter in this tale of two sons is found in Genesis, chapter 25. I have entitled this chapter, "The Birth and The Divisions". We will begin with verses 20 through 21a.

***and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean, of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his wife. Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was barren . . .***

We touched on the fact that Isaac prayed in our last discussion. Now let us continue and skip to verse 26b.

***. . . Isaac was sixty years old when she gave birth to them.***

In verse 20, Isaac was forty years old, and now, according to verse 26, he is sixty. This lets us in on the fact that for twenty years, Rebekah was barren. For twenty years, she patiently waited and he persistently prayed to God to fulfill the promise of the seed.

Isaac was the patriarch in line; that is, the line from which the Messiah would come. So, he is praying and we have a beautiful picture of unity in the home between Rebekah and Isaac. For twenty years, she is patiently waiting and he is praying before God as the spiritual leader. So, we are given the implication that twenty years have produced a foundation that we would almost think to be unshakeable.

We are told the answer to prayer came, in verses 21 through 23.

***. . . and the Lord answered him and Rebekah his wife conceived. But the children struggled together within her; and she said, "If it is so, . . .***

(that is, if this is an answer to prayer),

***. . . why then am I this way?" So she went to inquire of the Lord. The Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your womb; . . ."***

(I imagine she probably fainted after hearing that, but, after reviving her, the Lord went on, probably quickly, to say),

***" . . . and two peoples shall be separated from your body; and one people shall be stronger than the other; . . ."***

(note the next phrase),

***" . . . and the older shall serve the younger."***

That last phrase is important. We will get back to that in just a moment.

Now let us continue to verse 24 to see what happens on delivery day.

***When her days to deliver were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb.***

I love the word "behold" because this was probably a shock. Look at verse 25.

***Now the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment; and they named him Esau.***

This was a little fuzz ball of a baby; all hairy like a little fuzzy ball, and completely red. I can just imagine everyone cuddling him immediately. They called him Esau, which means "red," or in Arabic, it literally means "hairy". Continue to verse 26.

***Afterward his brother came forth with his hand holding onto Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob . . .***

Imagine that, the first baby comes and then, there is another one grabbing hold of his heel. How would you like to be a midwife during that one?

It tells us that because of that they named him Jacob. Jacob means "supplanter". I had to look that one up. Supplanter means, "to take the place of". Jacob could also be translated "one who takes the heel".

Supplanter means "one who takes the place of," so Jacob is the one who is going to take the place of the firstborn. This is out of the order of the patriarchal line; that is, the older usually has the blessing given to him. Jacob grabs hold of that heel as if to fight it and say, "No, I'm going to be first!" But he came out second.

Now, we have a break in the story while the boys grow up. The photograph album is not very extensive because we are actually skipping sixty years before the next verse. Look at verse 27a.

***When the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the field, . . .***

The boys had grown up. Esau had become a skillful hunter, a man of the field. This fellow was robust. He was what might be called, "a man's man". He was an athlete. He loved to go out and hunt; he was a skillful man; he was always out in the field, never at home. You can almost hear Isaac, in pride, as we will learn later, tell the exploits of his brave son.

Esau is the one who captured two deer and did not lose an arrow. He is the one who carries three or four beams on his back at once to repair the fence. He is "Papa's boy". "That's my son."

Verse 27b goes on to tell us,

*. . . but Jacob was a peaceful man, living in tents.*

### **A division in the parents' affection**

Now, probably the most tragic verse in relation to parenting, is verse 28 of Genesis chapter 25.

*Now Isaac loved Esau, because he had a taste for game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.*

Isaac proudly looked at this firstborn son and stubbornly, as we will note, refused to believe that Jacob would be given the blessing. You can almost see his chest puff out in pride, just as a dad's does today with a son. The tragic thing is, however, that this verse gives the implication of a division. It says that "Isaac loved Esau, . . . but Rebekah loved Jacob."

As far as Rebekah is concerned, Esau is the kind of guy that tracks mud into the tent. When anything is broken, she knows it is Esau who did it. But Jacob is a mother's delight. He loves to stay in the tent. He is probably sensitive, inquisitive, and helpful. So she loved him.

The division in the parents' affection that is implied in this early verse, and that we will see more of later, would reap very, very bitter fruit. It would bring disunity, not only in the marriage, but ultimately, in the entire home. They had decided that they would show partiality toward one instead of the other, rather than love them alike.

Let me say a word, at this point, to all of us who are parents. Whether your children are three, or thirteen, or thirty and gone from home, they are still hearing messages from what you have said in the past. I am sure you are aware that children pick up, with incredible skill, any kind of criticism that is based upon comparison. Perhaps you heard it growing up. "Your sister never got a C in science, she always made an A." Or, "Your brother always kept his room straight, so why don't you?" It is criticism based on comparison. What will happen is the child will learn not just to understand that, but he will also understand to manipulate you as a parent on the basis of the differences that you like.

I can imagine, if Esau ever wanted to get in good with his dad, it was very easy – just bag an extra pheasant, come home, and prepare it. Isaac would say, "Yeah, that's my boy." Then he might say something like, "Here are the keys."

If Jacob ever wanted to get in good with his mom, I can imagine him saying, "Mom, let me take care of dinner. I'll cook your specialty." He had her wrapped around his finger.

Esau and Jacob had learned how to take advantage of these differences. We are really going to see that come out in chapter 27. The division grows more apparent each day.

### **A division in the son's attitudes**

Notice another insight in this chapter, and that is the division in the sons' attitude towards spiritual things. Look at verse 29 of chapter 25.

*When Jacob had cooked stew, Esau came in from the field and he was famished.*

Jacob is in the kitchen, while Esau had been out hunting. I can just imagine these brothers disdaining one another. To Jacob, Esau was a rugged, rough guy who would eat like a barbarian. And to Esau, Jacob was a sissy; a man who stayed at home cooking around his mother.

By the way, let me say I wish I knew how to cook better. If anything ever happens to my wife, I am in trouble. I can live off peanut butter and jelly, and if I really get rambunctious, I can make a grilled cheese. I do not know how many of you men can cook, but if you say you can, I am going to start making house calls and you can prove it to me.

Look at verse 30.

*and Esau said to Jacob, "Please let me have a swallow of that red stuff there, for I am famished." Therefore his name was called Edom.*

"Edom" is literally transliterated "red". Continue to verses 31 and 32.

*But Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright." Esau said, "Behold, I'm about to die; so of what use then is the birthright to me?"*

Now let me explain the birthright. We learn what the birthright is from several Old Testament passages; such as, Deuteronomy, chapter 21 and I Chronicles,

chapter 5. We learn that it involved both material and spiritual blessings. The firstborn, the one given the birthright, would be given a double portion of land when the dad died. More importantly, however, the one who received the birthright would be the spiritual head of the family; the spiritual leader. Esau was a man of the earth; a man of the flesh, and he could care less about being the spiritual leader. He is hungry, so he says, “Who wants to be a spiritual giant, I’m famished.”

Esau had a disdain for spiritual things, so we read in verse 33,

***And Jacob said, “First, swear to me”; so he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob.***

Now Jacob goes about this in the wrong way. I am not excusing him, but underlying his improper methodology and his impure motive is the desire to have that spiritual leadership. He would have had it, since God had ordained it, if he had just been willing to wait for it. Look at verse 34a.

***Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew; and he ate and drank, and rose and went on his way. . . .***

Note the crassness of these words, “he ate and drank, and rose and went on his way.” Esau sat down, scoffed it down, and then, gets up and leaves. He does not even think about what he has given up. In fact, it really will not hit him until later, when he sees how it has disadvantaged him in terms of material prosperity. The last part of verse 34 tells us,

***. . . Thus Esau despised his birthright.***

Perhaps you are thinking that I am being too hard on Esau. So, let me go a step further. Turn to the New Testament to the book of Hebrews. Let me prove to you the reality of his character being that of the flesh. Look at Hebrews, chapter 12, verses 15 and 16. Especially note verse 16.

***See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal.***

Immoral, in this verse, means that Esau had no spiritual desire or discernment. He was a man totally given over to the desires of the flesh. It came down to the question, “Is it a little meal or is it the birthright; is it one meal or spiritual leadership and headship of the

family and being the one in the line of the Messiah who will soon come?” Esau said, “I’ll take the food.”

This was tragic. But understand, from Genesis, chapter 25, that Esau is not an Amalekite pagan. He is the son of Isaac and the grandson of Abraham, the man of faith. If anyone had been born into this world with spiritual advantages, it was Esau.

### **Principles of spiritual inheritance**

Let me make a couple of observations before we go any further. I will give a couple of principles of spiritual inheritance.

#### **A godly heritage does not make spirituality inevitable**

1. First, a godly heritage never makes spirituality inevitable.

If it was in anyone’s DNA, it was in Esau’s, and he disdained it.

#### **An ungodly example does not make spirituality impossible**

2. Secondly, let us flip the coin and spend a little more time on this in our thinking. An ungodly example never makes spirituality impossible.

Let us look at chapter 26 of Genesis, and I want to briefly scan it. Chapter 26 is the story of Isaac when a famine hits the land. He goes to the land where Abimelech is the king and he repeats the same sin of his father. His wife is beautiful and he is afraid the people of the land will kill him to have his wife. So he tells them that his wife is his sister. This is exactly the same thing that Abraham did. Deception was evidently, learned at home.

Jacob and Esau were in their forties, or maybe in their fifties, and they saw their dad and their mom go along with this deception. It was an ungodly example, yet we find one of the boys to be spiritually discerning and spiritually sensitive.

I think we are living in an age of, what we will call, parental paranoia. There is supposed to be safety in a multitude of counselors, but now I think there is insanity. My bookshelves have been filled in the last year, with books on raising children. Some of you are beyond that, but perhaps in your day, there were no books. Now, believe me, if you go to the store, you will note that there are many. They are good books,

and you can buy as many as you like, but know that reading them is probably going to produce a lot of confusion. You will have to decide under God's leadership, where you land.

One illustration I can give comes from my own family; my own little children. We have just come through that stage that all parents dread – the potty training stage. Who comes up with these terms anyway? We had one who was determined not to comply. The other one had no problem. Finally, we decided that this was a matter of him making up his mind. This was to him, the *Alamo* or *Custer's Last Stand*. Marsha and I were the Indians and Custer would fall. Finally, there was a sliver of success; there was some submission there. However, it was as if the following day, his mind was made up, "Hey, the other way was a lot more convenient, so why discipline?"

It was less than fifteen minutes after that episode that I was walking through the bedroom and picked up a book my wife had just gotten. I was flipping through it, and "bang," it lands right on a page with that particular thought in mind. It said, "Never discipline when a child fails in this regard." It continued on to say, "It may warp their personality."

Ha, ha. Now when he does something strange, I wonder, "Did I warp the poor kid?"

Before we leave this, let me say that there is a solution to this kind of paranoia – and it is not in a book. It is the theological understanding that God is the giver of spiritual desire. We, as parents, live as if it depends on us, but ultimately, we need to understand that underneath it is the spirit of God drawing that child unto himself – whether they are young or old. You may do everything wrong, but that child may turn out to be a mighty saint of God. However, you want to do everything right to help alleviate most of the hurdles they will have to face when they decide to commit their lives to Christ.

## **The Betrayal and The Deception**

Now, I have entitled the next section, "The Betrayal and The Deception". Look at chapter 27, verses 1 through 4.

*Now it came about when Isaac was old and his eyes were too dim to see, that he called his older son Esau and said to him, "My son." And he said to him, "Here I am." Isaac said, "Behold now, I am old and I do not know the day of my death. Now then,*

*please take your gear, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me; and prepare a savory dish for me such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, so that my soul may bless you before I die."*

Understand that a blessing is supposed to be a public event. This is a time of great celebration and all of the family, the servants, and those around that region are invited – this is a feast. Isaac's son is now being given this blessing, which is really the official enactment of the birthright, and what is Isaac planning to do? He is going to do it on the sly. It is only going to be between him and Esau. Why? Do you remember that phrase we read back in chapter 25? God told Rebekah, in verse 23b,

*. . . the older shall serve the younger.*

One of the problems with Isaac was that he had stubbornly refused to submit; to bend to the will of God. He thought that he could defy God successfully; that he could deny Him secretly in this area. So he was going to pull his son in, bless him before anyone found out, and then, it would be too late for Jacob.

Well, Rebekah is listening in. She is quite a character by now. She had the glass up to the wall of the tent and was listening. Perhaps she had expected Isaac to try something like this. Let us read the text and let the story tell itself. Look at verses 5 through 10 of Genesis, chapter 27.

*Rebekah was listening while Isaac spoke to his son Esau. So when Esau went to the field to hunt for game to bring home, Rebekah said to her son Jacob, "Behold, I heard your father speak to your brother Esau, saying, 'Bring me some game and prepare a savory dish for me, that I may eat, and bless you in the presence of the Lord before my death.' Now therefore, my son, listen to me as I command you."*

(she probably whispered this),

*"Go now to the flock and bring me two choice young goats from there, that I may prepare them as a savory dish for your father, such as he loves. Then you shall bring it to your father, that he may eat, so that he may bless you before his death."*

Jacob, like his mom, was really a deceiver because he thinks, "Well, Mom, there are some flaws in this plot. We forgot something."

Continue to verses 11 and 12.

***Jacob answered his mother Rebekah, "Behold Esau my brother is a hairy man and I am a smooth man. Perhaps my father will feel me, then I will be a deceiver in his sight, and I will bring upon myself a curse and not a blessing."***

The word "deceiver" is used, but I like the King James Version translation of "mock" better. He is saying, "Perhaps my dad who is blind, will be offended that I have taken advantage of his blindness."

Jacob did not want to mock or deceive Isaac in this way. He did not want to walk in and take advantage of his old dad's blind eyes that could not see. So he said, "I don't want to do this. So let's make sure that, if he ever asks, we've covered the bases. Let's make sure he doesn't catch me in the act."

Continue to verse 13a.

***But his mother said to him, "Your curse be on me, my son; . . ."***

In other words, "If he gets all over you, we'll just lay it right on me."

Continue to verses 13b through 16.

***". . . only obey my voice, and go, get them for me." So he went and got them, and brought them to his mother; and his mother made savory food such as his father loved. Then Rebecca took the best garments of Esau her elder son, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. And she put the skins of the young goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck.***

This was just in case Isaac hugged him, which he probably would after giving a blessing. Continue to verse 17.

***She also gave the savory food and the bread, which she had made, to her son Jacob."***

This is really thickening. Look at verse 18.

***Then he came to his father and said, "My father." And he said, "Here I am. Who are you, my son?"***

In other words, "Which one are you?"

Continue to verses 19 through 20a.

***Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau, your firstborn; I have done as you told me. Get***

***up, please, sit and eat of my game, that you may bless me." Isaac said to his son, "How is it that you have it so quickly, my son?" . . .***

Uh, oh. They forgot there should have been more time involved. So he thinks, "What am I going to say? Oh, I've got it."

Look at verse 20b.

***. . . And he said, "Because the Lord your God caused it to happen to me."***

Wow, talk about blasphemy! "God blessed me out there. I caught it real quick." Now he is bringing God into it.

Continue to verse 21.

***Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come close, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not."***

Isaac is not such a dummy. Look at verses 22 through 24a.

***So Jacob came close to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau." He did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him. And he said, "Are you really my son Esau?" . . .***

This is a tragic, pitiful verse. Then Jacob looks his blind father in the face, verse 24b,

***And he said, "I am."***

Look at verses 25 through 27a.

***So he said, "Bring it to me, and I will eat of my son's game, that I may bless you." And he brought it to him, and he ate; he also brought him wine and he drank. Then his father Isaac said to him, "Please come close and kiss me, my son." So he came close and kissed him; . . .***

I would imagine this is probably hard for Jacob, as this may have been the first time his dad had ever kissed him, since his dad loved Esau. I would also imagine that this is very uncomfortable for Jacob and may have even made him cry. I do not know. This is a tragic story.

Continue to the next phrase in verse 27.

***. . . and when he smelled the smell of his garments, he blessed him . . .***

Now, Jacob gives the blessing. He says, in verses 28 and 29,

*Now may God give you of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, and an abundance of grain and new wine; may people serve you, and nations bow down to you; be master of your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be those who curse you, and blessed be those who bless you.*

## The Blessing and The Departures

Well, the deception is complete. Tragically, it is about to be discovered. In fact, look at the very next verses, verses 30 through 33a of Genesis, chapter 27.

*Now it came about, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had hardly gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. Then he also made savory food, and brought it to his father; and he said to his father, "Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that you may bless me." Isaac his father said to him, "Who are you?" And he said, "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau." Then Isaac trembled violently, . . .*

It is as if he recognized, in that brief moment, and it caused him to shake all over, that he had fought the will of God for a hundred and thirty-eight years. Now, even with his little plot to bless his son Esau, Jacob had come and received the blessing.

Now at this moment, something fantastic happens. Let us look at verse 33b.

*. . . and [Isaac]said, "Who was he then that hunted game and brought it to me, so that I ate of all of it before you came, . . ."*

(he knew who it was),

*" . . . and blessed him? . . ."*

(note the last part of the verse),

*" . . . Yes, and he shall be blessed."*

From the beginning of that terrible moment to the end of his speaking, it is as if Isaac finally resigned himself. Then he said, "Esau, I'm sorry, but Jacob will be the one who is blessed." It is as if he finally resigned himself to the will of God.

We read Esau's reaction in verses 34 through 38.

*When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, . . .*

(he began to literally scream),

*. . . and said to his father, "Bless me, even me also, O my father!" And he said, "Your brother came deceitfully and has taken away your blessing." Then he said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he has supplanted me these two times? He took away my birthright, . . ."*

(that is a lie),

*" . . . and behold, now he has taken away my blessing." And he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" But Isaac replied to Esau, "Behold, I have made him your master, and all his relatives I have given to him as servants; and with grain and new wine I have sustained him. Now as for you then, what can I do, my son?"*

(think of the pitiful inflection in his voice, "What can I do?"),

*Esau said to his father, "Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father." So Esau lifted up his voice and wept.*

These are crocodile tears, as it were. These were no longer tears because Esau wanted the birthright, the blessing, these were tears because he now recognizes, as his father has just said, he will live off the fatness of the land. Jacob will have the grain; Jacob will be the master, and Esau says, "No! I want that."

It was too late, however. Isaac, his father, prophesied and this is literally a prophecy. This is not condemning Esau, this is just prophesying what would happen to Esau. Look at verses 39 through 40.

*Then Isaac his father answered and said to him, "Behold, away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling, and away from the dew of heaven from above. By your sword you shall live, and your brother you shall serve; but it shall come about when you become restless, that you will break his yoke from your neck."*

Continue to verse 41.

*So Esau bore a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing with which his father*

*had blessed him; and Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob."*

There was no spiritual desire in Esau. He was still a man of the earth; a man of the flesh.

### **Two chief causes for marital discord**

The tragedies of this home and a couple of the things that brought about most of the problems are the same things that exist in our marriages today. Let me give two key problems that cause marital discord.

#### **Stubbornness in men**

1. For men, we could call the problem stubbornness.

How many women are married to stubborn husbands? I know my wife married one, unfortunately.

Why is it that a man will ride around completely lost, but will not stop for directions? That example is fresh on my mind because I did it Friday night. The whole family was in the car, headed to the home of some church friends. I had been there once, a long time ago, and I thought, "Oh, I know how to get there. I don't need the directions."

I did not have a map in the car, so what did we do? We drove around town for thirty minutes before I finally stopped and got specific directions.

When we got to the home, the lady said, "I'm sorry you got lost."

My wife said, "Well, now I know my way around town."

That was marital discord.

#### **Manipulation in women**

2. For women, I think the problem is manipulation.

Now it is the women's turn. There is a tendency, before women tell their husbands what they want them to do on their day off, to cook their favorite meal.

Why is it that we tend, as men, to be stubborn, and, as women, to be manipulative? It goes all the way back to the garden, that we previously studied, when God told man that, because of the fall; because of sin, he would rule her. Implied in that is a domination; a stubbornness. To the woman, God said

their desire would be over him. The desire of women would be to manipulate men; to fashion them.

We find this in Isaac and Rebekah's home, and it literally wrecked it. It can wreck ours as well.

## **Application**

### **The consequences of disharmony**

Now I want to give the consequences, although painful, of disharmony in the home. Let me give three, before we close.

#### **Grief**

1. The first consequence is grief.

Turn back to Genesis, chapter 26 and look at verse 34.

*When Esau was forty years old he married Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite;*

Then, look at verse 35.

*and they brought grief to Isaac and Rebekah.*

These wives were not women of the tribe; these were Canaanites; these were pagans. All of the spoiling that dad had done; all of the love that was there was soon disdained. Why? Because son had grown up to recognize the deceit; the partiality.

I think of the grief that perhaps Isaac felt when he recognized, after he had blessed Jacob, that he had had a chance; he had had years before he blessed his son to develop a relationship. He had had an opportunity to love his son Jacob, and he had turned his face away, shown partiality, and loved Esau instead.

Now it comes to Isaac that Jacob is the next patriarch. I cannot help but imagine that Isaac went back in his memory to his relationship with his dad, Abraham. It was a beautiful, close relationship. Perhaps Isaac retraced, in his imagination, that trip to Mount Moriah where he and his father had gone, arm in arm together, to do the will of God. Now Isaac had lost his own son. What grief he must have had.

#### **Separation**

2. The second consequence is separation.

The family is now broken apart. Both sons are gone. Isaac and Rebekah are a husband and wife who have been deceiving each other and lying to one another for decades. They had started out like Prince Charming and Snow White, but now they live in embarrassed silence.

Perhaps the saddest implication of this separation is in chapter 27. Note verse 42.

*Now when the words of her elder son Esau were reported to Rebekah, she sent and called her younger son Jacob, and said to him, "Behold, your brother Esau is consoling himself concerning you by planning to kill you."*

Now Rebekah will again manipulate, as she says, in verse 43,

*Now, therefore, my son, obey my voice, and arise, flee to Haran, to my brother Laban! Stay with him a few days, until your brother's fury subsides, until your brother's anger against you subsides and he forgets what you did to him. Then I shall send and get you from there. . . ."*

The tragedy is, ladies and gentlemen, that Jacob would be gone, not for a few days, but for twenty years. He would never see his mother again alive. She would never see her son again alive. In fact, the next time that Jacob returns to Canaan it will be when Jacob and Esau get back together again at the burial ceremony of their dad, Isaac.

This was the woman who was going to have it her way. She was going to manipulate; she was going to control. Instead of trusting God, Rebekah sent Jacob away not knowing that she would never see him again.

### Silence

3. I think the third consequence is silence.

Perhaps the most tragic implication is that neither Isaac nor Rebekah are heard from again until chapter 35, when they are buried. Isaac had not been about to die, he was just trying to get this blessing slid under the carpet. He would, in fact, live for forty more years. I cannot help but believe that the final forty years of life for Isaac and Rebekah were years of great sadness.

### The correction of disharmony

What are the solutions to disharmony? Let me give three.

### Respect

1. The first is respect, especially from the wives – do not manipulate.

Perhaps you are married to a very stubborn man; perhaps you are married to an unbeliever. You may be separated from a husband who is an unbeliever, and you are praying that he will come to God. Perhaps you, like Rebekah, never learned. Can you learn to rely on the sovereign arms of a God who is in control?

### Love

2. The second solution is more for the husbands, and that is, to love your wives.

Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 25a, says,

*Husbands, love your wives . . .*

Husbands, love your wives.

### Instruction

3. The third solution is instruction.

Ephesians, chapter 6, verse 4, says,

*Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*

We need to recognize that God gives the spiritual increase in our children's lives and that even now, wherever they may be, God is in control. Yet, we still need to provide the best example possible, because they are watching.

Let me read the poem, *Little Eyes Upon You*, that I keep in a prominent place in my study. It is to a daddy, but it is a poem that I think, also applies to those who are not married and to those who do not have children. There are spiritual people who are younger in the Lord and are watching you. What do they see?

*There are little eyes upon you and they're watching night and day.*

*There are little ears that quickly take in every word you say.*

*There are little hands all eager to do anything you do;*

*And a little boy who's dreaming of the day  
he'll be like you.*

*You're the little fellow's idol, you're the  
wisest of the wise.*

*In his little mind about you no suspicions ever  
rise.*

*He believes in you devoutly, holds all you say  
and do;*

*He will say and do, in your way when he's  
grown up just like you.*

*There's a wide-eyed little fellow who believes  
you're always right;*

*And his eyes are always opened, and he  
watches day and night.*

*You are setting an example every day in all  
you do;*

*For the little boy who's waiting to grow up to  
be like you.*

This has been the tale of two sons, but it has actually been about a family of four people. Perhaps I have spoken to:

- an Isaac who is resisting the will of God; who is stubbornly resisting God's desire because it does not fit his plan.
- a Rebekah who is fashioning her life, and the most important person in that life is herself.
- a Jacob who is living a lie; who is deceiving – that may be deceiving a spouse; deceiving a child; deceiving a teacher or a professor; deceiving a boss.
- an Esau, someone who never accepted the birthright and therefore, never had it; someone who had no spiritual insight or desire – for you, it is coming into the line of the Messiah and accepting Him as your Savior.

This manuscript is from a sermon preached on 1/23/1989 by Stephen Davey.

© Copyright 1989 Stephen Davey

All rights reserved.