

Kidnapping the Blessing

I. Slide1 Intro: Kidnapping the Blessing

- A. We're about to see what happens when there's **division** in the home. The home starts to unravel.
- B. **Slide2 Note** upfront, **all 4** of our characters in this scene are *almost equally at fault*. [tree]

II. Slide3a WRONG DECISION (1-4)

- A. **Slide3b** My dying wish...*what could go wrong?* Note ***all 5 senses*** are in play here.
 1. His **sight** was pretty much gone/dim. (100+ years old)
 2. His **taste** buds gave him the wrong answer. (venison **or** filet-of-goat)
 3. His **touch** was off (how close was Easy hairy arms to a goat? **Werwolf syndrom / Hypertrichosis**)
 4. His **hearing** was ok, **but** rejected the evidence.
 5. His **smell** was ok (Esau's clothes), **but didn't** put 2 & 2 together.
 - a) **All 5 senses** play a conspicuous part, largely by their **fallibility**, in this classic attempt to handle **spiritual responsibilities** by *the light of nature*.¹
- B. **Slide3c** (4) That my soul may bless you - Esau has already sold his **birthright/bekhorah** to Jacob. The **blessing/berakhah** is closely related **but** is **distinct** from the birthright.
 1. The **birthright** specifies **property** and **wealth** passed from one generation to the other, this has already been given to Jacob by Esau and such an action would be **irrevocable** by Isaac.
 2. The **blessing** focuses on **future wealth and posterity** - *most profoundly seen in receiving Yahweh's covenant blessings*.
 3. For the author of Hebrews, Esau's **birthright** and **blessing** are **inseparable**. He writes that because Esau **sold his birthright**, he was **rejected** when he wanted to inherit the **blessing**.

¹ Derek Kidner, Genesis 27.

- a) Slide3d Heb.12:16,17 See to it that...that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like **Esau**, who sold his birthright for a single meal. 17 For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance/place for to repent, though he sought it with tears.
- b) *To sell your birthright is to trade away your blessing.*

III. Slide4a **WRONG SOLUTION (5-17)**

- A. (5) We are never told whether the divine communication Rebekah received from God at the birth of Jacob and Esau was communicated to Isaac (i.e. 25:23 *And the Lord said to her, Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger*).
- 1. Rebekah may have felt that she was acting with **divine approval** in this **deception** since **the blessing ceremony** would result in Esau's dominance over Isaac.
- B. Slide4b (8) **Obey my voice** - The text clearly presents **Rebekah** as the instigator of this plot
 - 1. She appeals to Jacob to obey her 3 x's in the passage (8,13,43).
- C. (12) **Let your curse be upon me** - No little *mojo*.
 - 1. In the ancient Near East, **curses** were considered powerful if they had **divine support** - a real threat in this instance since God chose **Isaac** as His covenant recipient and the one who would **pass on the blessings** of the covenant to his heirs.
 - 2. This makes Rebekah's promise that she would take any **curse** upon herself a serious matter (26:13). She would be taking on **the opposite** of **the covenant promises** (a lack of divine support).

IV. Slide5a **WRONG EVERYTHING (18-29)**

- A. (18) Note Jacob's fear & uncertainty - only the words, "*my father*" vs. Esau in vs.31 (if you had 2 or more kids, you know is prob a **talker**, the other, **quiet**).
- B. Slide5b (20) **The Lord your God** granted me success - Jacob uses God's covenant name, ***Yahweh***, in his **lie** and refers to ***Yahweh*** as his father's God, **not** yet his own.

1. Slide5c Gen.28:21 *so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God.*
 2. And in 32:22–32 in the story of Jacob wrestling with God. (esp.27,28)
And he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed.
- C. Slide5d (27-29) So Isaac *smells* him & *blesses* him.
- D. God takes & redirects Isaac's gropings and ambitions...which contain *a core* of faith.
 Heb.12:20 *By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau.*
- E. The dew of heaven - This metaphor speaks of *material abundance in crops* (not mere living-space) and, in turn, the ability to sustain large numbers of domesticated livestock.
1. In a region where rainfall was sparse, *dew* was vital for sustaining life.

V. Slide6a WRONG ATTITUDE (30-41)

- A. Esau's heart was not right with God or man...like Cain in ch.4.
- B. Slide6b (33) Isaac's, *I have blessed him?* (Jacob) *Yes, and he shall be blessed* expresses more than *mere belief* that the spoken word is self-fulfilling: he knows that he has been **fighting against God**, as Esau has, **and he accepts defeat**.
- C. (36) Word play *Jacob* & *cheated* - *Ya-akov* vs. *A-kov*.
- D. (39,40) Isaac gives Esau a blessing, *buut* a rather **negative** one.
 1. Slide6c This pronouncement becomes **an appropriate destiny** of the profane person...**the freedom to live unblessed** (39) and **untamed** (40). Kidner
- E. (40) By your sword - Isaac prophesies that *Edom* (Esau's descendants) is destined to live by *pillaging*.
- F. (40) You shall serve your brother - In the 10th cent bc, Esau's descendants, the *Edomites*, became **vassals to Israel** under David. 2 Sam.8:13
- G. (40) You shall break his yoke from your neck - In the 9th century bc, Esau's descendants (*Edom*) eventually revolted against Jacob's descendants.

VI. Slide7a WRONG CALCULATION OF COST (42-46)

- A. Rebekah must **lose** Jacob to **save** him. **So** she uproots the *home-lover*.
- B. (43) Flee to Laban - Jacob found himself thrust out of the nest he had feathered. *Kidner*
- C. (46) I loathe my life - *Ohh do yah?* Though this was probably true to some extent, **but** Rebekah seems to use it for an excuse.
 - 1. She knew of Esau's intention to kill Jacob (whether Isaac knew is unknown).
 - 2. If Rebekah did not want to upset Isaac with this information, **she needed a coherent excuse to explain Jacob's departure**. Her "fear" was that Jacob might marry a local girl, like his brother did. 26:35
- D. Slide7b Rebekah's *diplomatic victory* was complete; **but** she never would see her son again
 - 1. Her stay there *awhile* (44, a few days) became **20+ years**. *What a cost!*
- E. Slide7c The costs was so high. *Sin will always, Take you farther than you want to go.*
Keep you longer than you want to stay. Cost you more than you want to spend.

VII. Slide8a WRAP UP THOUGHTS

- A. **All 4** of our characters in this scene are almost equally at fault.
 - 1. **Isaac** - He knew God's birth-oracle (25:23 *the older shall serve the younger*). **Yet** set himself to **use God's power** (the blessing) to thwart it. *That's magic, not religion.*
 - 2. **Rebekah** - She had a **just cause** (a legally sufficient reason). She **knew** God's *heart & promise & prophecy* on this matter. **Yet** made no **approach** to God. No gesture of **faith**. No gesture of **love**. 3 x's...**obey my voice** (not the Lord's?)
 a) Rebekah, *faith is living w/o scheming.*
 b) **So**, she made her **son** a **liar** & deceived **her husband**.
 - 3. **Esau** - in agreeing to his dad's plan, broke his own oath (w/his brother, **ie** birthright)
 - 4. **Jacob** - a **snowball of lies**. Who are you? How did you find the game so quick? Let me feel you. Voice no but hands yes. Are you really Esau? Taste the game. Come near, kiss me, let me sell you.

- a) Slide8b We learn with these **4 rival schemes**...God will *do whatever His hand and His plan had predestined to take place*. Acts 4:28

VIII.Slide9 MEDITATION

A. How am I like Isaac?

1. Do I mostly **rely on** my natural senses, what I can *see, taste, touch, hear & smell*?
2. Do I try to handle life by *discerning the spiritual or following the natural?*
3. Are you more interested in your **physical appetite** or on **spiritual things**?
4. Do I try to “*handle*” God, by either outright trying to **thwart** His plan, or at least **manipulate** it?

B. How am I like Rebekah?

1. What is an area in my life where I feel I need to **help God out** in this one situation.
2. **Is there any area in which I know what God wants me to do/what is right, but I’m choosing to do wrong?**
3. Rebekah had a just cause, but forgot to go to God. **Remember a time when you did the same?**

C. How am I like Jacob?

1. Have you ever reaped the fruit of **hatred** from someone, then turned around and asked, *why me God?*
2. **What have you been hiding under your goat-skin veneer?**

D. How am I like Esau?

1. Have you traded away a blessing? Have you broke your own oath?
 2. **Do you secretly wish you could live untamed** (live like you want/no restrictions)? **What would the result of that look like in your life?**
 3. We all want blessing **and** not suffering.
- E. God can overcome all our evil. That’s what’s beautiful about *God’s great grace*. Thank Him for it.