

GENESIS – Lesson 48

Learn: For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain that cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater. So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. Isaiah 55:8-11

Read: Genesis 26:34, 35; 27:1-27

1. What had been the specific command in regard to where Isaac's wife should NOT come from? Genesis 24:3
2. Knowing well how cautious God had been in selecting a wife for his father Isaac, a selection which carefully guarded the integrity of the line of the promised seed, where did Esau go for a wife? Genesis 26:34
3. What was and still is God's will for the marriage relationship? Genesis 2:24
4. Again, knowing that God's will for marriage was monogamy (that is one man for one woman), what did Esau do to compound his insult to God? Genesis 26:34
5. Esau was both presumptuous and utterly unconcerned about God's promised blessing associated with the patriarchal line. How old was Esau when he made his deliberate choice to marry, showing that this was not a matter of youthful foolishness? Genesis 26:34
6. What result did Esau's willful choice to go against God's will bring to the lives of Isaac and Rebekah? Genesis 26:35
7. Abraham had so carefully avoided the "daughters of Canaan" as a wife for his son because they were idolaters and ungodly in lifestyle, how would marrying such women affect the already worldly Esau? Deuteronomy 7:1-4 (Especially note verses, 3, 4.)
8. Has God changed from the Old Testament to the New Testament when it comes to His command concerning marriage between a believer in the God of the Bible and an

unbeliever? II Corinthians 6:14-18
Explain your answer.

9. Remembering what Esau did in regard to his birthright (Genesis 25:30-34), his marriages to these ungodly women, and his disregard for his parent's feelings in the matter, what is very clear about Esau?

10. In spite of all the evidence of Esau's character, and in spite of God's clear instruction concerning Jacob before he was born, and in spite of Esau's solemn oath to sell the birthright to Jacob, what did Isaac propose to do? Genesis 27:1-4

11. What does the scripture indicate as a reason that Isaac would deliberately try to thwart the purpose of God? Genesis 25:28

It is hard to comprehend such a spiritual man such as Isaac showing such favoritism to Esau, even to the point of flaunting God's will. It is a warning to each of us to realize that at any time we are capable of falling into sin and willfully disobeying the Lord.

12. What do the following scriptures say that remind us of the constant danger a believer faces.
I Peter 5:8, 9

I Corinthians 10:11, 12

Some may side with Isaac, rather than with God in Isaac's choice of his son Esau, in regards to the blessing and birthright. People have said that Jacob was obviously a sly schemer, a liar, and deceiver, a "supplanter," a man intent on acquiring money by whatever means he could devise. They say that Jacob is shrewd, crafty, covetous, with no ethical scruples except those dictated by his own self-interest. They wonder why would God choose Jacob over Esau- a strong, virile, outdoor man. Sad to say, but because Jacob represents the Jews, it is such caricatures of Jacob and Esau, and the Jews in general, that have caused tremendous waves of anti-Semitism and persecution to be visited upon the Jews down through the centuries.

It is not that we should condone lying and deception. However, it must be remembered when studying these passages in the Book of Genesis, that there is never a single incidence in the Bible of criticism of Jacob (except from the lips of Esau and Laban, both of whom are unworthy witnesses). Every time God spoke of Jacob, it was a message of blessing and promise, never one of rebuke or chastisement. If we would be faithful Bible expositors, therefore, we must be guided by what God has actually said, not what we think He should have said.

13. What is God's reminder to us in Isaiah 55:8

Therefore, an attitude commonly expressed by Bible expositors relative to Jacob such as "The stolen blessing" or "Jacob reaps the harvest of his evil years," is entirely out of line. In this case the author was pronouncing moral judgments of his own which are not at all founded on the actual Biblical statement concerning Jacob.

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14. What is God's judgment concerning Jacob as given in Genesis 32:28; Malachi 1:2, 3

15. Once Isaac had made up his mind to give the blessing to Esau in spite of what God said, this being a most solemn occasion, who was included in the planning and who was left out? Genesis 27:1-6

16. When Isaac chose to sin, it affected not only his relationship with God. How were other family relationships affected? vv 6-13

Rebekah, as soon as she learned of Isaac's plans, acted immediately to prevent his carrying them out. She must have been hesitant, as a good and faithful wife, but evidently felt that, in this case, God's will must override her husband's will. She may have failed to understand, and perhaps had inadequate faith, to realize that God's will would be accomplished whether or not men cooperated in its accomplishment. Isaac's blessing of Esau could not possibly overrule what God had long ago decreed.

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17. How was it possible that Jacob was able to get the blessing when Isaac had every intention of giving it to Esau? vv 1, 23, 25, 27

18. How do we know that the wild game taste was not all that was involved in Isaac's preference for venison? vv 17, 25

We may wonder about Rebekah's reasoning for carrying out her plan to override Isaac's plan, and since her thoughts are not included, we can not know them. But in doing so she spared Isaac a heavy chastisement from the LORD, and certainly Isaac realized afterward how wrong he had been to try to thwart God. We do know however that the LORD never rebukes Rebekah for what she did, but instead seemed to honor it, at least in its results. Dr. Henry Morris

19. Jacob at first did not want to participate in Rebekah's plan, although he knew that the blessing belonged to him. What did Rebekah say to get Jacob to comply? v 13

NOTE : Jacob's fear that his father would think him a "deceiver" needs a little clarification. The word actually means "mocking," and seems to suggest that the discovery of the plan by his father would make him seem to be mocking his father's blindness.

20. What was the one thing about Jacob that gave Isaac confusion as to whether he was really Esau as he claimed? v 22

21. What did Isaac promise Esau, who was actually Jacob? v 25

NOTE: The word "soul" is the Hebrew "nephesh," and refers to the mind and the heart, or the consciousness, of man.

22. What did Jacob finally have to do in order to convince his father that he was indeed Esau? vv 19, 24

Why did the Lord not rebuke Jacob for this lie, and why did God later confirm the blessing? God is a God of truth and He hates lies. It would seem the only way of understanding this situation is to conclude that, whatever may have been wrong with the stratagem and deception of Jacob and Rebekah, the sin of Esau and Isaac was infinitely more grievous.

23. Read Exodus 1:15-20 and give a brief summary of a similar instance.

24. Read Romans 13:1-4 and I Peter 2:13. What is our response to government to be?

25. But the midwives did resist their government and God blessed them. How will a believer know what to do when the government requires them to do that which God has commanded us not to do, such as infanticide in this case. Or what to do when the government requires that we not obey a command of the Lord?

Acts 4:1-20 (esp. vv15-20); Acts 5:25-29 (esp. v 29)

How will this apply to us directly in our day with the closing of churches due to government mandates? Also see Hebrews 10:23-25

26. Back to Exodus 1:20, 21, how did God look at this particular disobedience of these midwives to their government?

27. Read Joshua 2:3-6; 6:25. What did Rahab do in order to save lives?

What was the Lord's response toward Rahab for this?

Also see Matt. 1:1-17 (esp verse 5) and Hebrews 11:30, 31

There are a number of other instances in the Bible in which godly men, in order to accomplish the will of God and to glorify Him, had to break a commandment, at least in the form of which, for purposes of simplicity and everyday use, they are normally expressed. We have to recognize this fact, in order to do full justice to Scripture as God

has revealed it to us. At the same time, we must emphasize strongly the fact that such instances as these constitute rare exceptions to the rule, and can only be justified by very special and unusual circumstances. The one overriding criterion seems to be that such an exception can at best be warranted only when a greater principle, associated with the greater revealed purposes of God, will be sacrificed by legalistic adherence to the letter of the law.

Furthermore, the examples given in scripture never indicate that such actions were in order to gain some temporal advantage for those practicing them. Both Rahab and the Hebrew midwives risked their lives by their deceptions. They would seem to have been much better off, temporally speaking, to tell the truth; but this would have resulted in death to God's people.

Similarly, Jacob and Rebekah, in order to do what they thought was necessary to accomplish God's will were willing to risk the wrath of their own loved ones, and Jacob even to risk his life at the hands of an angry brother.

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