



Walking in the *Foot Prints* of Jesus A Discipleship Journey

The OLD TESTAMENT- Their Story is Our Story
Isaac, Rebekah, Esau and Jacob- Week 7
Genesis 25: 19-34 and Genesis 27

Rebekah, Isaac's wife, became pregnant in her old age. She conceived twin sons and even before birth they fought in her womb. She is told by God :

“Two nations are in your womb, two peoples are quarreling while still within you:
But one shall surpass the other, and the older shall serve the younger”.

When they were born, Esau, the older son, became a skilled hunter and outdoorsman and Jacob, the younger son, was quiet and stayed near the tents, helping his mother. Esau became the favorite of Isaac and Jacob became the favorite of Rebekah. Esau, as the oldest, was expected to inherit the birthright of the family. This meant that he would receive more inheritance but also that it was his responsibility to take care of his widowed mother and oversee the family assets. Esau, it seems, did not care about that responsibility and even “sold” his birthright to Jacob one day for a bowl of stew.

In Biblical times women did not have much say in decisions concerning the family and clan leadership. Isaac, as head of the household, had all of the say in who was to inherit the birthright. When the time came for him to pass it on, he told Esau to kill some game and prepare it. They would celebrate with a meal, then he would pass the birthright and blessing of God onto him. Rebekah overheard this conversation and knowing what God had revealed to her before the twins were born, she worked out a way for Jacob to receive the birthright and blessing instead. Once the blessing was given, it could not be taken back. Esau was very angry and threatened to kill his brother when he found out.

To make matters worse, Esau had married 2 foreign women who practiced a pagan religion and this upset Isaac and Rebekah. As a result, Rebekah orchestrated a plan to have Jacob go to the household of her brother to find a proper wife and get him away from his angry brother for a while. Isaac agreed that Jacob should do this and blessed him on his journey.

This story gives us an example of how God uses the unexpected to carry on His will. Rebekah, a woman, was told God's plan even before her children were born. It is through her works that Jacob, God's chosen, is given the means to fulfill God's plan. Jacob, as younger son, is also not expected to be one carrying on in this position, but God saw in him obedience and trust and allowed him to receive His blessing.

God continues to use unexpected people and situations to fulfill what God wants for our lives. We like our lives to follow a straight path but sometimes God puts unexpected people or situations in our lives. We get upset that this is not supposed to happen. But maybe it is? Maybe God sees something in us that makes this unexpected thing good for us, helping us find our way closer to Him. We need to talk to God about these things and listen for God's response.

Think of a time in your life when something or someone that was unexpected brought you closer to God. How did you react at the time? What do think of the result now?

