

Rebekah & Jacob - Do Not Lie

Foundation

**Bible passage: Gen 27.6-24
& Col 3.9**

Rebekah and Jacob

Isaac and Rebekah had twin sons, Jacob and Esau. Esau was the oldest of the two and as they grew became the favourite son of Isaac. But Jacob was the favourite son of Rebekah. Such taking sides in a family is never a good idea and we see in this chapter how it fuelled problems between the brothers which would endure for generations.

When Isaac was old and nearing death, he wanted to bless his two sons and give a particular blessing to the firstborn, Esau. But Jacob and Rebekah plotted together so that the blessing would go to Jacob instead. They used the fact that Isaac's sight was failing and that Jacob and Esau were quite different with the former being smooth skinned and the latter hairy. With the help of Rebekah, Jacob disguised himself as Esau and although old Isaac was suspicious, he fell for the ruse.

"Do not lie to one another"

Jacob therefore lied directly to his father about who he was, and he and his mother were guilty of deception and of cheating Esau out of his blessing.

There was already ill feeling between the brothers but after this deception Jacob felt unsafe and, fearing reprisals, he fled. When he returned years later, he still seemed to distrust his brother.



Isaac and Jacob by Ribera, Jusepe de, lo Spagnoletto, 1637

The problems this created would last for generations as the descendants of Esau (the Edomites) became enemies of the descendants of Jacob (the Israelites).

It probably seems odd to us that Isaac could not just change his blessing, but we see in the Bible that people took such things very seriously. Indeed, this shows us the power of words in the minds of many and therefore also underlines the sin of deception and lying.

Do not lie to one another

In writing to the young church in Colossae Paul is addressing Christians who had "put off the old self". The Christian message is not simply a call to believe in Jesus but to "repent and believe the gospel" (Mark 1.15). Since lying and deception are both wrong in the sight of God, Paul expected that these Christians would want to turn away from such things. The language of "putting off" is like taking something off.

We can see from Jacob and Esau, and other places in the Bible, how lying is not just wrong but damages families and friendships. When people lie to each other trust breaks down and relationships with it. Those who are deceived feel cheated and personally hurt by what has been done.



Lies, cheating and deception, such as that of Jacob and Rebekah, damage families and friendships.