



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Pass The Promise Series, Lesson 17

Lesson Title: Esau and Jacob

Take Home Point: Rough times in our families need God's forgiveness.

Warm-Up:

In 1845, Alexander Dumas published a book titled *The Count of Monte Cristo*. It tells the life story of a man unjustly accused and imprisoned. Once free, he devotes his life to getting revenge against the three men who deceived the authorities to harm him. Eventually, he does exact his revenge, and all three pay a full price for their hateful deed. It is only a novel, but what about our real world with Jews and Arabs, Croats and Serbs, Ethiopians and Eritreans? How many lives are spent – wasted – in resentment and bitterness, with the focus to destroy?

Read: Genesis 25:19-34, 27:1-24

Observation (What happened?):

Who did Jacob deceive to get both the birthright and the blessing?

What kind of consideration did Esau have toward the birthright he was to receive from his father? (The birthright was Isaac's special inheritance for Esau as the oldest son.)

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What kind of relationship do you think Esau and Jacob had prior to this account?

How do you think Esau felt when he found out he had been tricked?

Insight:

Read Genesis 25:23 and 27:1-4 again. Isaac knew, directly from the Lord, that the older would serve the younger, yet he attempted to bless Esau anyway. And what kind of blessing did he have for Esau? Read 27:29. Isaac specifically said in his blessing that the one blessed would be served by his brothers. Isaac believed he was giving this to Esau, and he was doing it in spite of God's word to him and Rebekah. Jacob's deceit was layered on top of his father's, with the result that what God said was to occur. It is so hard for us to let go of our desires and let God have his way. And sometimes we fail, to the harm of ourselves and others. But isn't it good to know that God knows us and our situation completely, that he has a plan of which we are a part, and that his forgiveness is available to us when we fail?

Application (What does it mean to me?):

Can you think of a time recently when you were tempted to deceive or take advantage of a situation? How did you handle it? How did God want you to handle it?

How do you respond when someone deceives you or takes advantage of you? How does God want you to respond?