

HEROES OF FAITH - ISAAC
Hebrews 11:20
"Isaac - He Blessed His Sons"

INTRODUCTION ... A popular TV program 25 years ago - "Father Knows Best" ... is it true that "father knows best"? ... even on Father's Day I say, "Sometimes yes, sometimes no!" ... we honor-respect our fathers, but not because they are/were all-knowing or otherwise perfect! Today's HERO OF FAITH is a good example of that: ISAAC - BE BLESSED HIS SONS.

I. "Hello ... I am ISAAC ...

"I remember that day when I blessed my sons ... my mind was still sharp, even though my eyes and the rest of the body were getting old and weak ... I thought death was near, little dreaming that I would live quite a few more years ... it was time to do my fatherly duty - to give the blessing to my older son, as was the custom in my day. But there was a problem: my sons were twins - ESAU and JACOB ... Esau was born first, but the Lord had told my wife before they were born - 'the older will serve the younger' ... but that did not seem to happen - Esau got married (to a couple of Hittite women who made life miserable for us! - they did not believe in the Lord God or walk with Him, and they led Esau further away from the Lord) and moved into his own tent, while Jacob was not married and still lived in our tent, almost like a servant - it seemed that the older Esau was indeed chief and should get the blessing.

"But my wife REBECCA did not let things happen that way! - she and Jacob planned to deceive me. While Esau was hunting, she prepared a special meal for me - a meal that I told Esau to prepare for me ... she helped Jacob put on Esau's fine clothes and some animal skins on his arms to fool me - I couldn't see to know who was coming, and their voices were too much alike! Yes, they fooled me ... and I gave Jacob the blessing I intended to give Esau - without knowing it since I couldn't see!

"Fathers can be blind sometime - in more ways than I was! - just as mothers can be, and people who are neither fathers or mothers ... sometimes we refuse to see the plans that God makes and shows us ... sometimes we stubbornly go our own way and do what we think best, even though God shows us a different way ... I should have known/understood/remembered that God chose Jacob to have that blessing, but I just ignored God's will. Do you sometimes do that? - I think so!

"But the Lord showed me how blind I was! - and I realized that Jacob should have the blessing. When Esau came, and I learned what I had done, he wanted me to take-away the blessing from Jacob - but I could not! All I could give Esau was a prediction about the hard life that he and his descendants would have in a hard, dry land ... and did he become angry! He was filled with hate toward his brother."

II. Faith = being certain of things we cannot see. (Hebrews 11.1)

Isaac could not see into the future, no more than we can! ... but God showed him some things that will happen, and he believed what God told him: that Jacob and his descendants would rule over Esau and his descendants, that Jacob would live in a rich land, that Esau would live in a hard land, that Esau's descendants would rebel against Jacob's descendants - indeed, King Herod was Esau's descendant. Isaac believed that God controlled the events of history.

We cannot see into the future, yet with faith in God we are confident about the future ... we know who is in control - the Lord God, who consistently shows love & mercy & goodness ... and we know that He does not change. If God loved us so much that He gave His only Son to save us from sin and to make us His people, will he now forsake or abandon us? ... with faith we answer, "NO!" ... He remains God, in spite of our sin & weakness & sometimes weak faith ... He remains in loving control, even though in our sin we plan contrary to His plan for us.

We are God's children through faith in Christ (cf Epistle, Galatians 3.23-29) Isaac's blessing to Jacob - He promises us life forever with Him, life now with the clothing of righteousness that Jesus gives through Baptism ... with faith we receive that blessing ... with faith we love the Lord in gratitude for His blessing ... with faith we live each day, walking with the Lord in obedience and service.