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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, October 2, 2024 - Scent of Deception

OCTOBER 02ND 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

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When I was a child, my gift-giving was very predictable. I always bought Old Spice for my father. Old Spice cologne. Old Spice shaving cream. Old Spice soap on a rope. He graciously responded each time with surprise and delight. For me, the smell of Old Spice would forever be linked to my father.

The people in today's story had distinctive smells as well. In fact, Esau's scent became part of his brother Jacob's plan to deceive their father, Isaac. Normally, the father's blessing would be given to the firstborn son, to Esau, even though God had said, "The older will serve the younger" (Gen. 25:23). Their mother, Rebekah, wanted her favorite child (see Gen. 25:28), Jacob, to receive that blessing.

So Rebekah and Jacob came up with a plan centered around food, clothing, and scent! Jacob would wear his brother's clothing, thereby smelling like Esau (Gen. 27:15). The goatskins would mimic Esau's hairiness (v. 16). Rebekah cooked a meal to trick her husband into thinking it was freshly caught game (v. 14). This plan could work because Isaac, nearly blind, would be relying on his other senses, namely smell, hearing, taste, and touch.

When Jacob came before him, Isaac was suspicious because the voice sounded like Jacob’s. But the goatskins did their work (vv. 22–23), as did Esau’s clothing (v. 27), and the deception proved successful. Jacob received the blessing (vv. 28–29).

Esau proved himself to be “godless” by trading away the blessing for a single meal (Heb.12:16–17). Although the blessing rightly belonged to Jacob at this time, Jacob and Rebekah resorted to deception, instead of waiting for God to bring it about. Old Testament scholar Derek Kidner observed that all the parties in this story “are almost equally at fault.”

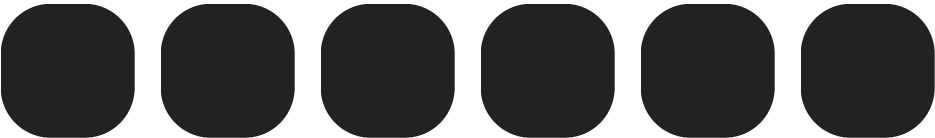
Have you ever been tempted to “help” God’s cause by taking matters into your own hands? How might Rebekah and Jacob have demonstrated trust instead?

Dear God, reading about all the deception in Jacob’s household makes us examine our own lives. Lord, help us avoid lies and deception at all costs! May we live with love, wisdom, honesty, and justice before You.

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