



# Hebrews 11:20

*By Faith Isaac was Blind, now Sees* Sun, Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> 2008

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## **If you can't say anything good, don't say anything at all**

- Perhaps we have all heard the advice....popularized in "Bambi"
- Good advice, but not always the right advice...another story
- In some ways, rightly describes what Hebrews 11 is doing

## **Heb 11 lists heroes and heroines of the faith – presenting before us what did well**

- Yet, it leaves out, intentionally, the failures, weaknesses and more

## **One of the thoughts I have put before you – believe foreshadows our judgment**

- Christian – every one of us will be judged – before judgment seat of Christ
- **2 Cor 5:10; 1 Cor 3:12-15**
- Fearful picture...that much of life...could be burned away in judgment

## **Perhaps....especially true in the case of Isaac**

- Don't want to present or assume that Heb 11 is all good about these guys
  - Likely much more in each life worthy & will receive honor in heaven
- Yet....interesting to look at this one verse about Isaac 11 Eng words
  - Not only limited coverage here...but in Genesis as well – 2 chapters
  - Provocative when you consider – Isaac lived longer than dad or son
  - Yet both Abraham & Jacob each have about 12 chapters of lives
- Part of the lesson of Isaac's life – folly of such living...warning

## **Yet, in God's grace – there is something left after fire purifies junk away**

- Recorded here in this verse – Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau
- Crazy thing is this....that chapter of Isaac's life is ungodly...
- Yet in midst – faith crops up in Isaac...God rewards
  - For me, personally, this verse helpful this week in seeing that chap

# I. Isaac's Heritage

1. Miraculous birth (21:5-7)
  - a. Surely Isaac heard the account a hundred times....
  - b. To know you are a miracle, to know God specifically brought life about
2. Defining sacrifice (22:6-8)
  - a. Two of them went together...powerful picture
  - b. Perhaps, Isaac himself became a willing sacrifice
  - c. Such an account – having a father with such faith - powerful
3. Providential Marriage (24)
4. Sons in answer to prayer (25:19-21)
5. God appeared to – blessing (26:2-5)
6. Blessed by God (26:12)
7. God appeared again... (26:23-25)

## II. Isaac Deceived

1. Going blind (27:1)
  2. Dismal Outlook (27:2)
  3. Loves Esau (25:27-28)
    - a. Man of the field (world) (25:27)
    - b. Despised Birthright (25:34)
    - c. Worldly Marriages (25:34-35)
    - d. Profane man (*Heb 12:16*)
      - i) Unhallowed...that which lacks all relationship or affinity to God.
  4. Chooses Esau to Bless (27:2-4)
    - a. God choose Jacob (25:21-23)
    - b. How could Isaac make this choice?
      - i) Ignorance....seems unlikely
      - ii) Forgetful, doubtful...maybe even disobedient
      - iii) What God wanted was clear...what Isaac wanted, different
    - c. Words all carnal and selfish (27:2-4)
      - i) Nothing about prayer...seeking God, hearing God....all “I” stuff
      - ii) Notice...all about Isaac's carnal appetite
  5. Deceived by senses (27:5-29)
    - a. Incredibly ugly scene....
    - b. Rebekah evesdropping
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- c. Rebekah's deception
  - i) Perhaps was jealous for God's will. Perhaps her own love
  - ii) Yet, what she does here is wrong – God does not hold as good
  - iii) God could have and would have undone Isaac's intention....
  - iv) Manipulation....is not of God.
  - v) Faith is a life without scheming
- d. Jacob's deception
  - i) Wary of it...not because wrong...fear it won't work...sad, worldly attitude
  - ii) Lies....blatantly
- e. Isaac is deceived
  - i) Again, something tragic about....watching this
  - ii) Can't help but feel that Isaac is in a place, far from God – open to lies
  - iii) Think of Josh 9:7-14 – deception of Israelites...did not ask God

## III. Isaac's Faith...Sight

### 1. Obviously, playing with the hymn a little that we all know

- a. Amazing Grace...how sweet the sound....saved a wretch like me
- b. I once was blind...but now I see....
- c. For Isaac....sin, selfishness, distance from God...brought to blindness
- d. But now....sight is thrust back upon him...and he sees

### 2. Trembled, shaken (27:33)

- a. Wording...picture is intense....shook to core of who he was.
- b. Why? What has Isaac in such a state?
- c. Heard the phrase – whole life passes before your eyes...see clearly
- d. I believe it is what happened here...realized he had been fighting God
- e. Realized you cannot fight God and win....realized he has been trying
- f. I believe he is seeing again....life is coming into view...rightly

### 3. Won't, Can't alter blessing

- a. Why? What is it that is happening...what is the blessing
- b. Definition - Lit speak good of...call blessed
- c. Not power...agreeing w/God
  - i) The blessing was not magic words uttered that cannot be rescinded
  - ii) Consider Prov 19:21; 16:126:2 (true of a blessing as well), Num 23:8
- d. By faith – that is what Heb 11 is about
  - i) What is faith? Again, not some spiritual or magic power or force
  - ii) Rom 10:17 – came by hearing

- iii) Where did Isaac hear? At birth....now he is hearing, believing, obeying
  - iv) As he sits there, Esau in front of him...clear that God's words stand
  - v) Can't change the blessing...he whom God blesses is blessed
4. He saw what was coming (is what it says in Heb 11)
    - a. His words did not cause the future, but prophetically revealed it
    - b. Spiritual things the coming things" (mellontōn) in accordance with the nature of things or with the divine appointment and therefore certain to take place. usually is used for spiritual things concerning the salvation in and from Christ
    - c. Heb 11:1
  5. Blessing becomes spiritual
    - a. Again, Heb 11:20 saws saw...word has a spiritual connotation to it
  6. As look at first two blessings - These blessings have low view
    - a. Focus on stuff...power
  7. God's blessing more (26:3-5)
    - a. God with...about decndants, a future land...a promise...of the Messiah
    - b. In your seed (singular) all the earth will be blessed
  8. Isaac's blessing becomes (28:3-4)
    - a. Notice – God almighty – El Shaddai....sovereign, almighty God
    - b. Blessing of Abraham...descendants...inherit land
    - c. Something changed in Isaac's perspective here...and it is wonderful
    - d. Did it stick? We don't' know. Has another 47 years....hopefully good
  9. By Faith, Isaac also
    - a. Small point...don't want to press it...but is interesting
    - b. In Heb 11:20 – is an un-translated Gk word – also. Missing from some texts
    - c. Not found in the rest of the verses....but would tie it back to v.17-19
    - d. In Heb 11:17-19 – pic of greatest sacrifice...letting go, possessing nothing
    - e. In one sense...this is Isaac's taking up cross...letting go of Esau

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## Conclusion

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Isaac's Heritage

Isaac's Blindness

Isaac's Faith...Sight

Could wish it was more...yet something altogether good about...watching Isaac  
bless...see things and call things good, seeing them spiritually, eternally

Must be something altogether frustrating about trying to fight God's will

Paul's Testimony – trembling, astonished...hard to kick against goads  
What do you want me to do