

# THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

LESSON XI, FIRST QUARTER, INTERNATIONAL SERIES, MARCH 17.

Text of the Lesson, Gen. xxvii, 15-23, 41-45—Memory Verses, 21-23—Golden Text, Prov. xii, 22—Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

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This is certainly a pitiful story of human weakness and sin and unbelief and scheming to help God carry out His purpose. Isaac's desire for a mess of savory meat that he might bless Esau before he died seems like weakness, but what shall be said of Rebekah teaching Jacob to lie and willing to take the consequences upon herself? (Verse 13.) We know that it is written of Ahaziah, king of Judah, that "his mother was his counselor to do wickedly" (II Chron. xxii, 3), but she was a wicked woman and a murderer. We know also that Herodias told her daughter to ask for the head of John the Baptist, but we could expect nothing better from such a one. Both Athaliah and Herodias were the devil's own property, and he did as he pleased with them, but both Rebekah and Jacob were of God's chosen people, and better things are expected of such. The devil seems to take special pains to get hold of the Lord's property, for thus he brings great dishonor on the name of the Lord. We have already seen him gaining an advantage over Abraham and Isaac and Lot and Noah, and later he takes David and Solomon and Jehoshaphat and others. He asked for Job and Simon Peter; he instilled unbelief and doubt and fear into the minds even of those who were nearest to our Lord.

Let us lay it to heart that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in heavenly places, and that we need nothing less than the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. vi, 11-12). We may always overcome him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony and by not counting our lives dear to ourselves (Rev. xii, 11). Turning to our lesson, we must remember that the Lord had told Rebekah that her younger son would have the pre-eminence and that the elder should serve the younger (xxv, 23). Faith would not have been troubled by any suggestions as to the possibility of its being otherwise. It should be true of all believers as it was of Abraham that "he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform" (Rom. iv, 20, 21). See also the comfort of Isa. xlv, 24.

Rebekah, not having her mind stayed upon Jehovah, no sooner hears the words of Isaac to Esau than she feels that something must be done—and that quickly—if her favorite son (xxv, 28) is to have the blessing. This may look like reason and common sense, but it certainly was not faith in God. The father of lies, the great deceiver, seems at once to have taken possession of her and to fill her with plans to deceive her husband and to transform the smooth man into a hairy man (verse 11). It is about the worst kid glove story on record (verse 16). Soon Jacob is on his way to his father partly clothed with some of Esau's raiment and partly fixed up otherwise and bearing the savory meat which his mother had prepared (verses 15-17). Now see him in the presence of his father and listen to the lies that roll out of him in answer to his father's questions. "I am Esau, thy firstborn." "The Lord thy God brought the venison to me." "I am thy very son Esau" (verses 19, 20, 24). It is written, "Whoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" (Gal. vi, 7), and, while nothing can palliate the guilt of Jacob and his mother, we notice that Isaac is doing a little reaping on the line of lying. And what about the reaping of Jacob when his sons so cruelly deceived him concerning his beloved Joseph? Is it not suggestive of sowing the wind and reaping the whirlwind? (Ezek. viii, 7). It pays to sow to the spirit.

When Isaac was telling Esau that his brother had obtained the blessing and added, "You, and he shall be blessed" (verse 33), it is possible that he remembered the purpose of God about the elder serving the younger and perhaps saw the folly of his attempt to thwart the purpose of God. And yet verse 35 may indicate that he was spiritually as well as physically blind, for he speaks to Esau of "thy blessing."

In verse 41 we see a proof of I John iii, 15, that hatred is murder. And now Rebekah begins to do a little reaping, for she is compelled to part with her beloved son because of the hatred of Esau. She says that he is to tarry with her brother in Haran a few days until Esau's fury turn away, until he should forget it, and that then she would send and fetch him (verses 43-45), but we never read of her sending for him, and we do not know that she ever saw him again. Comparing this chapter with some that we have been asked to omit, we cannot but wonder why. And yet all Scripture is profitable, though not equally profitable, and here we see the deceitfulness and wickedness of the human heart and the folly and sin of unbelief and of trying to help God. It becomes us to learn from the Scriptures what the purpose of God is, then believe firmly that He will always do as He has said, and trustfully and obediently dwell with Him for His work (I Chron. iv, 23). He is the God of truth, Jesus is the Truth, and the Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and it is impossible for anything but truth to dwell with Him.

**Voice The Index of The Mind.**  
Cultivate a mild, gentle, and sympathetic voice.  
And the way to secure a mild, gentle, and sympathetic voice is to be mild, gentle and sympathetic.  
The voice is the index of the soul.  
Children do not pay much attention to your words—they judge of your intents by your voice.  
Your voice measures. "My sheep know my voice."  
We judge one another more by voice than language, for voice colors speech, and if your voice does not corroborate your words, doubt will follow.  
We are won or repelled by a voice. Your dog does not obey your words; he does, however, read your intents in your voice.  
The best way to cultivate a voice is not to think about it.  
Actions become regal only when they are unconscious; and the voice that convulses, that holds us captive, that leads and lures us on, is used by its owner unconsciously.  
Fix your mind on a thought, and the voice will follow. If you fear you will not be understood, you are losing the thought—it is slipping away from you—and you are thinking of the voice. Then your voice rises to a screech, subsides into a purr, or bellows like the vagrant winds. Anxiety and intent are shown and your case is lost.  
If you fear you will not be understood, you probably will not. If the voice is allowed to come naturally, easily, gently, it will take on every tint and emotion of the mind.  
And, to get back to the place of beginning, the advice is this: The best way to cultivate the voice is not to cultivate it. The voice is the sounding board of the soul. God made it right. If your soul is filled with truth your voice will vibrate with love, calm, sympathy, and fill your hearers with the desire to do, to be, and to become.  
Your desire will be theirs.  
By their voices ye shall know them.  
Peace—be still! Feel that and then say it, and your voice shall be a word of command and even the elements will obey.—EMERT BRUNNARD in *March Lippincott's*.

**Often The Kidneys Are Weakened by Over-Work.**  
Unhealthy Kidneys Make Impure Blood.  
It used to be considered that only urinary and bladder troubles were to be traced to the kidneys, but now modern science proves that nearly all diseases have their beginning in the disorder of these most important organs.  
The kidneys filter and purify the blood—that is their work.  
Therefore, when your kidneys are weak or out of order, you can understand how quickly your entire body is affected and how every organ seems to fail to do its duty.  
If you are sick or "feel badly," begin taking the great kidney remedy, Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root, because as soon as your kidneys are well they will help all the other organs to health. A trial will convince anyone.  
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per acre for Florida. In 1905 South Carolina produced an average of 10.9 bushels per acre, worth on Dec. 1, 1905, 74 cents per bushel, and Florida produced an average of 10.1 bushels per acre, worth on the same date 66 cents per bushel. On the same date the average farm price of corn was higher per bushel in only Arizona (97 cents per bushel), California (76 cents per bushel) and Wyoming (75 cents per bushel).

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