

Fortunate Son

For many children, few things stink more than having parents who play favorites. That is unless, of course, you are the favorite. Playing favorites can cause all sorts of problems among them: envy, strife, elitism, to name a few. These problems don't just exist in childhood either. They can extend throughout adult life too.

Playing favorites happened in the Old Testament as well. Remember Isaac and Rebekah? Isaac favored Esau and Rebekah favored Jacob. It should be no surprise then that there would be strife between the two. Jacob deceives Isaac and Esau and starts quarreling with Esau for years to come. Even over one thousand years later the people of Israel and Edom are fighting against each other!

We tend to act like our parents. Some of those actions are inherited and some learned. Jacob played favorites just like his father. He clearly favored Joseph over the other eleven brothers. And, the brothers became indignant and tried to kill him. I do not believe Joseph was without fault either in the way he proclaimed his dreams of he and his brothers. Fortunately, it seems the cycle ends with this generation after the salvation in Egypt from the famine.

God has been playing favorites too.

God called the nation of Israel to be his. He chose them for a purpose. *I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles* (Isa. 42:6). He played favorites by choosing them for a purpose. His purpose. We are to be set apart for him that they might complete his mission: the salvation of the earth.

He calls us for the same purpose. We are his favorites to bring salvation to those who don't know Him. *And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified* (Rom 8:30). We shouldn't be alarmed at the reaction of the "other brothers." Of course they will want to hurt and kill us. They never received the blessing of being chosen, called, justified, and glorified by God!

But let us not take the side of elitism either. Since Robert is frequently referencing music from the 1960s, I will do one here too. Credence Clearwater Revival had a song "Fortunate Son" in 1969. It speaks about those in power and fortune looking down and mistreating those who are not. May we not be that way. *For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son* (Rom. 8:29).

We have been favored so we will become like Jesus. Let us become more humble, more loving, more serving, more meek, and more gentle. Being the favored means more work and more responsibility. Don't forget, it also means a greater reward!

--Alex Swango