

Isaac Blesses Jacob

THEME: Jacob takes Esau's birthright; Jacob flees to Laban.

This chapter has as its theme Jacob and Rebekah conniving to get the blessing of Isaac for Jacob. It is the blessing which Isaac intended for Esau. You see, Jacob wanted the blessing of his father. He knew God had promised his mother that the elder would serve the younger; so the blessing was his already. However, he did not believe God. Rebekah, his mother, did not believe God. Evidently Isaac, the father, didn't believe God or he would never have attempted to bypass Jacob and give the blessing to Esau. He followed his own feelings and appetite in contradiction to the distinct Word of God.

The method Jacob used in obtaining the birthright cannot be supported on any grounds whatsoever. He used fraud and deceit. His conduct was despicable. God did not condone this any more than He condoned the conduct of Sarah and Abraham in the matter of Hagar and Ishmael. God could not use the trickery and cleverness of Jacob. As we shall see, God deals with this man in a very definite way. Jacob had to pay for his sin in the same coin in which he sinned. You will note that as we get into this chapter.

Chapter 26 concluded with Esau, who was about forty years old, marrying two Hittite women. This was a grief to Isaac and to Rebekah. Now they recognize that, if Jacob is not to marry a Hittite or a Philistine, he must be sent away to Haran where Isaac got his bride from the family of Abraham. - McGee

Gen 27:1-4 Now it came to pass, when Isaac was old and his eyes were so dim that he could not see, that he called Esau his older son and said to him, "My son." And he answered him, "Here I am." Then he said, "Behold now, I am old. I do not know the day of my death. Now therefore, please take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me. And make me savory food, such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, that my soul may bless you before I die."

Approximately thirty-seven years have passed since the events of the previous chapter. Isaac is now 137, his sight has failed, and he thinks he is about to die, perhaps because his brother Ishmael had died at that age (Gen_25:17). But he will live forty-three more years. – Believers Bible Commentary

We have seen that Isaac was an outstanding man, a great man. Abimelech and the Philistines came to make a treaty with him since they feared him. He was patient and peace loving but also prominent and powerful. Here, however, he reveals that weakness of the flesh. All during his life, Esau had been his favorite while Jacob had been the favorite of Rebekah. Esau was the outdoor boy who would go out and bring in a deer or some other animal. He would barbecue it, and the old man would enjoy it. Now Isaac is very old and he wants to bless his favorite son. He knows very well that God has said the elder will serve the younger, but he bypasses that because he wants to bless Esau. So, he tells Esau to go out and bring in some meat and he will bless him because of it. What a revelation this is of this family.

Have you noticed the family strife since we have come to this last major section of Genesis? There was strife in the family of Abraham because of Hagar. Now there is strife in this family over these twins. - McGee

Gen 27:5-8 Now Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt game and to bring it. So Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, "Indeed I heard your father speak to Esau your brother, saying, 'Bring me game and make savory food for me, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of the LORD before my death.' Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to what I command you."

Rebekah overheard what Isaac said. Jacob is her favorite; so she conceives this deceitful plan. It is absolute trickery, and it cannot be condoned on any basis whatever. God is recording it as history, but He condemns it. We will see that. Remember the things that are being done here, and later you will see the chickens come home to roost for Jacob. Now Rebekah goes on to say to him: - McGee

Gen 27:9-12 *Go now to the flock and bring me from there two choice kids of the goats, and I will make savory food from them for your father, such as he loves. Then you shall take it to your father, that he may eat it, and that he may bless you before his death." And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, "Look, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth-skinned man. Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall seem to be a deceiver to him; and I shall bring a curse on myself and not a blessing."*

Esau was not only an outdoor man and a red man, but he was also a hairy man. Not only will he *seem* to be a deceiver; he is a deceiver. - McGee

Gen 27:13-17 *But his mother said to him, "Let your curse be on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get them for me." And he went and got them and brought them to his mother, and his mother made savory food, such as his father loved. Then Rebekah took the choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. And she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. Then she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.*

My friend, I can't help but comment on this. She put that skin of the kid of the goat on the back of his neck and on the back of his hands so that when his father would feel him, he'd think it was Esau. She also dressed him in Esau's clothes so he would smell like him! Apparently the deodorant that Esau was using was not very potent. The fact of the matter is, I think he was like the whimsical story I heard about two men who were working in a very tight place. One of them finally said to the other one, "Wow! I think the deodorant of one of us has quit working." The other fellow answered, "It must be yours because I don't use any!" Well, I don't think that Esau used any either, and I'm not sure he had a shower very often. Even if you couldn't see him, you could smell him. – McGee

Take note sowing and reaping is law that God has, and see it play out here where the son uses a goat to deceive the father. Many other religions believe in concepts out of the bible as the foundation of their religion. Sowing and reaping is true, but many call it Karma.

Gen 27:18-20 *So he went to his father and said, "My father." And he said, "Here I am. Who are you, my son?" Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn; I have done just as you told me; please arise, sit and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me." But Isaac said to his son, "How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?" And he said, "Because the LORD your God brought it to me."*

Believe me, this boy at this particular point is typical of pious frauds. You find many such frauds even in fundamental circles today. They talk about the Lord leading them. My, sometimes the Lord "leads" them to do some very unusual things! I find out sometimes that Christian men think they can do things that the Mafia would be arrested for. But these men can very piously pray about it and say that it is the Lord's will. Believe me, Jacob at this point is a pious fraud. The Lord had nothing to do with this deception. - McGee

Gen 27:21-22 *Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come near, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not." So Jacob went near to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau."*

Although Rebekah planned the deception, Jacob was equally guilty for carrying it out. And he reaped what he sowed. C. H. Mackintosh observed that:

. . . whoever observes Jacob's life, after he had surreptitiously obtained his father's blessing, will perceive that he enjoyed very little worldly felicity. His brother sought to murder him, to avoid which he was forced to flee from his father's house; his uncle Laban deceived him. . . . He was obliged to leave him in a clandestine manner. . . . He experienced the baseness of his son Reuben . . . the treachery and cruelty of Simeon and Levi towards the Shechemites; then he had to feel the loss of his beloved wife . . . the supposed untimely end of Joseph; and to complete all, he was forced by famine to go into Egypt, and there died in a strange land. . . . Believers Bible Commentary

Gen 27:23-27 *And he did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him. Then he said, "Are you really my son Esau?" He said, "I am." He said, "Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's game, so that my soul may bless you." So he brought it near to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank. Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come near now and kiss me, my son." And he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him and said: "Surely, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field Which the LORD has blessed.*

You can tell that Isaac suspected something was wrong, but Rebekah knew Isaac very well and she had worked out every detail. – McGee

Be careful when you plan in deceit, even your successes come at high cost as we will see. Anyone ever lied thought they got away with it, only later to find it cost them dearly in the long run?

Gen 27:28-29 *Therefore, may God give you Of the dew of heaven, Of the fatness of the earth, And plenty of grain and wine. Let peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, And let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, And blessed be those who bless you!"*

Isaac is giving the blessing which *he* had received—he is passing it on. The interesting thing is that it already belonged to Jacob. God had said that it did. God had already blessed Jacob. God is not accepting this deception at all. – McGee

Isaac blessed Jacob with prosperity, dominion, and protection. It is interesting that the blessings spoken by the patriarchs were prophetic; they came to pass literally because, in a real sense, these men spoke by inspiration. – Believers Bible Commentary

Gen 27:30 *Now it happened, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.*

Gen 27:31 *He also had made savory food, and brought it to his father, and said to his father, "Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that your soul may bless me."*

Gen 27:32-33 *And his father Isaac said to him, "Who are you?" So he said, "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau." Then Isaac trembled exceedingly, and said, "Who? Where is the one who hunted game and brought it to me? I ate all of it before you came, and I have blessed him—and indeed he shall be blessed."*

Somebody may ask whether venison tastes like lamb or goat. It surely does. I remember several years ago when I was pastor in Pasadena that I went deer hunting in Utah with one of the officers of the church. We got a deer, and so we invited the congregation for a dinner just to have a time of good, wholesome fellowship and a lot of fun. We didn't have quite enough meat for all the people; so we bought two lamb legs and cooked that along with the rest of the meat. Nobody could tell the difference, and everyone said the venison was good. Both meats tasted very much alike. - McGee

Gen 27:34-37 *When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me—me also, O my father!" But he said, "Your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing." And Esau said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright, and now look, he has taken away my blessing!" And he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" Then Isaac answered and said to Esau, "Indeed I have made him your master, and all his brethren I have given to him as servants; with grain and wine I have sustained him. What shall I do now for you, my son?"*

Gen 27:38 -40 *And Esau said to his father, "Have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me—me also, O my father!" And Esau lifted up his voice and wept. Then Isaac his father answered and said to him: "Behold, your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, And of the dew of heaven from above. By your sword you shall live, And you shall serve your brother; And it shall come to pass, when you become restless, That you shall break his yoke from your neck."*

When Esau returned and learned of the deception, he sought the blessing tearfully. But the blessing had been granted to Jacob and it couldn't be retracted (Heb_12:16-17). However, Isaac did have a word for Esau, as follows:

Far from rich soil on earth shall you live, far from the dew of heaven on high; you shall live by the sword and serve your brother; but when you grow restive, his yoke you shall break (vv. 39, 40—Moffatt).

This suggests that the Edomites would live in desert places, would be warriors, would be subject to the Israelites, but would one day rebel against this rule. This latter prophecy was fulfilled in the reign of Joram, King of Judah (2Ki_8:20-22). – Believers Bible Commentary

Gen 27:41 So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, "The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob."

Gen 27:42 And the words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah. So she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said to him, "Surely your brother Esau comforts himself concerning you by intending to kill you."

Gen 27:43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice: arise, flee to my brother Laban in Haran.

Esau is thinking. *My father is old and won't live much longer. Just as soon as my father dies, I'll kill Jacob. I'll get rid of him!* This is the thought of his heart, and he evidently talked about it to others.

Here again we see Rebekah taking things into her own hands. She tells Jacob, "You are going to have to leave home." Little did she know that she would pay for her part in this, her sin. She never saw this boy again. She said she would send him over there for a little while but it was a long while and she died before he got back.

We must remember that Jacob is her favorite. She wants Jacob to go to her brother, Laban, and that is where she will send him. This is where Jacob is going to learn his lesson. This is where the chickens will come home to roost. Old Uncle Laban is going to put him through school and teach him a few things. Jacob thought he was clever, but Uncle Laban is an expert at cleverness. Poor Jacob will find he is just an amateur, and he is going to cry out to God in desperation before it is all over. - McGee

Gen 27:44-46 And stay with him a few days, until your brother's fury turns away, until your brother's anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereaved also of you both in one day?"

Notice that she says she will send him away for a few days. A few days lengthened to twenty years, and during that interval she died. She never saw her boy, her pet, her favorite, again.

We can picture the life of Rebekah during those years when we consider that Esau probably did not think much of his mother after that little episode.- McGee

Gen 27:46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these who are the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

Remember that Esau had married these heathen, godless women. Already that was ringing sorrow into the home, and even Rebekah was overwhelmed by it. Now she tells Isaac that if Jacob stays there he will probably do the same thing. She could use this as an excellent excuse to get Jacob away from home to protect him from Esau. She has this little conference with Isaac to convince him that the thing to do is to send Jacob back to her family, to her brother Laban. Remember how Abraham's servant had gone there to get her. So now the point is to get Jacob back there to find a wife, but also to get him out of danger. Very frankly, I think that if he had stayed at home, Esau would have tried to kill him. However, the way it turned out, Rebekah was the first to die, and Jacob got back for his father's funeral. But he never again saw his mother. - McGee