

# Genesis 27 - The Patriarchal Blessing; Conspiracy; The Deception & Blessing of Jacob; Jacob's Flight to Haran

II. Epilogue: Patriarchal history (Gen 11:10—50:26)

(3) Life of Jacob (Gen 27:1—36:43)

(A) Jacob's deception (27:1—28:5)

(a) Plot to deceive Isaac (27:1-17)

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## Genesis 27

(3) Life of Jacob (Gen 27:1—36:43)

(A) Jacob's deception (27:1—28:5)

(a) Plot to deceive Isaac (27:1-17)

1 Now it came about, when Isaac was old and his eyes were too dim to see, that he called his older son Esau and said to him, "My son." And he said to him, "Here I am."

1 Now it came about, when Isaac was old and his eyes were too dim to see, that he called his older son Esau and said to him, "My son." And he said to him, "Here I am."

1 Eventually, Isaac grew so old that he could not see. One day, he called his eldest son Esau. "My son," he called out to him.

1 And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, here am I.

- The loss of his eyesight led Isaac to believe that he may not live much longer

2 Then Isaac said, "Behold now, I am old *and* I do not know the day of my death.

2 Isaac said, "Behold now, I am old *and* I do not know the day of my death.

2 "Look how old I am! I could die any day now,

2 And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death:

- Isaac was 137 years old at the time; he lived another 43 years (35:28), until the age of 180

— His half-brother Ishmael died 14 years before this incident, which was the age difference between Ishmael and Isaac

— Possibly because Isaac was now the same age as when Ishmael died, he assumed he might soon die as well

- Jacob and Esau (twins) were both 77 years old

— Calculating these ages is from a deduction of the following passages: Jacob worked 14 years for his two wives (30:25); Jacob served Laban for 20 years total (31:38); Isaac died at the age of 180 (35:28); there was seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine for a total 14 years (41:6,53); when Jacob arrived in Egypt, there were five years left for the famine to run (45:11); Jacob was 130 when he arrived in Egypt (47:9). From all these clues, Jacob was 77 years old, making Isaac 137 years old at this point in time.

3 Now then, please take your gear, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me;

3 Now then, please take your gear, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me;

3 so go find your weapons, take your bow and arrows, go outside, and hunt some game for me.

3 Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison;

4 and prepare a delicious meal for me such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, so that my soul may bless you before I die."

4 and prepare a savory dish for me such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, so that my soul may bless you before I die."

4 Then prepare some food, just the way I like it, and bring it to me so that I can eat and bless you before I die."

4 And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.

- This was in clear violation of the revelation given to Rebekah in 25:23. God had already revealed that Jacob would be the one to carry on the line, therefore the patriarchal blessing rightfully belonged to Jacob, not to Esau.

— Furthermore, Esau had already sold the birthright, and whoever had the birthright was supposed to get the patriarchal blessing

— It also overlooked Esau's grievous marriages to Hittite women (26:35)

Here again, the biblical account differs from the way Jacob is often portrayed: as stealing the patriarchal blessing from Esau. What was really happening was Esau was trying to steal

the patriarchal blessing from Jacob. The patriarchal blessing rightfully belonged to Jacob. Isaac's attempt was a violation of the revelation given to Rebekah, and it was a violation of the birthright sale. Furthermore, Isaac's action was in spite of the fact that Esau had intermarried with the Canaanites.

Isaac's statement in 27:4b: "That my soul may bless you" is repeated three times: once by Isaac (27:25), once by Jacob (27:19), and once by Esau (27:31). So he really wanted to bless Esau with all his resources, contrary to the agreement and contrary to what God had already declared would be His will. What did Isaac want out of this? He wanted venison. So great a blessing for so low a price revealed Isaac's attitude. Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of soup; Isaac was willing to misdirect the patriarchal blessing for one venison meal.

5 Now Rebekah was listening while Isaac spoke to **his son Esau**. So when Esau went to the field to hunt for game to bring *home*,

5 Rebekah was listening while Isaac spoke to his son Esau. So when Esau went to the field to hunt for game to bring *home*,

5 Now Rebekah overheard Isaac while he was speaking to his son Esau. When Esau had gone out to the field to hunt and bring in some game,

5 And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it.

- "...his son Esau" - this phrase, along with v6, shows obvious favoritism is at play

6 Rebekah said to **her son Jacob**, "Behold, I heard your father speak to your brother Esau, saying,

6 Rebekah said to her son Jacob, "Behold, I heard your father speak to your brother Esau, saying,

6 Rebekah gave these instructions to her son Jacob: "Quick! Pay attention!" she said. "I heard your father talking to your brother Esau. He told him,

6 And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying,

- "...her son Jacob" - this phrase, along with v5, shows obvious favoritism

- Rebekah sent Jacob into action to stop Isaac. Her favorite son, Jacob, already had the birthright

— She was determined that he should receive the blessing, too, from the lips of the Lord's representative, so that all would be well with the divine inheritance.

7 'Bring me *some* game and prepare a delicious meal for me, so that I may eat, and bless you in the presence of the LORD before my death.'

7 'Bring me *some* game and prepare a savory dish for me, that I may eat, and bless you in the presence of the LORD before my death.'

7 'Bring me some game and then prepare some food for me so I can eat and bless you in the presence of the LORD before I die.'

7 Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the LORD before my death.

8 So now, my son, listen to me as I command you.

8 Now therefore, my son, listen to me as I command you.

8 So now, my son, listen to what I have to say and pay attention to what I'm about to tell you.

8 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee.

9 Go now to the flock and bring me two choice young goats from there, so that I may prepare them as a delicious meal for your father, such as he loves.

9 Go now to the flock and bring me two choice young goats from there, that I may prepare them as a savory dish for your father, such as he loves.

9 Go to the flock and bring me two healthy young goats. I'll prepare some delicious food for your father, just the way he loves it.

9 Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth:

10 Then you shall bring *it* to your father, that he may eat, so that he may bless you before his death."

10 Then you shall bring *it* to your father, that he may eat, so that he may bless you before his death."

10 Then you are to take it to your father so that he can eat and bless you before he dies."

10 And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death.

The sin in this chapter is not Jacob's stealing the patriarchal blessing; that rightfully did belong to Jacob. The sin lay in their deceiving the father. Here again is a lapse of faith, as it was with Abraham in Gen 12 and with Sarah in Gen 16. Rebekah had the revelation from God, and so she simply should have trusted God that He would intervene at the proper time and work things out in such a way that indeed Jacob would get the patriarchal blessing. Nevertheless, she felt she had to take matters into her own hands because it seemed that nothing could stop Isaac from giving the patriarchal blessing to Esau, and with that came many material benefits. While Esau cared little about the spiritual benefits, he wanted those material benefits.

11 But Jacob said to his mother Rebekah, "Behold, my brother Esau is a hairy man and I am a smooth man.

11 Jacob answered his mother Rebekah, "Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man and I am a smooth man.

11 "But look!" Jacob pointed out to his mother Rebekah, "My brother Esau is a hairy man, but I'm smooth skinned.

**11** And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man:

- Jacob expressed doubts about his mom's plan, mainly because of physical differences between Jacob and Esau

12 Perhaps my father will touch me, then I will be like a deceiver in his sight, and I will bring upon myself a curse and not a blessing."

12 Perhaps my father will feel me, then I will be as a deceiver in his sight, and I will bring upon myself a curse and not a blessing."

12 My father might touch me and he'll realize that I'm deceiving him. Then, I'll bring a curse on myself instead of a blessing."

12 My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing.

- Rebekah seemed certain she could duplicate the taste of meat from wild game with goat's meat. But Jacob was not so sure he could deceive his father.

- After all, Jacob said, if Isaac touched him, Isaac would know the difference between Esau's hairy skin and Jacob's smooth skin

- Jacob had no guilt—only fear—regarding the plan

- But the blessing was in danger and all must be risked, including even the possibility of a curse on Rebekah

13 But his mother said to him, "Your curse be on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get *the goats* for me."

13 But his mother said to him, "Your curse be on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get *them* for me."

13 "My son," she replied, "let any curse against you fall on me. Just listen to me, then go and get them for me."

**13** And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me them.

- Rebekah took any curse that may come to pass upon herself, since she was the mastermind of the plan

14 So he went and got *them*, and brought *them* to his mother; and his mother made a delicious meal such as his father loved.

14 So he went and got *them*, and brought *them* to his mother; and his mother made savory food such as his father loved.

14 So out he went, got them, and brought them to his mother, who then prepared some delicious food, just the way his father liked it.

14 And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother: and his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved.

- Jacob went out to get the two young healthy goats

15 Then Rebekah took the best garments of her elder son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them on her younger son Jacob.

15 Then Rebekah took the best garments of Esau her elder son, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son.

15 Then Rebekah took some garments that belonged to her elder son Esau—the best ones available—and put them on her younger son Jacob.

15 And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son: So Jacob did as his mother told him.

- Esau, having been married for 37 years (v1; 26:35), would have had his own tents and wives. Why Rebekah had some of his clothes is unknown. Perhaps they were priestly robes, kept in her house until passed on to the eldest son.

16 And she put the skins of the young goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck.

16 And she put the skins of the young goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck.

16 She put some goat skins over his hands and on the smooth part of his neck.

16 And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck:

- Esau's clothes would provide the proper smell and the goatskins would provide the proper feel

17 She also gave the delicious meal and the bread which she had made to her son Jacob.

17 She also gave the savory food and the bread, which she had made, to her son Jacob.

17 Then she handed the delicious food and bread that she had prepared to her son Jacob,

17 And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

- Rebekah must have been a good cook in order to make goat meat taste like venison such that Isaac would not notice the difference

— In her preparations, she was able to cover all but one of the senses, either actively or passively. For the sense of sight, Isaac was blind; for the sense of smell, Jacob was wearing Esau's clothing; for the sense of taste, the goat tasted like venison; for the sense of touch, the goatskins would be hairy.

— The sense of hearing was the only problem she could not really cover, and that fact will become a problem to a point of danger

(b) Rebekah and Jacob deceive Isaac (27:18-29)

**18** Then he came to his father and said, "My father." And he said, "Here I am. Who are you, my son?"

**18** Then he came to his father and said, "My father." And he said, "Here I am. Who are you, my son?"

**18** who went to his father and said, "My father..."

"It's me!" he replied. "Which one are you, my son?"

**18** And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son?

**19** Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn; I have done as you told me. Come now, sit and eat of my game, so that you may bless me."

**19** Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn; I have done as you told me. Get up, please, sit and eat of my game, that you may bless me."

**19** "I'm Esau, your firstborn!" Jacob told his father. "I've done what you asked, so please sit up and eat what I caught, so you can bless me."

**19** And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.

- "...I" - there are two Hebrew words for "I": *ani* and *anochi*, and Jacob used the latter

— In this case, the use of *anochi* would have focused on identifying himself as first-born, to which he had some claim through the birthright. The word *ani* is used to emphasize the predicate nominative, as will be the case later, in 27:32.

— *Ani* emphasizes the name and emphasizes the person. In this case, the use of *ani* would have emphasized his identity to be that of Esau, clearly a false statement. Therefore, what happened here was that while Jacob must lie, he tries not to lie by using the non-normative *anochi*.

- So Jacob lied, and his deception of his father was indeed sinful; that is where Jacob's sin lay

— It should be noted that the sin is not the stealing of the patriarchal blessing, but the deception of the father. However, what Isaac and Esau were trying to do was even more sinful, because they were trying to thwart the very purpose of God.

20 Isaac said to his son, "How is it that you have *it* so quickly, my son?" And he said, "Because the LORD your God made *it* come to me."

20 Isaac said to his son, "How is it that you have *it* so quickly, my son?" And he said, "Because the LORD your God caused *it* to happen to me."

20 "How did you get it so quickly, my son?" Isaac asked.

Jacob responded, "...because the LORD your God made me successful."

**20** And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the LORD thy God brought it to me.

- This was an opportunity for Jacob to confess, but he chose not to. Instead, he continued with his web of lies

— By using God's Name, it makes it all the worse. There is no reason to excuse Jacob's sin, but it is important to make sure exactly what the sin was and what it was not.

21 Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come close, so that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not."

21 Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come close, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not."

21 So Isaac told Jacob, "Come here, my son, so I can feel you and know for sure whether or not you're my son Esau."

**21** And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not.

- Prodded by his mother, Jacob lied twice to his father, first, about his identity and second, that God had given him success (in hunting, v20)

22 So Jacob came close to his father Isaac, and he touched him and said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau."

22 So Jacob came close to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau."

22 So Jacob approached his father, who felt him and said, "It's Jacob's voice, but Esau's hands."

22 And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.

- The sense of hearing was the one sense Rebekah and Jacob could not and did not cover



23 And he did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him.

23 He did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him.

23 He didn't recognize Jacob, because his hands were hairy like those of his brother Esau, so Isaac blessed him.

23 And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him.

- Because Jacob's arms felt like Esau, Isaac allowed his sense of touch to overshadow his sense of hearing

24 And he said, "Are you really my son Esau?" And he said, "I am."

24 And he said, "Are you really my son Esau?" And he said, "I am."

24 He asked, "Are you really my son Esau?"

"I am," Jacob replied.

**24** And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am.

- "...I" - this time Jacob used *ani* without the predicate so he did not arouse the suspicion that his earlier use of *anochi* may have done (Cf. v19)

- Three times Isaac voiced his suspicion, three times Jacob lied to him; the last time, here, a direct question and a direct lie

— But deceived by his senses of touch and smell, he blessed Jacob, thinking he was Esau

25 So he said, "Bring *it* to me, and I will eat of my son's game, that I may bless you." And he brought *it* to him, and he ate; he also brought him wine and he drank.

25 So he said, "Bring *it* to me, and I will eat of my son's game, that I may bless you." And he brought *it* to him, and he ate; he also brought him wine and he drank.

25 "Come closer to me," Isaac replied, "so I can eat some of the game, my son, and then bless you." So Jacob came closer, and Isaac ate. Jacob also brought wine so his father could drink.

**25** And he said, Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought it near to him, and he did eat: and he brought him wine, and he drank.

26 Then his father Isaac said to him, "Please come close and kiss me, my son."

26 Then his father Isaac said to him, "Please come close and kiss me, my son."

26 After this, Jacob's father Isaac told him, "Come closer and kiss me, my son."

26 And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son.

27 So he came close and kissed him; and when he smelled the smell of his garments, he blessed him and said, "See, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the LORD has blessed;

27 So he came close and kissed him; and when he smelled the smell of his garments, he blessed him and said, "See, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the LORD has blessed;

27 So Jacob drew closer to kiss him. When Isaac smelled the scent of his son's clothes, he blessed him and said, "How my son's scent is the fragrance of the field that the LORD has blessed.

27 And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the LORD hath blessed:

- The smell of his clothing fooled Isaac into finally offering the blessing, Jacob's final act of deception

28 Now may God give you of the dew of heaven, And of the fatness of the earth, And an abundance of grain and new wine;

28 Now may God give you of the dew of heaven, And of the fatness of the earth, And an abundance of grain and new wine;

28 May the LORD grant you dew from the skies, and from the fertile land; may he grant you abundant grain and fresh wine.

28 Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine:

29 May peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you; Be master of your brothers, And may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be those who curse you, And blessed be those who bless you."

29 May peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you; Be master of your brothers, And may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be those who curse you, And blessed be those who bless you."

29 May people serve and bow before you; may you be master over your brothers; may your mother's sons bow before you; may anyone who curses you be cursed; and may anyone who blesses you be blessed."

29 Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.

- In this blessing, Isaac intended that Esau was to rule over his brother, and this was in direct contradiction to what God said in 25:23. Indeed this would be true, although initially

it appeared otherwise (32:18; 33:3,8,13-15).

- The blessing included prosperity in crops, domination over other nations and his brothers, cursing on those who cursed him, and blessing on those who blessed him.
- God identified so closely with Abraham (Jacob) that cursing Jacob was the same as cursing God
  - This phrase connects this blessing with the Abrahamic Covenant of 12:3
  - Thus, against Isaac's expectations or hope, the Abrahamic Covenant was to be sustained through Jacob, not Esau
- Isaac's blessing of Jacob was the result of divine intervention in spite of Jacob's sin
  - Isaac blessed Jacob against his own will; later, Balaam will bless Israel against his own will

***Jacob received a blessing from his father by hiding behind the name and wearing the garments of his father's beloved firstborn son. So do we!***

### **Consequences of Jacob's Deceit**

- (1) He never saw his mother again
- (2) Esau wanted him dead
- (3) Laban, his uncle, deceived him
- (4) His family life was full of conflict
- (5) He was exiled for years from his family

By the promise of God, Jacob would've received the birthright. But he chose to take matters into his own hands, and thus suffered the consequences. He didn't need to scheme this deception with his mother.

(c) Esau's grief (27:30-41)

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

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

**30** Just after Isaac had finished blessing Jacob and Jacob had left his father Isaac, Jacob's brother Esau returned from hunting,

**30** And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

- A close call—as one went out (with the blessing), the other came in (to be blessed)

31 Then he also made a delicious meal, and brought it to his father; and he said to his father, "Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that you may bless me."

31 Then he also made savory food, and brought it to his father; and he said to his father, "Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that you may bless me."

31 prepared some delicious food, brought it to his father, and told him, "Can you get up now, father, so you may eat some of your son's game and then bless me?"

31 And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me.

32 His father Isaac said to him, "Who are you?" And he said, "I am your son, your **firstborn**, Esau."

32 Isaac his father said to him, "Who are you?" And he said, "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau."

32 But his father Isaac asked him, "Who are you?"  
"I'm Esau, your firstborn son," he answered

**32** And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau.

- "...firstborn" - since Esau had already sold the birthright, declaring himself the firstborn now became meaningless

33 Then Isaac trembled violently, and said, "Who then was he who hunted game and brought *it* to me, so that I ate from all *of it* before you came, and blessed him? Yes, *and* he shall be blessed."

33 Then Isaac trembled violently, and said, "Who was he then that hunted game and brought *it* to me, so that I ate of all *of it* before you came, and blessed him? Yes, and he shall be blessed."

33 At this, Isaac began to tremble violently. "Who then," he asked, "hunted some game and brought it to me to eat before you arrived, so that I've blessed him? Indeed, he is blessed."

**33** And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.

- Isaac trembled violently over what had happened and Esau was very bitter and angry — Isaac knew he had been tampering with God's plan and had been overruled; there was no going back now. This was not trembling in anger, but in fear, in recognition of the divine will

- He recognized that God's will for his sons is better than his own will for them
- By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come (Heb 11:20)

34 When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me, me as well, my father!"

34 When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me, *even* me also, O my father!"

34 When Esau realized what his father Isaac was saying, he began to wail out loud bitterly. "Bless me," he cried, "even me, too, my father!"

**34** And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father.

- While Esau did not care about the spiritual ramifications and benefits of this blessing, he did want its material blessings and promise of military superiority

35 And he said, "Your brother came deceitfully and has taken away your blessing."

35 And he said, "Your brother came deceitfully and has taken away your blessing."

35 Isaac replied, "Your brother came here deceitfully and stole your blessing."

**35** And he said, Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing.

- This statement is part truth and partly false: Jacob did come in guile, but he did not steal away the blessing. The blessing rightly belonged to Jacob.

36 Then *Esau* said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he has betrayed me these two times? He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing." And he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?"

36 Then he said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he has supplanted me these two times? He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing." And he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?"

36 Then he said, "Isn't his name rightly called Jacob?" Esau asked. "He has circumvented me this second time. First, he took away my birthright, and now, look how he also stole my blessing." Then he added, "Haven't you reserved a blessing for me?"

**36** And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?

- Both of Esau's statements were false: Esau willingly sold his birthright to Jacob (he "despised" it), and, since Jacob had the birthright, the blessing rightfully belonged to him

37 But Isaac replied to Esau, "Behold, I have made him your master, and I have given to him all his relatives as servants; and with grain and new wine I have sustained him. What

then can I do for you, my son?"

37 But Isaac replied to Esau, "Behold, I have made him your master, and all his relatives I have given to him as servants; and with grain and new wine I have sustained him. Now as for you then, what can I do, my son?"

37 In response, Isaac told Esau, "Look! I've predicted that he's going to become your master, and I've assigned all his brothers to be his servants. What then can I do for you, my son?"

**37** And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?

- The blessing given to Jacob was irrevocable

38 Esau said to his father, "Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me, me as well, my father." So Esau raised his voice and wept.

38 Esau said to his father, "Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me, *even* me also, O my father." So Esau lifted his voice and wept.

38 Then Esau implored his father, "Don't you have even one blessing for me, my father? Bless me, even me too, my father!" Then Esau lifted his voice and wept bitterly.

**38** And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

**39** Then his father Isaac answered and said to him, "Behold, **away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling**, And away from the dew of heaven from above.

**39** Then Isaac his father answered and said to him, "Behold, away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling, And away from the dew of heaven from above.

**39** At this, his father Isaac replied to him, "Look! Away from the fertile land will be your dwellings; away from the dew of the skies above.

**39** And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above;

- All that was left was a blessing for a profane person

- In both of these blessings, Isaac uses a min partitive, which should read:

— "...away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling" should read: "Away from the fatness of the earth shall be your dwelling"

— "...away from the dew of heaven from above" should read: "away from the dew of heaven"

- In some translations, Esau's blessing sounds similar to the blessing Isaac gave to Jacob, however in the Hebrew text it is actually the opposite of what was promised to Jacob

— It means that since Esau's place is *away from this* and *away from that*, Esau will not inherit the Land. Whatever his blessing, it will be away from the Land; he will not be the inheritor of this Land.

40 "And by your sword you shall live, And you shall serve your brother; But it shall come about when you become restless, That you will break his yoke from your neck."

40 "By your sword you shall live, And your brother you shall serve; But it shall come about when you become restless, That you will break his yoke from your neck."

40 By your sword you'll live; but you'll serve your brother. But when you've become restless, you'll break off his yoke from your neck."

40 And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

- The Edomites, Esau's descendants, would live in a land less fertile than Palestine

— Also Esau would live by force, be subservient to Jacob, and be restless (Cf. Ishmael, 16:12; Num 20:14-21)

— Though Esau was not personally subject to his brother, his posterity were tributary to the Israelites until the reign of Joram when they revolted and established a kingdom of their own (2 Kings 8:20; 2 Chr 21:8-10; Cf. 2 Sam 8:14)

— Edom was defeated by Saul (1 Sam 14:47) and subjugated by David (2 Sam 8:14)

— There was a failed revolt under Solomon (1 Kings 11:14-22); Edom rebelled from Joram but was subdued again by Amaziah (2 Kings 14:7; 2 Chr 25:11-19)

- "...thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck" - this break happened first under Joram (2 Chr 21:8-10), then under Ahaz (2 Kings 16:6; 2 Chr 28:16-17)

In subsequent history, when the Jews went into Babylonian Captivity, the Edomites left their territory at Mount Seir in the Trans-Jordan and moved into the southern part of Judah, where they became known as Idumeans. In addition, later these Idumeans were conquered by one of the descendants of the Maccabees, John Hyrcanos, who conquered them in 129 BC, forcibly converted them to Judaism, and then incorporated Idumea into the Jewish Judean State. Eventually, these converted Idumeans produced the dynastic rule of the House of Herod.

Before leaving the section on Isaac's blessing of Jacob, there are two observations. The first observation is the condemnation of Jacob. Words of condemnation of Jacob in the text come only from the mouths of Esau and Laban, hardly good witnesses as to what constitutes honesty. Furthermore, God Himself never condemns Jacob. When God speaks to Jacob, it is always a message of blessing and of promise and never a rebuke, never a word of chastisement. Negative things about Jacob come from his enemies; God is always positive towards Jacob.

Nevertheless, Jacob lived a long life of hardships and struggles. By his own admission, long and evil were my days. He lived a long life of travel: in Beersheba for 60 years, then in Haran for 20 years, the Land of Canaan for 50 years, and then Egypt for 17 years.

**41** So Esau held a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him; and Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob."

**41** So Esau bore a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him; and Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob."

**41** So Esau harbored animosity toward Jacob because of the way his father had blessed him. Esau kept saying to himself, "The time to mourn for my father is very near. That's when I'm going to kill my brother Jacob."

**41** And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob.

- This passage begins the transition to the Laban stories

- Because of his deception Jacob had to flee from home. But the occasion introduced the motif of his taking a wife from his relatives in the East.

- Whereas Isaac had remained in the land while Abraham's servant had gone to find and fetch his wife (Gen 24), Jacob's journey was necessitated by the imminent danger of being killed by his angry brother (27:41-42).

- Moreover, God would deal with Jacob severely under the hand of Laban, his uncle

- Indeed, the sojourn out of the land in several ways parallels the later sojourn of Jacob's family in Egypt

- Rebekah told Jacob about Esau's anger, and urged him to go immediately to her brother Laban in Haran

- First, there is Ishmael's hatred of Isaac, and now Esau's hatred of Jacob

- The Arabs are all descendants of either Esau or Ishmael, and the root of today's conflict began with these two individuals

#### (d) Jacob departs (27:42—28:5)

**42** Now when the words of her elder son Esau were reported to Rebekah, she sent *word* and called her younger son Jacob, and said to him, "Behold your brother Esau is consoling himself concerning you *by planning* to kill you.

**42** Now when the words of her elder son Esau were reported to Rebekah, she sent and called her younger son Jacob, and said to him, "Behold your brother Esau is consoling himself concerning you *by planning* to kill you.



42 Eventually, what Rebekah's older son Esau had been saying was reported to her, so she sent for her younger son Jacob and warned him, "Look! Your brother is planning to get even by killing you.

**42** And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee.

43 Now then, my son, obey my voice, and arise, flee to Haran, to my brother Laban!

43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice, and arise, flee to Haran, to my brother Laban!

43 Son, you'd better do what I say! Get up, run off to my brother Laban in Haran,

43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran;

- This would be a 450 mile journey

44 Stay with him a **fewdays**, until your brother's fury subsides,

44 Stay with him a few days, until your brother's fury subsides,

44 and stay there with him a few days until your brother's fury subsides.

44 And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away;

- "...few days" - this turned into 20 years

- What Rebekah hoped would come to pass (Esau's anger would subside) did take place (33:1-16)

— Esau prospered materially in his own inheritance so he was eventually willing to forgive Jacob

45 until your brother's anger against you subsides and he forgets **what you did to him**.

Then I will send *word* and get you from there. Why should I lose you both in one day?"

45 until your brother's anger against you subsides and he forgets what you did to him.

Then I will send and get you from there. Why should I be bereaved of you both in one day?"

45 After that happens and he has forgotten what you've done to him, I'll send for you so you can return from there. Why should I be bereaved of you both in one day?"

45 Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him: then I will send, and fetch thee from thence: why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?

- "...what you did to him" - Rebekah sneakily turns the blame onto Jacob

- Rebekah would never see her favored son again, as she would die before Jacob returned

- If Esau would've murdered Jacob, Esau would have been executed in accordance with the Noahic Covenant (9:6)

**46** And Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am tired of living because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife from the daughters of Heth like these from the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

**46** Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am tired of living because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife from the daughters of Heth, like these, from the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

**46** Rebekah also told herself, "Heth's daughters are making me tired of living. If Jacob marries one of Heth's daughters, and she turns out to be just like these other local women, what kind of life would there be left for me?"

**46** And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?

- Esau's Hittite wives began to make life difficult on Rebekah

— This, however, was not the main reason for sending Jacob off to Haran; it was just a "side benefit" of his flight...to take a wife from Paddan-Aram, amongst Abraham's family line, like Isaac did (in Rebekah)

### **Summary/Lessons**

All participants were at fault...

- Isaac attempted to thwart God's plan by blessing Esau
- Esau broke the oath he had made with Jacob
- Rebekah and Jacob tried to achieve God's blessing by deception
  - Their victory would reap hatred and separation
  - Rebekah never saw Jacob again
- Jacob alone did not destroy the family; parental preference did

Parental favoritism tore the family apart

- Spiritual insensitivity
  - They relied on senses vs spiritual discernment
- Deception
  - Jacob's only hesitancy was his fear that he would be cursed instead of blessed (27:12)
  - Jacob would later learn that blessings are given by God, not gained by deceit

Their victory would reap hatred and separation; Rebekah never saw Jacob again. Jacob alone did not destroy the family; parental preference did. So in a sense Rebekah and Jacob won, though they gained nothing that God would not have given them anyway, and they lost much. Their family life was destroyed, and each had to bear lonely hours of

separation, disillusionment, and regret. Rebekah would never see her favorite son again, and Jacob would have to face life without a father, mother, or brother. Yet God would work through their conniving. Their activities only succeeded in doing what God's oracle had predicted. God's program will triumph, often in spite of human activities. Natural senses play a conspicuous part—especially the sense of taste in which Isaac prided himself, but which gave him the wrong answer.