



Taking the Blessing

(Genesis 26:18-28:5)

Genesis 27:33 - 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."

1. The **Defiance** of the Father (**Genesis 27:1-4**)

MacArthur states, "Isaac was old. Blind Isaac evidently thought he was near death (v. 2) and would not live much beyond his current 137 years, which was the age of Ishmael when he died (25:17). He certainly did not expect to live another 43 years as he actually did (35:28; cf. 30:24, 25; 31:41; 41:46, 47; 45:6; 47:9 to calculate **Isaac's age at 137** and his **twin sons' ages at 77** years old)."¹

Isaac's greatest problem was his defiance of God's revealed will. God had made it clear that the elder would serve the younger (see **Genesis 25:23**). But Isaac did not want to accept that. MacArthur continues, "Ignoring the words of God to Rebekah (25:23), forgetting Esau's bartered birthright (25:33), and overlooking Esau's grievous marriages (26:35), **Isaac was still intent on treating Esau as the eldest** and granting him the blessing of birthright."²

2. The **Desire** of the Mother (**Genesis 27:5-17**)

Genesis 25:28 says, "And Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob." Rebekah and Jacob were similar – they both deceived to accomplish their goals. Isaac and Esau were similar, too – they both valued their own appetites above that which God told them was valuable.

Bryant Wright writes, "Rebekah was so ambitious for Jacob that she was willing to be damned to get what she wanted (**Genesis 27:12-13**). **William Manchester's biography of Douglas MacArthur, *The American Caesar*, tells how his mother was so ambitious for him that when he enrolled at West Point, she rented an apartment nearby so she could see if his dorm room light was on late at night to know if he was studying to be tops in his class.** That is another mother who was over-the-top in ambition for her son."³

Both Rebekah and Isaac scheme. Boice writes, "It is true that later on, Rebekah, Isaac's wife, schemes to achieve the blessing for her favorite son, Jacob. But Isaac is no less scheming. ... Isaac undoubtedly knew that

¹ John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 52.

² MacArthur, 52–53.

³ Bryant Wright, *Seeds of Turmoil* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2010), 73.

if he announced that he intended to give the **blessing—which granted supremacy and promised material prosperity**—to Esau, the household would erupt into an intolerable uproar of dissension. Rebekah would protest and make Isaac’s life miserable. To avoid this, Isaac decided to dispense his blessing secretly.⁴

3. The **Dishonesty** of the Son (**Genesis 27:18-29**)

Hebrews 11:20 - By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

What is the difference between the “birthright” and the “blessing”?⁵ “A birthright is the right that a person has, through the circumstances of their birth, to assume the leadership of their family in the next generation. ... Since the birthright is not automatic, the leader of the family in the previous generation needs to confer it officially on a person. They do this before they die in the form of a blessing. So a blessing is the official confirmation of a birthright.”

5 Lies of Jacob (**Genesis 27:19-20**)

- 1- **“I am Esau”** (he is Jacob)
- 2- **“your firstborn”** (he is not the firstborn)
- 3- **“I have done just as you told me”** (he was not asked to do this by Isaac)
- 4- **“eat of my game”** (his mother cooked it)
- 5- **“The Lord your God brought it to me”** (He is taking the Lord’s name in vain – the 3rd commandment. He is adding God’s name to the deception! This is the worst lie of them all!)

4. The **Disappointment** of the Brother (**Genesis 27:30-40**)

Jerry Vines says, “Esau is a man who wants blessing but doesn't want to be the kind of man God can bless.”

Hebrews 12:15–17 - ¹⁵looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; ¹⁶lest there be any fornicator or **profane person like Esau**, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. ¹⁷For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance (**NOTE:** there is no possibility of undoing what has been done), though he sought it diligently with tears.

5. The **Ultimate Design** of God

Though we will never know how this could have occurred, God could have stopped Isaac from giving the blessing to Esau. He did not need Rebekah and Jacob to help Him accomplish His ultimate purposes.

Romans 9:11-13 – Does this mean that God hated Esau and loved Jacob before they were born?⁶

- 1) God is speaking of the nation “Jacob” and “Esau” (not individuals). **Genesis 25:23** says Rebekah was told two “nations”, two “peoples” are in her womb.
- 2) Even though a nation was chosen, each individual still had to accept the Messiah to be saved. See **Romans 9:3-4, 10:1**. There were also individuals from Edom (**Amos 9:12**) and Moab (**Ruth 1**) who were believers.
- 3) God’s “love” for Jacob and “hate” for Esau quoted in **Romans 9** is from **Malachi 1:2-3** (c. 400 BC) not **Genesis** (c. 2000 BC). The evil deeds of the Edomites against Israel were well documented (see Numbers 20), which were cause for God’s statement.
- 4) The Hebrew word for “hated” mean as “loved less.” **Genesis 29:30-31** actually describes how Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah, and then says **“The Lord saw that Leah was hated”**. Jesus describes this kind of comparative love in **Luke 14:26** and **Matthew 10:37**.

⁴ James Montgomery Boice, *Genesis: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998), 753.

⁵ Christopher Smith, <https://goodquestionblog.com/2021/01/17/what-is-the-difference-between-a-birthright-and-a-blessing/>

⁶ Adapted from Norman Geisler, *Chosen But Free, 3rd edition* (Grand Rapids, MI; Baker Publishing, 2010), 81-82.