

Genesis 27: The Big Swindle

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The timeline for this chapter is about **37** years after Chapter 26. At this point, Isaac is **137** and the twins are **77** years old.

Here is another chapter where the recurring theme of **clothing** plays a significant role in the events.

What started as a happy union has turned sour after **97** years—we see that Isaac is weak (both physically and spiritually) and Rebekah is now in charge of the household.

Isaac is old and believes he is **near death**. In fact, he will live another **43** years.

This household is noteworthy for the lack of **trust**. Rather than trying to outdo each other in good works, they try to outdo each other in **deception**.

The events of this chapter also demonstrate a lack of trust in God. His purposes are **immutable**.

In this chapter we see the culmination of the **favoritism** that was revealed in chapter 25. We also know there was friction in the household on account of Esau's **wives**.

Everyone in the household knows that **Jacob** is to receive the blessing, but Isaac favors Esau.

Esau has already willingly forfeited his **birthright** and **profaned** the covenant by marrying Hittite wives. Yet he still thinks he deserves the blessing.

Blessing the firstborn would normally be a **public** event. To perform the blessing in private points to **willful deception**.

In spite of all the scheming, in the end **God's will** prevails. Good thing, since all He has to work with is **sinners**.

Of the four characters in this narrative, only **Isaac** comes out looking better at the end.

This chapter provides another example of the folly of using the **ends** to justify the **means**.

God's law does not permit us to think about **consequences**. We are to choose what is in accordance with the law, not what we think will produce the "best" outcome.

God's law will never paint us into a corner. There is always at least one **moral** choice. Otherwise, we could not be held individually responsible for our choices.

What would have been a more godly way for Rebekah to handle the situation when she discovered Isaac's plan?

There is a keen difference between **influence** and **manipulation**.

What shall we say about Rebekah ordering Jacob to lie? Does Jacob have a duty to lie if his mother instructs him to do so? How do we know that he knows it is wrong?

Part of the warning for us in this chapter is to notice how **easily** and how **convincingly** Jacob lies to his father. Are we capable of any less?

Not only Jacob lies to his father, but he is also guilty of **blaspheming God**.

We see Jacob at this point (age 77!) being very spiritually **immature**.

When the real Esau comes to his father, Isaac **trembles violently**.

Isaac's response is the realization that he's been **deceived** and that his attempt to thwart God has been **overturned**.

"What was happening to Isaac? It was the realization that he had tried to box with God and had been defeated, and that he would always be defeated unless he surrendered his own errant will to the Almighty." —J.M. Boice

Boice argues that this "trembling" may have signaled Isaac's **spiritual conversion**. Notice that Isaac's tone changes from this point.

In contrast to Isaac, Esau's bitter cries are seen as **indignant** rather than **penitent**.

Notice the irony of Esau becoming enraged when Jacob turns the tables.

Rebekah's plea with Isaac regarding a wife for Jacob suggests that Isaac didn't know Esau intended to **kill Jacob**.

Rebekah's motivation for choosing a suitable wife for Jacob had nothing to do with the **covenant** and everything to do with **self-pity**.

Rebekah expects Jacob to be gone only a **few days**. Instead, she never sees Jacob again.

What is really at the bottom of Esau's anger toward Jacob?

"[Esau] is angry not only with his brother but also with his parents and with God himself, whose blessing, as he knows, it is and from whom alone it was also to be expected."
—Martin Luther

In the background, **Satan** is working through Esau's hatred in order to cut off the lineage of the promised Seed. Where else have we seen this?

Christology in this chapter:

- Jacob wearing Esau's clothing
- Jacob covered in the skins of a goat
- Jacob bringing an offering to his father
- Jacob receiving the blessing which belonged to his elder brother
- Esau receiving a curse from his father

"If we would obtain a blessing from our heavenly Father, we must come for it in the garments of our elder brother, clothed with his righteousness, who is the first-born among many brethren."
—Matthew Henry