

Genesis

Memorize the TRUTH!

Lesson 15 God Blesses Jacob Genesis 27-28

For it is by grace you have been saved,
through faith — and this not from
yourselves, it is the gift of God — not
by works, so that no one can boast.
Ephesians 2:8-9

Two Conspiracies — Genesis 27:1-17

Day 1

- a. According to custom, Esau, Isaac's older son, would receive a special blessing. Who had God chosen to inherit the blessing? Genesis 25:22-23

b. What did Isaac tell Esau to do before he gave him his special blessing?
- What did Rebekah and Jacob plan to do?
- What had Jacob done to deserve the blessing? What does this tell you about God? Titus 3:4-5

b. Why is it important for us to keep this principle in mind? Ephesians 2:8-9

Learn the TRUTH!



Isaac is old, weak and blind. Unfortunately, his blindness extends to spiritual matters. He tries to oppose God's plan to bless Jacob. But God can use anything, even bad circumstances and our wrong choices, to bring about His own good and perfect will. This week, choose to submit to God's will, because His plan is best!

Jacob Receives the Blessing — Genesis 27:18-29

Day 2

- Why do you think Isaac was ready to ignore God's revealed will in this situation?
- After reading Genesis 27:1-25, what do you think the atmosphere was like in Isaac and Rebekah's home?
- What warnings about showing favoritism in our own families can we glean from this unfortunate situation?

Leftovers for Esau
Genesis 27:30-41

Day 3

7. What was the outcome of Rebekah and Jacob's plan?
8. a. What was Esau's immediate reaction when he learned what had happened?
- b. What "spin" did he put on his earlier attitude toward the birthright?
9. What did Isaac prophesy for his two sons?
Genesis 27:28-29 (Jacob)
- Genesis 27:39:40 (Esau)
10. What future action did Esau plan?

Jacob on the Run
Genesis 27:42-28:9

Day 4

11. a. How did Rebekah save Jacob's life?
- b. What did Isaac do to try to repair the damage?
- c. How do you see God at work in this?
12. a. How did Esau try to regain his parents' favor?
- b. Was he was successful? Why or why not?

A Vision of God
Genesis 28:10-22

Day 5

13. a. Describe Jacob's encounter with God on his journey to Haran.
- b. What message was God conveying to Jacob through this encounter?
14. a. How was Jacob's relationship with God changed by this experience?
- b. Can you recall a time when God revealed Himself to you in a special way? If so, tell how this experience transformed your relationship with Him.

Live the TRUTH!

Jacob's vow makes a point about spiritual immaturity. Notice the conditions Jacob places on God: God must watch over him, provide food, clothing and a safe journey, and if God complies, then Jacob will call Him his God. Jacob can only see his needs for the immediate journey. How often do our prayers reveal our spiritual immaturity? Let's choose to submit to God with "no strings attached" and be amazed at His gracious generosity.

Commentary Genesis Lesson 15

When Esau sold his birthright to Jacob, he must have believed that it was a private transaction. His father would have the final say about distributing the family assets and God's promises. Esau probably felt secure. Isaac would issue a patriarchal blessing, a legally binding declaration. He decides to give this blessing when he is 137 years old and in failing health. He asks Esau to prepare a special meal before he formally conveys the blessing. The patriarch knows that the event is really the transference of promises made by the Lord to Abraham and confirmed to him.

Rebekah eavesdrops on the conversation between Isaac and Esau. She orders Jacob to help her plan an elaborate deception. She will prepare a tasty meal for the patriarch. Then Jacob, impersonating Esau, will serve the food to his father and thus receive the blessing of the firstborn. To trick Isaac, Jacob will wear Esau's clothes, and goatskin on his hands and neck will imitate his brother's body hair. Jacob presents himself to Isaac as Esau; Isaac is suspicious and cautious. Though his sense of sight is gone, he can still use touch. He demands that the "firstborn" come near so that he can feel the garments and skin of the one to be blessed. Finally, Isaac seems content and joyful when he experiences the delightful smell of Esau's clothes. In four brief sentences, he conveys legal title to the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant. These include (1) material prosperity, (2) preference among the nations, (3) preference within his family, and (4) the passing of God's blessings on to others.

No sooner has this sad charade been concluded than Esau arrives. Instantly, Isaac trembles at the realization that he has been deceived. Just as quickly, he yields to the plan of God that had been revealed in the earlier oracle. He concedes that Jacob has not only received the blessing but will retain the blessing. God has spoken, not only by the prophecy, but also by circumstances. His words are crushing to Esau, who blames Jacob for taking his birthright. In reality, Esau had sold it to him in exchange for a bowl of stew, demonstrating just how low his opinion of the birthright truly was. Jacob has taken nothing, though he deceived Isaac at the moment of blessing.

Esau's attempt to recoup the blessing begins with a question for his father: "Haven't you reserved any blessing for me?" (27:36). Isaac's reply makes clear that, in blessing Jacob, he has been effectively speaking for God. "I have made him lord over you" (27:37) is a statement that recognizes God's power behind what has been said. God has not approved deception, but He has integrated the sins of others into His own purpose.

After Esau's weeping and pleadings, Isaac pronounces a blessing on Esau, which does not compromise Jacob's promised blessing. Esau would live in an arid land; his reputation would be for warfare. Eventually, the break between the twins would be embodied in rebellion. Isaac's words are prophetic; years later, the descendants of Esau, the Edomites, settled in the rocky terrain of Mount Seir, southeast of the Dead Sea. Esau plans to kill Jacob when Isaac dies.

Check It Out:

Isaac plans to enjoy a tasty meal of wild game and then have a secret ceremony to give Esau the blessing that God has decreed for Jacob. Isaac is determined to oppose God's will.

Beware of caring too much for all the wonderful things God has given us to enjoy. They may lead us away from the One who gave them. When preoccupied with earthly cares or pleasures, it is easy to drift away from God and rationalize that His will can be safely ignored. Being distracted by the cares and worries of this life, or by the deceitfulness of riches (and the good things those riches make it possible for us to enjoy), can make us unproductive for the Lord. Seeking to know and do the will of God is far better than selfishly focusing on the pleasures of this life.

When Esau speaks about revenge against his brother, Rebekah quickly alerts Jacob to the danger. He is to abandon Canaan temporarily and dwell for a time with her brother Laban. She believes that, in time, Jacob could safely return. The gathering violence in Isaac's family is kept from the patriarch via a clever deception. Jacob's departure for Haran would be given a cover story. Referring to Esau's Hittite wives, Rebekah tells Isaac, "I'm disgusted with living because of these Hittite women" (27:46). If Jacob were to marry such a wife, Rebekah warns that she would be driven to despair. Jacob should seek a wife among the couple's family back in Haran. Isaac sends Jacob north with a stern warning to marry one of Rebekah's nieces. Rebekah will never see Jacob again.

While Isaac seems to have been somewhat interested in spiritual things, Jacob knows little of the Lord beyond His reputation. God soon begins to address Jacob's spiritual ignorance during the long trip northward. Stopping at the place where Abram had sojourned long before, Jacob retires for the night. As he sleeps, God appears to him in a dream. Jacob sees a stairway between earth and heaven with "the Lord" above it. God speaks to him in the dream, identifying Himself as the God of Abraham and Isaac. He then confirms all the promises of the Abrahamic covenant once again, adding a vow to bring Jacob back to Canaan, eventually.

Jacob now has direct knowledge of God. He determines that the experience will mark a turning point in his relationship with God. He decides to memorialize the place by setting up the stone upon which he had slept and pouring oil on it. He names it *Bethel, house of God*. Bethel would be an important location throughout the rest of the Old Testament, with most of the pivotal events of Scripture taking place within a few miles of it. Jacob's knowledge of God is still incomplete. Instead of simply bowing before God because of the vision he has seen and recognizing God's greatness, Jacob bargains with God. He will follow the Lord as his God only if He provides faithfully for him during the uncertain time ahead. God will prove Himself to be faithful. The question is, will Jacob?



Because we are flawed people living in a flawed world, we will make mistakes in our lives. Genesis puts Isaac's family under the spiritual microscope, so that we can learn from and avoid their mistakes. Isaac and Rebekah made a lot of mistakes:

- 1. They chose favorites, which is a recipe for disaster.**
- 2. They failed to communicate with each other.**
- 3. They did not speak out against the competition and animosity between their sons – in some ways, they even made it worse!**
- 4. Most importantly, they did not seek God's wisdom.**

Are any of their mistakes being played out in your life or family? God can restore broken relationships and enable communication to be reestablished. Be encouraged!



Use a dictionary to define "sovereign."

What does Romans 9:11-18 say about God's sovereignty?