

Journey Through HIStory: Esau's Misery

Text: Genesis 27:30-46

Introduction:

Esau returned from his hunting and prepared a meal for his father, but little did he know that the blessing he was looking forward to receive had already been given to his brother, Jacob.

I. Esau and Isaac Learn About the Deception. – Gen. 27:30-38

- A. Isaac was shocked when he realized that he had mistakenly given the blessing to Jacob.
 - ***“Isaac trembled exceedingly:*** *Isaac began to shake convulsively. This phrase is very strong. He was overcome with a deep sense that something had gone wrong in his plan to bless Esau instead of Jacob.*” ^[1] (David Guzik, *Jacob Deceptively Gains the Blessing of Isaac*)
- B. The blessing could no longer be **retracted**.
 - This once again demonstrates the value of people’s words before, unlike today.
- C. Esau cried out bitterly after hearing the words of Isaac.
- D. It is apparent that Esau considered the birthright and the blessing to be two **separate** things.
 1. *“For he has supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright, and now he has taken away my blessing.”* – Gen. 27:36 (AMP)
 2. Isaac did not correct Esau and was not surprised when he heard about the birthright issue either, and there was no statement from the writer whether the birthright and the blessing are the same or not.
 3. Hebrew words for “birthright” and “blessing”:
 - i. birthright: b^əkô^{râ} (bek-o-raw') ^[2]
 - ii. blessing: b^ərâkâ (ber-aw-kaw') ^[3]
- E. Jacob had been made **ruler** and master of Esau, was given all his relatives as servants, and was exceedingly prospered.
- F. The only thing Esau could do was ask for whatever blessing could be given to him, no matter how small, and weep about it.
 - Maybe Esau could have been able to do something if he had not so foolishly sold his birthright, whether it was the same blessing or not.

II. Isaac's Prophecy for Esau. – Gen. 27:39-40

- A. Isaac was not able to bless Esau with anything besides an opportunity to be free from serving Jacob someday when he **overcomes** his anger and hatred.
 1. In the KJV translation it says, *“... it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.”* instead of *“it shall come to pass when you break loose [from your anger and hatred], That you will tear his yoke off your neck [and you will be free of him].”* (AMP)
 2. *“thou shalt have dominion”* – rûd (root); (Hiphil) to be restless, show restlessness; have the dominion, be lord, mourn, rule. ^[4]
 3. It implies having **control** over his anger and hatred and being free of it.
 4. This prophecy was fulfilled after many years (Gen. 33:1-17) and Esau was even blessed, and he prospered (Gen. 33:9).
- B. ***“By your sword you shall live:*** *Whatever blessings and security Esau might enjoy, it would come as he skillfully wielded his sword. His life would not be easy, though it could be blessed.*” ^[1]

III. Esau's Bitterness. – Gen. 27:41-45

- A. He hated his brother and **planned** to kill him when their father dies.
- B. Rebekah heard about Esau's plan and immediately called Jacob to instruct him.
 1. She told him to go to her brother, Laban, in **Haran**.
 2. Jacob was to stay there until Esau's anger subsided.
 3. She realized that Jacob might be killed right after Isaac dies. – *"Why should I be deprived of you both in a single day?"* (vs. 45 AMP)
 4. *"Rebekah never saw her son Jacob again. He was well over forty and probably fifty-seven years old when he fled from Esau to Haran, and he stayed there at least twenty years."* [5] (Footnotes, Amplified Bible, [The Lockman Foundation](#))

IV. Spiritual Insights and Principles.

- A. We can speculate from the passage that when Esau sold his birthright to Jacob, he did not take Isaac's **blessing** into account, and that may be the reason why he gave no regard to his birthright.
- B. If the birthright included all of the blessings Isaac had to give, then wouldn't it have been Jacob's by right at that point since Esau already sold it to him?
 1. Jacob would not have had to **deceive** his father.
 2. Perhaps Jacob and Rebekah also realized that that transaction was not legitimate, or they wanted to make sure to get everything and not miss anything.
 3. The bottom line is that Jacob could have **received** the fulfillment of the prophecy God told Rebekah without exploiting his brother, Esau, for the birthright or deceiving his father, Isaac, for the blessing.
 4. Jacob would not have had to flee out of fear of Esau because of his wrath, and could have gone to Haran merely to meet his wife to be.
 5. He could have **preserved** his relationship with his twin brother, Esau.
- C. The blessing is not in the birthright, but from **God**.
 1. It is like with Abraham and Lot—God's blessing is not in the prosperity of the land (the well-watered plain of Jordan), but in His promise. – Gen. 13
 2. Jacob was able to **choose** who to bless with the birthright and was not limited to the firstborn.
 - i. He disqualified his firstborn (Reuben) and blessed his other sons with the double portion (Joseph) and the perpetuation of the promise (Judah). – Gen. 49:3-4, 8-12, 22-26
 - ii. He blessed Joseph's younger son, Ephraim, to be greater than the firstborn, Manasseh. – Gen. 48:8-22
 3. The law concerning the firstborn was given in Moses' time. – Deut. 21:15-17
- D. Rebekah expressed her frustration to Isaac concerning Esau's wives. – Gen. 27:46
 1. *"She's setting up for that Isaac will send Jacob away in peace, saying that these daughters-in-law were just really a real vexation and a problem and all and she wanted her son Jacob to go and get a wife from her own family."* [6] (Chuck Smith, Verse by Verse Study on Genesis 27-28)
 2. *"Another pretext Rebekah's cunning had to devise to obtain her husband's consent to Jacob's journey to Mesopotamia; and she succeeded by touching the aged patriarch in a tender point, afflicting to his pious heart—the proper marriage of their younger son."* [7] (Robert Jamieson, Commentary on Genesis 27)

- E. *“The sad by-product of this bit of deception that they had connived together is that the mother was deprived of ever seeing her son whom she loved, Jacob again. She died while Jacob was in Haran.”*^[6]
- F. *“In this tragic story, everyone lost. Each of the main characters — Isaac, Rebekah, Esau, and Jacob — schemed and maneuvered in human wisdom and energy, rejecting God’s word and wisdom. Nevertheless, God **still** accomplished His purpose. The tragedy was that each of the participants suffered, because they insisted on working against God’s word and wisdom.”*^[1]

Conclusion/Application:

Rebekah and Jacob wanted to get the blessing, the fulfillment of the God’s prophecy, so badly that they went to dangerous lengths, even deceiving Isaac, in order to attain it, instead of waiting on the Lord (Isa. 30:18; 40:31). We have to be careful of having the same mindset—focusing on the blessing and getting too caught up with it that we lose sight of the source (God). God’s blessing does not depend on whatever title or deed, but on His unfailing **character** and His Word.

-
1. https://www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik_david/study-guide/genesis/genesis-27.cfm?a=27033
 2. <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/h1062/kjv/wlc/0-1/>
 3. <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/h1293/kjv/wlc/0-1/>
 4. <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/h7300/kjv/wlc/0-1/>
 5. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+27&version=AMP>
 6. https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/smith_chuck/c2000_Gen/Gen_027.cfm?a=27033
 7. https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/jfb/Gen/Gen_027.cfm?a=27033