

Jacob Deceives Isaac and Receives the Patriarchal Blessing

Genesis 27:18-29

Genesis 27:18-29 - So he went to his father and said, "My father." And he said, "Here I am. Who are you, my son?" ¹⁹ Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn; I have done just as you told me; please arise, sit and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me." ²⁰ But Isaac said to his son, "How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?" And he said, "Because the LORD your God brought it to me." ²¹ Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come near, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not." ²² So Jacob went near to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." ²³ And he did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him.

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

²⁵ He said, "Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's game, so that my soul may bless you." So he brought it near to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank. ²⁶ Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come near now and kiss me, my son." ²⁷ And he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him and said: "Surely, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the LORD has blessed. ²⁸ Therefore may God give you of the dew of heaven, of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine. ²⁹ Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, and let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be those who bless you!"

Background Notes

Back in Genesis 25, when Jacob and Esau were younger, we studied the account of how Jacob tricked Esau into selling him his birthright. "Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary." Therefore his name was called Edom. But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day." And Esau said, "Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to me?" Then Jacob said, 'Swear to me as of this day.' So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright" (Genesis 25:29-34).

The birthright and the patriarchal blessing were very closely connected. Very ancient non-biblical records show that birthrights could be sold, and the transaction was legally binding, just as the patriarchal blessing was legally binding. Rebekah and Jacob were concerned that Isaac's efforts to bless Esau would override the transaction of the birthright. So Rebekah came up with a plan to outsmart Isaac, and Jacob went along with it. The plan involved Jacob pretending to be Esau, and the plan worked.

Isaac gave Jacob the blessing, but Jacob had to tell his father several bold-faced lies to make the plan work. Isaac was suspicious, and when he asked Jacob if he was really Esau, “*Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau your firstborn”*” (v19). That was a lie! “*I have done as you have told me*” (v19). That was a lie! “*Please arise, sit and eat of my game*” (v19). That was a lie! When Isaac asked, “*How have you been able to find this game so quickly?*” Jacob replied, “*because the Lord your God brought it to me*” (v20). That was a lie! And when Isaac asked him once again if he were truly Esau, Jacob replied, “*I am*” (v20). That was another lie!

Jacob didn't say “The Lord **my** God,” or “the Lord **our** God” brought it to me. Instead, he said, “The Lord **your** God brought it to me.” It's very clear that Jacob was not walking with the Lord at this point.

The patriarchal blessing is found in verses 27-29. Notice that it includes material prosperity: “*Surely, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the LORD has blessed. Therefore may God give you of the dew of heaven, of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine. It also includes the promise of power: “Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, and let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be those who bless you!”* The Abrahamic Covenant was reiterated in verse 29, as part of this patriarchal blessing.

Doctrinal Points

1. Lying and deceiving have bitter consequences.

If ever you're looking for a chapter in the Bible to prove that lies and deceit do not pay, Genesis 27 is the chapter! The family friction and fragmentation in this chapter are all a result of lying and deceiving. All the members of the family are mentioned in this chapter, but they are never seen together as a family. Isaac and Rebekah are not together as husband and wife. Family fragmentation is the result of lies and deceit.

Lies and deceit have bitter consequences. Before this chapter was over, Jacob had to flee for his life because of Esau's anger and hatred, and as far as the biblical record goes, Rebekah never saw her favorite son again. Oh, the bitter consequences of lies and deceit!

Is lying and deceiving happening in your family? Husbands, are you lying to your wives about anything? Wives, are you deceiving your husbands about anything? Parents, are you deceitfully manipulating your children? Children (and not just little kids or teenagers) are you deceiving your parents in any way? Expect bitter consequences!

As you know, Margie and I just downsized, sold our home and moved temporarily into an apartment complex. Among our neighbors are a number of people who have very sad stories. Many of them are single because of broken marriages.

The bitter experiences they share invariably stem from lying and deceiving in relationships. In a family or a church fellowship or wherever - lies and deceit always have bitter consequences.

2. Lying and deceiving cannot thwart God's purposes.

This truth is taught in Genesis 27. In spite of the lies and deceit of Jacob and Rebekah, in spite of Isaac trying to circumvent the will of God, in spite of the family friction and family fragmentation, God's purposes were not thwarted, messed up, wrecked, or overthrown. God's purposes were carried out. Jacob was to receive the blessing, and Jacob was blessed.

However - the fact that Jacob received the blessing in **no way** condones the lies and deceit! Lies and deceit are sins, and those who practice them will be judged for these sins. But lies and deceit will not thwart God's purposes.

Maybe some of you are in situations right now where you are surrounded by lies and deceit. Maybe it is in your family. Maybe it is in your place of work. Be encouraged! Lying and deceiving cannot thwart God's plan and purpose for your life. Lies and deceit cannot thwart God's purposes.

Practical Applications

1. Your first lie will not be your last lie.

Did you notice that Jacob had to lie again to cover up his first set of lies? Isaac had said: *"Who are you, my son?" Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn; I have done just as you told me; please arise, sit and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me." But Isaac said to his son, "How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?" And he said, "Because the LORD your God brought it to me."*

The lie of verse 20 must be told if the set of lies in verse 19 are to be covered up. That is the way it is when you lie - you have to keep on lying to cover up the inconsistencies of your former lies. I'm sure you're aware of politicians in our country who are sad illustrations of this principle.

Truth is like a jigsaw puzzle. Each piece of truth fits in with all the surrounding pieces. If you change one piece, or wrongly try to force it in, all the surrounding pieces are disrupted and distorted. Once one lie is told, distortion of truth occurs, and more lies must be told to try and straighten out the disruption and distortion. But subsequent lies only cause further disruption, like forcing more incorrect pieces into the jigsaw puzzle.

It is a never-ending cycle of distortion. Your first lie will not be your last lie - and usually your lies have to get bigger to cover up the former lies (as illustrated by Jacob). Notice that Jacob even brought God into the picture! Verse 20, *"because the Lord your God brought it to me."*

When little children lie, they often try to bring God into the picture: "I didn't take the cookie - maybe **God** took the cookie!" Adults are just grown-up children when it comes to lying. Eventually even the character of God is maligned. Don't ever start lying to try to protect yourself -- in fact, don't ever start lying for **any** reason! Your first lie will not be your last lie.

2. Watch out that you are not deceived in the area of your weakness.

Isaac's palate was his weakness. He loved the wild game dishes that Esau provided for him, and this led to his downfall.

The real source of deception here was satanic. Satan knew Isaac's weakness was his strong desire - his uncontrolled desire - for savory food from the field, and Satan capitalized on this weakness!

We all have our "weak" areas - areas in which we are more prone to sin. We need to be especially on our guard against falling for Satan's deception in those weak areas. What about the area of money and "success"? Or the area of pride - our social position, or an important position in the church? What about the area of sex and other physical desires? Or the area of materialism - wanting more "things"?

Believers need to be aware and alert, because Satan wants to destroy our lives as believers, and he will try to deceive and tempt us in our weakest areas. *"Be vigilant, because your enemy the devil walks around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him..." (1 Peter 5:8-9).*

Many Christians have fallen into sin and their lives have been ruined by yielding to temptation in the weak, undisciplined, and uncontrolled areas in their lives. Watch out that you are not deceived in the area of your weakness!