

ISAAC'S BLESSINGS (PART 1)

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Isaac was the son of Abraham and Sarah, and the one through whom Abraham's seed would be called (Gen 21:12). He was therefore the one chosen to be the heir of the great promises that God had made to Abraham. Abraham's firstborn son Ishmael, by Hagar the bondswoman of Sarah, was *not* the heir. Isaac himself bore two sons, twins, whom he named Esau and Jacob. Esau was the firstborn (Gen 25:25). Therefore, Esau possessed the birthright, which he sold to his brother Jacob for a morsel of meat (Gen 25:29-34). As the firstborn son, Esau was also designated to receive his father's blessing. Isaac was minded to give him this blessing in Genesis chapter 27:1-4: "*And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, here am I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death: now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison; and make me savory meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.*" The remainder of the chapter records how Jacob took the blessing that Isaac (but not God) intended to give to his brother Esau. Jacob received the greater blessing, and Esau received a lesser blessing from his father Isaac.

Rebekah's plan

Genesis 25:27-28 says, "And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. *And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.*" The situation that unfolded in Genesis 27 was a reflection of the preferences that each of the parents had for a particular son. Genesis 27:5 says that "*Rebekah heard when Isaac spoke to Esau his son*" regarding the impending blessing. Esau dutifully went out to hunt for the food that his father requested (Gen 27:5). Meanwhile, "*Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying, Bring me venison, and make me savory meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the Lord before my death. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savory meat for thy father, such as he loveth: and*

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thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death" (Gen 27:6-10). Jacob was concerned that his father would recognize the deception because he has not a hairy man like his brother Esau (Gen 27:11-12). Rebekah also had a plan to overcome this problem: "And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son: and she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck: and she gave the savory meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob" (Gen 27:15-17).

Isaac's blessing for Jacob

Per his mother Rebekah's plans, Jacob successfully convinced his father Isaac that he was indeed Esau (Gen 27:18-25). What followed was clearly a prophetic blessing that came from God, as Jacob himself would one day impart to his own sons (Gen 49), and also to his two grandsons by Joseph (Gen 50). Genesis 27:26-29 says, "And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed: *therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.*" This blessing meant that Jacob's children would be the heirs of the promises God had initially made to Abraham.

Therefore, as in Isaac Abraham's seed was called, in Jacob would Isaac's seed be called. It is interesting that in both cases, the firstborn sons were *not* the ones God fulfilled His promises through. The blessing that Isaac gave to Jacob was fulfilled in its entirety. Joshua 21:43-45 says, "And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. *There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.*"