

Isaac Wanted to Give the Blessing to Esau

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to focus on godly character as they begin to think about marriage, or as they help others who are thinking about marriage. In this topic, we see that Isaac began to think that his time to die would come soon and that he wanted to give the blessing to Esau, even though Esau had earlier despised the birthright.

Genesis 27:1-4 says, “Now it came to pass, when Isaac was old and his eyes were so dim that he could not see, that he called Esau his older son and said to him, ‘My son.’ And he answered him, ‘Here I am.’ Then he said, ‘Behold now, I am old. I do not know the day of my death. Now therefore, please take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me. And make me savory food, such as I love, and bring *it* to me that I may eat, that my soul may bless you before I die.” In these verses, we see that Isaac thought that he was getting old, and the time of his death would soon come. He wanted to make certain that he had given the blessing to Esau before that day came because he did not know when he would die. In addition, due to his age, his eyesight was gone, and he could not see. This may have had a part in making him think that the day of his death would soon come.

In order to prepare for the blessing, Isaac told Esau what he was to do. Isaac told Esau that he was to go out in the fields and hunt for some game that he could kill in order to make a savory stew for his father. The word translated “savory” means very tasty or delicious food. This word is used six times in this chapter. Isaac wanted Esau to prepare a very special dinner from the meat that he was able to kill that day as he hunted. Then, he wanted Esau to prepare a stew with the meat for him to eat before he gave the blessing. Isaac said that once he had eaten this very special dinner, he wanted to bless Esau before he died. Isaac did not realize that he would live many more years before he died, so he wanted to make certain that he had given the blessing before that time arrived.

However, Rebekah was listening when Isaac talked to Esau. As husband and wife, they each had a favorite son. Genesis 25:27-28 says, “So the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau because he ate *of his* game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.” The fact that each had a favorite son meant that each favored one son. Rebekah knew what God had told her, in Genesis 25:23, “And the LORD said to her: ‘Two nations *are* in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; *One* people shall be stronger than the other, and the older shall serve the younger.” She knew that Esau had sold his birthright to Jacob, as Genesis 25:33-34 says, “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.” In addition, both Isaac and Rebekah were very upset about the wives Esau had chosen, as Genesis 26:34-35 says, “When Esau was forty years old, he took as wives Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. And they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah.” The fact that Isaac and Rebekah both had a favorite son was now about to lead to more sin.

Esau had already sinned by despising the birthright and rejecting the spiritual leadership for the family. Now, Genesis 27:5-10 says, “Now Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt game and to bring *it*. So Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, “Indeed I heard your father speak to Esau your brother, saying, ‘Bring me game and make savory food for me, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of the LORD before my death.’ Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to what I command you. Go now to the flock and bring me from there two choice kids of the goats, and I will make savory food from them for your father, such as he loves. Then you shall take *it* to your father, that he may eat *it*, and that he may bless you before his death””

Isaac chose to sin by trying to give the blessing to Esau, even though God had said, “the older would serve the younger.” Here, we see that Rebekah chose to deceive her husband so Jacob would get the blessing. Jacob also chose to sin by agreeing to help carry out the deception of his father. Such choices always have consequences. We will see some of those consequences in the next several chapters. Meanwhile, while Esau was out hunting for an animal to kill to make the delicious stew, Rebekah went to talk to Jacob. She told Jacob what she had heard Isaac say to Esau. Then, we see that she began to explain her plan to make sure that the blessing went to Jacob instead. Rebekah wanted Jacob to carry out the command that she was going to give him. By this statement, Rebekah showed that she felt very strongly about the fact that Jacob should receive the blessing rather than Esau.

Rebekah told Jacob to go to the flock and get her two young kids of the goats. She said that she would take those young goats and make savory stew like the kind of stew that Isaac loved. She felt that she could make the meat from those young goats taste just like a similar stew that would be made from wild game such as a young deer. Since Jacob could get the goats from the flock, he would have the meat ready very quickly for the stew and in much less time than it would take Esau to hunt for some kind of wild game. Rebekah said that once she made the delicious stew, Isaac would eat the stew and then give Jacob the blessing before he died. Rebekah was sure her plan would deceive Isaac.

However, Jacob was not as certain. Genesis 27:11-17 says, “And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, ‘Look, Esau my brother *is* a hairy man, and I *am* a smooth-skinned man. Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall seem to be a deceiver to him; and I shall bring a curse on myself and not a blessing.’ But his mother said to him, “*Let* your curse *be* on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get *them* for me.” And he went and got *them* and brought *them* to his mother, and his mother made savory food, such as his father loved. Then Rebekah took the choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which *were* with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. And she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. Then she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.” Esau had been a hairy man from the time he was born. Genesis 25:25 says, “And the first came out red. *He was* like a hairy garment all over; so they called his name Esau.” In contrast, Jacob had very smooth skin without much hair. Jacob was afraid that his father might feel him and realize that his skin was smooth. This would cause his father to recognize that he was a deceiver and not Esau. Instead of receiving a blessing, Jacob was afraid that he would bring a curse upon himself. Jacob understood that sin and deception could cause consequences

for which he was not prepared. The same is true for us today when we try to deceive others. Jacob did not want to bring a curse on himself instead of a blessing.

Rebekah was prepared for that answer by Jacob. She said that if Isaac gave a curse, the curse should fall on her instead of on Jacob. Rebekah then told Jacob to obey her voice to go and kill the two young goats and bring them to her so that she could make savory food like Isaac loved. Then, Jacob went and killed two young goats and brought the meat to his mother so she could prepare the savory food that Isaac loved. As a result, each member of the family had chosen to do what they hoped would get them what they wanted instead of what God had planned. We will see that the consequences of this choice had a major negative effect on the lives of each of them. Galatians 6:7 says, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.” They all reaped the consequences of their choices.

Rebekah made the savory food and then she prepared Jacob so that he would be able to deceive his father. Rebekah had some of the best clothes of Esau in her tent and so once the food was ready, she took the clothes of Esau and put them on Jacob. Genesis 27:26-27 says, “Then his father Isaac said to him, “Come near now and kiss me, my son.” 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.” Here, we see that Isaac was deceived by the smell of these clothes so that he thought it was Esau rather than Jacob that had brought him this food that he ate. Rebekah had recognized that was one of the things she could do to deceive Isaac.

However, she also did one other thing to deceive Isaac. She took the skins of the two young goats that Jacob had killed and put these goat skins on the hands and neck of Jacob. This helps us to understand how hairy Esau was. Genesis 27:22 says, “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.’” When Isaac felt the goatskins on the hands of Jacob, he thought he was feeling Esau because the hands were so hairy. As a result, both of the things that Rebekah did, to deceive Esau, worked. As we will see when we get to these verses, Isaac was deceived, even though the voice sounded like the voice of Jacob. She may have deceived her husband, but she certainly did not deceive God.

Once Rebekah had placed the clothing and the skins on Jacob, she gave him the food that she had prepared for Isaac. We will see, in our next topic, that Jacob had to lie in order to totally deceive his father. This is a reminder that one sin will lead to other sins to try and cover up the sin that has already been committed. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain to others that sin is like a trap. Each sin committed only leads to more sin and more consequences. Genesis 27:41 says, “So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, “The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob.” Here, we see that Esau would decide to kill Jacob because of these sins. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children to explain the consequences of sin.