

## Deception for Blessing

Genesis 26.34-28.9

It's a tragic story: A family is torn apart in the pursuit of a blessing! Isaac is deceived, and Jacob takes the prize, but pain and misery are the result. Deception steals the experience of joy from the lives of those who manipulate others to secure spiritual blessing.

Scenes of Deception

- The Disobedience (27.1-4)
- The Scheme (27.5-17)
- The Heist (27.18-29)

Scenes of Despair

- The Anguish (27.30-40)
- The Grudge (27.41-45)
- The Separation (27.46-28.5)

The Lesson for God's People

*Don't seek God's blessing by deceptive means! Trust God to fulfill His promises in His way and His time, and you will experience the joy of His blessings in your life.*

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# JACOB STEALS THE BLESSING



1. There are no 'good guys' in this sad story. Each in his or her own way demonstrates spiritual frailty we detest, yet which we struggle to avoid in our own lives. Let's start with Isaac: In his defense, we note that he is old, and his eyesight is failing. But by arranging to give his blessing to Esau, he goes against what God had said (see Gen. 25.23). Why might he have done this? (See Gen. 25.28!) How does his motivation here reflect Esau's in selling his birthright years before (Gen. 25.29-34)?
2. Esau consistently shows himself unworthy of God's blessing. Although he sold his birthright to Jacob years before for a bowl of stew, he goes along with his feeble father to get what he has despised during his life (Gen. 25.34). What else in the narrative here exhibits Esau's unworthiness to receive the blessing (see 26.34-35; 28.6-9)? How do Christians reflect this – seeking blessing while pursuing worldly desires?
3. While Rebekah and Jacob pursue what is right (God promised the blessing to Jacob), they do so by deception. They lack faith in God to do what He said He would do, and fail to treat Isaac with the love and respect he is due. How can Christians today pursue what is 'right' in the wrong way? Why are we so often more concerned about what other people think about us instead of what *God* knows about us? [Good verse to memorize here is 1 Samuel 16.7b: *The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.*]
4. This tragic drama is replayed often in God's people today. Too often churches are split by warring factions, each side seeking the 'blessing' of God. As happened with Rebekah and Jacob, God's people today may seem to succeed through manipulative means, but deceitful actions bear dreadful fruit. What were the lasting results of this event for Rebekah and Jacob? Can you think of ways that Christians today fail to trust God to keep His promises, and instead seek to achieve their desires by deceitful means? Have you ever done this?