

Before we begin our look at Genesis chapter twenty-seven, it helps to know that this chapter encompasses a non-stop family drama.

The first two characters in that drama are Isaac and his wife, Rebekah. Earlier in Genesis chapter twenty-five, we were told that Rebekah became pregnant with twin boys. It was during that pregnancy that God told Rebekah that her first-born child would serve the child who was born after, according to [Genesis 25:21-23](#).

When the time of their birth arrived, Rebekah's first child emerged with so much hair on his body that his parents named him Esau (a word that literally meant "hairy"). The second child quickly followed his brother by grasping Esau's foot during his own birth process. They named this second child "Jacob" (or "heel-catcher"), a name that is connected with a fast-talking, deceptive individual. These two children will go on to become the other players in this family drama.

As we consider the various interactions between these family members, we'll find several unfortunate character deficiencies among them.....

- One family member will lie to another family member.
- Two family members form an alliance to plot against a third family member.
- One person engages in an elaborate plan to deceive another member of the family.
- One family member makes plans to murder another family member.

The motivation behind these schemes and acts of deception isn't difficult to explain. As we'll see, these things happened because each family member sought to have his or her own way without guidance or direction from God. No one in this family sought to pray, talk about their concerns, or ask themselves, "*Am I acting as God would have me act in this situation?*"

Knowing this, we might ask ourselves why this chapter is included in the Bible. To answer that question, we simply need to look to the New Testament book of 1 Corinthians for an explanation that helps explain the reasoning behind this narrative...

"These things happened to them as a warning to us. All this was written in the Scriptures to teach us who live in these last days" (1 Corinthians 10:11 CEV)

The next verse continues with the following advisory: ***"So be careful. If you are thinking, 'Oh, I would never behave like that' -let this be a warning to you. For you too may fall into sin" (1 Corinthians 10:12 TLB).***

Therefore, it is important to learn from the events of Genesis chapter twenty-seven so we can avoid replicating the mistakes we find there.

"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'" (Genesis 27:1-4).

Isaac was approximately 137 years old at the time of these events. And even though Isaac will go on to live for several more decades, of putting his affairs in order seems like a prudent and responsible course of action for a man of his age. The way he sought to accomplish that task was by pronouncing a blessing upon his oldest son, Esau.

That blessing included the eldest son's share of his estate and the rights to the promises that Isaac had received from his father Abraham. God gave those promises to Abraham in Genesis chapter fifteen when He said to him, **"your own son shall be your heir... Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them... So shall your descendants be"** (Genesis 15:4, 5 RSV).

Later, God confirmed those promises to Isaac when He said, **"...to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham. I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed"** (Genesis 26:3-4 NIV). These were the promises that Isaac sought to pass down to Esau by through his blessing.

However, there was an issue with Isaac's objective. In seeking to give this blessing to Esau as his eldest son, Isaac sought to follow the normal practice of that era. The problem was that God had already spoken to Rebekah and told her that the younger son (Jacob) was to have authority over the older son (Esau) according to [Genesis 25:23](#).

That should have told Isaac that God had a different agenda for his family. But there were some other warning signs that Isaac should have noticed as well.

In addition to God's message to Rebekah concerning her sons, there were some other indicators that should have told Isaac that Esau was not God's choice to receive the blessings and promises he inherited.

For instance, Esau had earlier chosen to [sell his rights](#) as the first-born son. Those rights included the spiritual blessings and promises that God had given to Abraham. Esau apparently thought little of those rights, but his brother Jacob saw their importance and bought them from Esau in exchange for a bowl of stew.

Later, we saw how Esau elected to marry two women from [one of the pagan nations](#) of that area. Since there is nothing to indicate that Esau paid any attention to the character or spiritual beliefs of those women before he married them, it should come as no surprise that **"...Esau's wives made life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah"** (Genesis 26:35 NLT). So it appears that Esau was a spiritually unconcerned person with respect to his personal relationships as well.

These things should have told Isaac that Esau was not God's choice to carry on his family's spiritual heritage. Nevertheless, Isaac told Esau to, **"...get your weapons... (and) hunt some wild game for me. Prepare me the kind of tasty food I like and bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my blessing before I die"** (Genesis 27:3-4 NIV). So it seems that Isaac was determined to give this blessing to Esau despite God's message to his wife and the evidence of Esau's life.

So why was Isaac so determined to give this blessing to Esau? One potential reason was that Isaac simply liked Esau more than he liked Jacob. Esau was an outdoorsman and Isaac liked to eat what Esau brought back from his hunting trips, according to [Genesis 25:27-28](#).

So Isaac was willing to pass along his family's spiritual heritage to a son who didn't really deserve it in exchange for a good meal. But what Isaac didn't know was that a quick thinking counter-agent was monitoring his conversation. That person was now ready to make her own contribution to this family drama.

“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'” (Genesis 27:5-10).

Unbeknownst to her husband Isaac, Rebekah was secretly monitoring his conversation with Esau. After hearing what Isaac had in mind, Rebekah subsequently launched into a covert operation.

Now Rebekah could have spoken to Esau and Isaac together and reminded them of what [God had previously said](#) regarding her children. She might have also reminded Esau that he no longer had any rights as the oldest son because he had sold them to his brother and swore to it with an oath according to [Genesis 25:30-33](#).

But even if Rebekah didn't want to confront Isaac and Esau together, she could have stopped Esau before he left and then spoken to Isaac privately. Unfortunately, Rebekah rejected those options, and her decision to undertake this stealth mission involving Jacob will eventually make things worse.

So now that we've looked at what Rebekah *could* have done in this situation, let's consider what she *didn't* do. For example, one thing that Rebekah didn't do was speak the truth to these family members with an attitude of love. In other words, Rebekah wasn't willing to communicate directly with Isaac and/or Esau about the consequences of their actions in a truthful, loving manner. This concept is something that the Bible will talk about later in [Ephesians 4:15](#).

You see, Rebekah apparently failed to recognize that there are times when the most loving thing we can do for others is to tell them the truth in no uncertain terms. Genuine love always seeks another person's highest good, and there may be times when a dose of cold, hard truth spoken with an attitude of love is the only thing that will save someone from serious harm.

In addition, Rebekah failed to demonstrate respect for her husband Isaac in this situation. Instead of speaking the truth in love and trusting God to address the situation, she chose to engage in a covert operation and secretly undermine her husband with an act of deception. People who genuinely respect each other do not engage in plots and schemes like this. Unfortunately, that is the path Rebekah chose for herself.

So Rebekah immediately contacted Jacob and said to him, “...***listen carefully and do what I tell you***” (NIV) or, “...***listen to me as I command you***” (NASB). This tells us that Rebekah exercised her prerogative as Jacob's mother to enlist him as a participant in her plan. That plan involved butchering some of the family's livestock to create a meal that was as delicious as anything that Esau might hunt down in the field. She would then give that meal to Jacob, who would use it to trick his elderly, blind father into giving *him* the blessing that he sought to give to Esau.

However, Jacob identified a critical weakness in Rebekah's plan to deceive his father and secure this blessing. Here's how he defined that problem...

“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'” (Genesis 27:11-12).

Jacob's response warrants close attention. When Rebekah told him about her plan to deceive Isaac, Jacob did not respond by asking, "*Is this plan right? Is this plan good? Does this plan honor God?*"

Instead, Jacob essentially responded by saying, "*If my father realizes that I'm trying to mislead him, he will curse me rather than bless me.*" Notice that Jacob was indifferent to the deceptive nature of Rebekah's plan. He simply wanted to avoid being caught.

Now, before we continue, it may be useful to recall the players in this family drama:

- First, we have Isaac. He was attempting to circumvent God's will in an effort to show partiality towards his favorite son.
- Next is Isaac's oldest son, Esau. His lifestyle demonstrated a serious lack of concern for the things of God. He was also ready to embrace the benefits and privileges that were afforded to the first-born son, even though he traded those rights away.
- Then there was Rebekah, Isaac's wife. She was the mastermind behind this plot to cut her elder son out of the traditional family inheritance by deceiving her husband.
- Finally, there is Jacob, Esau's twin brother. Jacob didn't seem to be concerned about *doing* something wrong; his primary concern seemed to be, "*What if I get caught doing something wrong?*"

Sadly, it appears that no one in this family was prepared to trust one another. They only seemed interested in manipulating their circumstances to suit their personal objectives, even if it meant betraying other family members.

However, there is an additional character in this narrative who is yet to be identified. That individual has been seemingly overlooked by every other participant in this family drama. Though unseen, this person has been quietly observing these events as they've unfolded. We will identify that person and highlight his importance to this account next.

To this point, the events of Genesis chapter twenty-seven have focused on four main personalities: Isaac, Rebekah, Esau, and Jacob. However, there is a fifth person in this narrative who has seemingly gone unnoticed by these others. That fifth person is God.

You see, Isaac, Rebekah, Esau, and Jacob have each been working to engineer a scenario that would suit their individual preferences. But there is something that everyone seems to have forgotten: if it wasn't for God, there wouldn't be any inheritance.

These individuals seemed to be under the impression that "Isaac's blessing" was some kind of mystical formula that guaranteed a blessing to anyone who possessed it. But "Isaac's blessing" didn't obligate God to do anything. Isaac could have given that blessing to Esau (or anyone else), and it would have been meaningless if God had not appointed that person to receive it.

Unfortunately, their actions were impeding their opportunity to honor God and accept His plan for their lives.

"[Jacob said] 'What if my father touches me? I would appear to be tricking him and would bring down a curse on myself rather than a blessing.' His mother said to him, 'My son, let the curse fall on me. Just do what I say; go and get them for me'" (Genesis 27:12-13 NIV).

If we were to rephrase Rebekah's response in contemporary terms, we might understand her meaning to be this: "*If your father figures out what's going on and puts a curse on you, I'll take that curse upon myself.*" Unfortunately, Rebekah will live to regret that response.

Nevertheless, Rebekah had yet to address Jacob's objection to this plan to deceive her husband. If Isaac somehow came into contact with Jacob during this stealth operation, he would immediately know that someone was attempting to deceive him.

But Rebekah had a plan to get around that problem...

“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” (Genesis 27:14-17).

So Jacob prepared these steaks and Rebekah used them to create a meal that her husband was sure to love. Then she took Esau's best clothes and gave them to Jacob to wear. For the finishing touch, Rebekah covered Jacob's arms and the smooth part of his neck with goatskins. This would enable Jacob to impersonate that aspect of his brother's personal appearance if Isaac were to come in contact with him.

So Rebekah clearly engineered a cleverly deceptive plan. To illustrate the brilliant nature of that strategy, let's consider the five senses that human beings possess: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. In order to manipulate Isaac into granting this blessing to Jacob, Rebekah knew she had to present him with some misleading (but persuasive) sensory data.

The key to success hinged on the fact that Isaac had lost his sight. Since Isaac's visual impairment prevented him from visually identifying Esau and Jacob, his ability to distinguish between them rested solely on his remaining four senses.

By placing Esau's clothes on Jacob, Rebekah anticipated the likelihood that Isaac would pick up on the outdoor scent of his clothing. Since Esau was a hunter and outdoorsman, Isaac would immediately associate that scent with his elder son.

Then there was the savory meal that Rebekah prepared. That would address Isaac's sense of taste. Finally, the goatskins on Jacob's arms and neck covered the tactile aspect of her plan. The only remaining vulnerability involved Isaac's sense of hearing. Unfortunately for Rebekah, there was little she could do to disguise the sound of Jacob's voice.

So Rebekah addressed three out of Isaac's four remaining senses. But would that be enough to mislead her husband into doing something he didn't want to do?

“So he went to his father and said, 'My father.' And he said, 'Here I am. 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.' Isaac said to Jacob, 'Please come near, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not.'

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.' And he did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him.

Then he said, 'Are you really my son Esau?' He said, 'I am'” (Genesis 27:18-24).

There are so many lies in this brief conversation that it's almost beyond belief. The only truthful thing Jacob said during this exchange came at the very beginning of this discussion when he addressed Isaac as, "***My father...***" Everything that followed was a lie.

First, Jacob began by falsely identifying himself as Esau. That was lie number one. Then he said to his father, "***I have done as you told me***" (NIV). That statement was false because Isaac did not instruct Jacob to do anything. That represented lie number two.

Isaac then asked, "***How did you find it so quickly, son?***" (GW). That question offers some insight into Isaac's mindset. For Isaac, it seemed highly implausible that his son could...

1. Hunt down an animal in the open field.
2. Kill it.
3. Butcher it.
4. Prepare it.
5. And get it home-delivered as quickly as "Esau" did.

Then again, if Isaac had known that his son's "hunting trip" consisted of selecting two goats from the family farm, he wouldn't have had to ask. Nevertheless, Isaac was seemingly suspicious and Jacob responded with lie number three: "***The LORD your God helped me find it***" (GNB). So it wasn't enough for Jacob to deceive his father; he also felt compelled to invoke God's name in an attempt to add divine legitimacy to his lie.

But Isaac still wasn't convinced, so he asked once again, "***Are you really my son Esau?***" "***Yes, I am,***" ***Jacob answered***" (CEV). That false portrayal represented lie number four. So, taken together, Jacob told four lies in the five sentences he spoke to his father during their conversation.

Judging by his conversation with Isaac in Genesis 27:18-24, it appears that Jacob was willing to say whatever was necessary to get what he wanted, truthfully or otherwise. Unfortunately, many seem to share a similar attitude today. In fact, lying is so commonplace in modern-day society that we have almost come to expect it.

For instance, some take a pragmatic approach to lying and simply view it as a way to get things done. For others, lying represents an effective way to avoid conflict, punishment, or an uncomfortable exchange with others. Then there are those who see lying as a tool to be used to advance a preferred narrative.

Of course, no one likes to be defined as a liar, so we have invented clever and practical methods to distance ourselves from the fact that we aren't being honest. For example, politicians, salespersons, and interest groups are often skilled in framing "a" truth, but not "the" truth. An employee might view a request to lie as nothing more than a part of the job. Or perhaps we might justify a falsehood with the rationalization that it will somehow serve a greater good.

If our consciences bother us regarding our lack of truthfulness, we can always excuse ourselves with the claim that our lie was small or inconsequential. However, there is a problem with that approach: if someone is untruthful in small things, then he or she is likely to be untruthful in larger matters as well. As Jesus noted in the gospel of Luke, "***Anyone who can be trusted in little matters can also be trusted in important matters. But anyone who is dishonest in little matters will be dishonest in important matters***" (Luke 16:10 CEV).

While lying often seems easier than then telling the truth, there is a penalty for taking the path of least resistance. That penalty takes the form of distrust in our relationships, as well as doubt and uncertainty in our interactions with others. This is one reason why Colossians 3:9 tells us, ***“Don’t tell lies to each other; it was your old life with all its wickedness that did that sort of thing; now it is dead and gone” (TLB).***

We can honor God and gain the respect of others if we develop a reputation for honesty. In a world where straight answers are scarce, we should make it our aim to ***“...speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church” (Ephesians 4:15 NLT).***

This reminds us that God is a God of truth ([Psalm 31:5](#)) who does not lie ([Titus 1:2](#)). Those who tell the truth are those who follow God’s example of honesty and integrity.

Portions of this section originally appeared [here](#)

So far, Jacob had managed to convince his elderly, blind father that he was Esau, the son that his father had chosen to receive his inheritance. But there was one last test for Jacob...

“Then he said, ‘My son, bring me some of your game to eat, so that I may give you my blessing.’ Jacob brought it to him and he ate; and he brought some wine and he drank. Then his father Isaac said to him, ‘Come here, my son, and kiss me.’ So he went to him and kissed him.

When Isaac caught the smell of his clothes, he blessed him and said, ‘Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that the Lord has blessed!’” (Genesis 27:25-27 NIV).

In one sense, this did not speak well of Esau, for Isaac essentially said that his son smelled like a pasture. Nevertheless, Isaac had a more pressing issue, for he was about to make a critical decision based solely on his sense perception.

You see, Isaac failed to seek God and verify the truth of what his senses told him. Like Isaac, a person who only relies on what he or she can physically sense may lack critical information that only God can provide. While there is a basic reliability to sense perception, it is also possible to be fooled by what our senses tell us, just as we see here.

Isaac could have addressed this vulnerability by praying for God's help in discerning the truth regarding this situation. But he declined to do so. This brings us to uncomfortable reality that faces virtually every human being.

The most likely reason to explain Isaac's inaction is this: *Isaac knew what God wanted him to do, but he didn't want to do it.* Isaac was clearly determined to give his inheritance to Esau, even though God had earlier told Rebekah that Jacob would exercise authority over him ([Genesis 25:23](#)). Since Esau was Isaac’s favorite son ([Genesis 25:28](#)), giving this inheritance to Jacob probably wasn’t something he wanted to do.

So it’s possible that Isaac didn’t seek God’s direction for one reason: he already knew that God would tell him something he didn’t want to hear. That may explain why he was vulnerable to this act of deception.

So, having become convinced that he was addressing his son Esau (even though he wasn't), Isaac moved to pronounce his blessing upon Jacob...

“May God give you heaven’s dew and earth’s richness— an abundance of grain and new wine. May nations serve you and peoples bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed” (Genesis 27:28-29 NIV).

The phrases that appear in this passage (like “*earth’s richness*” and “*an abundance of grain and new wine*”) herald a future of wealth, prosperity, and success. So Isaac clearly sought to ensure that Esau received “the best of the best” in this blessing.

But he didn’t stop there: “*May many nations become your servants, and may they bow down to you. May you be the master over your brothers, and may your mother’s sons bow down to you. All who curse you will be cursed, and all who bless you will be blessed*” (AMP). This went far beyond the standard patriarchal blessing, for it pointed to an international leadership position for the recipient.

So Isaac had now fulfilled his duty to convey the blessing given to him by his father Abraham, who received it from God ([Genesis 12:3](#)). From Isaac’s perspective, everything had fallen into place just as he had hoped. After savoring a delicious meal, he fulfilled his desire to bestow the family inheritance upon his favored son.

But Isaac was about to discover that his plan had gone awry...

“Now it happened, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. He also had made savory food, and brought it to his father, and said to his father, 'Let my father arise and eat of his son’s game, that your soul may bless me.'

And his father Isaac said to him, 'Who are you?' So he said, 'I am your son, your firstborn, Esau’”
(Genesis 27:30-32).

Isaac surely must have been pleased with the way these events unfolded- at least until Esau showed up to receive the blessing he had unwittingly given to Jacob.

Now that he had been deceived into giving his blessing to Jacob instead of Esau, Isaac was about to be confronted with the weight of his decision...

“Then Isaac trembled exceedingly, and said, 'Who? Where is the one who hunted game and brought it to me? I ate all of it before you came, and I have blessed him—and indeed he shall be blessed'”
(Genesis 27:33).

This passage highlights Isaac's emotional struggle to grasp what had taken place. The shock and astonishment that swept over Isaac was so overwhelming that he lost the ability to physically control himself. But why was Isaac so traumatized over what had occurred?

Well, Isaac sought to prioritize his own agenda in defiance of God’s will- and he fell victim to the very scheme he sought to orchestrate. Even though Isaac tried to manipulate these circumstances to suit his preference, God easily worked around him to accomplish His will.

That realization shook Isaac to the core as he began to grasp how close he had come to choosing a path that would have put him at odds with the Almighty. But while Isaac was emotionally shaken by what had transpired, Esau had some feelings of his own...

“When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, ‘Bless me—me also, O my father!’” (Genesis 27:34).

Esau was a man who cared little for spiritual things, as evidenced by his earlier decision to trade his birthright for a bowl of stew ([Genesis 25:29-34](#)). However, when it came time to receive a blessing that included “...***an abundance of grain and new wine***” (CSB) and the opportunity to have “...***nations serve you and peoples bow down to you***” (NIV), he was definitely interested.

But Esau lost that opportunity when he turned his back on the things of God. This helps explain the cautionary message given to us in the Biblical book of Hebrews...

“Watch out that no one becomes involved in sexual sin or becomes careless about God as Esau did: he traded his rights as the oldest son for a single meal. And afterwards, when he wanted those rights back again, it was too late, even though he wept bitter tears of repentance. So remember, and be careful” (Hebrews 12:16-17 TLB).

So Esau lost the blessing that his father sought to confer upon him- and it didn’t take long for Isaac to identify the culprit...

“But he said, ‘Your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing.’ And Esau said, ‘Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright, and now look, he has taken away my blessing!’...” (Genesis 27:35-36).

We might rephrase Esau's response to his father in the following manner: “*When you named my brother ‘deceiver,’ you gave him the right name. This is the second time that he has cheated me- first he took my birthright and now he has my blessing as well.*” Apparently, Esau had forgotten that he had voluntarily transferred his birthright in return for something to eat. But that didn’t stop him from blaming Jacob for the fact that he made a bad exchange.

So what can we learn from Esau’s example? Well, even though Esau neglected to prioritize the things of God, it’s not too late for those who seek to avoid his example. You see, God has provided us with many blessings as well. Those blessings encompass a range of gifts, including the valuable assets of time, talent, and the opportunity to do meaningful work that creates a lasting impact both now and in eternity.

The question is, what will we do with those blessings? Will we trade them for something of little value (like Esau) or will we invest those things in a God-honoring manner? Since the opportunities that are available to us today won’t last forever, that means *today* is the day to invest in the things of God.

For example, the New Testament epistle of 1 Peter tells us, “***Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms***” (1 Peter 4:10 NIV). There are two key implications within that passage. First, it implies that every Christian has received a gift from God in the form of a talent, skill, or ability. Next, that gift (whatever it is) has a specific purpose: to serve others.

This means we do not own our talents, so to speak; instead, we are stewards of God's gifts to us. If we aren’t using the talents, skills, and abilities that God has given us (or if we are using them inappropriately), then we are failing to fulfill the mandate given to us in 1 Peter 4:10.

Esau let a valuable blessing from God slip away, and we should take care to avoid his example.

Even though Esau had lost everything that Isaac wanted to give him, he made one last attempt to obtain a blessing from his father...

"...And he said, 'Have you not reserved a blessing for me?' Then Isaac answered and said to Esau, 'Indeed I have made him your master, and all his brethren I have given to him as servants; with grain and wine I have sustained him. What shall I do now for you, my son?' And Esau said to his father, 'Have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me—me also, O my father!' And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

Then Isaac his father answered and said to him: 'Behold, your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, And of the dew of heaven from above. By your sword you shall live, And you shall serve your brother; And it shall come to pass, when you become restless, That you shall break his yoke from your neck'" (Genesis 27:36-40).

This was probably not the kind of blessing Esau was hoping for. Unfortunately, Isaac had little left to offer Esau following his encounter with Jacob. However, Isaac's "secondary blessing" eventually came to pass.

You see, Esau's descendants were known as the Edomites, a name that developed from Esau's nickname Edom ([Genesis 25:30, 36:9](#)). The Edomites populated an area of the world that we associate with the modern-day country of Jordan. The arid features of that land served to fulfill Isaac's prediction: "...*The place where you live will lack the fertile fields of the earth and the dew from the sky above*" (GW).

In addition, the people of Edom later clashed with the Israelites, the descendants of Esau's brother Jacob. For example, the Edomites once mobilized their armed forces against the people of Israel when Israel sought permission to pass through a land area that was under Edom's control (see [Numbers 20:14-21](#)). Later, the people of Edom broke away from the control of Jacob's descendants and established their own government, just as Isaac said they would (see [2 Kings 8:20-22](#)).

Nevertheless, Esau harbored a deep sense of resentment towards his brother, and it wasn't long before he began plotting his revenge...

"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'" (Genesis 27:41).

Esau's plan was simple: "*It won't be long before my father passes away. Once he dies, I'm going to kill my brother Jacob for what he did to me.*" But the same person who discovered Isaac's plan to bless Esau uncovered that plan as well...

"And the words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah. So she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said to him, 'Surely your brother Esau comforts himself concerning you by intending to kill you.

Now therefore, my son, obey my voice: arise, flee to my brother Laban in Haran. And stay with him a few days, until your brother's fury turns away, until your brother's anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereaved also of you both in one day?" (Genesis 27:42-45).

Esau's plan to murder Jacob presented Rebekah with a difficult problem. If Esau killed Jacob, another family member might seek to execute Esau to avenge his death. Rebekah's common-sense question thus reveals her dilemma: "*Why should I lose both of you in one day?*" (GW).

Rebekah's solution was to get Jacob out of sight as quickly as possible by sending him to stay with his uncle Laban in the town of Haran. Since Haran was roughly five hundred miles (800 km) away, it represented a good place to stay until things settled down back home.

It seems that Rebekah was under the impression that Jacob would only have to remain in Haran for a limited time. But little did Rebekah know that Jacob would eventually spend twenty long years in exile. Jacob's departure also represented the last time Rebekah ever laid eyes upon her beloved son, for she would not live to see his return.

While Rebekah knew she had to get Jacob out of town fast, she also knew that her husband Isaac would question his hasty departure. What she needed was a cover story to explain Jacob's sudden disappearance. And once again, Rebekah engineered a fabricated account that was designed to deceive her husband...

“Then Rebekah said to Isaac, ‘I’m disgusted with living because of these Hittite women. If Jacob takes a wife from among the women of this land, from Hittite women like these, my life will not be worth living!’” (Genesis 27:46 NIV).

Earlier, [we learned](#) that Esau married two women who belonged to a local people group known as the Hittites. Since the Hittites were not normally followers of God, it's likely that Esau's wives exerted a poor influence upon him. Thus, it should not surprise us to learn that ***“...Esau's wives made life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah” (Genesis 26:35 NLT)***. Since Esau's wives had already brought misery to Isaac and Rebekah, the prospect of a similar marital arrangement for Jacob was bound to be a source of concern for Isaac.

So by saying, ***“I’m sick and tired of these local Hittite women! I would rather die than see Jacob marry one of them” (NLT)***, Rebekah cleverly planted the suggestion that Jacob needed to get away from home in order to find a suitable marriage partner. But that was just a bit of subterfuge. The reality was that Jacob needed to get away from home in order to save his life.

So it's clear that all four members of this family made several critical errors...

- First, there was Isaac. His plan to evade God's will led to a stunning failure and left his favored son with virtually nothing.
- Then there was Rebekah. The charming, gracious young woman [we met earlier](#) in Genesis chapter twenty-four had now grown to become a deceptive and devious individual. Her deceitful plan succeeded, but she never saw her favorite son again.
- Esau's lack of concern for his Creator and his disinterest in his family's spiritual heritage led to the loss of his inheritance. When he realized his mistake, it was too late to recover what he had lost.
- Jacob got what he wanted, but he will soon discover the cunning, manipulative, and deceitful nature of his treacherous uncle, Laban.

In light of these things, Proverbs 16:9 reminds us, ***“We make our own plans, but the LORD decides where we will go” (CEV)***. The events of Genesis chapter twenty-seven underscore the truth of that Proverb and encourage us to avoid replicating these examples.