

## Genesis Chapter 27 - Commentary By Mike Wells

### Chapter 27 Overview:

**Overview of Genesis 27:** The focus now shifts to the life of Jacob. He, unfortunately, lived up to his name as a deceiver. He first stole his brother's birthright. Now here, he through deceit steals the patriarchal blessing due to his older brother. In turn, he is forced to flee for his life. The chapter has these subdivisions: (1) the stolen blessing in verses 1-25, (2) the blessing of Jacob in verses 26-33, and (3) Esau's regret and anger in verses 34-46.

**Genesis 27 : 1-4** – *1 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. 2 And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death: 3 Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison; 4 And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.*

- It is thought Isaac at this time was about 137 years old.
- Though he would live another 43 years to be 180, he thought his time was short.
- He also had lost most of his eyesight.
- So he invited his first-born son, Esau, to go hunt venison and prepare him a meal of wild game, which he loved.
- He concluded, *“that my soul may bless thee before I die.”*

**Genesis 27 : 5-10** – *5 And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it. 6 And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying, 7 Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the LORD before my death. 8 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. 9 Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth: 10 And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death.*

- Rebekah, Isaac's wife, heard what her husband had said to Esau.
- Her favorite son was Jacob.
- Therefore, after Esau had departed on his hunting trip, she informed Jacob of what was going on.
- Though Jacob received the blame for what would take place, the idea actually was hatched by his mother, Rebekah.
- It is little wonder Jacob became such a 'supplanter.'
- His mother certainly left him an example to follow.
- Her scheme was simple.
- She ordered Jacob to go to the family flock, find *“two good kids of the goats,”* and she would make the *“savoury meat”* which she knew her husband loved.
- Her plan was for Jacob to take the wild-game meal to his father and portray himself as his brother, Esau.
- The plan was that Isaac would therefore bless Jacob in place of his brother.

- The focus on this entire chapter revolves around the matter of the patriarchal blessing by Isaac upon one of his sons.
- Little is known of such a blessing elsewhere in the Scripture apart from this incident.
- However, it was the custom of the day that the patriarch of a family (in this case, Isaac) was allowed to convey a single special blessing upon his eldest son.
- It was thought that blessing was: (1) singular and non-transferable and (2) conveyed a special blessing from God to the recipient thereof.
- Because God had made such profound promises to Abraham and Isaac, the recipient of the blessing in this case would really be a big deal.
- Rebekah knew this and desired that her favored son would receive that blessing.
- It may be, she sought to justify her thoughts by the fact her sons were twins and therefore the blessing conceivably could go either way.
- Remember, God had already foretold that the elder would serve the younger.
- Rebekah also knew that.
- However, it should not be assumed that God approved of the planned deceit.
- He would have blessed Jacob regardless.
- What is evident is that Rebekah took things into her own hands, using deception and fraud.

***Genesis 27 : 10-13 - 10 And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death. 11 And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man: 12 My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing. 13 And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me them.***

- Jacob protested how that his father would know the difference by touch.
- Esau was a man of much body hair.
- Jacob was not.
- Isaac would figure out what was going on and curse Jacob rather than bless him.
- Rebekah made the promise that whatever curse might come would be upon her.
- She ordered her son: “only obey my voice, and go fetch me *them*.”

***Genesis 27 : 14-17 - 14 And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother: and his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved. 15 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: 16 And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck: 17 And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.***

- Jacob did as told.
- Though his mother had concocted the scheme, Jacob was a willing accomplice.
- Rebekah also took one of the best garments of Esau, with its distinctive smell, and dressed Jacob therein.
- She also fastened the skins of the goats upon his hands and upon his neck, the exposed portions of his body.

- She further prepared the meal of meat in the way she knew her husband enjoyed and sent Jacob in to his father.

**Genesis 27 : 18-25** - *18 And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son? 19 And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. 20 And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the LORD thy God brought it to me. 21 And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not. 22 And Jacob went near unto 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 discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him. 24 And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am. 25 And he said, Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought it near to him, and he did eat: and he brought him wine, and he drank.*

- The deception was underway.
- Jacob asked who it was that came to see him.
- Jacob answered “*I am Esau thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me.*”
- He proceeded to invite his father to eat of the meal he brought him.
- Isaac immediately was suspicious.
- He asked how his son had accomplished the venture so quickly.
- Jacob dishonestly said, “*Because the LORD thy God brought it to me.*”
- Still suspicious, Isaac ordered him near so he could touch him.
- Because of the goat skins upon his hands and neck, Isaac was confused.
- He said, “*The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.*”
- He therefore asked him again, “*Art thou my very son Esau?*”
- Jacob directly lied and said, “*I am.*”
- Isaac then told him to bring the venison which Jacob did, and Isaac ate thereof.

**Genesis 27 : 26-27** - *26 And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. 27 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.*

- Still unsure, Isaac therefore asked his son to come close to him and kiss him.
- Therefore, Jacob did so.
- In coming that close, Isaac smelled the distinctive smell of Esau's garment and noted, “*the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the LORD hath blessed.*”
- The deception was accomplished.

**Genesis 27 : 28-29** - *28 Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: 29 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 blessing thee.*

- Isaac therefore proceeded to formally bless Jacob thinking it was Esau
- Isaac may not have been aware that Jacob had already traded the birthright from Esau.

- Thinking Esau was the recipient of the blessing, he invoked that he would be lord over his brethren (i.e.,) Jacob.
- That was not in God's plan.
- However, Isaac was in fact prophetically blessing the lineage of Jacob which would find its ultimate fulfillment in Christ.
- See Genesis 12:3.
- This is the first formal transmission of God's promise to Abraham on to Jacob.

**Genesis 27 : 30-33** - *30 And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. 31 And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me. 32 And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau. 33 And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.*

- As is usually the case in deception, it usually becomes known.
- In this case, it was almost immediate.
- Jacob had no sooner departed his father's presence than Esau showed up from his successful hunt.
- He had made the savoury meat requested by his father and came and presented it to his father.
- Isaac was perplexed.
- He asked, "*Who art thou?*"
- Esau told him it was him.
- Isaac therefore trembled exceedingly and asked again, "*Who?*"
- To their mutual dissatisfaction, Isaac asked who it therefore was who had just brought him venison and had been blessed.
- The finality of the patriarchal blessing is implicit in the statement, "*yea, and he shall be blessed.*"

**Genesis 27 : 34-36** - *34 And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father. 35 And he said, Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing. 36 And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me.*

- Both Isaac and Esau knew immediately who had stolen the blessing.
- Esau therefore cried bitterly and implored his father, "*Bless me, even me also, O my father.*"
- Isaac no doubt in frustration and anger said "*thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing.*"
- The word translated as **subtilty** (hmmr *mirmah*) has the basic sense of 'deception,' which is precisely what Jacob had done.
- Esau bitterly noted the implications of his brother's name.

- Jacob has the idea of ‘**supplanter**:’ that is, usurper, fraudulent, or cheat.
- He reminded his father that Jacob had twice ‘supplanted’ him in obtaining his birthright under questionable circumstances and now the outright theft of his blessing.
- He therefore pathetically asked, “*Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?*”

**Genesis 27 : 37** - *And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?*

- Isaac gives more insight into the nature of the patriarch blessing.
- It conveyed leadership of the family clan to the recipient thereof along with the lion’s share of the family wealth.
- Isaac pondered aloud, “*And what shall I do now unto thee, my son?*”

**Genesis 27 : 38-40** - *38 And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept. 39 And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; 40 And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.*

- Esau pled still with his father for a special blessing from him.
- Perhaps in genuine grief and perhaps also to move his father, Esau again wept before him.
- Isaac therefore uttered this blessing to his defrauded son. “*Behold, thy dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; And by thy sword shalt thou live and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.*”
- Esau’s blessing was simple. (1) Isaac invoked material blessing from God upon him. (2) Though he would live by the sword, it is implied he would prevail. (3) He would in fact serve his brother. (4) However, the time would come when he would finally break the dominion and rule of Jacob from him.
- That was fulfilled in II Kings 8:20-22.

**Genesis 27 : 41-42** - *41 And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob. 42 And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee.*

- Esau therefore hated Jacob and began to plan the murder of his brother.
- He assumed his father would soon die and he would accomplish his deed after his death.
- In addition, Esau’s plan was told to Rebekah, his mother.
- She therefore again schemed how to protect her favored son.
- She let Jacob know of his brother’s plan.

**Genesis 27 : 43-45** - *43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran; 44 And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother’s fury turn away; 45*

*Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him: then I will send, and fetch thee from thence: why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?*

- *Rebekah therefore* urged Jacob to leave immediately and go stay with her brother, Laban, who still lived in Haran.

**Genesis 27 : 46** - *And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?*

- The chapter concludes with Rebekah complaining to her husband Isaac about their son Esau's wives, the daughters of Heth.
- Heth was a son of Canaan and father of the Hittites of whence Esau's wives were.
- She noted that she did not want Jacob to take a wife of them also.
- There likely was both Divine Providence as well as her trying to justify herself in sending Jacob to Haran.