

set up this stone as a pillar to be God's house. And I will give You a tenth part of all You give to me."

- It is clear that **Jacob** is a worshiper of God and his first response was **fear** (vs. 17). To him the place was the house of **God** and the **gate of heaven**.
- **Bethel** means *house of God*.
- **Jacob** made the first recorded vow in Scripture (verse 20). These elements were in the vow:
 - God would provide **food and clothes**.
 - God would enable a **return** to Canaan.
 - Jacob would give **God** 10% of his gain. This principle was later included in the Law of Moses. For both Abraham and Jacob to use that 10% number, it must have been a practice in their times.

GENESIS CHAPTERS 27-28

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Genesis Previously		
Mankind Created	Nations Formed	Abram Covenanted
Abram at War, is Honored, Land Boundaries Specified		
Sarai substituted, then Rejected Hagar; the Lord supported Her Expanded Names given to Sarai and Abram.		
Abraham was Visited and Warned about Sodom Sodom Was Destroyed, but Lot and Daughters Were Saved.		
King Abimelech takes and quickly returns Sarah		
Isaac is born, then Hagar and Ishmael are dismissed		
The near-sacrifice of Isaac and the death of Sarah.		
Isaac Marries Rebecca		
Isaac prays for a son and received two. God blessed Isaac.		

Chapter 27 describes the third conflict between the brothers Jacob and Esau. The first was in the womb and at birth (Genesis 25:21–28); the second was over the *birthright* (Genesis 25:29–34); and the third, in this chapter, is over the birthright *blessing* from their father Isaac. Every family in Genesis had profound conflicts.

ISAAC REQUESTS A SPECIAL MEAL

(1) Isaac was now old, and had become blind. He called to his older son Esau, saying, "My son." And Esau answered, "Here I am." (2) Isaac said, "See, I am old. I do not know when I will die. (3) Take your bow and arrows, and go out to the field to get meat for me. (4) Get some food ready for me that I love. Bring it to me to eat, so that before I die I will pray that good will come to you."

- Not only did Jacob exploit his brother **Esau**, but his **blind** father **Isaac** as well. Many in the family line had been involved in deceiving others. **Jacob** and **Esau** were 77 at this time and **Isaac** was 137. He lived more years after this event. **Isaac** wanted to give his blessing as head of the household to **Esau** in exchange for his favorite **food**. The blessing was a combination of benediction and prediction.
- Hunting **meat** with a **bow and arrow** would not have been permitted under the Law of Moses because the animal might die slowly. We see that the words were penned before the Law of Moses was written. Like all of early Genesis, it was written on documents that were handed down to the time of Moses and Moses added a few editorial notes so readers would understand the older names of places. Genesis 14 shows a number of examples.

REBEKAH PLANS A DECEPTION

(5) And Rebekah was listening while Isaac spoke to his son Esau. So when Esau went to the field to hunt for meat to bring home, (6) Rebekah said to her son Jacob, "I heard your father talking to your brother Esau. He said, (7) 'Bring me some meat. Make good-tasting food for me to eat. And before I die I will pray to the Lord for good to come to you.' (8) So now, my son, listen to what I tell you to do. (9) Go to the flock and bring me two fat young goats. I will cook them into good-tasting food, just what your father loves to eat. (10) Then you will take it to your father for him to eat. So before he dies he will pray for good to come to you."

- **Bradford** observes:
"Rebecca was likely thinking that if her doddling old husband refused to carry out God's will, she would doing whatever it took.....even if it included deception."

This scheme originated with **Rebekah**.

(11) Jacob said to his mother Rebekah, "But my brother Esau has much hair. And my skin is smooth. (12) If my

(13) There above it stood the LORD, and he said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. (14) Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. (15) I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

- The **Lord** identifies himself with **Abraham** and **Isaac**.
- The promise of many **descendants** is repeated. Jacob is 77 and unmarried.
- The promise of a blessing for the whole earth because of his **descendants**—this must point to the coming of Jesus. He had just stolen the family blessing.
- The **promise** of **land** is repeated even though he is presently a fugitive leaving it.
- The **promise** is made to bring the extended family back to Canaan.

JACOB RESPONDED TO THE VISION

(16) Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "For sure the Lord is in this place and I did not know it." (17) He was afraid and said, "This place is so different! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." (18) So Jacob got up early in the morning. He took the stone he had used as a pillow, and set it up as a pillar. He poured oil on the top of it. (19) He gave that place the name Bethel. Its name had been Luz before. (20) Then Jacob made a promise. He said, "If God will be with me and take care of me as I go, and if He will give me food to eat and clothes to wear, (21) so that I return in peace to my father's house, then the Lord will be my God. (22) I have



THE LORD REAFFIRMS THE COVENANT WITH JACOB

(10) Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Harran. (11) When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. (12) He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

- There was an incident while traveling to **Harran**. **Jacob** dreamed of a **stairway** to **heaven** with **angels** going up and down the **stairs**.
- The Lord was at the top. Verse 13.
- This is the first of seven revelations of God to Jacob.
- **James Smith** interprets, "Between heaven and earth there was uninterrupted communication mediated by angels."

father touches me, he will think of me as one trying to fool him. Then he will bring a curse upon me instead of good."

- **Rebekah** had received the Lord's plan that the older will serve the younger (25:23), but she devised a scheme to help out the Lord anyway.
- **Rebekah** did not turn to the Lord in prayer as she had years before about the active twins in her womb (25:22). She wanted to deceive Isaac and get the blessing pronounced on **Jacob**.
- **Jacob** didn't mind the deception, but he was deeply concerned about getting caught. He did not want a **curse** (vs. 12) from his **father**.

REBEKAH EXECUTES THE DECEPTION

(13) His mother said to him, "My son, let the curse fall on me. Just do what I say; go and get them for me." (14) So he went and got them and brought them to his mother, and she prepared some tasty food, just the way his father liked it. (15) Then Rebekah took the best clothes of Esau her older son, which she had in the house, and put them on her younger son Jacob. (16) She also covered his hands and the smooth part of his neck with the goatskins. (17) Then she handed to her son Jacob the tasty food and the bread she had made.

- **Jacob** must have known that God had selected him, but he went along with this ruse by his mother. Either **Rebekah** had lost all confidence in the promise of God or she thought she needed to help the Lord along. In either case, she lacked faith in the Lord.

(18) Then he went to his father and said, "My father." Isaac said, "Here I am. Who are you, my son?" (19) Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau, your first-born. I have done as you told me. Sit up and eat the meat I brought, so you will pray that good will come to me." (20) But Isaac said to his son,

“How have you found it so fast, my son?” And Jacob said, “Because the Lord your God made it happen.”

(21) Then Isaac said to Jacob, “Come near so I can touch you, my son, to know for sure if you are my son Esau or not.” (22) So Jacob came near his father Isaac. Isaac touched him, and said, “The voice is Jacob’s voice. But the hands are Esau’s hands.” (23) He did not know who he was, because his hands were covered with hair like his brother Esau’s hands. So Isaac prayed that good would come to him.

- **Jacob** lied (there are three lies in verse 19 alone), deceived and used the name of the **Lord** to bolster the lie. This is a case of using **God's** name in vain. (vs. 20)
- **Isaac** was suspicious because of the sudden success and the **voice**. Now for one more lie:

(24) Isaac said, “Is it true that you are my son Esau?” Jacob answered, “I am.” (25) So Isaac said, “Bring it to me so I may eat the meat my son has made ready. And I will pray that good will come to you.” He brought it to him, and he ate. He brought him wine also, and he drank.

(26) Then his father Isaac said to him, “Come near and kiss me, my son.” (27) So Jacob came near and kissed him. When Isaac smelled his clothes, he prayed that good would come to him. He said, “The smell of my son is like the smell of a field that has received good from the Lord. (28) May God give you from heaven water on the grass in the early morning, and the riches of the earth, and more than enough grain and new wine. (29) May nations serve you, and the people bow down in front of you. Be the ruler of your brothers. May your mother’s sons bow down in front of you. Cursed be those who curse you, and may good come to those who honor you.”

- **Jacob** passed the “**smell** test,” so **Isaac** blessed him in place of **Esau**.
- **Isaac** prayed for Jacob:

to come to Jacob and said, “Do not marry one of the daughters of Canaan,” (7) and that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother and had gone to Paddan-aram. (8) Esau knew that the daughters of Canaan did not please his father Isaac. (9) So Esau went to Ishmael, and married Mahalath the daughter of Abraham’s son Ishmael, the sister of Nebaioth. He added her to the wives he already had.

- It appears that **Esau** married a third wife who was loosely connected with the covenant people. He was not concerned about the covenant with the Lord. Jacob *was* concerned about this family treasure.
- The life of **Isaac** was not a joyous one:
 - He had a barren wife.
 - A disappointing older son.
 - There was a famine.
 - There was conflict with neighboring herdsmen.
 - His health failed long before his death.

Romans is informative here:

Not only this, but there was Rebecca also. Rebecca gave birth to two sons at the same time. Both of them were sons of Isaac. Even before the two sons were born, we see God’s plan of choosing. God could choose whom He wanted. It could not be changed because of anything the older son tried to do about it. It was before either one had done anything good or bad. Rebecca was told, “The older son will work for the younger son.” The Holy Writings say, “I loved Jacob, but hated Esau.”

What about it then? Can we say that God is not fair? No, not at all! God said to Moses, “I will have loving-kindness and loving-pity for anyone I want to.”

Romans 9:10-15

- The despair of Esau turned to hatred and he planned to kill Jacob. **Rebekah** had created a situation that could lead to the death of both men, so she turned to deception again for a remedy. She claimed she was sending **Jacob** away so he would not marry a local woman. She was teaching **Jacob** to avoid a difficult situation and flee. She was planning a short absence for **Jacob**, but it was much longer.

ISAAC WANTED JACOB TO MARRY A COUSIN

(Chapter 28:1) So Isaac called Jacob and prayed that good would come to him. He said to him, “Do not marry one of the daughters of Canaan. (2) Get ready, and go to the house of your mother’s father Bethuel in Paddan-aram. Take a wife for yourself from the daughters of your mother’s brother Laban. (3) May the All-powerful God bring good to you and give you many children until you become many nations. (4) May He give you and your children after you the same gift that He gave Abraham. May He give you the land that He gave Abraham, the land where you are now a stranger.”

- **Isaac** sent **Jacob** back to Rebekah's people with the added blessing of numerous **children** and grandchildren.
- The covenant with Abraham was a reminder that the new family was to return to this land of Canaan that had been given to them by **God**.

(5) Then Isaac sent Jacob away. And he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban, the son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob and Esau’s mother.

- **Jacob** went to **Laban's** area just as **Isaac** had wanted.

ESAU MARRIED LOCAL WOMEN

(6) Now Esau saw that Isaac had prayed for good to come to Jacob and that he had sent him away to Paddan-aram to find a wife. Esau knew that his father had prayed for good

- To experience heaven's dew, so needful for crops.
- Harvest **grain** and **wine**.
- For him to be served by **nations** and be lord over his brother.
- Blessings on those who bless him and **curses** for those who **curse** him.

ESAU ATTEMPTS TO FEED ISAAC

(30) When Isaac had finished praying that good would come to Jacob, Jacob left his father Isaac. Just then his brother Esau came in from hunting. **(31)** Then Esau made good-tasting food and brought it to his father, and said, “Sit up, my father, and eat the meat your son has made ready, so you will pray that good will come to me.” **(32)** His father Isaac said to him, “Who are you?” He answered, “I am your son, your first-born, Esau.” **(33)** Then Isaac shook all over, and he said, “Who was it then who killed an animal and brought meat to me? I ate all of it before you came! And I prayed that good would come to him! Yes, and good will come to him!”

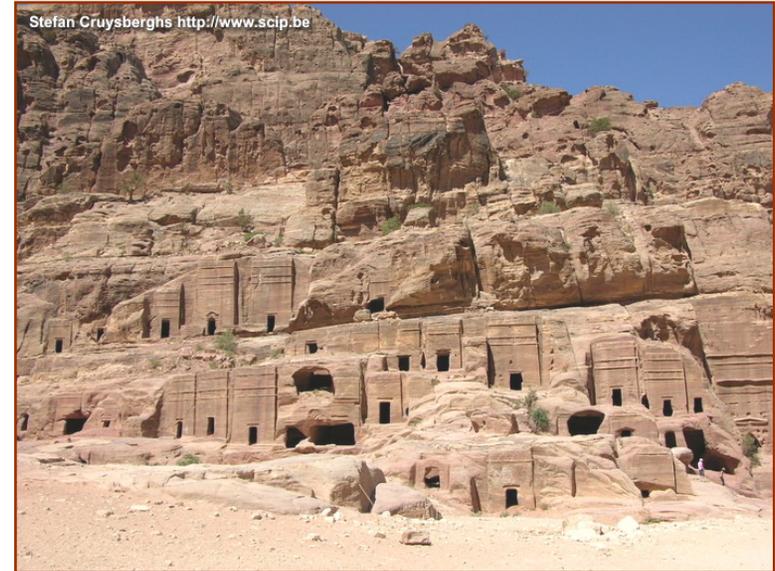
- **Jacob's** timing was perfect. Now **Esau** returned with the genuine game and asked for the blessing. After **Isaac** checked his identity, he realized the theft. **Isaac** could not withdraw the blessing.

(34) When he heard what his father said, Esau cried out with a loud and sad cry. He said to his father, “Pray that good will come to me also, O my father!” **(35)** But Isaac said, “Your brother came in and fooled me. He has taken away the good that was to come to you.” **(36)** Then Esau said, “Was it not right that he was given the name Jacob? Two times now he has taken what should have been mine. He took away my right as a first-born. And now he has taken away the good that was to come to me.” Then he said, “Can you not pray that good will come to me also?”

- **Esau** understood the name of Jacob to mean *deceitful*. **Esau** wanted a blessing, so Isaac spoke again. This event is mentioned in Hebrews 12:16-17.

(37) Isaac answered Esau, “See, I have made him to rule over you. I have given him all his brothers as servants. I have given him grain and new wine to keep him alive and well. What then can I do for you, my son?” (38) Esau said to his father, “Do you have only one prayer for good to come, my father? Pray that good will come to me also, O my father.” And Esau gave out a loud cry. (39) Then his father Isaac answered him: “See, the place where you live will be away from the riches of the earth, and away from the water on the grass in the early morning. (40) You will live by your sword and you will serve your brother. But when you break loose, you will throw his load off your back.”

- **Bradford** summarizes the promise made to **Esau** by **Isaac**: “Being cursed that he would reside AWAY from the fat of the land, cursed that he would live in a fairly desolate place where it didn’t often rain, one could see why he would burn with homicidal anger and envy towards his conniving brother. This curse to be separated from rich lands, combined with the blessings given to Jacob, served to set Esau, later to be called Edom, against Jacob, later to be called Israel, for all time. And, that is certainly what we have seen played out in history.”
- Blessings were not available, but **Isaac** made accurate predictions.
 - His descendants, the Edomites, would dwell in barren places.
 - They would live by the sword.
 - They would serve Jacob.
 - Sometimes they would get Jacob's people off of their back.
- Hebrews 11:20 says Isaac made these blessings and predictions to Jacob and **Esau** by faith.



An ancient housing development in Edom.
The units are all finished in earth tones!

ESAU HATED JACOB

(41) Esau hated Jacob because his father had prayed that good would come to Jacob. Esau said to himself, “The days when I will have sorrow for the loss of my father are soon. Then I will kill my brother Jacob.” (42) But the words of her older son Esau were told to Rebekah. She called her younger son Jacob, and said to him, “See, your brother Esau comforts himself by planning to kill you. (43) So now, my son, do what I tell you. Get ready, and go at once to my brother Laban at Haran. (44) Stay with him for a few days, until your brother’s anger goes away. (45) When your brother’s anger against you is gone and he forgets what you did to him, then I will send for you and have you return from there. Why should I have sorrow for both of you in one day?” (46) Then Rebekah said to Isaac, “I am tired of living because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob marries one of the daughters of Heth, like these, from the women of the land, what good will my life be to me?”