

# OpenTheo

## Genesis 26 - 27



### Genesis - Steve Gregg

In this exposition of Genesis 26 - 27, Steve Gregg highlights the shortcomings of the biblical characters Isaac, Esau, Rebecca and Jacob, all of whom make mistakes and are not fully virtuous. Despite their misdeeds, the sovereignty of God is ultimately accomplished, as evidenced by the passing down of the patriarchal blessing to Jacob through deceit. Isaac's blessing carries prophetic significance and is a sort of inheritance that is separate from the birthright, and Esau's decision to sell his birthright for a bowl of soup is used as an example of making short-sighted and unwise decisions.

### Transcript

Genesis 26 is the only chapter in the Bible devoted exclusively to Isaac. Isaac is a relatively unimportant person, except for the fact that he provides an essential link between Abraham and the later generations. He didn't really do anything original.

All the chapters of the Bible are about Isaac. Other than this one that mentions him, they mention him in connection either with his father or with his son. Of course, he's in some of the story about Abraham and even some of the story about Jacob and Esau, but already by the end of chapter 25, Jacob and Esau have sort of taken center stage and then from chapter 27 on, you know, they're going to be kind of the center of attention.

Again, chapter 26 is stuck in there just so that almost to give Isaac a little bit of attention of his own, but the attention is given isn't very impressive. He doesn't do anything original. He makes the same mistake as father does and saying that his wife is his sister.

So that's not even original. And then he spends the rest of his life digging wells, but not original wells. He's redigging the wells that Abraham had dug, and he doesn't even give them original names.

He gives them the same names that Abraham gave them. In other words, this guy is just maintaining this is a maintenance generation. No ground is lost and no ground is gained except that another generation passes and some and a significant child, Jacob, comes to be born in it.

But I don't I don't know exactly what was in Moses mind in writing this and giving so little attention to Isaac and recording only such things about him that are entirely unoriginal behaviors of his. It might be just a way of saying that there are seasons in God's overall dealings where he's, you know, doing significant things through somebody and he's going to do significant things in the future for somebody. But there's a generation between that.

Not not much is happening. Certainly, that is true of the history of the church. It's been true of the history of revival, that there'll be a revival in one generation and a revival in a later generation.

But in between, there's, you know, the church just kind of maintain just just kind of holding the ground, hopefully not losing ground. But God has his spurts of activity in history and other times in between those spurts, the obligation of the people of God is simply to not lose the ground and to keep keep the traditions going of the previous spurt until the next one comes. And that's really all that Isaac seems to do.

So there was a famine in the land besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac dwelt, went to Abimelech, the king of the Philistines in Gerar. Now, the first famine that was in the days of Abraham was back in Genesis chapter 12, and that had caused Abraham to leave the promised land and go down to Egypt, where he had, of course, endangered Sarah by saying that she was his sister.

Isaac at least doesn't go down to Egypt. He doesn't leave the land. It's clear that Abraham did not want Isaac to ever leave the land.

He wouldn't even let him go down to Padnerum or up to Padnerum to find a wife. Instead, he had to send a servant. And when the servant said, well, if she won't come, shall I take her? God forbid.

Don't don't let my son leave this country. And Isaac apparently picked up on that sentiment. And instead of going down to Egypt and leaving the promised land, he stayed in the land.

But he went to live in the region of Gerar. It's possible that Gerar was importing food from Egypt or something so that during the famine times there was more to be had there. And Isaac was wealthy, so he could buy grain from him if they had it.

And then the Lord appeared to him and said, do not go down to Egypt. Dwell in the land in which I shall tell you of which I shall tell you sojourn in this land. And I will be with you and bless you for to you and your descendants.

I will give these lands and I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham, your father. And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven. I will give to your descendants all these land.

And in your seed, all the nations of the earth shall be blessed because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments and my statutes and my laws. Now, God gives Isaac a promise, but it's just the same promise he gave to Abraham. In fact, he even says, I'm going to do this for you because of Abraham.

So not because you're special necessarily, but because your father, Abraham, obeyed me, I'm going to do this for you. And he does say, stay in the land and I'll bless you here. Even though there was a famine, God did bless him, as we shall see before the chapter is over.

He actually farmed and made and got quite a harvest. So Isaac dwelt in Gerar and the men of the place asked him about his wife and he said, she's my sister, for he was afraid to say she's my wife because he thought less the men of the place should kill me for Rebecca because she is a beautiful woman to behold. Now, it came to pass when he had been there a long time that a Bimlach, king of the Philistines, looked through a window and saw and there was Isaac showing endearment to Rebecca, his wife, showing endearment literally means caressing.

The King James is sporting with his wife. I think most would assume this means what we would call petting, caressing her, acting, you know, intimate with her in a way that a man and his sister would not do. And therefore, a Bimlach put it together.

The penny dropped and he said, wait a minute, quite obviously, she's your wife. Now, I think Rebecca, we're doing this in public, out in front of everybody, not very wise if he's trying to convince people she's his sister. At least in this case, unlike Abrams, she never was taken from Isaac.

She never had to be restored to him from some harem of a king. But this king did realize that there had been that danger of it happening. And he he rebuked Isaac for that.

But maybe they weren't in public, maybe a Bimlach and they had, you know, buildings, you know, across from each other, sort of like David. David could look from his window and see Bathsheba bathing on her rooftop, you know, I mean, maybe they were in different buildings, but he could see through the window. Anyway, maybe maybe a Bimlach was a voyeur anyway and was, you know, had his binoculars there at the window.

And he saw this happening. Great. I guess she's not really available.

She's his wife. And he says, quite obviously, she's your wife. So how could you say she's my sister? And Isaac said to him, because I said, lest I die on account of her.

Very heroic. I don't want to die for her. But the Bible says that that's exactly what a husband's supposed to do.

In Ephesians 5, it says, Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her. And but Isaac was not heroic. And obviously, he was a man of his time.

He didn't he he loved his wife in whatever way he loved her. But but it was not like the sacrificial love of Jesus who would die for Jesus. A greater love has no one than this that he died for his friends.

So I don't want to die for her. So I just said she was my sister. And a bit like, by the way, a bit like that's the same name as the king in of the same city in Chapter 20.

And this, you know, Chapter 20, when Abraham went down there and a bit like took Sarah into his harem, that was before the birth of Isaac. And now Isaac is what? At least 60. So is this the same of Bimalik? And by the way, the Bimalik in Chapter 20 was attracted to a woman who was 90 years old.

So he may have been an old guy then. And now this is at least 60 years later, maybe more. So it's probably a different Bimalik and many feel that this was a Bimalik might have been even a title rather than a personal name, a little bit like Pharaoh in Egypt, that the king of Egypt's always called Pharaoh, no matter who he is, no matter what his proper name is, he's always Pharaoh.

And that the Philistine leaders of Gerar were apparently possibly always called a Bimalik, whoever they were might have been a Bimalik the first, a Bimalik the second, even and the third and fourth. There's also later on, he's got names like in verse 26, it's going to say that Ficall, the commander of his army, came with a Bimalik to make a deal with Isaac. Well, the earlier a Bimalik in chapter 20 also had a commander of his army, Ficall.

So Ficall might have also been more of a title or a rank or something rather than a personal name. Anyway, a Bimalik said, what is this you've done to us? Verse 10. One of the people might soon have lain with your wife and you would have brought guilt on us.

So a Bimalik charged all his people saying he who touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death. Now, this is this is interesting because these Philistines who are uncircumcised, unclean pagans, they show some moral, you know, fiber. He says, OK, now that we know she's your wife, no one can touch her.

Now, Isaac's concern was that if he had admitted she was his wife, they would kill him to take her. But obviously, that was not what they were inclined to do. Now, some people in some cultures had done such things.

In Egypt, there's a well-known story that archaeologists have discovered about called the tale Two Brothers that tells of an actual case where a man was killed because someone wanted his wife. And so and it's from that general period. Abraham probably knew that story and feared that.

Isaac, too. But remember in chapter 20, when a Bimalik said to Abraham, why did you deceive us like this, Abraham said, because I thought there's no fear of God in this place. But there was.

A Bimalik did fear God. He didn't know the true God. But when God revealed himself to him, he feared him and he obeyed him.

And likewise, this man, perhaps the son of the other one, seems to have some scruples, too. And now that it's come out that Rebecca is Isaac's wife, he makes a decree. No one is allowed to harm this man or touch his wife.

For a pagan, that's that's pretty commendable, it seems like. And so Isaac sowed in the land. Now, sowing seed was not something that Abraham had done.

He had wandered. You don't farm if you're wandering around from place to place. He's a sheep herder.

He was a Bedouin. He was a nomadic shepherd. That's what Abraham was.

And a sheik at that. He was very powerful. And Isaac was all those things, too.

But now because of the famine, he settled in one area for a while and he says, well, I'm here. Might as well lease some property, sow some seeds, see what comes of it. And it says and he knew it, this farming stuff, but he sowed seed in the land.

And it says the same year he reaped a hundredfold and Yahweh blessed him. Now, a hundredfold is a very large crop, very unusual. It's not impossible, but it's a it's a bumper crop for sure.

And yet it was a famine time. Presumably it was, you know, a drought. And yet God gave him such a huge crop because God did tell him, you don't go to Egypt, you stay here, I'll bless you in the land here.

So even though other people were not getting good crops, Isaac was. God was giving special attention to his farm and giving him a lot of produce. And so he began to prosper and continued prospering until he became very prosperous.

For he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and great number of servants, so the Philistines envied him. See, if he had all this grain in a time of famine, well, other people didn't have grain, so they had to buy it from someone. And he was the one who seemed to be the grain magnet of the area.

And so people would come and they would trade with him gold and silver and livestock in order to get grain. And so he was accumulating. He not only had a lot of grain that he grew, he's accumulating all these other kinds of wealth by trading in the area until he was the most powerful man in the area.

And the Philistines were intimidated by him. They were jealous of him because they envied him. Now, the Philistines had stopped up all the wells, which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham, his father, and they had filled them with earth.

In all likelihood, these wells were the source of the water that watered his crops. He didn't in all likelihood have, well, there was apparently no rain going on and therefore his servants would have been drawing water out of wells and pouring it on the crops. That's a pretty slow and tedious way to water your crops.

And the Philistines, jealous of him, not liking the fact that he was advancing in wealth so much, would go and fill up the wells with mud to make it, you know, obviously to try to thwart this prosperity and this blessing that was going on in his life. But it didn't work. God still blessed him.

But Abimelech said to Isaac, go away from us, for you are much mightier than we. And it's possible that the Philistines didn't exist in large numbers in Palestine at that time. We know the Philistines had been in the area for some time, but their cities might have been small.

And if Isaac inherited all the servants Abraham had had, plus he's getting all this new prosperity, he could easily be a tremendous and formidable force to be reckoned with in the area. And the Philistines felt like he was actually more powerful than them. Then Isaac departed from there and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar and dwelt there.

And Isaac dug again the wells of water, which they dug in the days of Abraham, his father, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham. He called them by the names which his father had called them. Also, Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found a well of running water there.

But the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, the water is ours. So he called the name of the well Isak, which means quarrel, because they quarreled with him. Then they dug another well and they quarreled over that one also.

So he called it the name Sitna, which means hatred or enmity. So it looks like he's abandoning these wells as soon as there's contention over them. He redigs his father's wells and then he digs a few of his own, but they quarrel because he doesn't get to keep them.

He abandons them and just names them quarreling and hatred. But then he moved from there and dug another well, so they did not quarrel over it. So they call that one Rehoboth, which means spaciousness or room, because he said, for now, Yahweh has made room for us and we shall be fruitful in the land.

Now, see, to be fruitful in the land, apparently to produce crops, they needed these wells. And so he says, now we've got now we've got a place, we've got this well here,

there's water, no one's fighting us for it. So this is where we can settle in and be fruitful since we've had to leave the former farm site.

Then he went up from there to Beersheba and the Lord appeared to him the same night and said, I am the God of your father, Abraham. Do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for my servant Abraham's sake.

So he built an altar there and called the name called on the name of Yahweh and pitched his tent there. And there Isaac's servants dug a well also. Now, that was a redigging of the well.

There was already a well there. It was called Beersheba, which means the well of the old. And there was it was named that.

Remember when Abram had received or had given seven new lambs to a Bimelech, because there was dispute over well on that occasion, too. This is back in chapter 20 when Abram said, your servants took this well from me and the Bimelech said, I didn't know anything about it. I haven't heard about it until just now.

And so Abram said, well, it's my well and I'm going to give you seven new lambs. And when you receive them, that's a token of you agreeing that it's mine. And an oath was made there and they called it the well of the old.

Actually, the word Beersheba, Sheba can mean oath or it can also mean seven. So it could be called the well of seven, the well of the seven, the seven new lambs that were exchanged there. But it seems to be a play on words because they made an oath there, too.

So Beersheba can mean the well of the oath or the well of the seven. And so he it's, you know, he redigs that well again and calls it by the same name. Abram had called it.

Then a Bimelech came to him from Gerar with Ahuzot, one of his friends, and Phicol, the commander of his army. And Isaac said to them, why have you come to me since you hate me and have sent me away from you? But they said, we have certainly seen that the Lord is with you. Now, they say Yahweh.

Interesting. We've seen that Yahweh is with you. The Philistines didn't worship Yahweh, they worshiped Dagon, a god that was depicted as a fish with a man's body.

And Dagon was obviously a demon god. But the various nations accepted in general the actual existence of the other gods, the other nations. They just felt there was a tribal loyalty that each tribe or each nation felt to the god of their of their group.

And yet they did not dispute that the gods of other groups were real gods. And so for the Philistines to acknowledge Yahweh as a real god is not strange, even though they

weren't worshippers of Yahweh. They knew that Isaac and his family were worshippers of this Yahweh and that Yahweh was blessing them and they had no problem acknowledging and giving credit to Yahweh for that.

And they said, we have certainly seen that Yahweh is with you. So we said, let there now be an oath between us, between you and us. Let us make a covenant with you.

In other words, we're intimidated by you. God's blessing you. We're afraid you might decide that you're strong enough to overthrow us.

Let's make an agreement that that won't happen. Now, that should be unnecessary because in Chapter 20, Abraham made that same oath with the earlier Bimelech and it had included their offspring. That is, they said, neither my sons will not afflict your sons and so forth.

So the oath that Abraham made should have been binding here. We see then Isaac making an oath that's exactly like the one his father made, too. Again, everything that Isaac does, it's recorded as just a redoing of things Abraham did.

So in Genesis 26, 34 says, when Esau was 40 years old, he took as wives Judith, the daughter of Beeri, the Hittite, and Bazimath, the daughter of Elam, the Hittite. And they were a grief to the mind of Isaac and Rebekah. Then the years pass.

We don't know how many years, but now they're both most most scholars have calculated they're 75 or 80 years old about this time. In Chapter 27, Esau has been married for maybe 35 years to these women that he got married to in the previous chapter. And it's time now for the patriarchal blessing to be given.

Blessings not the same as a birthright, but it goes with it. Basically, the patriarchal blessing is sort of like an oral will. Someone, you know, putting him in his will.

And here's what I want this son to have. All I'm going to state it orally. And there's something prophetic about it, too, because in the Bible, it says in Hebrews 11, that by faith, Isaac blessed his sons, Jacob and Esau.

So there's something God related to this faith in God causing some prophesy about the future of his sons. But even in other families, a dying patriarch or dying father would generally bless his sons and make, you know, bequeath to them things and stuff. And the one with the birthright would naturally get the good stuff.

And now it's time because Isaac thinks he's dying here. Now, Isaac isn't dying. Isaac has gone blind and he can't do much and he thinks he's dying.

So he figured, I better give this blessing that goes with the birthright. And he wants to give it to his favorite son, Esau, not Jacob. Now, why do I think he's not dying yet?



Because he's about 130, if you calculate the dates in the surrounding chapters and so forth and his age at the time, Jacob's age when he went to stand before Pharaoh, Jacob was 130.

And this is count backward through the famine years and all these other things. Isaac here was about 135 years old. But we're told later on in chapter 20, he died at 180.

So he's still about 40 something years from his death. But he doesn't know that he's a blind old man. He thinks he's dying.

So even though he's miscalculated by about 40 years, he thinks he better get this done. Get his house in order, pass on the family blessing, patriarchal blessing to his favorite son, Esau. Now, I don't know why he chose to give it to Esau.

We know Esau is his favorite, but that isn't enough reason. Because certainly Jacob must have known what God told Rebekah when she was pregnant. I mean, why wouldn't she tell him? How did it get written in the Bible? She kept it to herself.

You know, she didn't write the Bible. So, I mean, it's obvious that she would have communicated, I mean, it'd be very important information to her husband. God told me these are twins.

You know, the younger is going to be the one with the rights of progeniture and the older is going to serve him. Isaac would have known that God had said that. Unless he was maybe doubting that his wife had heard God right or something, but he still had a different favorite than God did.

And, of course, the sale of the birthright over the pot of stew, which was no doubt decades earlier, could hardly have been kept a secret. Jacob would have no reason to keep it a secret. You know, Esau might not be interested in talking about it, but Jacob would certainly talk about it to his family.

I mean, I can't believe that Isaac didn't know that Esau is supposed to get this stuff. But it was a possibility that a father could give a better blessing to the son who didn't have the birthright. And maybe maybe Isaac's upset that Jacob got the birthright and he still wants to give something of value to Esau, his favorite.

And for some reason, Isaac's not letting Rebecca know about this or Jacob. He has a private talk with Esau and says, go out, hunt me some venison, prepare it. You know how I like it.

Bring it to me. And after I eat, I'm satisfied. I'll give you the blessing.

Now, that kind of thing would normally be done at a big festival. I mean, it's sort of like the even at the weaning of Isaac, there had been a big feast and stuff. I mean, there's

there's these celebratory things in the Middle East.

Certainly the giving of the father's blessing would be at a feast. And yet Isaac says, just bring me the food. We'll just have this between ourselves.

You know, we'll just have a little feast. I'll have a feast and I'll give you the blessing. And it was very clear he didn't want Rebecca or Jacob to know about it.

So he either felt guilty about it or he just didn't want to have trouble in the family with his other members. So he says in verse two, Isaac says to Esau, behold, now I'm old. I do not know the day of my death.

Now, therefore, please take your weapons and your quiver and your bow. Go out to the field and hunt game for me and make me savory food, which such as I love and bring it to me that I may eat and my soul may bless you before I die. Now, this is I looked for the first time today at Dennis Prager's commentary on Genesis.

He's a Jew. He's he's kind of unofficially a Jewish rabbi. He speaks at synagogues and things like that.

He's written some commentaries on the Torah. And I was looking at it today because I'd never I had on my shelf. I'd never used it.

And he said, you know, Jewish, later Jewish law under the Torah, you wouldn't go and hunt with a bow and arrow and eat the animal. You had to slit the animal's throat. It had to die with a single blow.

You wouldn't have the animal running around with an arrow until it finally expired. Under Jewish law, I don't see it in the Torah, but apparently it's the way that rabbis understood the law. They they should slaughter it like a cow.

You don't you don't go and hunt and then follow it as it's running around wounded and things like that. And Prager mentioned that, you know, this shows that this story predates the Jewish law as it claims to. You know, I mean, it shows it's ancient because later Jews, at least later in Moses time, would have been sensitive about this.

Isaac wouldn't say, go out and hunt me a deer and do this. Likewise, he mentions that back in Chapter 18, when the when God came to visit Abraham at his tent and he fed him a meal, it says he gave him cheese and milk. And meat will later Jews have a custom.

You don't eat milk and meat at the same meal. And so Prager's point out that these are, you know, marks of authenticity and antiquity of these stories, because later Jews, if they were making it up, they wouldn't have Abraham eating milk and meat at the same table and serving it to God. And they wouldn't have Isaac saying, go hunt me some wild game.

You know, that's just not the way the Jews understood their dietary restrictions after the law was given. So, I mean, it's truly has the marks of a very ancient story, obviously, and as it is, it should. It says in verse five, now, Rebecca was listening when Isaac spoke to Esau, his son, and Esau went to the field to hunt game and to bring it.

So Rebecca spoke to Jacob. So they're going to do something secret to saying, indeed, I have. I heard your father speak to Esau, your brother saying, bring this game and make savory food for me that I may eat 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 to choice kids of the goats that I may 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.

Now, I have to say, I've only had venison very seldom. It's great. I've never eaten goat.

And I wouldn't have guessed that a man who had a favorite venison dish could mistake a meal of goat for it. Maybe goats taste a lot like venison. I'm not sure.

But I think probably it does talk about being spicy. It's very possible that there are certain spices they use that so, you know, so altered the taste that you couldn't really tell if it's venison or goat. But it worked, by the way.

I mean, Isaac didn't recognize it was goats instead of venison and says, then you shall take it to your father that he may eat it and he may bless you before his death. And Jacob said to Rebecca, his mother, look, Esau, my brother, is a hairy man and I'm a smooth skinned man. This was mentioned when they were born at their birth in chapter 25, says the first one came out all covered with red hair.

Harry. Now, you might think. How hairy exactly was he? Now, Esau, the name that was given to him means hairy.

So there's a very prominent feature of this baby born covered with red hair. Edom, his other name means red. Throughout history, there's been lots of redheads called red.

And so he's covered with red hair. But exactly how much? Well, Jacob, as we will see, in order to impersonate him. In case his father would feel his skin, put goat's skin with the hair on it, on his neck and his hands.

And later, when Isaac was suspicious, he didn't feel it. Said, oh, that's that's Esau. OK.

I mean, this guy has much hair on his body as a goat. Imagine this guy with long red hair all over his body. He's like a orangutan, you know.

Like the missing link. It's an amazing thing when you think about I've never even seen a

baby with that much hair. But this is what Jacob was concerned about.

So I'm a smooth man. In other words, I don't have much testosterone. That's not necessarily what it means, but it could.

Could mean. In any case, says, you know, my brother's a hairy man. What if my what if dad touches me and feels that he'll know I'm.

That I'm not Esau. In fact, he says, 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.

Now, it's perhaps to Jacob's credit that he objected to this scheme, but not for good reasons. He didn't want to bring a curse on himself. If his if his.

Ploy was discovered by his dad. He's not objecting to deceiving his father. He's objecting to the danger of getting caught at it.

And we're going to see that every person in this story is doing a wrong thing. There are four characters in this story, the parents and the two sons, and every one of them is doing something that they know is wrong. Isaac knew it was wrong to try to give the blessing to the son that God had not chosen.

Esau knew he'd already sold his birthright when his father said, hey, go help me some things so I can bless you. He should have said, dad, you know, remember, I sold my rights on this to Jacob a long time ago. And he said, you know, I mean, if he is an honest man, he should have done that.

Rebecca was not exactly straightforward with her husband. I mean, she didn't. One would think she should come to him, say, hey, I heard what you said to Esau.

You know very well. You're not supposed to give the blessing to Esau. Shame on you.

You know, you need to repent of that. And, you know, she could have done that, but instead she decides to fool him. And Jacob, probably the least guilty of all, only because he's spineless.

He knows this isn't okay, but he doesn't stand up to his mother. So he does the wrong thing too. There's not a virtuous person in this story.

And yet the will of God gets done, which is perhaps an important lesson of the story. In the sovereignty of God, he doesn't even need the willing, righteous cooperation of anybody to get the will of God done. It was God's will that Jacob should have the blessing and he got it.

But everybody involved with deceiving everybody else. And it's just a really kind of interesting story, though, complicated. And so he said, dad may recognize that I'm not

his son.

He may curse me instead for trying to deceive him. Verse 13, then his mother said to him, let the curse be on me, my son. Only let my voice, only obey my voice and go get them for me.

Now, they had to hurry. They had to get this all done, butcher these goats and all this stuff before Esau came back. And if he had a favorable hunting day, he might be back.

Who knows when, anytime. So this is a tense situation. If this is a movie, it has some tense music playing, even though he gets away with it.

You know what could happen. Esau might come in with more arrows in his quiver. And recognize that someone's trying to steal what he thinks is his.

He should know better, but he's not, he's not being completely honest here either. Now, his mother says, let me get the curse. She's basically welcoming the curse that her husband would utter on Jacob, on herself.

Which I guess is something a person could do. Just like you could curse somebody and it's supposed to work. I guess you could say, well, I'll take that curse.

I'm the one responsible here. Anyway, it didn't happen. And he went and got them and he brought them to his mother and his mother made savory food, such as his father loved.

Then Rebecca took the choice clothes of her elder son, Esau. Now, why have to do that? Why wear Esau's clothes if the father's blind? Well, because they smell like Esau. Esau is an outdoorsman.

And whether you're an outdoorsman or not, in a society where people don't bathe, but once a year. Those are going to be very distinctively smelly clothes, you know. Jacob probably didn't smell real good either.

I mean, nobody did. No one smelled good in those days. They didn't take showers every day.

They didn't have deodorant. They were in a hot, sweaty desert area. But Esau's clothes, it's obvious.

The reason for the clothes is not to deceive Isaac visually, since he's blind, but to deceive his other senses. He didn't have his eyesight, but he had four other senses. And he was deceived by all of them.

A sense of taste by disguising goat meat to be venison. The smell by wearing Esau's clothes. A sense of feel by the hair on the arms and the neck.

And of course, of hearing. And this is one that almost didn't work. Because Jacob couldn't quite impersonate his brother perfectly.

There's a famous line in here. The voice is Jacob's, but the hands are Esau's. It's actually become a Jewish proverb for, you know, something's not adding up here.

You know, in situations, different kinds of situations where something is not quite adding up. You know, the voice is Jacob's, but the hands are Esau's. You know, but the voice didn't quite fool her dad, but all the other senses did.

And so, Rebekah's thought of everything. I mean, who'd have thought that, you know, you've got to smell like your brother, too. And not just bring the food.

So she went and got the clothes and took the choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which were with her in the house. Put them on Jacob, her youngest son. She's dressing him.

He's a man almost 80 years old. His mom's still putting his clothes on for him. He's not exactly a manly man, I think.

You know, kind of a mama's boy, though he was a very competent man. Once he went to do business with Laban, he was a good wheeler and dealer and competent. And he had some physical strength when he wrestled with God all night.

So it's not like he didn't have the natural strength of a man. It's that he was coddler because he was his mother's favorite and he was indoors most of the time. But she gets him dressed.

She even puts the food in his hands. So then she gave savory food and bread, which she had prepared and put it in the hands of Jacob. It's like he's not doing anything.

He goes and gets the goats and she she gets the clothes. She puts the clothes on him. She cooks the goats, hands it into Jacob, tells him what to do.

So he went to his father and said, my father. And he said, here am I. Who are you, my son? Now, it must not have been Jacob's natural voice. He must have been trying to imitate Esau, but not well enough for his father to think it was Esau.

Wait, who are you? You call me father? Who are you? You're my son? Which one are you? It's possible that Jacob began just by saying that one word just to see if this is going to work or not. You know, I'll just call him father and say nothing else and see if I get past that. Her, you know, is he going to recognize my voice? And he says, who are you? And Jacob said to his father, I'm Esau, your firstborn.

I have done just as you told me. Please arise. He's probably talking to a lower register than usual.

Sit and eat my game, you know, that your soul may bless me. But Isaac said to his son, how is it that you found it so quickly, my son? And he said, because the Lord, your God brought it to me. So Jacob's even taken the name of the Lord in vain here in a way, you know, lying, using the name of Yahweh.

Then Isaac said to Jacob, please come near that I may feel you, my son. Isaac's not really convinced here. He says, OK, your voice isn't quite what I'm expecting.

You're back a little earlier than I thought you were. So let's do a few more tests here. Come and let me feel your skin.

And he's also going to smell it and so forth. So he's you can see that Isaac is not buying it completely, which means that Jacob was probably starting to pit out. You know, he's probably, whoa, this is not working, which might have made him smell more like Esau.

As a matter of fact, it says. He says, so Jacob went near to Isaac, his father, and he felt him and said, the voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands of the hands of Esau. And he did not recognize him because his hands were hairy, like like his brother Esau's hands.

So he blessed him and he said, are you really my son? So even he was still saying, come on, is this is this a are you trying to fool me here? You know, are you really Esau? And, you know, this must have really made Jacob his conscience must have hurt a little if he had some conscience to say, yeah, I am, you know, to to keep even when his dad's asking, are you lying to me? No, no, I'm not lying. I'm really Esau. So he said, bring near to me and I'll eat my son's game so that my soul may bless you.

So he brought it near to him and he ate and he brought him wine and drink. He drank, excuse me. And his father, Isaac, said to him, come near my son 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 is blessed.

Therefore, may God give you of the dew of heaven, of the fatness of the earth and plenty of grain and wine. Let peoples serve you and nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren and let your mother's sons, interesting phrase, bow down to you.

Cursed be everyone who curses you and blessed be those who bless you. Now, I said essentially that he says, may your mother's sons serve you. There was only one other son, his twin brother.

And that twin brother, Isaac's referred to as your mother's son. Isaac had his son Esau and Rebecca had her son Jacob. Perhaps just saying mother's sons may simply be a way of saying, you know, I'm just going to cover everything.

Never know if Rebecca may have another child someday. If she does, they're all covered here. Any other sons in the family, you're over a little.

No, there's only one other than that. Now, I'd point out to you that what he blessed him with here did not really include any of the spiritual aspects of the promise made to Abram. And there are some people, scholars who feel like Isaac deliberately just kept it to the physical.

You know, lots of crops, lots of wheat, lots of prosperity, protection from your enemies. If they hurt you, may they be hurt and so forth. But he leaves out this part about all the nations of the world being blessed through him.

And some feel that since Isaac was now persuaded as much as he, I guess, could be that this was Esau, he knew Esau was not the right one to give those blessings to. It's almost like he wanted to divide up the birthright and give Esau the physical benefits and reserve the other for Jacob. At the end of the chapter, he gives another blessing to Jacob.

He doesn't know this is Jacob, but later when he does know it's Jacob, he does call, he does bless him with the spiritual aspects of the blessing. So it's almost like he's maybe deliberately withholding it. This is a rather abbreviated blessing and it only has to do with physical benefits.

Now, then 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 hunting. So this is, you know, one guy goes out, you know, exit stage right, enter stage left, you know, it's just like a drama. It's a little like, you know, the book of Job.

No sooner had this messenger stopped talking than this other messenger came in. No sooner had he stopped, another came. I'm not sure if it really happened quite instantly like that, or if it's simply a vigorous way of telling the story.

No, let's keep this thing moving here. You know, he'd hardly left, you know, might've been an hour earlier, who knows? Or maybe not. Maybe he walked out one tent door and he's off once in the other.

It's hard to know if this is a rather Middle Eastern way of storytelling to kind of make things move along a little bit. Like when Mark's gospel, unlike the other gospels, and immediately Jesus did that, and then immediately he did that, then immediately he did that, and then immediately he did that. It's like in the first two chapters of Mark, it seems like there's half a dozen or more immediately.

And it's like, let's make this a vigorous tale. Let's keep this moving here. You know, I don't know that that might not be something of a hyperbole.

Maybe it was a way that they kept the stories, you know, active, interesting, engaging by



being... There's plenty of hyperbole in the Bible, so it could well be. Or it might be literal. I'm not saying it isn't.

So he'd scarcely gone out and he saw it comes in. And he also had made savory food. Of course, his father's not going to be very hungry now.

And brought it to his father. He said to his father, let my father arise and eat his son's game, that your soul may bless me. And his father Isaac said to him, who are you? That must have made his father suspicious.

Wait a minute. I just did all that. Who's in here now telling me to do it again? And I think the jig was up.

I think Isaac suddenly knew. Okay, I get it. That's why it didn't sound like Esau.

That's why the voice was Jacob's. It was Jacob, you know. So he says, who are you? And he said, I'm your son.

You're firstborn, Esau. Then Isaac trembled exceedingly, realizing that he'd been caught by God. You know, he'd been fooled.

And he trembled exceedingly. And he said, who? Where is the one who hunted game and brought it to me? And I ate all of it before you came and I have blessed him. And indeed, he shall be blessed.

Yeah, it's not going to be undone. This last statement, indeed he will be blessed, was usually interpreted to mean that he suddenly realized that God had thwarted his ruse and God was into Jacob getting the blessing. And so, well, I tried to not let this happen, but he's going to be blessed.

He's the one. I can't change it now. When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry.

He said to his father, bless me, even me also, oh, my father. But he said, your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing. Esau said, is he not rightly called Jacob, which means a supplanter? For he has supplanted me these two times.

He took away my birthright and now look, he's taking away my blessing. Well, hey, you sold your birthright fair and square. No one had a gun to your head.

You know, you just wanted that food. So, I mean, here now he's complaining about his earlier actions and he's suffering the consequences of a bad decision he made earlier. And now he's complaining about both, both the bad decision he made and the present consequences.

He says he's supplying me these two times. Now he's taking my blessing. And he said,

have you not reserved a blessing for me? Did you give him everything or is there anything left over you can give me? I want something anyway.

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've sustained him.

What shall I now do for you, my son? And Esau said to his father, have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, oh my father. And Esau lift up his voice and wept. Now, this is the weeping of remorse over realizing how much some stupid choice you made earlier is now costing you.

There have been many people in a position somewhat analogous to this, not the exact, this is a unique case. But I mean, obviously, there's times when you you have the choice to make a spiritual choice or a carnal choice. You make the carnal choice and then you wail over it later on.

This may be, as in a case like myself, making a stupid choice in marriage the first time. And and wailing later as, you know, my my daughter from my marriage raised in a broken home and those kinds of things. You know, the same, you know, marry in haste, repent at leisure, you know, you have plenty of time to repent if you marry in haste.

And many people have made some unspiritual decisions or wrong decisions, unwise decisions, and then they weep afterward. Now, this weeping of Esau, as I think most of you probably know, is referred to in Hebrews chapter 12 in a way that I think many people have failed to correctly understand it. I've heard many people quote this passage from Hebrews 12 in a way that is not intended.

It says in Hebrews 12, verse 15 through 17, looking diligently, lest anyone fall short of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble. And by this, many be defiled, lest there be a fornicator or a profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

Now, Esau is called a profane man, which means he didn't live a sacred life. He's compared with fornicators, though it's not necessarily saying he was a fornicator. He could have been.

He married some pretty ungodly women and several of them. So, one might argue that he was a fornicator, but also one might argue that the writer of Hebrews is saying any Christian who commits fornication is making the same kind of mistake Esau made by throwing away something of value, your purity, your virginity, your sanctity, for what, a moment of satisfying an appetite? I mean, you got to know that once Esau realized the birthright he'd given up was of value, he was kicking himself all over the desert, you

know, for what did I get out of it? A meal. If you've ever been on a fast and you intend to fast, you know, a certain length of time, but it gets kind of hard.

Eventually, you're kind of tempted by a meal. You say, oh, well, I fast a lot. I'll break that fast now.

I don't know if you're like me, but you know, you say finally, okay, I'm hungry. I've been hungry for days. I'm going to eat this.

You know, it's gonna be so good. Eat two bites. Suddenly you're not hungry anymore.

You think, you know, couldn't I have finished this fast? I mean, what was so great about these two bites? It's like when the edge is off your hunger. When you got the edge of your hunger, you know, you'd sell your soul for a meal almost. And when you do sell your soul for a meal and you taste the meal, you think, well, that wasn't bad, but it certainly wasn't all that was advertised to be.

Because every, to the Bible says to the hungry soul, every bitter thing is sweet, but to the full soul, you know, he loathes the honeycomb. The idea is that when you're hungry, everything looks good. There's a deceptive lure of your appetites, your flesh really, to eat.

But once you do it, it's done. And, you know, it's just another meal. And it's maybe different from other meals in that it's the only one you'll regret.

I gave up my fasting for this. You know, I gave for a food that's just ordinary food, like I could eat five times a day, any ordinary day. And it's not even all that great.

And no food is all that great that you feel good about breaking your fast for if you broke it prematurely. And you don't have to eat the whole meal to regret it. It takes two bites and you're not hungry anymore, probably.

I mean, you've got, you're hungry enough to eat the rest of the meal, but it's, the edge is off. And you think, what in the world? What a stupid mistake that was. And the writer of Hebrews compares Esau doing that to a fornicator, a Christian who fornicates.

Anyone who's fornicated, and even if you haven't fornicated, even if you've only had sex within marriage in legitimate situations, you know very well, leading up to it, it makes all kinds of promises of ecstasy and tremendous, but how long does it really last? I mean, even if it's the best encounter in the world, it's going to be done in probably minutes. And once it's over, it's almost like it, like it never happened. You know, it's a passing pleasure.

That's what eating a meal is, a passing pleasure. Sex is a passing pleasure. So many pleasures of the flesh are just so transient.

And they promise so much. And then even if they, even if they fulfill their promise, they don't, you know, all they can promise is a few minutes, you know, and if you give up your holiness, I mean, how many people in hard marriages have broken down and just had, you know, a one night stand or affair of some kind and destroyed their marriage, destroyed their children, everything like that. And it's like, how much they must be kicking themselves saying, that was not even worth it.

You know, why did I think that was going to be worth it? And now look, it's irreversible. I'm never going to be innocent of that thing again. I'm not, my, my, my wife or husband will never be able to look at me as a faithful person again, my children, you know, it's just everything's, I've destroyed so much and gotten so little back.

That's what a fornicator, who's a Christian who falls to fornication, they've got to think that way because that's the way it is. And the writer of Hebrews says, don't let anyone be a fornicator or a profane person like Esau. Esau may or may not have been a fornicator, but he was a profane person who did the same mistake that a Christian's making when they commit fornication.

There was an appetite, is calling out to him, it's make all kinds of promises. It's going to cost him something, but it just seems like it's going to be worth it. So he gets that bowl of soup and it isn't worth it.

It's just not all bad, you know, it's not, it's just not worth it. And then you find out later what you've lost. Reuben had the same experience.

Reuben, one of the sons of Jacob, the oldest, who would have had the birthright. Reuben at some point in his story, there's a, just in Genesis, just interjects this statement. And Reuben went into his father's concubine, as I recall, I think it was Bilhah, might have been Zilpah, but one of the two concubines of Jacob, his son Reuben went in and slept with him.

And it's mentioned and nothing else is said of it. I think it says Jacob knew, Jacob knew that, you know, or he was angry or something like that, but nothing came of it. It seemed like a moment of passion, a moment of sin.

And Reuben walks away. He's gotten away with it. Or did he? No.

When his father's on his deathbed, he's passed out the blessings. Here's Reuben, the firstborn, should be getting it all. And Jacob says, Reuben, he's as unstable as water.

He will not prosper. He's not getting anything, you know, because he says, because he went up to his father's bed. And then he speaks to those around him.

He went to his father's bed. Can you believe it? That's what Jacob says. He's, it's like he's, he's prophesying, like he's in a, almost like in a prophetic trance or something like

that.

But then he's like, he says he went up to his father, but then he's like, says to people, he went up to my bed. Can you believe that? Okay, let's go back to the trance again. You know, it's like, I just can't believe he did that.

And it is, I mean, Reuben found out what Esau found out. You have an appetite that's demanding gratification, promising that it's worth it. You succumb to it.

It's done. Any pleasure that was ever to be had, it's in the past. You know, that pleasure is never going to come back.

I mean, you can do the same sin again, maybe have the pleasure, but you can't. What you got is gone. It's not coming back.

But what you lost is also not coming back, you know? And when a Christian commits fornication, especially, especially the first time, but it's not really a better the second, third or fourth time. But when a Christian has been pure and they get tempted and they succumb, they lose something. They'll never get back.

When a young girl is a virgin and she's seduced or falls innocent, but she loses. Man, obviously she's never going to have her virginity back. There's a lot of Christian preachers are, oh, you can have a second virginity once you're a Christian.

Well, I mean, that's a nice thought. You can talk that way if you want to. The truth is no.

You get to lose your virginity one time, you get to, you know, break your record of faithfulness to God. You can do it many times, but the first time is the time when you can never again say I've been faithful, you know? So, I mean, that's what the writer of Hebrews is saying. Think of Esau, think of what he lost.

You'll lose something every bit as bad or worse if you do the same mistake. The Hebrews goes on. It talks about that afterward when he wanted to have the blessing, he was denied the blessing and he was rejected.

And here's the parts of so often misunderstood. For he found no place of repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears. Well, that's what we're reading about here in Genesis.

He's wept and cried, seeking it. But many preachers say he was trying to repent, but he's beyond repentance. He even cried and got emotional.

He still couldn't repent. He had simply gone too far. He was beyond the point of being able to repent.

He he found no place for repentance, even though he sought it. Now, they're mistaking

what's going on. We don't find in Genesis when when Esau is crying that he's trying to repent.

He's trying to get his father to repent. That's change his mind. The word repent means change my dad.

Can't you change your mind? You like me better than Jacob. Can't you do something for me? Did I miss out completely? Can't this situation be turned around? No, sorry, not. He was looking for a place of repentance that is of a change of mind, not for his himself, but for his father.

He's appealing to his father to change his mind. And even though he wept and so forth, his dad didn't change his mind. This is Hebrews is not saying that Esau was trying to repent, but simply couldn't do it, even though he got emotional about it.

He's saying he found no place for repentance, meaning for his father. He was trying to get his father to turn around, to repent and do something. But there was no place for that.

There's no possibility of it. He could weep and cry, make his appeal, but it was done. What was done was done.

Okay. Now we need to get through this. Obviously fast.

We're pretty, pretty much out of time, but let's verse 39, Genesis 27, 38. Then Isaac, his father answered and said to him, behold, your dwelling. Here's the blessing he gives Esau.

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. Now this first line, behold, your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth. It sounds like that's the same thing he gave to Jacob, the fatness of the earth.

And if you have a different translation, almost every modern English translation reads it a little differently. The Hebrew literally does say of the fatness of the earth, but of can mean from. And most modern translations say your fatness will be separated from or away from the fatness of the earth.

In other words, I gave the fatness of the earth to your brother. You're going to have to have something else. You're not going to have the fatness of the earth.

Your, your inheritance will be not that it'll be cut off from the fatness of the earth. And I will say this, the Hebrew doesn't necessarily say that. And again, when I looked at what Prager said, he thought it was saying that he was given prosperity too, like Jacob was

too.

But Christian Bibles don't usually render it that way. You read it. I looked at what I looked at.

I looked at the new American standard, the NIV, the ESV, even the new living translation, the Christian standard Bible and the new RSV. Those are all pretty major ones. Every one of them said your, your inheritance will be, your dwelling should be away from the fatness of the earth.

So negative. But then he says, you'll live by your sword and you shall serve your brother. Now that, that he'd serve his brothers already prophesied when he's in the womb.

That's what God told Rebecca when the twins were in the womb. But it says you're going to be serving your brother. But when, uh, when you become restless, you'll break the yoke from his neck.

That is, you'll break free. You won't be serving him anymore. Now this never happened to Esau or Jacob.

Esau never was in a position to serve Jacob. Jacob, in fact, was once in a position to bow down seven times to Esau after this, seeking his clemency, but Esau never bowed down to Jacob. There was never a time when Esau served Jacob, but Edom served Israel.

And of course, these prophecies have to do not with the men as individuals, but the destiny of their, their offspring. And so Esau's offspring were the Edomites and under David, they, they were made to serve Israel. They were brought under bondage, but under Jehoram, a later king of Judah, they rebelled and broke free.

You can read about that in second Kings. Chapter 20 through 22, when Jehoram was king, it says, Edom rebelled and Jehoram went out, tried to bring them back under subjection, but Jehoram was defeated. And the Edomites remain free to this day.

So the promise that they break the yoke of Jacob, that's, that's what this is talking. So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing, which his father, with which his father blessed him. And Esau said in his heart, the days for mourning of my father are at hand.

Then I will kill my brother. Now he said it within himself, but he must've mumbled it out loud. Cause Rebecca learned of it.

The words of Esau, her older son were told to Rebecca. So she sat and called Jacob, her younger son and said, 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, to, to my brother, in Haran and stay with him a few days until your brother's fury turns away.

This few days was extended to 20 years. Uh, so Rebecca said, you know, the curse come on me. Well, the curse did come on her in a sense.

She lost her favorite son for 20 years because of this ruse. And, uh, so she suffered for her deeds. Everyone in the family suffered somewhat, but, uh, but she suffered possibly most.

She lived much longer, but there's never any record of Jacob seeing his mother again. After this, he didn't see his dad and he came back and buried his dad. But we never read of Rebecca ever seen Jacob again after this parting of company.

She'd stay, stay a few days away. Now that ended up being 20 years until your brother's fury is passed until your brother's anger turns away from you. And he forgets what you've done to him.

What me, mom, I think this was, you tell me first what I did. You're putting this all on me. Yeah.

Well, you did it. Yeah. I know I tempted you.

I told you to do it, but it's on you. You know, you did it. Um, it says, then I will send once he's, once he's no longer angry, I'll send and bring you from there.

Why should I be bereaved also of you both in one day? Now, what she means by that is if Esau carries out his plan and kills Jacob, well, by any civilized law, Esau would have been put to death. So she'd lose both of her sons in the same day. And Rebecca said to Isaac, I'm weary of my life.

Now she's coming to her husband. She's not telling him that Esau is planning to kill Jacob. That's her real motive for suggesting.

She's going to suggest sending Jacob away to Laban's house in another country, up in Syria or Padinarum and, um, but she has to come up with some reason for it. And it was a legitimate reason. It's just not the reason she really had.

She wants to say to Isaac, I don't want Jacob to marry Canaanite women like Esau did. So let's send him back where I came from. Remember Abraham had sent a servant back to get Isaac a bride, you know, in Rebecca from the same town in Padinarum.

That's where Laban and Rebecca's family lives. So she said, I'm weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth, meaning Esau's two wives. If Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth like these, who are the daughters of the land, what good is my life to me? And so she didn't really make a suggestion, but she basically said, you know, these boys are marriageable.

I mean, Esau's already got two wives. Jacob is 80 years old. He doesn't have a wife yet.



I don't want him to marry these local girls. So she kind of let him think it was his idea. Yeah, I guess it is about time to look for a wife.

He's 80 years old. I guess he's old enough. So, well, so in the next chapter, which we won't go into, but Isaac calls Jacob in and says, I want you to go to Laban's and find a wife for yourself.

And he also gave him a parting blessing, which did include some of the parts of the Abrahamic blessing that he had withheld the first time he blessed Jacob when he thought he was blessing Esau.