Sibling Rivalry

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[0:00] If you wouldn't mind opening your Bibles to Genesis chapter 27. We're going to be covering a lot of scripture, you guys probably know I have some siblings, one of which is very close to me in age.

And there were lots of things that we did at the same time and competed with. And one of those, have you guys ever heard of academic bowl? You know, where you're sitting at the table, they ask questions, you buzz in, all that stuff.
Well, I'm a nerd. I'm sorry. That's just what I am. But my brother and I loved doing that. And one of the things that we tried to do was we were trying to see who could score the most points.
And it was very interesting the way things worked out, because one of the practical things you do, because there's like 10 seconds after they ask a question, the timer goes off and stuff, and if no one answers, then they just move on to the next question.
But our coach would always tell us, if you don't know the answer, it doesn't hurt to just buzz in and throw out a guess. If someone doesn't know the answer, that's totally fine. So I did exactly what I was supposed to do.
[1:22] I was like, bro, I don't know the answer to this. Let me just throw out a guess. And sometimes I was right. Well, my brother, it was really interesting, but he always made comments about the guesses that I would do.

And if you guys have ever been at an academic meet, it's supposed to be a quiet thing. Like you're not supposed to talk unless your name is called on and you buzz in. And so I would buzz in and guess. And then immediately after they'd say that's incorrect, my brother Dylan would look at me and say, that's a stupid answer.
Like in the middle of the meet and everything. It got so bad that literally our coach would not have us both in at the same time, at different times. So, but anyways, that was mine and my brother Dylan's sibling rivalry.
And what we'll see here in the book of Genesis is a sibling rivalry taken way too far. Lots of sins are committed and everybody is looking out for themselves. And I hope that you'll see this evening that it's even despite all of this sin that God shows his grace to the characters in the story, right?
Some of you guys have been to a jewelry store and I've used this illustration before, but if you're going to a jewelry store and you're looking at a particular piece of jewelry or a jewel itself, whenever you're examining it, the jeweler will set it against a black felt pad.
[2:36] And what that black felt pad does is it protects it, but it also allows the jewel to shine all the brighter. And one of the things I hope you'll see this evening is that even in the mess of sin in all of these characters in the story, it just makes God's grace shine all the brighter.

So without further ado, let's dive in. And before we start, I want to give just a little bit of context. What we're about to observe is the blessing stealing between Jacob and Esau.
And we will zoom into characters like Jacob, Esau, Rebecca, and Isaac. And I think it's important to understand before we start that we're diving into chapter 27 and there's some context in 25 and 26 that we don't have time to get to.
But suffice it to say, God has already told Rebecca and Isaac that Jacob will be the child that inherits the blessing. Also, in that culture, when it comes to the firstborn, being the firstborn was the most prominent and they would take over the family after the father passed.
So it's incredibly important who gets this blessing. But God said Jacob would be the one even though Esau was the firstborn. So we are going to take this chapter and a little bit afterward and take it in piecemeal, read a little bit at a time, and comment through.

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[3:55] And we'll see what we can take out of it. So I want to start in Genesis 27, and I want to start by reading verses 1 through 4. It says this, So basically, what's going on here is Isaac, he's up there in years, right?

He's realizing that he's about to die. He's not getting any younger, and he knows that he needs to pass this blessing on. It's about time. And Moses has already established that Isaac had a little bit shallower of a character earlier in chapter 25.
In verse 28 of chapter 25, it says this, that Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game. But Rebecca loved Jacob. One commentator says this about Isaac.
He says, Can you imagine that the reason that Isaac is going to bless Esau, quote unquote, is because he cooks from some food?
Keep that in mind. So Esau has prepared his whole life to win his father's blessing. He's been cooking and hunting for decades, right?
[5:33] Isn't that tragic? But Esau is seeing this as his moment to shine. He's seeing this as the moment that I've been waiting for my whole life. I can finally win God's, or I can finally win my father's favor and get this blessing that I've been chasing after.

I've been doing hard work out in the field. And it's his time to shine. But wait, what did God say? What is Isaac doing here? God already told Isaac that Jacob would be the one to inherit the blessing.
And on top of that, in verse 4, there's no mention of a blessing for Jacob at all, or even both of the kids. It's just Esau. Now, Isaac's motivation to bless Esau was not necessarily unfounded.
The Bible describes that Esau and Jacob were two very different characters, right? Esau was a more manly character. He spent his time hunting out in the fields, and he was described as hairy, right?
He was more masculine. But Jacob loves to dwell in tents and cook with his mother. And this is an agrarian culture at the time. There was a lot of outdoor work you did, right? And you needed someone who would work hard, right?
[6:41] And who wasn't afraid to get dirty. And if you're looking at your two sons and you're Isaac, you're like, this kid probably will be the one, right? But one last thing that I want to point out before we move on, why did a son need to bring food for a blessing in the first place?

You'll see Isaac being shallower in character as the text goes on, but can you see this right here? Isaac has, or Esau has to earn his father's blessing. He doesn't get it by way of being the firstborn. And the implication is that no food equals no blessing. So going on in verses five through 10, it says this, now Rebecca, Isaac's wife, was listening when Isaac spoke to his son Esau.
So Esau went to the field to hunt for game and bring it. Rebecca said to her son Jacob, I heard your father speak to your brother Esau. Bring me game and prepare for me delicious food that I may eat it and bless you before the Lord before I die.
Now therefore, my son, obey my voice as I command you. Go to the flock and bring me two good young goats that I may prepare for them, from them delicious food for your father, such as he loves.
[7:45] And you shall bring it to your father to eat so that he may bless you before he dies. So essentially what's going on here is Rebecca kind of sneakingly overhears this conversation Isaac is having with Esau.

And she says, wait, hold on. I love Jacob. I'm not going to let him miss out on this blessing. So she's not going to let the son that she loves miss this promised blessing. After all, God spoke to her and told her that the older will serve the younger.
And she saw her husband's plot to kind of give Esau the blessing and she tries to create her own. Now, there's a lot to say about this situation and women in this passage.
Adam listens to Eve and sinned. Abraham listened to Sarah and conceived a child through Hagar. And now Jacob is listening to the voice of another woman into sin.
And what we learn here and similar stories in the Bible is that God created men to lead women to holiness, not follow them into sin. That's what God created men for, to lead women to holiness, not follow them into sin.
[8:53] So Rebecca sets the stage. She puts this plan forward to her son and she's intending to deceive her husband here. Going on in verse 11, it says, But Jacob said to Rebekah, his mother, Behold, my brother Esau is a hairy man and I'm a smooth man.

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Perhaps my father will feel me and I shall seem to be mocking him and bring a curse upon myself and not a blessing. His mother said to him, Let your curse be on me, my son. Only obey my voice and go and bring them to me.
So Jacob, he fights back. He says, is this plan actually going to work? Right? Jacob starts thinking this plan through and he realizes some things. But Esau is hairy and he isn't.
His voice also isn't the same as Esau's. And we'll see that play out a little bit more later. This plan, essentially, Jacob's thinking, may not work. Now, through all of this in these verses, we see that Jacob isn't even worried about sinning against God or deceiving his father or cheating his brother. He just wants to make sure the plan will actually work. It looks like something will fail and he won't get the blessing. And, oh, Rebecca, she's not convincing her son well, so she says she'll take the fall.
[10:06] Right? She's got some smooth words. She says, My son, listen to me. Obey my voice. This is going to work. I promise. And if so, I'll take the fall if it blows up. Remember those words in verse 13.

She says, Let your curse be on me. Let's go on. Verses 14 through 17. So he went down and took them and brought them to his mother. And his mother prepared delicious foods such as his father loved.
Then Rebecca took the best garments of Esau, her older son, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob, her younger son. And the skins of the young goat she put on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck.
And she put the delicious food and the bread which she had prepared into the hand of her son Jacob. So here is the stage being set. But this verse begins by telling us that Jacob listened to the voice of the woman.
And right here, Moses is telling us that Jacob is failing at his job as a man. Right? What he should have done in that situation is said, But mom, God already promised this blessing and we don't need to sin to get it.
[11:09] God's sovereign. He's worthy. He's trustworthy and faithful. He will give this blessing to me. We don't have to lie to do it. But he doesn't. He goes along with it. And some of you are probably thinking, What are these best garments?

Well, just in brief, Esau was a man of the field and a hunter. And they were concerned about the smell of the garments. And this wasn't like your latest cologne manly fragrance.
This was the scent of the field. Right? Probably didn't smell too good. But the best scent was the scent of the field. It was a sense of working hard and good labor.
Now, when we think about the relationship Rebecca had with Jacob, we're not exactly told why she loved Jacob over Esau.
Perhaps it was because he helped her in the house. Perhaps it was because she felt sorry for him because he wasn't necessarily the masculine kid in the house. Or it could be for some other reason.
[12:08] But also, Rebecca didn't even need to put this plan together. Because, once again, what did God already say? If Rebecca had trusted him to begin with, she wouldn't have been so worried as to bring this about on her own.

But nevertheless, she sets everything up. She's got everything set up. She cooks the food. She puts the garments on her son. And then she sends Jacob in. And there's almost a good pause right here as the audience is in suspense for what's about to happen.
Right? This giant blessing stealing, this plan is being put to works. Everything's being set up. And now we get to see it play out. So, as we read these next few verses, I want to just make note of every lie that Jacob gives.
And I'll point them out as I read the text. So, starting in verse 18 and following, it says, So he, Jacob, went into his father and said, My father. And he said, Here I am. Who are you, my son? Jacob said to his father, I am Esau. Lie number one. You're firstborn. I have done. Lie number two. As you told me. Lie number three. Now sit up and eat of my game.
[13:14] Lie number four. That your soul may bless me. But Isaac said to his son, How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son? He answered, Because the Lord your God granted me success.

Lie number five. Then Isaac said to Jacob, Please come near that I may feel you, my son, to know whether you are really my son Esau or not. So Jacob went near to Isaac his father, who felt him,

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and said, The voice is Jacob's voice.
There it is. But the hands are the hands of Esau. And he did not recognize him because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands. So he blessed him. He said, Are you really my son Esau? He answered, I am. Lie number six. Then he said, Bring it near to me, that I may eat of my son's game and bless you. So he brought it near to him and he ate. And he brought him wine.
He drank. It's a very tragic story. So this is what happens with sin. Sin compounds. You realize that Jacob had to tell six lies, one of which is taking the Lord's name in vain.
[14:16] Jacob literally took the name of the Lord in vain in order to get what he wants. It's a violation of the third commandment. God has flown out the window and is a last thought in this whole situation.

Look at how many lies. And also, one thing that's important to point out is, like, even in the scenario, Jacob's not even playing by the rules before the game even started.
He didn't put any of this together. His mom put the food together and put everything and set everything up. He didn't do anything. It was Rebecca who did all the work. So one of the things that you see is just in this situation, the plan's starting to fail.
After Jacob tried to lie once, he's having to lie some more and continue to lie. And the sin is going to have to continue to grow just so Jacob can get what he wants. And one more thing that I want to point out in this.
Now, while the Old Testament law wouldn't come until later, in two places, there are literally laws against abusing blind people. That's exactly what Jacob is doing. His father is blind.
[15:18] He can't really see. And Jacob's taking advantage of that in order to get what he wants. This is a very dysfunctional family. So sin has put Jacob in quite a mess.

But we saw at the end he got what he wanted. Verse 26 and following. Then his father Isaac said to him, Come near and kiss me, my son. So he came near and kissed him.
And Isaac smelled the smell of his garments, the smell of the field, and blessed him and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field that the Lord has blessed. May the Lord give you of the dew of heaven and of the fatness of the earth and plenty of grain and wine.
Let people serve you and nations bow down to you. Be Lord over your brothers and may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you and blessed be everyone who blesses you.
Isaac smelled the smell of nature on his son and finally blessed him. And you could get to the point if you read it innocently and thought, like, well, I mean, Isaac could have just been wanting to give a general blessing to his son.
[16:24] But if you read the actual blessing, Isaac knew what he was doing. Look at the last part. He says, Cursed be everyone who curses you and blessed be everyone who blesses you.

That is the exact promise that God gave to Abraham. Isaac was intending to continue God's promise through Esau and not Jacob. Isaac knew exactly what he was doing.
And he did all of this thinking that he was blessing Esau rather than Jacob. But as we see, nobody can thwart God's plans. Nobody can. Verse 30 and following.
As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, when Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, Esau his brother came in from his hunting. He also prepared delicious food and brought it to his father.
And he said to his father, Let my father arise and eat of his son's game that you may bless me.
Esau's coming out from the field. He worked hard and now he's seeking to get his reward. He's set everything up and he's ready.
[17:22] Verse 32. His father Isaac said to him, Who are you? Esau, or he answered, I am your son, your firstborn Esau. Then Isaac trembled very violently and said, Who was it then that hunted game and brought it to me?

And I ate it all before you came. And I have blessed him. Yes, and he shall be blessed. As soon as Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry and said to his father, Bless me, even me also.
Oh, my father. But he said, Your brother came deceitfully and he has taken away your blessing.
Yeah, he took it away. But you gave it to him, Isaac. Remember that?
Verse 36. Esau said, Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has cheated me these two times. He took away my birthright and behold, now he has taken away my blessing. Then he said, Have you

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not reserved a blessing for me?
Isaac answered and said to Esau, Behold, I have made him lord over you. And all his brothers I have given to him for servants. And with grain and wine I have sustained him. What then can I do for you, my son?
[18:28] Esau said to his father, Have you but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, oh, my father. And Esau lifted up his voice and wept. Then Isaac, his father, answered and said to him, Behold, away from the fatness of the earth shall your dwelling be, and away from the dew of heaven on high.

By your sword you shall live, and you shall serve your brother. But when you grow restless, you shall break his yoke from your neck. Now, as we go back and unpack that, we see that God shows a bit of a sense of humor, and that literally right after Jacob leaves, we see Esau come right in, right?
And we see that Isaac starts trembling, because he understands that the jig is up, that he was deceived, that his plan didn't work, that Esau wasn't the one who received the blessing.
And the reason he trembled violently is possibly because he knew his son. He knew his son had a temper, as we'll see a little bit further on. And he realized what had just happened.
Now, you can imagine probably how disappointed Esau was. He had worked hard to chase after his father's love his whole life, and now it's been stolen from him. See, all Esau has known growing up is this kind of transactional love.
[19:44] I scratch my dad's back, he scratches mine. And he knows that the thing that is most valuable as a son in that age is the blessing. And he chased after it his whole life, sets everything up, and now it's stolen from him.

It's taken from him. You can imagine why he would be so upset. And even after all this, even after he realizes he doesn't get the blessing, he's still clawing and scratching for something.
He wants something for his hard work. Now, I want to clear some things up real quick in Esau's recollection of the events. He says in verse 35, Your brother came deceitfully and taken away your blessing.
Esau said, Is he not rightly named Jacob? You guys probably know the name Jacob means he cheats. Pretty straightforward there. And he says, For he has cheated me these two times.
So, just to clarify, Esau is the father of the Edomites. Edom means red. And another connection there is that whenever he sold his birthright, he sold it for a pot of red stew.
[20:46] So, there's a connection there. But Esau recalls and he says that Jacob stole it from him. No, Esau gave it away. And it says in the text that he despised his birthright afterward.

Esau was a man who only cared about what he was getting in the moment. Right? He even gave away the thing that was the most valuable to his name for a pot of stew. He said, What good is my birthright if I die of starvation?
And he gives it away. But he says that Jacob cheated him out of it. Which isn't true. He was only after what felt good in the moment. Which was a bowl of stew. And also, I want you guys to see how Isaac passes the buck here.
Isaac gave the blessing away. Jacob didn't just take it. The only way that a blessing could be passed on from a father to a child is by the father giving it away. Right? But Isaac's passing the buck.
He said, Well, I mean, he kind of took it from you. He came deceitfully. And Isaac had given all the blessing away and he thought that his plot was successful. And if he had given all this to Esau, it's really convenient.
[21:50] Because if he had actually blessed Esau as he had planned and God came to him and said, What did you do? He'd say, Well, I blessed Esau. I don't have anything else to bless Jacob with. So, I mean, I don't know what we're going to do.

He could have passed the buck even then. But he could have shrugged his shoulders to God. But God's sovereignty prevailed. And Esau is still in three different places here.
He's still chasing after that blessing. Not God at all. No character so far has been chasing after God. Right? And then we get to the actual blessing. Some blessing, right?
I would say that Esau, the older brother, got basically like the hand-me-ups of blessings here. I mean, he literally just told him that you're going to live by your sword. You're not going to inherit the good lands. You're going to fight with your brother.

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Pretty much it. But to Jacob, you're going to inherit all the fat of the land and all of those things. But going on, verse 41. And I'll pause in a couple of different places for a little bit of emphasis.
[22:47] It says this. Now, Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him. And Esau said to himself, The days of mourning for my father are approaching. Then I will kill my brother Jacob.

I just want to pause there for a second. When I was growing up and I was first reading through the Bible, one of the things that stuck out to me was Matthew 5. When Jesus would say, You've heard it said, Do not do X, but I tell you whoever does this has committed whatever with them in your heart. Right? And one of the things that always stood out to me was anger and murder. Right? Jesus says, You've heard it said, Do not murder, but I tell you whoever is angry with his brother is liable to judgment. And for a while, I just couldn't make that connection.
I was like, What? I mean, like, Is it every time you're angry with somebody, like, they just die? Right? I mean, I was trying to figure it out. And then I started thinking, If you think through the biblical stories, anger leads to murder so often.
Right? And we don't even get four chapters in the Bible before it happens. Cain is angry with his brother Abel, so he murders him. And we see Esau's angry with his brother Jacob. So he seeks to murder him.
[23:51] Right? Joseph's brothers are angry with him, so they want to kill him. And even the Jews in the New Testament are so angry with Jesus and what he's doing that they seek to kill him. And going on, he said, Can you imagine comforting yourself at the thought of murdering your own brother?

Esau is in wicked sin here. Then we see, going on, starting in verse 42, it says, Yeah, like that worked last time, mom.
Obey my voice. Arise, flee to Laban, my brother in Haran, and stay with him a while, until your brother's fury turns away, until your brother's anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him.
Then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereft of you both in one day? Then Rebecca said to Isaac, I loathe my life because of the Hittite women.
If Jacob marries one of the Hittite women like these, one of the women of the land, what good will my life be to me? So there's a few things that are important to unpack here, just for some clarification, right?
[25:05] Notice that Rebecca gives the exact same words she gave last time. She tried to plot something. If you imagine being in Jacob's shoes, the last time that I followed your plans, mom, I almost got murdered.

As a matter of fact, Esau wants to murder me. Is Isaac going to want to murder me next? Right? She says, Obey my voice. I've got a better idea this time. Then verse 45, read that again. She says, until your brother's anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him.
I'm sorry, but what? What you have done to him. What did she say in verse 13? Let your curse be upon me, my son. Right? This woman just straight up passes the buck.
She lied to her son's face when the fire got hot. And she not only didn't break the truth to Isaac and Esau and say, hey, this was my idea. I'm sorry.
There's this whole thing blew up. She not only didn't tell them the truth, but she just let everything fall on Jacob and sent him to her brother far away. She's like, I mean, this thing can be fixed if I just send him away for a bit, let Esau calm down.
[26:07] It'll be fine. Right? And then we end the chapter with an odd mention of some women. Right? And when it comes to Hittite women, it's recorded earlier that Esau married two Hittite women.

And the text says that they made life bitter for Isaac and Rebecca for 20 years at least. Now, that kind of, while we're talking about ages, it's important to note, why was Isaac so surprised that Jacob got back early?
Well, both Jacob and Esau were twins and they were in between 60 and 70 years old. So you can imagine why Isaac was like, how did you come back so quickly? I didn't know that you were that chipper.
Right? And they weren't young whippersnappers by any means. So you can imagine why Isaac was surprised. And we get more about the particular women going on. So I'm going to read the last part

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of our text in 28 verses 1 through 5.
It says this, Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and directed him. You must not take a wife from the Canaanite women. Arise, go to Paddan Aram, to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father, and take as your wife from there one of the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother.
[27:15] God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you. Does that sound familiar? That you may become a company of peoples. May he give the blessing of Abraham to you and to your offspring after you, that you may take possession of the land of your sojournings that God gave to Abraham.

Last verse, Thus Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Paddan Aram, to Laban, the son of Bethuel, the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob, and Esau's mother.
So when we think about wives, Isaac faced the exact same situation we see in verse 1. If you know the story of Abraham and Isaac, Abraham sent his son, or his servant, a long way to find Isaac a wife that was not Canaanite.
Right? People who were in the land of Canaan were pagans. They did not know the Lord. And Isaac understood that who you marry is important. Right? And he understood that the woman that you spend the rest of your life with will have a great effect on you, for better or for worse.
Essentially, you can boil it down as this. Evil wife equals miserable life. And that's why Rebekah was upset if Jacob would marry a Hittite woman or some pagan woman. And then, toward the end, we see Isaac start to come around.
[28:31] Right? He knows he's blessing Jacob at this point. He starts recalling more of the Abrahamic promises. And he goes back to the promise given to Abraham and continues to give it to its rightful heir.

And then he sends his wimpy, thief, coward of a son away to his brother-in-law just so his other son doesn't murder him. Friends, what we have seen so far is just the entire breakdown of a family unit. Because of sin. This is the only way that they can preserve Jacob's life. And there's one more comment I want to make. These are all the main characters in the story. They're not just some fringe Israelite that gets a couple of verses here and there.
But these are the main characters of the story that God's promise goes through. Right? And that's the story. That's the story of the blessing stealing. And what I want to do now is zoom in on each of these characters of the story and their sin and then hopefully apply the text to us today.
So, let's start with Isaac. Isaac's past, this whole younger sibling gets the blessing wasn't a foreign concept to Isaac. Right? Isaac had received the blessing of God and not Ishmael.
[29:40] Right? Who was the older sibling of Abraham or older son of Abraham. And Seth and Cain did this as well and God will go on throughout the text and the Old Testament to show favor to the younger, weaker, more faithful sibling.

And Isaac had every reason to trust God but he trusted his eyes or rather his nose and his ears instead. His preference toward Esau wasn't even godly though. He just enjoyed his cooking.
And interestingly enough, Isaac would go on to live another four decades after this point. He comes to the beginning of our text and says I'm about to die but he would go on to live another 40 years.
And when it comes to the blessing notice that while he's speaking to while he thinks he's speaking to Esau the words of the blessing are such that it applies exactly to Jacob.
He doesn't mention Esau by name once. God sovereignly works through sin. And everyone knew that you can't take blessings back. What Isaac did was irreversible and everyone knew it.
[30:44] And so Isaac was forced to send his son away. He could have obeyed the Lord initially and blessed Jacob. He could have sat Esau down and explained to him and said sometimes trusting the Lord's hard but we need to obey him even when we don't feel like it.

But he didn't do that. And now one of his sons wants to kill the other and the only way to save Jacob's life is to send him to one of the biggest crooks in the entire Bible. Let's look at Esau. Going on in God's design this was an installment in the pattern of God favoring the younger, weaker, and righteous over the older.
And we'll eventually see this in Joseph and his brothers and David and his brothers and so on. Throughout Genesis though Esau is never shown to be a man of God. The reason why he's prophesied to be at odds with Jacob is because Jacob will eventually do what is righteous and Esau is only concerned with what he wants.

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That's why he took two foreign women going against his parents' wishes and those women made his parents' lives bitter. At Esau's age this probably wasn't the first time that he had to perform for his father's love and affection.
And being a calculating man he expected his return on investment. And after things don't go his way he gives himself over to anger. And this should sound familiar. Genesis chapter 4 Cain was giving himself over to anger.
[32:04] Right? And that led him to even murder his own brother. But there's an observation here. If Esau had even been successful in killing Jacob that wouldn't have reversed the blessing back to him.

It would have just further added to the sins that have been already committed. And in the end Esau chose sin rather than righteousness. Let's look at Rebecca. This story teaches us where Jacob gets his skills in scheming and lying and deceit from.
She even took Rebecca took a page out of her mother-in-law Sarah's book and tries to scheme her way into advancing God's plan. I know God said this but I think I can get it to work this way. As mentioned earlier Rebecca didn't need to plot this at all because if she had trusted in God in the first place she would have known that he was going to bring it about.
And Rebecca even deceives Jacob with some smooth words like the serpent in the garden. Let your curse be on me my son. And like Isaac she was probably celebrating after this blessing after the blessing until their geriatric son returned from his time in the field.
She then has to hatch another plan just to keep her son alive after this plan blew up in her face. Now why is this tragic? Because Rebecca ruined her life and her family.
[33:20] We aren't told how long she thinks it will take for Esau to cool off probably a couple weeks or so but we know that Jacob never sees Rebecca again. The son that she loves the son that she wanted the best for she never gets to see again because of her sin.

She dies before he returns and it takes him 20 years to get back. It's even more shameful that her death isn't even mentioned in the Bible but her nurse's death is.
Rebecca ruined her life. Now I'm not the biggest fan of hypotheticals but sometimes I like to think and one question I like to ask Christians is like if you could sit down with a character in the Bible that's obviously not Jesus because everyone that would be our answer and just buy him a cup of coffee or just talk with them for a bit who would you pick?
My answer's not as common but mine would be Rebecca and there's a reason why. I would love to ask her some questions. How did you live a faithful life to the Lord after ruining it with sin?
How did you interact with your husband and son after ruining their trust? How did you cope with never seeing the son you loved again? And she chose the way that seemed right to her and it ended in completely broken family and eventually her own death.
[34:38] Proverbs 14.12 says there is a way that seems right to a man but its end is the way to death. So that's Rebecca. Now let's look at Jacob. So how many of you guys watched those reality TV competition shows?

Right? Yeah? A few of you. Yeah that was when I was they were like all the rage like a little bit over a decade ago like there was a TV show every single hour. That was something that was my mom's favorite to watch and I'd watch it with her and there are lots of different people with different talents and body types and different athletes and others.
There's a common trend though. Usually there are people who could outrun out swim and out perform every other contestant but you never see them make it to the end and the question is why? And it's because the weaker contestants know they have to use their heads to win because they won't win in the physical stuff and Jacob understood that to a T. Jacob knew that he wasn't going to beat Esau out in the field especially at their age so he had to outsmart him and that's what he did with the pot of stew in Genesis 25 and that's what he did in our text this evening.
While having smarts isn't a bad thing we see Jacob using that to just commit gross sin in this text. So what should Jacob have done? Well Jacob wasn't a child.
[35:58] He wasn't like a 10 year old or 11 year old. He didn't have to listen to his mother's sinful plot. He should have led her to trust God and also he was just looking out for himself.

His main concern was that the plan wouldn't work. Not the fact that he was sinning against God taking the Lord's name in vain lying through his teeth. Right? And we went through all the lies and sin that Jacob did before but remember that Jacob was willing to even take the Lord's name in vain

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to get what he wants.
Jacob was willing to steal from his brother and abuse his blind poor old father to get what he really wanted. No concern for God here. Now thankfully that's not how Jacob's story ends.
Now while all the characters should have been struck down in that moment God had a plan and he had a covenant to keep. Jacob starts off as this cowardly thief but the Lord is going to put him through the school of hard knocks.
He's going to learn what it's like to be deceived and stolen from by your family and he's going to learn what it truly means to serve the Lord. Jacob is leaving his family a coward a weak and spineless man but he's going to return a faithful man of God who seeks to protect his own family just in a few chapters.
[37:12] And the Lord goes on to bless Jacob by allowing him to sire the twelve tribes of the world or the twelve tribes of Israel that God would bless the entire world through. So you may be thinking right what does this necessarily have to do with me?

Well I hope that you can look at this story and see that Jacob didn't deserve God's grace in all of this. See Jacob's life was steeped in sin but God had set his love on him before he was born and determined that he was going to be faithful even when Jacob wasn't.
And the same is true for you and I today. If you're a Christian today that's what God did with you. You didn't do anything to earn God's love and neither did I. In fact we did the opposite.
We did nothing but sin but our God is gracious. He sent the thing he valued most his only son to die for your sin and mine all because he loved us.
Jesus endured the worst things that we can imagine because he was determined to redeem a people for his own possession. He brought us out of our darkness and into his marvelous light by his blood.
[38:22] Jesus plucked us from the path of hell and adopted us into his own family. He saved us from his own wrath and gave us his mercy. And if you don't know Christ today you can.

If you don't know his love and his grace you can today. If you turn from your sin and place your faith in Jesus you will be saved from the wrath to come. You will have eternal life and you will know a grace and mercy and love that nothing can take away.
This is the God we serve. So I want to end our time this evening by taking a step back and thinking about four things that we can reflect on from this passage.
The first is that we can't earn God's favor. This is just a snapshot into the lives of these characters but just like if we took a few more snapshots in yours or my life there's a lot of sin.
Our instinct when we mess up or displease somebody is to quickly do a couple of good things to cover up the bad. Sometimes we can even think that way with God but that's just a cheap bribe.
[39:31] It's like the murderer on trial sliding the judge a $20 bill under the table. God favors us because of Jesus not our works and when we stumble we rest in Jesus.

We don't try to work back into God's grace because it was never dependent on us to begin with. We can't earn God's favor. Secondly one of the things that we see is that sin brings destruction.
Now sin promises pleasure it promises to last and you may even be able to hide it this time. Isaac, Rebecca and Jacob certainly thought they could and look at what happened.
This entire family was destroyed because of sin and nothing has changed all the way today. Sin still destroys lives and families today and I think it's important for us to remember this at all times and especially when we're tempted.
Whatever is promised sin only brings destruction and ruin. Think about the stories of Adam of Samson of David Judas right all warped by sin and ruined their lives as a result.
[40:39] That's what sin brings nothing but destruction. Thirdly we see God's grace is greater than our sin. God's grace is greater than our sin.

It's been said that if something is repeated often it's important. In the Bible through many different stories like this one points us to this truth. God shows us in his word the flaws and sins of people and to continue to show us that we aren't good enough.
And this is the backdrop of grace. God set his love on a people to be a picture of his mercy and grace through the cross. It's against our sin and unworthiness that God's grace shines all the brighter.
One theologian put it this way because of our sin we have a great need for a savior and because of Jesus Christ we have a great savior for our need. Remember this truth throughout your life.

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Know that you cannot out sin the grace of God. And this is not a license to sin but I hope it gives you a bit of rest when you do stumble. Run to Jesus.
[41:49] His grace is sufficient for you. Lastly and I think probably more prominently in this text we see that trusting God is always the right answer.

trusting God is always the right answer. Now you guys are young and I will tell you this as you are seeking wisdom and seeking to learn things one of the wisest things you can do is learn from other people's mistakes.
Right? That way you don't make the same ones. And the Bible gives us plenty of stories showing what happens when people don't trust God despite what they see. Think about the garden.
Surely you will not die. Well, God may not have my best interests at heart so I'm going to go ahead and do things my way. Right? Think about the sister fibs when Abraham says she's not my wife she's my sister.
God promised Abraham that he was going to have a son. The son hadn't come yet but Abraham was like well, I mean I want to protect my own self. I don't need to trust God. Right? And even this situation people just did not trust God.
[42:50] God had promised that Jacob would be the blessed son and nobody trusted that. Nobody wanted to see God's plan work. And there are going to be times in your life where trusting God is easy.

There are going to be times where it's not so easy. The things that you see challenge what you believe to be true. And maybe like Rebecca you're tempted to sin to kind of speed up God's will this process.
And in those previous stories those were legitimate tests of faith in God and every single one of them failed. Pressures from the outside shook what they knew to be true and the result was ruined. Think about this story. An entire family was torn apart all because they thought that there was a better answer than trusting God. And I want to encourage you with this that in all times in your life learn from the Bible and remember that trusting God is always the right answer.
That's what biblical faith is. It's faith in the God who's proven himself to be true who's rescued you from your sin brought you from death to life and is with you every step of the way. It's the same God that Paul believes in and writes in Philippians 1 verse 6 that I am sure of this that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion.
[44:05] So I want to encourage you to trust that to trust in this God today. And I hope that our study this evening has been helpful and I hope you guys have fruitful small groups let me pray for us and we will go to small groups.

Father I thank you for this day Lord I thank you for your grace and your goodness Lord I thank you for stories like that of the blessing stealing in Genesis 27 that remind us of these truths that you put into our lives so often.
Lord I ask that the things we learn from this text would cause us to run to the cross that we would run to Christ and trust in him for everything even when life is shaking down around us. Lord I ask that you would help our students to have fruitful small groups that they would have good discussion and that Lord you would be glorified for the rest of the evening and it's in Christ's name that I pray.
Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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