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# Genesis 27-28 Narration Summary

Chuck Smith narration summary

## Genesis 27 - Isaac's blessing, human scheming, and God's sovereign purpose

### Isaac's condition and intention

- Isaac is old, blind, and believes he is near death, though he will actually live many more years.
- Chuck reflects that physical decline can be harder than death itself, because a person may remain alive while the body can no longer function well.
- Isaac calls Esau and asks him to hunt venison, prepare the savory meat he loves, and then receive the paternal blessing.

### Esau wanted the blessing, but not the birthright

- Earlier, Esau had despised and sold his birthright.
- Though he did not value the spiritual responsibility tied to the birthright, he still wanted the material and patriarchal blessing.
- Chuck emphasizes that the blessing properly belonged with the birthright.

### God had already chosen Jacob

- Before Jacob and Esau were born, God told Rebekah that "the elder shall serve the younger."
- Chuck stresses that this was God's sovereign election, based on God's foreknowledge, not on human merit.
- God knew beforehand the kind of men Esau and Jacob would become.
- Esau's later actions only confirmed the kind of man God already knew him to be: profane, material-minded, and uninterested in spiritual things.

### Rebekah and Jacob tried to "help God out"

- Rebekah overhears Isaac's plan and instructs Jacob to deceive his father.
- She prepares goat meat to taste like venison and disguises Jacob with goat skins and Esau's smell.
- Jacob's concern is not moral at first, but practical: he fears being caught.
- Chuck's main lesson here is important: Rebekah and Jacob were not wrong in believing God's purpose for Jacob. Their error was thinking God needed their deception in order to fulfill His will.
- Chuck applies this broadly: God does not need human scheming, manipulation, or dishonesty to accomplish His purposes.

### Isaac blesses Jacob

- Isaac is suspicious because the voice sounds like Jacob, but the hands feel like Esau.
- He eats, smells the garments, and gives the blessing.
- The blessing includes prosperity, dominion, rule over brethren, and the Abrahamic principle: blessing for those who bless him, cursing for those who curse him.

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## **Esau's grief was not repentance**

- Esau returns, discovers what happened, and weeps bitterly.
- He begs for a blessing, but Isaac explains the main blessing has already been given.
- Chuck explains Hebrews 12: Esau did not cry tears of repentance. He cried because he lost the blessing.
- His tears were tears of bitterness, anger, and loss - not true repentance before God.

## **Esau's hatred and the root of bitterness**

- Esau resolves to kill Jacob after Isaac dies.
- Chuck connects this to Hebrews' warning about a root of bitterness.
- This bitterness shaped not only Esau personally, but also the future hostility of Edom toward Israel.

## **Rebekah sends Jacob away**

- Rebekah tells Jacob to flee to her brother Laban in Haran until Esau's anger passes.
- She then persuades Isaac that Jacob should not marry a Canaanite woman.
- Chuck notes a sad consequence: Rebekah told Jacob to stay away only "a few days," but Jacob would be gone for many years, and apparently Rebekah never saw him again before her death.

## **Genesis 28 - Jacob sent away, blessed again, and met by God at Bethel**

### **Isaac sends Jacob to Haran**

- Isaac now openly blesses Jacob again.
- He tells him not to take a wife from the daughters of Canaan, but from the family of Laban.
- This second blessing is significant because Isaac now deliberately passes on the blessing of Abraham, the covenant promises, and the inheritance of the land.

### **Esau reacts again**

- Esau sees that Isaac does not approve of Canaanite wives.
- In response, he marries a daughter of Ishmael in addition to his other wives.
- This appears to be another fleshly attempt to gain favor without truly changing his heart.

### **Jacob's journey and loneliness**

- Jacob leaves Beersheba and travels toward Haran.
- He stops for the night in a barren place, uses stones for a pillow, and falls asleep.
- Chuck paints this as a hard and lonely moment in Jacob's life: uncertain future, forced departure, rough surroundings, and no clear sense of what lies ahead.

### **Jacob's dream of the ladder**

- Jacob dreams of a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, with angels ascending and descending on it.
- The Lord stands above it and repeats the covenant promises: the land will belong to Jacob and his descendants, his seed will spread abroad, all families of the earth will be blessed in his seed, and God will be with him, keep him, and bring him back.

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## Chuck's key interpretation of the ladder

- Chuck says Jacob may have fallen asleep feeling how vast heaven was and how far away God seemed.
- The ladder represents the way man can reach God.
- He connects this directly to John 1, where Jesus tells Nathanael he will see angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.
- Therefore, the ladder is a picture of Jesus Christ, the one true mediator between heaven and earth.

## “Surely the Lord is in this place”

- Jacob awakens and says: “Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.”
- Chuck gives this strong devotional application: God is present even in barren places, in lonely places, in uncertain places, in painful places, in places of testing and fear.
- What seemed like a hard wilderness became a holy place because Jacob became conscious of God's presence.

## Bethel becomes a place of worship

- Jacob sets up the stone as a pillar, pours oil on it, and names the place Bethel (“house of God”).
- The place of weariness and uncertainty becomes an altar and a memorial of encounter with God.

## Jacob's vow

- Jacob vows that since God will be with him, keep him, provide for him, and bring him back in peace, then the Lord will be his God.
- Chuck explains that Jacob is not bargaining with God here.
- The “if” should be understood more like “since”: since God has promised this, Jacob commits himself to the Lord.
- He also promises to give God a tenth of what God gives him.

## Chuck Smith's major teaching themes from this narration

### God's purposes do not need human deceit

- Rebekah and Jacob believed the right thing about God's plan, but used the wrong method. God can fulfill His purposes without fleshly help.

### Election is tied to God's foreknowledge

- God's choice of Jacob over Esau was not arbitrary cruelty, but flowed from God's perfect knowledge of what each would become.

### Esau's real problem was profanity, not bad luck

- Esau did not lose the blessing because life was unfair. He lost it because he despised spiritual things, then became bitter when consequences followed.

### Bitterness destroys

- Esau's tears were not repentance but bitterness. Chuck highlights bitterness as spiritually dangerous and defiling.

### Jesus is the ladder

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- Jacob's dream ultimately points to Christ as the one bridge between God and man.

### **God is present in wilderness seasons**

- Bethel teaches that places of hardship can become places of revelation when a person becomes aware of God's presence.

### **God's promises invite trust, not bargaining**

- Jacob's vow is not a negotiation, but a response of commitment to what God has already promised.