

GENESIS

Lesson 12

Now Esau hated Jacob . . .

GOD'S PROMISE TO ISAAC

Genesis 26:1-5

Genesis 26 opens with a famine in the land. It was common for people in Palestine to migrate to Egypt or the coast of the Mediterranean Sea (in Philistine territory) during times of severe drought. Isaac must have decided to go to Egypt, but God tells him not to go. Isaac then settles in Gerar. This is the first recorded revelation to Isaac.

1. What promises does God make to Isaac in Genesis 26:1-5?

ISAAC AND ABIMELECH

Genesis 26:6-35

Abimelech seems to be a title rather than a personal name for the kings of Gerar, just as Pharaoh was a title for the kings of Egypt.¹

2. What did Isaac claim about Rebekah in Genesis 26:7 and why did he make this claim?

3. How did Abimelech discover that Rebekah was the wife of Isaac? (Genesis 26:8).

4. Where might Isaac have learned this type of deception?

¹ Crawford, C.C. *Genesis: The Book of Beginnings*, Vol. 4 in the Bible Study Textbook Series. Joplin, Missouri, College Press, 1971.

When Abimelech learned the Rebekah was the wife of Isaac, he ordered all his people to not touch them or they would be put to death. Even though Isaac showed an appalling lack of faith, God blessed him and he became very wealthy with outstanding crop yields and growing flocks and herds. The Philistines were envious of Isaac and even filled his wells. When he moved to the Valley of Gerar, Isaac dug a well that his father had previously dug, but the local inhabitants disputed with him, so he opened another well and once again the local herdsmen claimed the water as their own. Only after digging a third well did he find peace with the herdsmen.

Next Isaac moved on to Beersheba where the Lord appeared to him for a second time repeating the promises he had made previously. Here Isaac built an altar and dug a well.

5. Describe what happens between Isaac and Abimelech in Genesis 26:26-31.

6. What did Esau do in Genesis 26:34-35 and what were the repercussions for Isaac and Rebekah?

ISAAC BLESSES JACOB

Genesis 27:1-28:9

Previously, Jacob had taken advantage of Esau to claim the birthright and now he deceives his father who had become nearly blind and likely somewhat senile. In Genesis 26, Isaac had deceived Abimelech about Rebekah and now he will be deceived by Rebekah and Jacob. James Smith outlines this chapter as: 1) a declining father, 2) a doubting mother, 3) a deceitful son, and 4) a despairing son.²



Isaac was now 137 years old and thought he was going to die even though he ended up living to the age of 180. Jacob and Esau were 75 years old at the time of these events.

7. What is the request of Isaac in Genesis 27:2-4?

The blessing that Isaac wished to give to Esau was no trivial matter. It consisted of a call for blessing, a prediction, and a prayer and was considered a solemn and binding act. Why Isaac wanted to place this blessing on Esau is unknown. Typically the blessing would go to the oldest son, which Esau was, but God had promised that the older would serve the younger. Was Isaac trying to circumvent the will of God? We do not know.

² Smith, James E. *Old Testament Survey Series: The Pentateuch*. Joplin, Missouri: College Press, 1992.

8. Describe the deception that Rebekah proposed to Jacob. (Genesis 27:5-17)
9. How did this show a lack of faith on the part of Rebekah?
10. Describe the deception of Jacob. (Genesis 27:18-25)
11. Describe the blessing of Isaac (which Jacob received) in Genesis 27:27-29
12. What was the reaction of Esau when he learned that Jacob had received the blessing (Genesis 27:30-38; Hebrews 12:17).
13. What predictions did Isaac make about Esau in Genesis 27:39-40?

Esau was so angry with Jacob that he planned to kill him. Rebekah hearing of the plot decided to send Jacob back to her brother for protection. She proposed to Isaac to send Jacob back so that he did not marry a Canaanite. The wives of Esau had brought great pain to Rebekah. Isaac agreed and sent Jacob away and told him to marry one of his uncle Laban's daughters. Isaac sends Jacob away with a blessing. Esau seeing how much the Canaanite women displeased his father, decided to marry a daughter of Ishmael.

JACOB'S DREAM

Genesis 28:10-22

Jacob stopped in a place called Luz and tired to get some sleep using a stone for a pillow. While he was asleep the Lord spoke to him in a dream. This is his first revelation from God. In the dream Jacob saw a ladder from earth to heaven with angels ascending and descending on the ladder. These were to illustrate prayers going up to heaven and God's answers coming down to earth. This vision was meant as an encouragement to Jacob.

14. What promise does God make to Jacob in the dream? (Genesis 28:13-15)

15. How did Jacob react to the dream? (Genesis 28:18-22)

JACOB MARRIES LEAH AND RACHEL.

Genesis 29:1-30

This episode in the life of Jacob records how the deceiver is deceived. Jacob had taken advantage of his brother and lied to his father. Now it is Laban the brother of his mother who takes advantage of Jacob. It had been a 725 kilometer trip from Beersheba to Haran and when Jacob arrives he sees a well with three flocks of sheep nearby.



When Abraham's servant had gone to find a wife for Isaac in the same location years before, he had traveled with a great number of gifts. Jacob now apparently traveled with no gifts. Abraham's servant prayed for God's guidance to find the right woman. There is no indication that Jacob sought God in the same way. Jacob wept for joy when he met Rachel, but the Scripture does not say that he thanked God.

16. When his uncle Laban offered Jacob compensation for his work, what was Jacob's request? (Genesis 29:15-18)

17. Describe the appearance of Rachel and Leah. (Genesis 29:17)

18. How did Laban take advantage of Jacob? (Genesis 29:18-30)

Jacob had pretended to be his older brother to gain the birthright and now Leah pretends to be her younger sister. Jacob is deceived by Leah, just as Jacob had deceived Esau. Throughout the wedding Jacob could not tell that Leah was not Rachel. The bride was almost certainly veiled and the tent was dark. Just as Jacob had deceived his father because his father had poor eyesight, Laban and Leah took advantage of Jacob because he could not see in the darkness and through the veil.

After the seven day wedding celebration, Jacob was given Rachel as a wife also. Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah. In all he worked for Laban for 14 years to gain Rachel as his wife.