

**Genesis 27: Jacob Gets the Blessing**  
**08-19-18 PM**

Genesis 27 is a disappointing look at the patriarchs Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob and Esau. It is disappointing because it reveals the worst of them; Jacob is a liar, Rebekah is a plotter, Isaac is foolish and Esau fails to see the truth. One wonders why Rebekah simply did not tell Isaac of the message of God related in Genesis 25, or why Isaac failed to inquire of God when giving God's blessing; why did Jacob refuse the deception, or Esau realize that this was the result of his foolish behavior?

There is a question here that is sometimes asked: is it possible that lying was acceptable before God? There were many liars among the patriarchs:

- Abraham lies (TWICE) about Sarah
- Isaac lied about Rebekah
- Jacob lied to his father
- Jacob lied to his father-in-law (Gen. 31)
- Simeon & Levi lied to Hamor (Gen. 34)

Interesting, they might have defended that by saying these were necessary lies; Abraham and Isaac lied for their protection; Jacob lied to get what God said was His, he lied to his father in lie to return to the land God called him, and Simeon & Levi lied to get justice. If there are good reasons to lie, these may have been some. But even if not, there are times in Scripture where it seems that lies accomplished the will of God. There are the Israelite midwives (Ex. 1), and Rahab protecting the spies (Josh. 2). These two cases in particular have been cited as evidence that there might be a righteous lie; the theologian Martin Luther once said "*a good hearty lie for the sake of the good and for the Christian Church, a lie in case of necessity, a useful lie.*" Such lies "*would not be against God.*"

One important point that needs to be understood is that the Old Testament often lacks a moral commentary (as opposed to the New Testament). It is often a record of historical events without a moral declaration. An example of this is when Esau despised his birthright. It is not commented on in Genesis, but in the New Testament we are told it was morally evil. This does not mean the Old Testament is without moral statement; in fact, almost all things have moral implications based on consequences. Again the example is Esau despising his birthright. This is a chief characteristic of the Old Testament, it is a law of consequences, a law of sin and death (Romans 2:14, 8:2).

This is an important contrast with the New Testament. An important fact Paul brings up in Acts 17 is that God's revelation no longer leaves ambiguity; "*Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent*" (Acts 17:30). The New Testament is filled with moral commentary by design. Simply look at the first lie in the church age, Ananias and Saphira. The New Testament texts are full of admonitions not to lie ("Do not lie" – Colossians 3:9, Ephesians 4:24). In the New Covenant, consequences are no longer a teaching tool; all things are revealed by the Word of God.

If consequences were the method of revealing morality in the Old Testament we ought to look back to the lies we have seen and ask what the consequences were.

- Abraham lies (TWICE) about Sarah.....Pharaoh & Abimelech were struck with plagues
- Isaac lied about Rebekah..... Abimelech warns he was nearly cursed
- Jacob lied to his father..... his brother hated him and sought to kill him
- Jacob lied to his father-in-law (Gen. 31)..... His father in law pursued him intended to harm
- Simeon & Levi lied to Hamor (Gen. 34)..... Jacob's reputation and safety were destroyed

The conclusion is simple: lying has always been evil – John 8:44. God did not condone lying, even if it was used by God to bring about a righteous conclusion. We see adultery, murder, theft, and many other sins which were committed in the Old Testament that were used by God for His purposes. Such sins are NEVER condoned.

The big idea from here on is this: God did not condone Jacob's lying, but God DID approve of his desires. We see that in the Old Testament God overlooked the flaws of men (David, Moses, Samuel, Hezekiah, Josiah, etc) because FAITH is the credit of righteousness – Romans 4:3. This is still true today; those who live by faith are seen by God not in their sins, but with a credited righteousness.