

# Sermon Study Guide



## #2: Intrigue & Deception

HOME: Finding Redemption in the Messiness of Life

February 2, 2020 | Dr. Stephen G. Tan

*In this series we will look at the life of Jacob to help us identify the sin issues that causes messiness in life and dysfunction in the family, and how we can find redemption in these messes.*

### Reflect

Intrigue and deception are sadly prevalent in many of our relationships at work, in school, in church, and even at home. Have you ever experienced being deceived by a loved one? How did you feel about it?

### Read and Discuss

#### Scripture

Genesis 27:1-41

#### Discussion Questions

1. In biblical times and culture, giving of blessings orally is as binding as a written will in today's context. Chapter 27 begins with an account of a blind Isaac giving his favorite son, Esau, his blessings as a first-born son. What did Isaac instruct Esau to do before Isaac gives Esau his blessing (v. 1-4)? Discuss how parents give inheritance to their children in your culture.
2. Scripture relates that what Isaac planned to do didn't turn out the way he wanted it to happen. A premeditated serious deception took place. From this true-to-life drama, we can gather five principles to learn from:
  - a. **Using deception to get your way shows a lack of trust in God (v. 5-10).** Rebekah knew exactly that it was God's will for Jacob to receive the blessings instead of Esau. But instead of waiting on God to work it out, she deceived both her husband and older son. What exactly did she do in connivance with her favorite son Jacob? Why do you think she did what she did? What could she have done instead of deceiving Isaac and Esau?
    - b. **Practicing deception diminishes our spiritual concerns and sensitivities (v. 11-12).** Jacob was more concerned that he would get caught rather than being concerned that what he was doing was wrong. Share real life examples of how, even among Christians, people try to cover up sin with another sin. How does it show that they are worried about being caught for doing something wrong but undervalue the wrong things they did? How do these thoughts and actions diminish spiritual concern and sensitivities?
    - c. **When in doubt, don't do it. It may not be the Lord's will (v. 21-29).** Isaac doubted whether the son he was about to bless was really Esau, but instead of calling for someone to verify it for him, he went ahead and blessed him. Discuss how doubts can be a positive way in seeking and affirming God's will. What does Ephesians 4:3 and 1 Corinthians 1:10 say about peace and unity in regard to God's way of doing things? How does personal agenda, interest and preferences make you miss the will of God? How should you avoid it?
    - d. **The truth will always come out; deception will always be exposed (v. 30-36).** How did Rebekah's and Jacob's deception been brought to light? How did the people concerned feel after the exposure? Do you ever entertain the thought that sins done in secret will remain a secret forever? Why or why not?

e. ***The consequence of deception is devastating, it is not worth it (v. 37-41).***

Esau desperately pleaded from his father blessings, but Isaac could not give it to him. As a result, Esau hated Jacob and promised to kill him after their father's death. The deceptive acts of Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Esau resulted in the division of the family for decades to come. Why is this not in God's plan? Would His will come to pass without deception? How should the consequences of sin keep you from doing what is wrong, deceptive, or outright sinful actions?

*Respond*

**In Walk:** Satan is fond of deceiving people so that we will not obey God, but as believers we need to live a life of righteousness. If you are tempted to live a life of deception, remember that it shows a lack of trust in God, that practicing it would diminish your spiritual concerns and sensitivities. Bear in mind that when you are in doubt, don't do it because it may not be the will of God, and always remember that the truth will always come out and deception will always be exposed. Before you take action, think of the devastating consequences of deception; it is not worth it. Think about these things and ask yourself if there is something deceiving you have done in your life. Pray that God will help you to get out of it and live truthfully with His grace.

**In Prayer:** Heavenly Father, thank You that You are the God of truth and holiness. As Your child, You want me to live in righteousness as well. Thank You that if there is no sin in my life, then there is nothing to expose and to suffer the consequences of sin for. Help me, Lord, to be honest in my dealings with my family and with other people I encounter. Help my life to give honor to Your Name as I testify about you to others. In Jesus' Name. Amen.