

**THE FLESH VS. THE SPIRIT,
AN EPOCH STRUGGLE**
Genesis 26:34-27:46

INTRODUCTION

As we study through the Bible, Genesis 27 gives us a glimpse into the dynamics of Isaac's family. This is a family of some messed up folks – real people – who made plans that opposed God's perfect and known will. Let's learn from them, and take heart that the Lord chooses to bless and use such imperfect people. The focus of this study will cause us to consider **The Flesh vs. The Spirit, An Epoch Struggle**.

DIGGING DEEPER

Read Genesis 26:34-27:46 several times. Remember, Isaac (and Jacob) have been chosen by God to play a part in His plan for the salvation of mankind. In observing this story from each person's perspective, look for practical application as you study through this chapter. Character studies help us to relate and learn specific lessons as we are confronted with decisions in life. Many decisions are made from a natural or carnal way of thinking. **1 Corinthians 2:14, 3:3**. Read and place a bookmark at **Galatians 5:17**. The lust of the flesh always turns towards sin. Now we are ready to dig in, beloved, contrasting **The Flesh vs. the Spirit, An Epic Struggle**.

Pray for wisdom and understanding, and let's begin.

I. Genesis 26:34-27:4. Isaac's Plan. God has a plan for Isaac's sons, and Isaac knows it. Esau has gone a wrong way, and his parents are bothered to see it. Rebekah and Isaac have known that the Lord chose Jacob over Esau. But Isaac has his own plans. He aims to give the blessing to Esau. Isaac is going to do what he wants, in spite of God's plan. Never smart!

II. Genesis 27:5-10. Rebekah's Plan. Getting ahead of God, Rebekah is not patient, devising a scheme to make things happen her way. She works behind Isaac's back, wanting to assure that Jacob receives Isaac's blessing. What must Isaac and Rebekah's relationship be like at this time? Both parents are completely in the flesh – conniving as they try to make things happen their way. God's plan is not even considered. Nothing good can come of all this. *Selah*

III. Genesis 27:11-29. Jacob's Deception. Jacob is uncomfortable with Rebekah's plan to deceive Isaac. Sadly, however, he ignores this impulse from the Holy Spirit to not give in to her pressure. He is willing to hide the truth and mislead his father in order to fulfill his plan, even claiming God's leading to justify his deception. Covetousness is an ugly sin! God gives the Spirit to convict and instruct, if only we would listen and obey. **Romans 7:15-8:2, Galatians 5:16-18, Ezekiel 36:27**.

IV. Genesis 30:33-41. Isaac Trembles & Esau Weeps. Sowing to the flesh, they are reaping corruption! Isaac realizes his plans are not realized, Esau is upset he did not get what he wanted.

V. Genesis 27:42-46. Reaping What's Sown. Rebekah got what she wanted, Jacob got what he felt was coming to him, but everyone was still a loser in this drama. The ends never justify the means, do they? **Galatians 6:7-8**.

Was all this manipulation & deception worth it? Genesis 27 shows that consequences for actions led by the flesh will reap corruption. The Lord has a better way. His word will instruct. His Spirit is here to guide. The result of following God's way is always a path of peace. Each character in our study, being led by the flesh, resulted in distrust, distress & broken relationships. Jacob will be sent away, never to see his mother Rebekah again. We don't need to live a life dominated by the flesh.....

CONSIDER **The Flesh vs. the Spirit, An Epic Struggle**. The winner in this battle is determined by which one is stronger. The stronger is always the one which is fed. How can you be sure to feed your spirit to make you strong?

- Invest priority time in personal prayer. **James 5:16, Luke 11:5-10, Luke 18:1-5**
- Feed on, read and study, the Word of God. **Psalm 1:2, Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 2:1-5, Proverbs 6:23, 2 Timothy 2:15**
- Worship with believers who will build you up in your walk. **Psalm 19:14, Psalm 100, Psalm 122:1, Hebrews 10:19-25**
- Seek Godly counsel. **Proverbs 11:14, Proverbs 15:22**
- Obey the Holy Spirit when He directs. **John 14:16-17, John 15:13-14, Romans 8:5-6, Galatians 5:25**

PRAY

- For all of the upcoming evangelical opportunities – for the part the Lord would have you take in each one of them them: Harvest America, WZXV Fun in the Sun Golf Day, Life Together Fest, VBS. Who would the Lord have you invite?
- Our missionary, Matt Fantley as he prepares for his trip to the states. For his safe travel and for his family while he is away.
- For the many graduates, Jr. high, high school and college, that the Lord may direct their paths as they plan for their futures.
- For your co-workers, that you would be the Lord's hands of love to them this week.
- For all of the details for the upcoming Teen Guatemala trip.