

# Jacob & Esau

Genesis 25:19-34, 27:1-40

## PPT Title

### Jacob & Esau

**Main Point:** Abiding in God is the key to peace and wisdom.

## PPT Verse

**Key Verse:** *Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.* - Philippians 4:6-7 NLT

**Props:** blind fold, an orange slice (sealed in a ziploc bag), chocolate, plastic snake or worms (add 1 or 2 drops of salad oil to make them feel real) Keep these items hidden!

## REVIEW



**Say:** Isaac married Rebekah when he was 40 years old. God renewed His promises to Isaac. God promised Isaac that he would have as many descendants as there were stars in the sky. He promised to give Isaac's descendants the land of Canaan, and that all people would be blessed through them. God remained with Isaac and blessed him greatly.

## TWINS! (Genesis 25:19-34)

**Say:** Isaac and Rebekah had been married for 20 years, yet they had no children. Remember, after Abraham and Sarah had waited for their child for 10 years, Abraham wrongly took matters into his own hands by marrying a second wife. After 20 years of waiting for a child, listen to what Isaac did:

*Rebekah couldn't have children. **So Isaac prayed to the Lord for her.** And the Lord answered his prayer. His wife Rebekah became pregnant.* - Genesis 25:21

Isaac did not do as his father had done. Isaac had faith that **God** would send him a child. Perhaps he learned from the sins of his parents. Surely Isaac saw how much trouble the sin of Abraham and Sarah had caused their family. This time, Isaac kept his eyes focused on God and His promises.

Rebekah felt a lot of movement going on inside of her belly. She didn't know what was happening. So she, also, went to the Lord with her concerns. The Lord had an interesting explanation for her. She was going to have twin boys! God told Rebekah about the future of her two sons:



*The Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your body. Two tribes that are now inside you will be separated. One nation will be stronger than the other. The older son will serve the younger one."* - Genesis 25:23

Each son's descendants would become a nation of people, one nation would be stronger than the other, and the younger son would rule over the older son. This was a very interesting prophecy. Rebekah must have thought about this over and over while her belly was getting bigger and bigger. Soon, it was time for the babies to be born.

*The first one to come out was red. His whole body was covered with hair. So they named him Esau. Then his brother came out. His hand was holding onto Esau's heel. So he was named Jacob. - Genesis 25:25*



Esau means "hairy," and Jacob means "heel holder, or one who takes the place of another." It is very unusual to have a baby that is hairy all over. The Bible doesn't tell us exactly how hairy he was, but it was certainly more than the average baby because they named him "hairy." Esau was the older brother because he was born just moments before Jacob.



The boys grew up. They were very different from each other, as brothers and sisters often are. Esau became a skillful hunter. He loved being outside in the countryside. But Jacob was a quiet man. He liked staying near his tent. He was what we would call "a home-body." Just for fun, let's see a show of hands. **Ask:** Who would rather play outside? And who likes staying inside?

**Say:** The Bible says that the boys' father, Isaac, loved to eat wild meat, so Esau was his favorite son. But Jacob was favored by his mother, Rebekah.

**Application:** It is wonderful that Isaac went to God when he was sad about not having any children yet. He did not go out and do things his own way. Instead, he prayed for his wife, and God answered his prayers. Then we saw that Rebekah also went to God when she was concerned about her pregnancy. God gave her wisdom and even a prophecy about the future of her children.

When you are sad, disappointed, or confused, do you go to God first, or do you run to another source? Do you talk to God, or reach for the telephone? It is good to get advice from godly people (Proverbs 19:20), but it is BETTER to go straight to the source! Going to God first ensures that we are keeping our focus on Him. You would be amazed at how God can work out an answer if you simply ask Him first. God speaks to us through the Holy Spirit, through His Word, through godly people, and through our circumstances. Make it your habit to run to God FIRST, then wait to be amazed at how He will answer you. Remember, Isaac asked for a son, and God gave him twins!

### **BIRTHRIGHT FOR SALE** (Genesis 25:29-34)

**Ask:** Raise your hand if you have ever traded anything. **Call on a few students to tell what they traded and what they received in return. Be prepared to give your own example of something you have traded if the students do not volunteer. Choose one of the students who shared and ask him or her a few more questions.** Why did you give away your \_\_\_\_\_? *I was tired of it, I grew out of it, etc.* And why did you want the \_\_\_\_\_ that you traded for? *It was cool, etc.* **Say:** Okay, so you had something you didn't care about anymore, and the other person had something they didn't really care about, so you traded. **Ask the group:** As long as both people know what they are getting, is that considered a fair deal? Yes. The next part of Jacob and Esau's story tells about a trade that they made.

**Say:** Because Esau was the oldest son, he received the birthright of the family. That means when the father of a family died, all of his property, money, and belongings were given to his sons. The son who held the birthright would receive twice as much as the other sons (Deuteronomy 21:15,16, 2 Chronicles 21:3).



*One day Jacob was cooking some stew. Esau came in from the open country. He was very hungry. He said to Jacob, "Quick! Let me have some of that red stew! I'm very hungry!"...*

*Jacob replied, "First sell me the rights that belong to you as the oldest son in the family."*

*"Look, I'm dying of hunger," Esau said. "What good are those rights to me?"*

*But Jacob said, "First promise me with an oath that you are selling me your rights." So Esau promised to do it. He sold Jacob all of the rights that belonged to him as the oldest son. - Genesis 25:29-33*

Esau was so foolish! For one bowl of stew he gave up his rights to two-thirds of Isaac's fortune. We know that Isaac was incredibly wealthy. He was so wealthy that the entire Philistine nation was jealous of him, and God continued to bless him even beyond that. The Bible says that, "Esau despised his birthright." That means he acted as though it was worthless. It was like a big joke to him. He was not actually starving to death. He simply did not want to wait to prepare his own meal. Jacob did not trick his brother. It was a fair deal, and Jacob definitely got the better end of it.



When Esau was forty years old, he married two women. Both women were Hittites. Again, Esau acted foolishly. He did not marry a woman from Abraham's family line, as his father did. The Bible says, "Esau's wives made life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah." (Genesis 26:34 NLT)

**Application:** Esau did not think about what was really important. He wanted what seemed good to him at the moment. He chose to fill his belly for a couple hours rather than prepare for his entire future. Esau did not value what was really important. He was foolish and impatient. In our lives, it is wise for us to rely on God to show us what is truly important, and to give us patience and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). God knows what every minute of our future holds. We must rely on God's Holy Spirit to guide us through every decision we make. Galatians 5:16 says, "So I say, live by the Holy Spirit's power. Then you will not do what your sinful nature wants you to do."

### **STOLEN BLESSING** (Genesis 27)

**Say:** When Isaac grew old, his eyes became too weak to see. Now, when a person has lost their sight, they have to rely on their other senses. **Ask:** Who can tell me what the other four senses are? *Hearing, taste, smell, touch* **Call for a volunteer.** (A girl may react better.) **Place the blindfold on her (or him).** **Say:** We're going to see if our volunteer can use her (or his) other senses to tell us what these things are. **Hold up the orange and tell her to use her sense of smell to identify the object.** Next, have her use her sense of **taste** to identify the chocolate. Then have her use **touch** to identify the fake snake or worms. (She may or may not be fooled.) **Allow her to remove the blindfold.** **Say:** Because you couldn't see, you used your other senses. But without the ability to see, I was able (or almost able) to trick you. **Thank your volunteer.**

**Say:** One day, Isaac called for Esau. Isaac believed he would not live much longer, so he thought it was time to give his blessing to his firstborn son. The blessing was different from the birthright. The birthright was the greater portion of money and property, but the blessing was a gift of things that money can't buy. A father would bless his son by announcing good things for his future, such as greatness and many children. Isaac told Esau to take his bow and arrows and go hunting. Isaac told him to prepare a meal for him from whatever he caught, and then Isaac would give Esau his blessing.

Rebekah was listening to Isaac's conversation. As soon as Esau went out to hunt, she hurried to get Jacob.

*Rebekah continued, "My son, listen carefully. Do what I tell you. Go out to the flock. Bring me two of the finest young goats. I will prepare tasty food for your father. I'll make it just the way he likes it. I want you to take it to your father to eat. Then he'll give you his blessing before he dies." - Genesis 27:8-10*

Rebekah wanted to trick Isaac by making him think that Jacob was really Esau. Jacob was afraid that Isaac would find out, but Rebekah insisted. Jacob was at least forty years old (Genesis 26:34). He was certainly old enough to stand up to his mother, but instead, he went along. So Jacob brought her two fine goats. Rebekah prepared a tasty meal for Isaac. She had Jacob dress in Esau's clothes, and even put goat skins on Jacob's arms and neck so Jacob would *feel* like Esau in case Isaac touched him!



Jacob took the food to his father's room. Because Isaac was blind, he asked who was at his door. Jacob lied and said he was Esau. Isaac was suspicious because the voice he heard sounded like Jacob. However, when Jacob came closer, Isaac smelled his clothes and felt his hairy skin. Isaac became convinced that Esau was with him. After Isaac ate the meal, he gave his blessing to his son, Jacob.



*May God give you dew from heaven. May He give you the richness of the earth. May He give you plenty of grain and fresh wine. May nations serve you. May they bow down to you. Rule over your brothers. May the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who call down curses on you be cursed. And may those who bless you be blessed." - Genesis 27:28-29*



When Isaac finished blessing him, Jacob left. **Ask:** Who do you think came in next? *Esau!* **Say:** Right after Jacob left, the *real* Esau came in from hunting. He had prepared a meal for his father. When Isaac heard Esau's voice and realized what had happened, his whole body shook. Esau cried out loudly. He begged his father to bless him too. But Isaac told Esau that Jacob had received the oldest son's blessing. Isaac said he had made Jacob the ruler over Esau. Esau begged for some sort of blessing from his father.

*His father Isaac answered him, "You will live far away from the richness of the earth. You will live far away from the dew of heaven above. You will live by the sword. And you will serve your brother. But you will grow restless. Then you will throw off the heavy load he put on your shoulders." - Genesis 27:39-40*

This was not much of a blessing. Esau became so enraged at his brother that he threatened to kill him. Next week, we will see what happened to Jacob, and we will see the consequences he and Rebekah faced because they chose to lie.

**Ask:** Whose idea was it to trick Isaac? *It was Rebekah's idea.* **Say:** Let's look at why Rebekah wanted Jacob to get Isaac's blessing. The Bible does say that Jacob was Rebekah's favorite son. The Bible also tells us that even before the twins were born, God told Rebekah that the younger twin would be greater than the older twin. God said the older boy would serve the younger boy. This might explain why Rebekah favored Jacob, and why Rebekah wanted to be sure that Jacob received his father's blessing. Also, Rebekah certainly knew her sons very well. She knew that Esau acted foolishly and did not take his future seriously. The Bible even calls Esau's behavior, "godless" (Hebrews 12:16). The blessing, which included ruling over others, becoming a great nation, and being a blessing for all generations to come, was a huge responsibility. Rebekah knew it was God's plan for Jacob to be the blessed one. So, when we look at it in this light, it seems very good that Rebekah wanted Jacob to receive Isaac's blessing. However, **the way** in which Rebekah went about getting the blessing for Jacob was **sin**.

Rebekah's sin was very much like the sin of Sarah, when Sarah told Abraham to marry 4

Hagar in order to have a child. It would seem that both Sarah and Rebekah believed God's promises. Sarah believed that Abraham was going to have children that would grow into a great nation, and Rebekah believed that Jacob would be greater than Esau. But both women doubted that God had the power and control to make His promises come to pass. Both women stepped in to "help God along." **Ask:** Did God need either woman's help? *No!* **Say:** Of course not! God is all-powerful. He does not need anyone's help. And He would NEVER want someone to sin in order to obey Him. Perhaps the worst part of both Sarah and Rebekah's actions is that they both convinced someone else to sin. Sarah convinced Abraham to marry Hagar, and Rebekah convinced Jacob to deceive his father. The Bible says we will be punished severely if we lead others into sin (Matthew 18:6).



**Ask:** Who can tell me what Rebekah *should* have done about her sons and their blessing? *Pray to God, talk honestly with Isaac* **Say:** Rebekah should have taken her concerns to the Lord, as she had done at other times in her life. Then God would have shown her the right way to handle things. Most likely, He would have assured her that He was in control and that she did not have to do anything at all.

Also, we must wonder why Isaac insisted on giving the blessing to Esau when God had revealed to Rebekah that it should go to Jacob. Scripture does not tell us that Isaac heard this from the Lord, but it would certainly seem that if Isaac had been abiding with God, he, too, would have known of Jacob's fate. Then the deception would have never taken place.

**Application:** Sometimes, we are like Rebekah. Sometimes we think we have to help God handle certain situations. **Ask:** Does God ever **need** our help? *No.* **Say:** No, God doesn't need anyone's help. Often, God *allows* us to be a part of His plan, but it is for our good, not because He can't handle things on His own. No matter how BIG of a problem or concern you have, go to God FIRST. Lean on Him - He can handle it.

*Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.* - Philippians 4:6-7 NLT

**PPT Main Point**

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