

12. Jacob and Esau

The Word of the Lord: The Old Testament for Young Children

Notes for Parents & Teachers

12. Jacob and Esau

- a. Inside her the boys struggled—it seemed they were going to be very different. And two different nations came from these two. The children of Jacob were called “the children of Israel.” The nation from Esau was called Edom.
- b. Note how different they were, and how Isaac loved the boy who was a hunter, and Rebekah loved the quiet man who lived at home. Esau was the oldest, so he should get twice as much of his father’s goods as Jacob would when his father died. That was called his “birthright.”
- c. Note that Esau didn’t think his birthright was worth much when he was hungry. He only thought of a meal. You might use the example of someone who is hungry and another person says, “Give me all the money you have, and I’ll give you some food.” He should have been sensible enough to realize that this was not a good deal.



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The Lord Blesses Isaac and Rebekah with Twin Boys

Isaac and Rebekah had no children. And Isaac prayed to the Lord to give them children, and the Lord answered his prayer and Rebekah became pregnant with twins. And the babies struggled within her and Rebecca asked the Lord why it was happening. The Lord told her the twin boys were going to be two nations.

Then when it was time for the babies to be born, the first baby boy was very hairy and it was a red color. So they named him Esau. And after Esau came another baby boy and they called him Jacob.

The boys grew, and Esau was a clever hunter who loved the field, but Jacob was a simple man who stayed near the tents. And Isaac, their father, loved Esau because he liked the meat stew Esau made, but Rebecca, their mother, loved Jacob.

One day, Jacob made a red lentil stew, and Esau came from the field, and he was feeling faint because he had not eaten. And Esau said to Jacob, “Give me to eat, I pray, of the red lentil stew, for I am feeling faint.” And Jacob said, “Only if you give me your birthright.” Then Esau said, “Behold, I am going to die from lack of food, and what good is this birthright to me then?” Jacob said, “Promise to me that you will give me the birthright,” and Esau promised Jacob and gave his birthright to him. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils, and Esau ate and drank and rose up and went away.

So Esau did not care about his birthright.

Genesis 25

