

Jacob and Esau

Genesis 25:20-34; 27:1-41

Level B | Lesson 1 | Teacher Overview



Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary.

And Esau said to Jacob, “Please feed me with that same red stew....”

But Jacob said, “Sell me your birthright....”

And Esau said, “Look, I am about to die; so what profit shall this birthright be to me?”

Genesis 25:29-32

For Teachers

This lesson has several activity options. You may wish to choose 2-3. Reading through all of the options will help you identify the activities that are best suited to your group’s size, student mix, available supplies, and the time you have to prepare. You may also want to mix and match activities from other age levels.

Activity Options

1. Talk About It
2. Illustration: Selling the Birthright
3. Illustration: Stealing the Blessing
4. Memory Verse
5. Act It Out: Stealing the Blessing
6. Look Closer: Differences Between Jacob and Esau
7. Coloring Picture: Jacob and Esau

Talk About It

Reading: Genesis 25:20-34, 27:1-41

This week we meet Esau and Jacob, twin brothers. Their mother Rebekah, feels the babies struggle before they are even born. Esau, the first born, is hairy and red. He becomes a hunter. Jacob grabs his brother's heel as he is born. He is mild and lives in tents. Today's lesson includes three stories: Jacob and Esau's birth, Jacob buying Esau's birthright for bread and stew and Jacob stealing Esau's blessing. The Talk-About-It introduces the characteristics of the brothers, centering on the story of Jacob stealing Esau's blessing.

1. Who are the twin brothers in today's story? (Esau and Jacob)
2. What was Esau like? (red and hairy, grew up to become a hunter)
3. What was Jacob like? (mild, smooth skin, lived in tents)
4. Who was born first? (Esau. As the oldest in the family, Esau would inherit twice as much land and twice as many animals and possessions as any other son. This was his birthright. So after their father died, Esau might get ten sheep, and Jacob only five. But Jacob wanted Esau to give him the double share instead. *(optional: you might demonstrate this for the children using stuffed animals or money)*)
5. What did Jacob ask for in exchange for a bowl of stew? (Esau's birthright) Do you think this was this fair or right?
6. One day Rebekah, Jacob and Esau's mother, overheard Isaac their father asking Esau to go hunting and prepare savory food so that he could give Esau the blessing of the firstborn. What did Rebekah do? (She ordered Jacob to bring two goats from their flock to make savory food for Isaac, so that Jacob would receive the blessing instead of Esau.)
7. Jacob knew that this was not right. How might you feel if you were doing something that you knew was not right? What was Jacob worried about? (Isaac was blind, and used his hands to "see"—he might feel Jacob's smooth skin.)
8. Why did Isaac not recognize Jacob? (He was suspicious of Jacob's voice, but the hairy skins convinced him that he was touching Esau.)
9. What happened when Esau came back from hunting? (He took his food to his father. Isaac realized what had happened but could not change what he had done.)
10. What does the name Jacob mean? ("supplanter"—he swapped places in the family with his older brother by taking the rights of the first born away from Esau)
11. How could Jacob and Esau have been better brothers to each other?

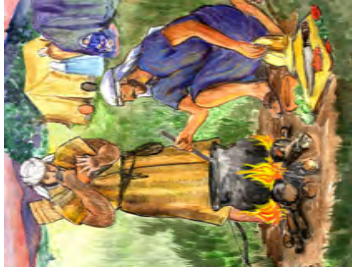




Memory Verse: Jacob and Esau

Esau was a skillful
hunter, a man of the
field; but Jacob was a
mild man, dwelling in
tents.

Genesis 25:27



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Cut in quarters and give one to each student to take home.

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Act It Out: Stealing the Blessing

At a Glance:

Students will act out the story of Jacob stealing Esau's blessing in groups of four. The teacher or student(s) read(s) the script while others act out the story.



Supplies Needed:

- 2 page play script for each reader (see following pages)
- “animal skin” to disguise Jacob, e.g. fake fur fabric, wool scarf, etc.
- *optional*: additional costumes and props

Directions:

1. Review the characters in the story. Encourage students to say something specific about each person, giving encouragement if they need help. For example: Isaac is old and cannot see; Rebekah encourages Jacob to deceive Isaac; Esau is a hunter, a hairy man of the field; Jacob does what his mother suggests, agreeing to disguise himself to deceive his father.
2. Divide students into groups of four actors and decide who will play Isaac, Rebekah, Esau and Jacob. *Optional*: Ask for volunteers to read the parts in the script.
3. Read and act out the story.

Stealing the Blessing Script

Rebekah is listening at the door as Isaac calls Esau.

Narrator: Now it came to pass, when Isaac was old and his eyes were so dim that he could not see, that he called Esau his older son and said to him,

Isaac: My son.

Esau: Here I am.

Isaac: Behold now, I am old. I do not know the day of my death. Please take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me. And make me savory food, such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, that my soul may bless you before I die.

Narrator: And Esau went to the field to hunt game and to bring it. So Rebekah went to Jacob.

Rebekah: Indeed I heard your father speak to Esau your brother, saying, 'Bring me game and make savory food for me, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of the Lord before my death.' Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to what I command you. Go now to the flock and bring me from there two choice kids of the goats, and I will make savory food from them for your father, such as he loves. Then you shall take it to your father, that he may eat it, and that he may bless you before his death.

Jacob: Look, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth-skinned man. Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall seem to be a deceiver to him; and I shall bring a curse on myself and not a blessing.

Rebekah: Let your curse be on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get them for me.

Narrator: And Jacob went and got them and brought them to his mother, and his mother made savory food, such as his father loved. Then Rebekah took the choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. And she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. Then she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob. So Jacob went to his father.

Jacob: My father.

Isaac: Here I am. Who are you, my son?

Jacob: I am Esau your firstborn; I have done just as you told me; please arise, sit and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me.

Isaac: How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?

Jacob: Because the Lord your God brought it to me.

Isaac: Please come near, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not.

Narrator: So Jacob went near to Isaac his father, and he felt him.

Isaac: The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.

Narrator: And he did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him.

Isaac: Are you really my son Esau?

Jacob: I am.

Isaac: Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's game, so that my soul may bless you.

Narrator: So he brought it near to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank.

Isaac: Come near now and kiss me, my son.

Narrator: And he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him.

Isaac: Surely, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed. Therefore may God give you of the dew of heaven, of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine. Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, and let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be those who bless you!

Narrator: Now it happened, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. He also had made savory food, and brought it to his father.

Esau: Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that your soul may bless me.

Isaac: Who are you?

Esau: I am your son, your firstborn, Esau.

Narrator: Then Isaac trembled exceedingly.

Isaac: Who? Where is the one who hunted game and brought it to me? I ate all of it before you came, and I have blessed him—and indeed he shall be blessed.

Narrator: When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry.

Esau: Bless me—me also, O my father!

Isaac: Your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing.

Esau: Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright, and now look, he has taken away my blessing! Have you not reserved a blessing for me?

Isaac: Indeed I have made him your master, and all his brethren I have given to him as servants; with grain and wine I have sustained him. What shall I do now for you, my son?

Esau: Have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me—me also, O my father!

Narrator: And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

Isaac: Behold, your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above. By your sword you shall live, and you shall serve your brother; and it shall come to pass, when you become restless, that you shall break his yoke from your neck.”

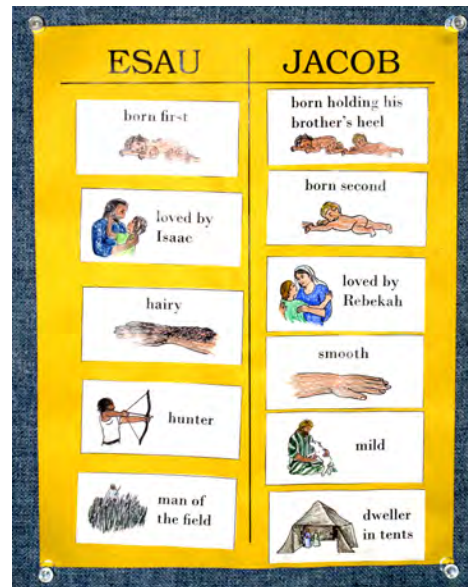
Look Closer: Differences Between Jacob and Esau

At a Glance:

This activity will help children remember the different characteristics of Esau and Jacob by sorting cards to match the appropriate brother.

Supplies Needed for Each Student:

- copy of *Esau and Jacob T-chart* sorting page (see next page)
- copy of *Differences Between Esau and Jacob* cards (see following page)
- scissors
- glue
- answer sheet to share—completed *T-chart* for students to check their answers
- *optional*: crayons, markers, or colored pencils












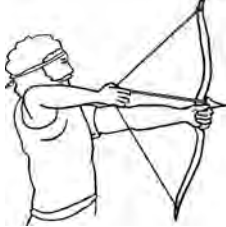

Directions:

1. Hand out the two project pages. If your timeframe allows, have children color the pictures. Have children cut apart the cards and place them in the appropriate column for Esau or Jacob.
2. When children think they have all the cards sorted correctly, they can check themselves against the answer sheet.
3. If all cards are correctly placed, children can glue the cards in place.

ESAU

JACOB

Differences Between Esau and Jacob

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Cut apart the cards on this page.2. Sort them as to whether they show characteristics of Esau or of Jacob. One brother will have one more card than the other!3. When you have sorted them successfully, glue the cards into the correct column on the Esau and Jacob T-chart.	 <p>man of the field</p>
 <p>loved by Rebekah</p>	<p>born holding his brother's heel</p> 
 <p>dweller in tents</p>	<p>hairy</p> 
 <p>loved by Isaac</p>	 <p>mild</p>
<p>smooth</p> 	<p>born first</p> 
 <p>hunter</p>	<p>born second</p> 

ESAU

Answer Sheet



man of
the field

hairy



loved by
Isaac

born first



hunter

JACOB



loved by
Rebekah

born holding his
brother's heel



dweller
in tents



mild

smooth



born second



