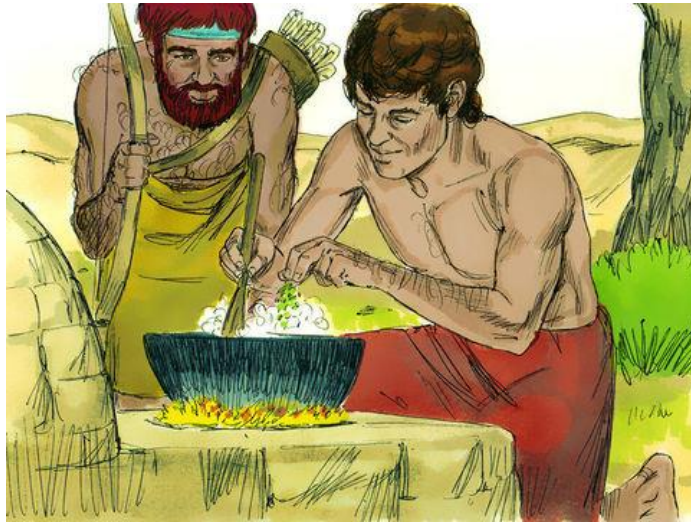




L2.25 “Jacob and Esau”



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Read Together: Isaac and Rebekah lived many years before they had children, but God finally blessed them with twin sons, Jacob and Esau. They were twins, but never were two people more different. Esau was hairy, but Jacob had smooth skin. Esau was a skillful hunter, but Jacob was a mild-mannered shepherd. One day Jacob was cooking lentil stew when Esau came from the fields. He had been hunting and was very hungry. Jacob offered his brother some stew in return for his “birthright blessing”. Esau agreed. Jacob seems quite devious, talking his brother out of his birthright. Remember this, however; Esau cared more about his hunger than his birthright. Many years later, an elderly Isaac decided it was

time to bestow a final blessing upon each of his sons. His plan was to give the greater blessing to Esau and a lesser blessing on Jacob, because Esau was his favorite son. Since Rebekah’s favorite son was Jacob, she hatched a plot that would have the greater blessing go to him! This lesson’s reading reveals what happened when their plan unfolded. Though the Bible reveals how weak and deceitful people can be, God’s purpose to establish a nation is still revealed. We’ll learn more about that later.

Read Together: Genesis 25:19-34; 27:1-41

Discuss:

- Discuss with your child the ethics of this situation. Since God had chosen Jacob to inherit the promises He made to Abraham and Isaac, was it wrong for Jacob and his mother to use trickery in getting them?
- Discuss with your child the fact that Isaac intended to give the blessings to Esau. Think of a few ways that God could have prevented Isaac from giving the blessings to Esau. Can any human cause God’s plans to fail (Isaiah 46:9-10)?
- Jacob was his mother’s favorite son and Esau his father’s. Ask your child what happens in a family when individual members are shown favoritism.
- Help your child understand that God chooses individuals for His purpose at His time. Explain that God did not choose Jacob because he was somehow “better” than Esau. This principle applies to those who are called now as well.

Review Memorization:

Genesis 27:29 “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.”



L2.26 “Jacob Flees to Padan Aram”



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Read Together: Esau despised Jacob for tricking him, and Rebekah, their mother, discovered his plot to kill him. Rebekah advised Jacob to go to her brother Laban’s home and stay there until Esau had calmed down. Now Isaac and Rebekah were not pleased that Esau had taken Hittite women as wives, so Isaac told Jacob to take a wife from his uncle’s daughters in Padan Aram. Jacob set out from Canaan to the land of Haran with nothing but his staff. On his way, Jacob stopped for the night, and he had a very strange dream while sleeping under the stars. He dreamed there was a ladder

that reached from heaven to the earth with angels going up and down. God spoke to him in the dream and gave Jacob the same promises that He had made to Abraham and Isaac. God promised to give him the land of Canaan and to multiply his descendants. God promised to be with him and to bring him back safely to the land. Jacob was filled with awe! He anointed the stone where he slept and called the place Bethel, which means house of God. For his part of the covenant, Jacob promised to obey God and to tithe to Him. Jacob completed his journey, arriving at his uncle Laban’s home in Padan Aram.

Read Together: Genesis 27:41-46; 28:1-22; 29:1-13

Discuss:

- Esau was very angry with Jacob and thought to kill him. Discuss with your child how thoughts become actions, and we must learn to control our thoughts. One strategy is to replace bad thoughts with good ones; we can also pray for anyone we may have bad thoughts about. How could Esau apply this?
- Explain to your child that most dreams do not have any meaning; they are just dreams. Jacob’s dream was special and God caused him to understand that.
- Discuss with your child what a tithe is.
- Remind your child that Haran is the place where Abraham and Sarah lived before their sojourn in Canaan; it is near modern day Syria. Laban was Rebekah’s brother, but he was also the son of Abraham’s nephew Bethuel.
- Point out to your child that Bethel is an important place in biblical history and that we will hear more of it in future Bible studies.

Review Memorization:

Genesis 27:29 “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.”



L2.27 “Jacob’s Wives and Sons”



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Read Together: Jacob arrived in Padan Aram, and began looking for his uncle Laban. Instead, he met Laban’s beautiful daughter, Rachel. Jacob fell in love with Rachel and desperately wanted her as his wife. Laban agreed to give her in marriage to Jacob. But, in return, he demanded that Jacob work for him for seven years. Jacob agreed and served Laban, tending his flocks. When the time for the wedding came, Laban prepared a feast. At the end of the feast, when it was finally time for Jacob to be with beautiful Rachel, Laban

tricked him! Instead of Rachel, Laban presented Leah, the older sister, to Jacob. Jacob was furious! He had married the wrong woman! Devious Laban suggested a solution. If only Jacob would work for another seven years for him, he would let him marry Rachel too! Reluctantly, Jacob agreed. But having two wives caused lots of problems for years to come. Jacob continued working for Laban for many years. He eventually became father to eleven sons and one daughter. As he grew older, he finally decided it was time to take his growing family and move back to Canaan.

Read Together: Genesis 29; 30:1–27

Discuss:

- Ask your child how they think Jacob felt to be tricked by his uncle. What lessons do you think he might have learned?
- Help your child to recall the names of Jacob’s sons.
- Names have meanings. Discuss with your child the meaning of the names given Jacob’s sons. Give a hint of how some of the names portray their future roles. Explain how your child was named and its meaning.
- Remind your child that God’s intent is for marriage to be between one man and one woman. Jacob’s example shows that anything else causes problems.

Review Memorization:

Genesis 27:29 “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.”

Bonus Memory Verse! Genesis 29:20 “So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed only a few days to him because of the love he had for her.”



L2.28 “Israel Returns Home”



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Read Together: For many years, Jacob worked for his Uncle Laban, but he was not happy. Sensing his discontent, Laban agreed to give some of his sheep to Jacob in payment for his labor. Before long, Jacob’s flocks thrived, and he began to become very wealthy. Now it was Laban’s turn to be unhappy. As his jealousy and envy deepened, Jacob knew it was time for his family to escape. While Laban was gone, Jacob and all his family made their getaway. Ten days later, Laban and his relatives caught up. What happened? You’ll have to read the story! Don’t worry...they parted ways and no-one was harmed.

But just when Jacob thought things were

going better, he found out that his brother Esau was headed his way...with four hundred men! Remember Esau? He was Jacob’s brother. The last thing we heard from him was a promise that he would kill the brother who took his blessing. Things did not look good for Jacob and his family! Thankfully, things did eventually take a turn for the better for Jacob. He survived yet another hostile encounter, and lived a long and prosperous life, as he passed on God’s promise to Abraham to his twelve sons.

To find out how Jacob survived these adventures, and also wrestled with God, read the chapters below! Oh, and did I mention, he also wrestled with God!

Read Together: Genesis 30-35

Discuss:

- Ask your child why they think Jacob left Padan Aram in secret. How does Proverbs 22:3 apply to what Jacob did? How does this principle apply today?
- Remind your child that Jacob left Canaan with next to nothing, but he returned a wealthy man. Explain that Jacob’s wealth was a result of God’s blessings.
- Help your child see that God names things what they are. Jacob was no longer the schemer he had been, and his new name, Israel, better reflected his new character. Note the humility Jacob expressed when he met his brother Esau.
- Explain to your child that the promise of national prominence and great riches were passed down from Abraham to Isaac, and from Isaac to Jacob who became Israel. The nation of Israel is named for this patriarch.

Review Memorization:

Genesis 32:28 “And He said, ‘Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed.’”