

## Jacob and Esau

Teacher Pep Talk: Soup... Esau despised his birthright and sold it to Jacob for a bowl of soup! Twins... What can you say? These two boys were born on the same day to the same parents, but they were completely different from one another. Their story is one of dreadful divisions and tearful reunions. God gave both sons to Isaac and Rebekah, but even He said, "...I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have hated." It is through Jacob that God will bring about His promises to Abraham – The Messiah (Jesus) will come through Jacob and his line.

**NOTE:** In this lesson the children will learn about how Esau lost both his birthright and his blessing. These are very abstract concepts for Little Guys to understand... So, make up two fancy looking "tickets" (or "coupons") one for "Birthright" and one for "Blessing" to convey the idea that these things were important and valuable. Show the coupons during the lesson and afterwards during the activities.

ALSO...One of the suggested activities is to **make soup** with your group. If possible, take your class to the "kitchen" and start the soup before you begin the lesson. If no kitchen is available, consider bringing in hot water to pour over ramen noodles, or "cooking" the soup in a microwave. *Always check with your church regarding **Fire Safety** and watch for any **Food Allergies!***

You will need: Bible  
2 Coupons or Tickets: One for Birthright and One for Blessing.  
"Soup" to cook in class

Major Points: Isaac and Rebekah had No Children  
God Gave them Esau and Jacob (Twin Boys)  
They were Twins, But Different  
Esau Sold His Birthright (for a Bowl of Soup)  
Esau Lost His Blessing  
Jacob Ran Away from Home  
God was with Jacob

Scripture Ref: Genesis 25, 27 and 28

Memory Verse: **In Genesis 28:15 God said to Jacob:** *"I am with you and will watch over you..."*

Lesson: **Isaac and Rebekah had No Children**

- *[Before you start the lesson, start the soup! See Activity note.]*
- *[Be sure to start with your Bible sitting on your lap. Also have the 2 Tickets or Coupons: "Birthright" and "Blessing".]*

- *[Review Timeline if available in classroom.]*
- Abraham and Sarah had a son named Isaac.
- When Isaac grew up, he married a girl named Rebekah.
- Nearly 20 years had gone by, but still they had no children.
- Isaac prayed and asked God to give them children.
- Isaac knew that God had promised to make his father (and him) into a great nation! And you can't do that without children.
- And Isaac knew that God ALWAYS keeps His promises!

### **God Gave Them Esau and Jacob (Twin Boys)**

- Isaac didn't have to wait long for God to answer his prayer!
- God gave Isaac and Rebekah twin boys!
- *(Rebekah asked God about the children she was to have. God answered her prayer. He told her that two nations were in her womb, and that they would be divided. He also told her that the younger one would rule over the older one.)*
- Soon the twins were born. The first one was hairy looking when he was born, so they called him **Esau**. *(which means "hairy")*
- Can you say "Esau"? *(Practice together.)*
- The younger one was holding on to the heel of the first. So they called him **Jacob**. *(which means "grasping the heel")*
- Can you say "Jacob"? *(Practice together.)*

### **They were Twins, but They were Different**

- Jacob and Esau were twins. Do you know what twins are? Twins are two children born to the same mother at one time.
- Even though Jacob and Esau were twins, they were very different.
  - Esau, the older one, was ruddy and hairy looking, while Jacob, the younger one, was smooth skinned and fair.
  - Esau grew up liking to hunt and being outdoors, while Jacob liked living quietly at home.
- Esau was the oldest *(by a few minutes)* and because he was the oldest, he had some special privileges that came with that.
  - ***[Show the two tickets or coupons here! If you like, you can designate two of the children to be Esau and Jacob. In that case, give both coupons to Esau.]***
  - Birthright – He would get more of his father's inheritance
  - Blessing – He would get a special blessing from his dad
- These things were important, but Esau didn't necessarily respect them as being important.

NOTE: How is the soup doing? Consider taking the children and checking the soup. If possible, tell the next part of the story while you are stirring the soup.

### Esau Sold His Birthright for a Bowl of Soup

- One day Esau went hunting.
- Jacob stayed home that day and made some soup.
- Esau came home really hungry! Have you ever felt really hungry? Your tummy may growl! (*Make growling sounds*)
- Anyway... Esau came home really hungry and smelled the soup that Jacob had made! It made him even hungrier.
- Esau asked Jacob for a bowl of soup.
- And he traded Jacob his birthright for a bowl of soup.
- **[Bring out the Birthright coupon. (If Esau has it, take it away from him and give it to Jacob.)]**
- Uh oh... Esau lost his birthright... Now it belonged to Jacob!
- Later on Esau lost his blessing too!

OPTION: If the lesson is getting too long, you may leave out this next section.

### Esau Lost His Blessing

- Isaac was getting older, and his eyesight was poor. So, it was time for Isaac to give Esau his special blessing.
- But before he blessed him, Isaac asked Esau to go hunting and bring back some nice venison to make a good stew for him to eat. (*Are you seeing a theme here? They really liked to eat in this family!*) So, Esau went off hunting.
- Meanwhile, back in the kitchen, Rebekah ...who liked Jacob best... found out what was going on.
- Rebekah made some stew. Then she helped Jacob dress like Esau.
- Together, they tricked Isaac into believing that Jacob was Esau!
- Isaac gave Jacob Esau's blessing!
- **[Take away the Blessing coupon. If Esau has it, take it and give it to Jacob.]**
- When Esau got home and found out what happened, he was very upset and he cried. He asked his father to bless him too.
- Isaac did the best he could.

If you left the last section out, resume the lesson here.

### Jacob Ran Away from Home

- Esau was really mad at Jacob, because he had taken both his Birthright and his Blessing. He wanted to hurt Jacob!
- Rebekah packed Jacob up and told him to go and live with her family in her old homeland, where he would be safe.
- Jacob left camp and headed to where Rebekah's family lived.

**God was with Jacob**

- While Jacob was on his way, God appeared to him in a dream.
- God told Jacob that He was with him and that He would take care of him.
- All the promises that God had made to Abraham and Isaac would be fulfilled through Jacob.
- Jacob knew that God ALWAYS keeps His promises!

Let's pray and thank God for always keeping His promises!

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you that you always keep your promises!  
Thank you that you were with Jacob.  
Thank you that you took care of him!  
Thank you that you love us!  
We love you back.  
Amen.

Suggested Activities: *(Choose 1 or 2 that will work with your group.)*

**Making Soup** – *The children will make soup while they listen to the Bible story.*

**NOTE:** If you can pull this off, it makes the most wonderful impression on the children. Please follow your church's rules for **Fire Safety**. If there is a kitchen nearby, consider relocating the class so that you can be near the kitchen while you tell the story. If no kitchen, consider having someone bring in hot water and pour it over ramen noodles in class, so that the children can see you making "soup." Boiling macaroni and pouring spiced tomato sauce over it (after it's drained) is a great way of "making soup." And, of course, you will need to eat the soup during your snack! Don't forget that part! 😊  
*This reminds me that we are to talk to our children about God's word and His promises during our everyday lives; when we rise up and when we lie down, when we come and go, and during our everyday activities. Cooking soup makes this story come alive!*

**Before Class:** Decide where and how you will cook "soup" during the lesson. (See NOTE for ideas.) Bring all necessary cooking items and utensils. Watch food allergies!

**During Class:** Before you start teaching the Bible Story, start the "soup." Be sure to go and check it a few times during the lesson, if possible. *(Or, send an adult helper to check on it and ask for a report on how it is doing, in front of the class.)* Tell part of the story while you are stirring the soup pot, if possible. Let the children watch later as you ladle it into soup bowls for them to eat, after it cools a little. Enjoy the soup for snack!

**Review Timeline** – *The children will learn the chain of Biblical events from the Timeline.*

**Before Class:** Construct a Timeline with papers designating significant Biblical events. See series lesson instructions for directions.

**During Class:** Talk about the various things we have studied in this series so far. Place a page on the Timeline for today's story. *(Use the activity sheet if you like.)*

**Birthright and Blessing** – The children will create coupons for Birthright and Blessing.  
**Before Class:** Provide a copy of the Birthright and Blessing activity sheet for each child. Provide crayons, markers, glue, glitter, scissors, and construction paper.  
**During Class:** Allow the children to decorate the Birthright and Blessing Activity Sheet. Use markers, crayons, glue, glitter, etc. Allow to dry. Cut out the “coupons” and put each one on a slightly larger sheet of construction paper. Take the coupons home!

**Re-enact the Stories** – *Older children will enjoy acting out 1-2 of the stories told today.*  
**Before Class:** Bring to class items that will help in telling the two stories: one of Esau selling his birthright for a bowl of soup, and/or the one of Jacob getting Esau’s blessing. Items might include: Pieces of fabric to create the idea of costumes or robes; a big bowl, a small bowl, and a wooden spoon for stirring; and some furry fabric in 3 wide strips.  
**During Class:** Summarize the stories found in Genesis 25 and Genesis 27 (*or read them directly from the Bible.*) Allow the children to re-enact the stories. Discuss them with your class. Was Esau right to give away his birthright for a bowl of soup? Did Jacob and Rebekah trick Isaac into giving Jacob Esau’s blessing? *In the next few lessons in our series, we will learn that Jacob (the trickster) gets tricked himself.*

**Talk about Tricks** – *Older children will discuss if it is good to play tricks on others.*  
**Before Class:** Familiarize yourself well with the stories told in Genesis 25 and 27. Be ready to answer some tough questions and discuss the idea of playing tricks on others.  
**During Class:** Talk about playing tricks on other people, with the children. Tell them that Jacob pulled a trick on his father Isaac to get Esau’s blessing. Ask the children what they think about that. Is it alright to trick someone else? Are we supposed to lie? How close is a trick to a lie? (*There may be some gray areas here, but use your discernment to lead the discussion. A trick may be funny for a moment, if the person is told right away that it is a trick, and no harm is done. But it can be very hard to control the results; sometimes harm is done, even if you don’t mean to do any!*) Jacob’s name actually means “one who grasps the heel” or “trickster.” In the next 2-3 lessons in this series we will hear some stories about how Jacob (the trickster) got tricked himself.

Birthright

Blessing