

Jacob Gets Esau's Blessing

(Genesis 27)

Introduction

Have you ever been really naughty? Think about the worst sin you've ever committed? Did you know that there is no sin too big or too awful for God to forgive? God's love and mercy are greater than any sin. And He promises to forgive anybody for any sin they confess. And, when He forgives a sin, He forgets completely about it.

This morning, we are going to learn about a terrible sin that Jacob and his mother, Rebekah, commit. Yet, God keeps His promise to Abraham and blesses Jacob anyway in spite of what he did. And, we shall see that God blesses us because He loves us with an everlasting love.

Opening Prayer

Lord, open our spiritual eyes and ears this morning so that we might learn more about how wonderful You are. Lord, we all sin and fall short of perfection. You know that we make bad and wrong choices every day. Thank you, Lord, that Your mercies are new every morning and that You will always be faithful to us, even when we fail You. Show us, this morning, Lord, just how loving and kind You are towards us. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning. (Lamentations 3:22-23 NLT)

Lesson

We've been studying about the Fathers of our Faith.

To review let me ask you some questions:

1. Who was the very first Jew? (Abraham)
2. Who were his descendants? (His son, Isaac, married Rebekah and they had two sons, Esau and Jacob.)
3. What did God promise Rebekah concerning her sons before they were even born? (They would become enemy nations and the younger one would rule over the older.)
4. Which one of the twins was hairy? (Esau)
5. Which son did Isaac favor? (Esau)
6. Which one did Rebekah favor? (Jacob)
7. Last week we learned about how Jacob tricked Esau into selling his birthright. What's a birthright? (A special honor given to the firstborn son which entitled him to twice as much inheritance as his siblings.)

Esau sinned against God by disregarding his birthright. Because he didn't value it, he was willing to sell it for a bowl of soup. And, Jacob sinned against Esau by tricking him into selling his birthright.

Now we pick up the story many years later, when their father, Isaac, was very old and almost blind. Let's read together...

Genesis 27:1-4

One day when Isaac was old and turning blind, he called for Esau, his older son, and said, "My son." "Yes, Father?" Esau replied. ²"I am an old man now," Isaac said, "and I don't know when I may die. ³Take your bow and a quiver full of arrows, and go out into the open country to hunt some wild game for me. ⁴Prepare my favorite dish, and bring it here for me to eat. Then I will pronounce the blessing that belongs to you, my firstborn son, before I die."

Isaac knew that he would soon die and before he did, he wanted to give his firstborn son the birthright blessing.

Although Jacob had bought the birthright from his older brother years before for a pot of stew, he still needed his father's blessing to make it legal.

But Rebekah was listening; she was eavesdropping on Isaac and Esau's conversation.

Genesis 27:5-7

But Rebekah overheard what Isaac had said to his son Esau. So when Esau left to hunt for the wild game, ⁶she said to her son Jacob, "Listen. I overheard your father say to Esau, ⁷'Bring me some wild game and prepare me a delicious meal. Then I will bless you in the LORD's presence before I die.'"

Rebekah knew that God had told her, before the boys were even born, that Jacob would be ruler over Esau, but she failed to trust that God could accomplish His goals on His own. So, she took matters into her own hands and came up with a plan...

Genesis 27:8-10

Now, my son, listen to me. Do exactly as I tell you. ⁹Go out to the flocks, and bring me two fine young goats. I'll use them to prepare your father's favorite dish. ¹⁰Then take the food to your father so he can eat it and bless you before he dies."

Rebekah came up with a plan to help God. She quickly devised a plan to trick her husband into blessing her favorite son, Jacob. She did something wrong to try to bring about what God had already said would happen. She didn't want to do a bad thing; she was trying to help God out! But listen, kids, it is NEVER right to do wrong.

Let's say you know of a family that was really poor. They do not even have enough money to buy food to eat. You can see their needs and you want to help them out. So, you decide to steal some food from the grocery store. When you steal for a good purpose like that does it make it right? No! It is NEVER right to do wrong.

Unfortunately, Jacob wasn't concerned about doing a wrong thing. He was more afraid of getting caught by his dad...

Genesis 27:11-12

"But look," Jacob replied to Rebekah, "my brother, Esau, is a hairy man, and my skin is smooth. ¹²What if my father touches me? He'll see that I'm trying to trick him, and then he'll curse me instead of blessing me."

Jacob seemed more worried about getting caught than about doing what was right. He didn't seem concerned about the dishonesty of his mother's plan; instead, he was more afraid of getting in trouble with his earthly dad than with God, the Father.

If you are ever worried about getting caught, you are probably not doing something that is honest. You need to let your fear of getting caught be a warning to do right.

Genesis 27:13

But his mother replied, "Then let the curse fall on me, my son! Just do what I tell you. Go out and get the goats for me!"

Rebekah and Jacob had become so wrapped up in this plan that they no longer saw clearly what they were doing. Sin had trapped them. And Jacob did what his mother told him to do. He brought her the goats and she fixed the meat his father's favorite way.

Genesis 27:14-17

So Jacob went out and got the young goats for his mother. Rebekah took them and prepared a delicious meal, just the way Isaac liked it. ¹⁵Then she took Esau's favorite clothes, which were there in the house, and gave them to her younger son, Jacob. ¹⁶She covered his arms and the smooth part of his neck with the skin of the young goats. ¹⁷Then she gave Jacob the delicious meal, including freshly baked bread.

Rebekah made a pair of gloves from the hairy skin of the goats and she also fastened a strip of the hairy skin around his neck.

Genesis 27:18

So Jacob took the food to his father. "My father?" he said. "Yes, my son," Isaac answered. "Who are you—Esau or Jacob?"

Isaac wanted to make sure which son was in the room with him...

Genesis 27:19-20

Jacob replied, "It's Esau, your firstborn son. I've done as you told me. Here is the wild game. Now sit up and eat it so you can give me your blessing." ²⁰Isaac asked, "How did you find it so quickly, my son?" "The LORD your God put it in my path!" Jacob replied.

Jacob lied! He told a bold-faced lie to his father!

Genesis 27:21-23

Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Come closer so I can touch you and make sure that you really are Esau." ²²So Jacob went closer to his father, and Isaac touched him. "The voice is Jacob's, but the hands are Esau's," Isaac said. ²³But he did not recognize Jacob, because Jacob's hands felt hairy just like Esau's. So Isaac prepared to bless Jacob.

So, Isaac thought it was Esau and gave Jacob this blessing...

Genesis 27:29

May many nations become your servants, and may they bow down to you. May you be the master over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you. All who curse you will be cursed, and all who bless you will be blessed."

This blessing has come down through the children of Israel right to this day. Everyone who curses the people of Israel is cursed by God and those that bless them are blessed by God.

As soon as Isaac blessed Jacob, Esau came in with the meat for his father and he found out he was too late.

Genesis 27:30

As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and almost before Jacob had left his father, Esau returned from his hunt.

When Esau found out he was too late, he was very unhappy. He asked his father for a blessing also...

Genesis 27:34-36

When Esau heard his father's words, he let out a loud and bitter cry. "Oh my father, what about me? Bless me, too!" he begged. ³⁵But Isaac said, "Your brother was here, and he tricked me. He has taken away your blessing." ³⁶Esau exclaimed, "No wonder his name is Jacob, for now he has cheated me twice. First he took my rights as the firstborn, and now he has stolen my blessing. Oh, haven't you saved even one blessing for me?"

But, Isaac said it was too late.

Genesis 27:37

Isaac said to Esau, "I have made Jacob your master and have declared that all his brothers will be his servants. I have guaranteed him an abundance of grain and wine—what is left for me to give you, my son?"

This really upset Esau...

Genesis 27:41

From that time on, Esau hated Jacob because their father had given Jacob the blessing. And Esau began to scheme: "I will soon be mourning my father's death. Then I will kill my brother, Jacob."

Esau threatened that as soon as his father died, he would go after Jacob to kill him. Jealous anger blinds us from seeing the blessings we have. When Esau lost the valuable family blessing, his future suddenly changed. Esau was so angry at Jacob that he failed to see his own wrong in giving away the birthright in the first place. So, Rebekah told Jacob to flee for his life.

Genesis 27:42-43

But Rebekah heard about Esau's plans. So she sent for Jacob and told him, "Listen, Esau is consoling himself by plotting to kill you. ⁴³So listen carefully, my son. Get ready and flee to my brother, Laban, in Haran.

So, Jacob had to run for his life!

Let's talk about the consequences of sins:

Rebekah suffered for her bad choice; she never got to see her beloved son Jacob ever again.

Esau suffered for selling his birthright for a pot of stew! He became bitter and angry and eventually became the founder of an enemy nation, just like God had told Rebekah before the twins were born.

Jacob paid a huge price for carrying out this dishonest plan:

- He never got to see his mother again.
- His brother wanted to kill him.
- His family became torn by strife.
- He was separated from his family for many years.

Jacob would have received the birthright and blessing anyway; God had promised it and God always comes through with His promises. Imagine how different his life would have been had he and his mother waited for God to work His way, in His time.

Later on Jacob and Esau get reunited and reconciled to one another. And God forgives them for their sinful ways.

It is NEVER right to wrong. But this is how God's promise to Abraham got passed down first to his son, Isaac, then to his grandson, Jacob.

Let's read the blessing together...

Genesis 28:3-4

May God Almighty bless you and give you many children. And may your descendants multiply and become many nations! ⁴May God pass on to you and your descendants the blessings he promised to Abraham. May you own this land where you are now living as a foreigner, for God gave this land to Abraham."

God can and does make all things work together for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose.

Once again, let me point out that God's blessings come to us not

because we've done good things; not because we're so righteous and holy; they come to us because God chooses to bless us. He loves us with an everlasting love. And, nothing we do or don't do can change His mind about us. Isn't that something to thank Him for? Let's thank Him together right now!

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, we are so glad You are loving and forgiving. Thank You for sending Jesus who has taken the punishment for our sins when He died on the cross. God, help us to appreciate all You've done for us in making it possible to be with You in Heaven. Lord, we don't want to take our blessings lightly, like Esau did. He sold his birthright for a pot of stew. Don't let us be tempted to sell our birthright for something the world has to offer us.

Help us also, Lord, to always be truthful. Don't let us follow Jacob's example of being a deceiver. And thank You, Lord, for making all things work together for good for those who love You and are called according to Your purpose -- even our sins and the bad choices we make. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

CRAFT CORNER

Make a journal – a blessing book where the children can either write a "Thank You" note to Jesus or draw pictures of all the blessings they have.

GAME CENTER

Ping Pong Ball Toss

Write point numbers in the cups of two egg cartons. Place the two cartons long sides together. Divide the children into two teams. Give a child from each team 3 tosses of the ball for every right answer. The

team with the highest points gets two pieces of candy while the other team gets one piece.

Review Questions

1. What was it that Isaac wanted to give his first-born son before he died? (The birthright blessing)
2. Why did Jacob need his father's blessing if he already bought the birthright from Esau for a pot of stew years earlier? (To make it legal)
3. Why was Rebekah anxious for Jacob to get the blessing instead of Esau? (God had told her before the boys were born that the younger would rule over the older.)
4. What was Rebekah's sin? (She took matters into her own hands. She resorted to doing something wrong to try to bring about what God had already said would happen.)
5. What was Rebekah's plan? (She knew that Isaac was almost blind and wouldn't know which son was before him.)
6. What was Jacob's sin? (He was more worried about getting caught than about doing what was right.)
7. What does it probably mean if you are worried about getting caught doing something? (You are probably not doing something honest!)
8. What was the blessing that Isaac gave to Jacob? (That he would be master over his brother and, everyone who is good to him would be blessed of God.)
9. What happened as soon as Jacob got the blessing? (Esau came in with the meal for his father and found out he was too late.)
10. What was Esau's sin? How did Esau react to the situation? (First of all, he shouldn't have given away the birthright. But then, he was so angry, he hated his brother Jacob, and wanted to kill him.)
11. What did God do and why? (God blessed Jacob in spite of his sins. Why? Because God always keeps His promises. He had promised Abraham that He would bless Abraham's descendants. So, He did.)
12. Do any of us deserve to be blessed of God? (No! But, "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness." Lamentations 3:22-23 NIV)

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