

In the Beginning...

An Exploration of Genesis

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Week 4 May 5, 2024
"A Father's Blessing"

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we praise you for this day and for the strength you bless us with. We ask that you would reveal something new to us today. Remove the veils in our minds that could hinder us from seeing you today and make us one with you. Help us clear our minds, give us your mercy, and fill us with your grace. In Jesus' name, Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Genesis 25:29-34 (NIV)

²⁹Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came in from the open country, famished. ³⁰He said to Jacob, "Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I'm famished!" (That is why he was also called Edom.)

³¹Jacob replied, "First sell me your birthright."

³²"Look, I am about to die," Esau said. "What good is the birthright to me?"

³³But Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob.

³⁴Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left.

So Esau despised his birthright.

Genesis 27:21-29 (NIV)

²¹Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Come near so I can touch you, my son, to know whether you really are my son Esau or not."

²²Jacob went close to his father Isaac, who touched him and said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau." ²³He did not recognize him, for his hands were hairy like those of his brother Esau; so he

proceeded to bless him. ²⁴"Are you really my son Esau?" he asked.

"I am," he replied.

²⁵Then he said, "My son, bring me some of your game to eat, so that I may give you my blessing."

Jacob brought it to him and he ate; and he brought some wine and he drank. ²⁶Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come here, my son, and kiss me."

²⁷So he went to him and kissed him. When Isaac caught the smell of his clothes, he blessed him and said,

"Ah, the smell of my son
is like the smell of a field
that the Lord has blessed.

²⁸May God give you heaven's dew
and earth's richness—
an abundance of grain and new wine.

²⁹May nations serve you
and peoples bow down to you.

Be lord over your brothers,
and may the sons of your mother bow down
to you.

May those who curse you be cursed
and those who bless you be blessed."

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INTRODUCTION

Abraham’s son Isaac had two boys named Esau and Jacob. Jacob's name means "trickster" or "heel catcher," and he lived up to his name. Once again, while Jacob is highly esteemed, upon closer inspection we see that he is also human and imperfect. But God uses the imperfect, just like us. The story of Jacob and Esau teaches us several lessons regarding family relationships.

For parents, the story of Jacob and Esau shows us the importance of affirming the uniqueness of our children, that our words may be a blessing or a curse, and the importance of passing down our faith. The story also reminds us that we are blessed to be a blessing and that forgiveness is vital to any relationship.

QUESTIONS

1. Do you have any siblings? If yes, how is your relationship with them?
2. Isaac and Rebekah turned to God with their concerns, and found divine guidance and help. Have you made it a central part of your life to “inquire of the Lord”? Do you have mentors or models who help you know how to do that?
3. Read Genesis 25:29-34 (on page 1). What do you learn about yourself through your responses to this story? Are you more apt to admire Jacob or to deplore the way he treated Esau? With which qualities in each of the brothers do you most identify?
4. In the sermon, Pastor Eric said “the words we say to our children can be a blessing or a curse.” Discuss.
5. What are some ways you teach your faith to the next generation?

FINAL APPLICATION

What is one thing you can do this week to pour your life into someone from the next generation?