

Twin Brothers

MEMORY VERSE:

"Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him."

Psalm 37:7

Perhaps you know some twins or are a twin yourself. Well, twin boys were born to Isaac and Rebekah and they named them Esau and Jacob. Twins can often look so much alike that you can't tell who is who unless you know them very well. But Esau and Jacob were not like this. They looked different: Esau was very hairy while Jacob was smooth-skinned. They also acted differently: Esau was adventurous and loved to hunt, while Jacob was quiet and would rather stay close to home.

Esau had been born a few minutes before Jacob and in those days the oldest son would get the father's special blessing: this was called a birthright. The birthright would give the oldest son the responsibility of looking after the rest of the family after the father's death, but it would also give him all his father's riches. The father could choose to give it to a younger son or someone else if he wanted to, or it could be sold or given away before the blessing was actually spoken by the father, but once the blessing had been given, it could not be taken back.

One day, Esau had been out hunting and returned home almost fainting with hunger. Jacob was cooking some lentil soup when Esau came in. Esau demanded some and Jacob was quick to make a deal. "If you give me the birthright, I will give you some soup." Esau quickly agreed and gobbled it down.

Years passed and Isaac began to feel that he didn't have much longer to live. He called Esau and asked him to bring him one last meal of venison and then he would give him the blessing. Esau grabbed his bow and arrow and headed out to the fields.

But Rebekah had heard it all. She remembered that before the boys were born God had said that the older would serve the younger. She believed in God's promises and felt that God would want Jacob to be the one blessed, so she ran to find him. Together they came up with a plan to trick Isaac who was now old and blind. It is never good to try to trick people. They should have waited and trusted in God.

After quickly roasting a couple goats, Jacob dressed up in Esau's clothes, and his mother covered him with the hairy goat skins. Jacob brought the meal in to Isaac and Isaac was tricked. He gave Jacob the family blessing.

Shortly after this, Esau came in to his father with the meal he had prepared. Isaac was horrified to discover what had been done. From that day on Esau hated Jacob and plotted how he might kill him. Rebekah had to send Jacob off to live with her brother Laban in Haran for his safety, and she never saw him again.

Things to Remember

- Like Rebekah and Jacob we should believe in God's promises, but we should not try to gain them by lying or cheating.

- Families are strong because of loyalty, love and trust, but jealousy and deceitfulness can destroy a family.

Discussion

What had God said about the two boys to Rebekah and Jacob?

Why did Jacob trick Isaac?

What did Jacob have to do because of the trick he played?

Activity Suggestions

Draw a picture of Esau and Jacob. Remember that although they were twins, they looked very different!

Make a mask. Take a paper plate and cut it in half. Figure out where the eye holes should be and cut a little space along the bottom for your nose. Punch a hole at either side and tie or staple a piece of elastic to each side so that it will fit on your head. Decorate it with anything that you have on hand: sequins, glitter glue, ribbon, wool, etc.