

## Lesson 15: Blessing from Isaac

Welcome back! A couple of weeks ago, we began our new Via Positiva theme = Blessings and Gratitude.

This week, we continue with the Abraham-Isaac-Jacob saga found in *Genesis Chapters 12-50*. Once again, if you've never read it, or haven't read it in a long time, check it out. It's an amazing story.

Today, we're on part 2, which focuses on Jacob tricking Isaac to steal the blessing from Esau.

### Review/Introduction

Here are a few tips for introducing the lesson and reviewing the previous ones.

- ❖ Blessings are things that make us feel good, lucky, thankful, etc.
- ❖ God offered Abraham the blessing of many, many descendants - as numerous as the stars in the sky.
- ❖ God did finally bless Abraham and Sarah - even though they were very old - with a son. His name was Isaac.
- ❖ Isaac eventually grew up and married Rebekah. They had twin sons named Esau and Jacob. Esau was covered with red hair and became an excellent hunter. Jacob had smooth skin and mostly enjoyed staying at home/cooking.

### Video-Based Lesson

There are actually several really good videos of this story. This [4-minute version](#) is our favorite. A slower-paced 4-minute version can be found [here](#), and a fun version, told by kids, can be found [here](#).

If you want something really short (1 minute), try [this one](#)!

After watching the video, feel free to review and ask a few thought questions. Here are some to get you started.

- ❖ Do you know any twins - babies who were born at the same time to the same mother?
- ❖ Why do you think Jacob wanted to steal the blessing?

- ❖ Do you think Jacob stealing the blessing was a good thing or a not-so-good thing?
- ❖ How do you think Esau felt when he found out Jacob had tricked their father?
- ❖ Have you ever wanted something really, really badly?
- ❖ Have you ever told a little lie to get something you wanted?

### Bible Passage/Lesson - Older Kids

For the older kids, we read excerpts from the Bible passages related to this story.

For this first passage, make sure they understand the words, "barren" and "game."

#### Excerpts from Genesis 12:1-3

Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren and the Lord granted his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived....

When her time to give birth was at hand, there were twins in her womb. The first came out red, all his body like a hairy mantle; so they name him Esau. Afterwards his brother came out, with his hand gripping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob....

When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents. Isaac loved Esau, because he was fond of game; but Rebekah loved Jacob.

#### Questions

Do you know any sets of twins? Do they look alike? Or do they look different? Do they act alike/different? Do you/they know which one was born 1<sup>st</sup>?

Do you ever feel like a parent favors one child over another?

Nowadays, one twin being born before the other is not really a big deal. But, back in Bible times, it was a really big deal. When someone dies, they often give their things to their children or other loved ones. This is called an inheritance. Have you ever heard of that? Have you ever inherited something from someone who died?

In Bible times, the inheritance was not shared equally. It was the oldest son who got the most. This was called the birthright. Because Esau was born a few minutes before Jacob, Esau had the birthright. Esau's birthright would have: 1) made him the head of the household, which would put him in charge of everyone; 2) would have given him twice as much land as Jacob; 3) would have given him all the animals that grazed on that land; and 4) would have given him a special blessing, showing that God favored him.

Jacob wanted the inheritance - which was a pretty good deal - so he decided to trick Isaac, who was quite old by that time. Here's what happened.

### Excerpts from Genesis 27:1-12

When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim so that he could not see, he called his elder son Esau to him and said to him, "...prepare for me savory food, such as I like, and bring it to me to eat, so that I may bless you before I die."

Now Rebekah was listening...so...Rebekah said to her son Jacob, "I heard our father say to your brother Esau, 'Bring me game, and prepare for me savory food to eat, that I may bless you before the Lord before I die.' Now therefore my son, obey my word as I command you. Go to the flock, and get me two choice kids, so that I may prepare from them savory food for your father, such as he likes and you shall take it to your father to eat, so that he may bless you before he dies." But Jacob said to his mother Rebekah, "Look, my brother Esau is a hairy man, and I am a man of smooth skin. Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall seem to be mocking him, and bring a curse on myself and not a blessing."

### Thought Questions

Any guesses about how Jacob might fool Isaac?

### Excerpts from Genesis 27:13-29

Then Rebekah took the best garments of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them on her younger son Jacob; and she put the skins of the kids on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. Then she handed the savory food, and the bread that she had prepared, to her son Jacob.

Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn..." Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Come near, that I may feel you, my son, to know whether you are really my son Esau or not." So Jacob went up to his father Isaac, who felt him and said, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." [Isaac] did not recognize [Jacob], because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so [Isaac] blessed [Jacob].

May God give you of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine.

Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you.

Be lord over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you.

Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be everyone who blesses you!

### *Thought Questions*

So, Jacob managed to trick Isaac into giving him Esau's birthright. If someone were to bless you, what would you want? Would you want to be "lord over your brothers?"

Would you ever trick someone to get something you wanted? Would you feel badly afterward?

Has anyone ever tricked you? Did that make you feel bad?

### *Activities*

A fun activity that goes well with this lesson is to identify objects, even when they can't be seen - which is what Isaac did (although not very successfully!) For some objects we use our sense of touch; for others we use our sense of smell.

#### *Touch*

Simply take a paper bag or pillowcase and fill it with a few items hanging around your house. For younger kids, things like a ball, a small doll, a Lego, or sunglasses work well. For older kids, things like an eraser, cotton balls, and a band-aid are fun for them to touch and guess.

#### *Smell*

You probably want to use a paper bag instead of a pillowcase for the olfactory version of this activity. Younger kids can identify things like a cotton ball sprayed with perfume and an orange. Older kids can identify things like a lemon, crayons, and coffee.

### *Coloring Page*

There are also several coloring pages out there that depict this story. You can print this one out and let your kids color it. It can also be fun to glue some cereal on the pot of stew or to glue real yarn/fur on their beards and Jacob's "fake hand."

