

LESSON 16

Jacob & Esau

GENESIS 25:19-34



BIBLE TRUTH

GOD DIRECTS ALL THINGS FROM BABIES TO BIRTHRIGHTS

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. **OPENING REVIEW** **5 MIN**
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
2. **BIBLE STORY** **10 MIN**
Read Genesis 25:19–34 from the Scriptures or read story 16, “Jacob and Esau,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
3. **OBJECT LESSON 1** **10 MIN**
The Big Trade
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ one die
 - ✓ six boxes of various sizes
 - ✓ wrapping paper
 - ✓ wrapped chocolate candy
 - ✓ a rock, a pine cone, and/or some nonoffensive gag items
4. **TEACHING/DISCUSSION** **10 MIN**
5. **OBJECT LESSON 2** **10 MIN**
A Grace Choice
6. **SWORD BIBLE MEMORY** **5 MIN**
7. **ACTIVITY TIME** **15 MIN**
The Twins
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ paper
 - ✓ colored pencils
8. **CLOSING PRAYER** **5 MIN**
9. **BONUS OBJECT LESSON** **10 MIN**
A Free Gift
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ a small gift-wrapped Bible

TOTAL 80 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

God knew the older son would serve the younger son—Rebekah felt the children struggling inside her and was concerned. She wanted to know why this was happening. She prayed to the Lord, and God told her something very interesting. God said she was carrying twins who would grow up to become two nations and that the older twin would serve the younger.

Rebekah came to God in faith, believing that he knows all things and controls all things. God does not always answer our “why” questions this directly, but he did here for Rebekah. In doing this, he made her faith grow stronger. Rebekah’s sons continued the fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham, Rebekah’s father-in-law.

God blessed Isaac with twin boys—Just as God had said, Rebekah had twin boys. She would have known they were boys because God had said they would be “two nations,” and in her day only men could lead a nation. Also, normally the son who was born first would be the leading son, but God said the younger son would be the leader. So Rebekah probably also knew her sons would be very different from each other.

Esau sold his birthright in fulfillment of the prophecy—When Isaac and Rebekah lived, the firstborn son had the “birthright.” This meant that when the father died, the first son would inherit the family’s wealth and power. All the other members of the family would have to serve and obey the oldest son. But God told Rebekah that her older son would serve the younger. In this passage we see how God allowed that to come to pass.

Jacob probably knew about God’s promise to his mother; i.e., that he would get the family birthright. So one day when Esau came in hungry from hunting, Jacob took advantage of the situation and offered to give Esau a bowl of stew in exchange for his birthright, which was still Esau’s to give away or to keep. Esau, for the price of a bowl of stew, willingly and foolishly gave his birthright away. By doing so, he was agreeing to serve his brother.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Chosen

To be chosen by God is a term theologians use to describe those whom God picks to be objects of his mercy. God does not show mercy equally to everyone, even though everyone is equally guilty of sin and deserves to be eternally punished. But out of love, God chooses to extend

mercy to some. Some might see this choice of God as unjust, but Paul addresses this in Romans 9:11–16. Since all men are justly condemned and deserve death for their sin, God doesn't have to save anyone. Therefore, when God saves anyone, he demonstrates mercy. The scandal, if there is one to report, is that God chooses anyone at all.

WHERE IS JESUS? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Read Romans 9:8–15.

Have you been wondering why God told Rebekah that her older son would serve the younger? Here, in the book of Romans, God gives us the answer. God wanted to show that he controls everything. By choosing the meeker, younger son over the firstborn, stronger son, God was showing us that he didn't need man's strength to accomplish his plans. In the end, God wanted everyone to see that his people are saved by our faith in God alone, not because of when we were born or because of anything we do.

God does not save us because we are strong or because we were born first. We are saved by faith (trusting in God's plan), and even our faith is a gift God gives to us. The most important part of God's plan to save us was the death of his Son Jesus upon the cross, who died to take our sins away.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Genesis 25:19–34 from the Scriptures or read story 16, "Jacob and Esau," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 **10 MIN**

The Big Trade

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ one die
- ✓ six boxes of various sizes
- ✓ wrapping paper
- ✓ wrapped chocolate candy
- ✓ a rock, a pine cone, and/or some nonoffensive gag items

Prior to class, take the six boxes and wrap up candy in three of them and a rock, pinecone, or some nonoffensive gag items in the others. Number the boxes from one to six. Have several pieces of wrapped chocolate candy available for use during the exercise.

Ask for a volunteer from the class. Give him a small wrapped piece of chocolate and explain that he can keep it or trade it for a wrapped gift. If he chooses to keep the chocolate, have him sit down and start the process over again with another volunteer. If he chooses to trade the chocolate candy for a wrapped box, have him roll the die to determine which box he will get. Continue this until all six prizes are taken. Have the children unwrap their boxes one at a time. After each, announce that he or she “traded a wonderful chocolate for a {whatever is in the box}.” When they get a more valuable prize, they will be excited and when they get a gag they will be disappointed.

Use the following questions to connect this exercise with Esau’s decision to trade his birthright for a bowl of stew:

- Do you think Esau made a wise trade? Why or why not?
- Why do you think Jacob asked his brother for his birthright?
(Perhaps his mother told him that God’s plan was for his older brother to serve him.)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION **10 MIN**

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

A Grace Choice

Read Romans 9:11–16. In this passage we get a glimpse into God’s choosing based on his mercy not on works, showing that salvation is only by grace. Have the children compare this New Testament passage with the Old Testament story of Jacob and Esau and answer the following questions:

- What do we learn about the story of Jacob and Esau from the book of Romans that we didn’t learn from the text in Genesis?
(By choosing the younger son God wanted to show that he alone decides which child would carry on the promise. God was not bound to follow the tradition of the firstborn son. Jacob was not man’s choice, he was God’s choice, and God did not base his choice of Jacob on his behavior.)

- What does understanding God’s sovereign choice have to do with us today?
(God chooses us the same way he chose Jacob, not by our works but by his love and mercy.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN

The Twins

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ colored pencils

Have the children draw a picture of Esau, who was a hunter and a hairy man, next to Jacob, who was not hairy and not as strong.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day’s scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

A Free Gift

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a small gift-wrapped Bible

Choose one child from your class to receive the gift. In the middle of class, announce that you would like to present a gift to a particular student. Be careful not to give a reason for the gift. For example, avoid saying, “I am presenting this gift to Mary because she is so kind to the other students.” Instead, say that the person you chose did nothing at all to deserve the gift. You just wanted to bless them out of the kindness of your heart.

After they open the gift, draw out the class with the following questions:

- **Did they deserve the gift?**
(No, they did nothing to earn it.)
- **Did I have to give this gift to them?**
(No, you did not.)
- **Did I have to withhold the gift since I was not giving a Bible to everyone?**
(No, you can choose to give a gift to one person.)
- **How is this like God’s gift of salvation to us?**
(God pours out his Holy Spirit on some for salvation, but clearly, not everyone receives that gift. God opens the eyes of some to believe, but he does not open the eyes of everyone to believe.)