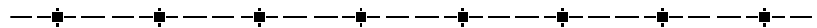


Old Testament

Mission Arlington • Mission Metroplex Curriculum • 2008

Families of the Old Testament



Created for use with young, unchurched learners
Adaptable for all ages including adults

Old Testament

Brothers Compete

Jacob and Esau

Genesis 25-35

Brothers Compete

Genesis 25:21-28

Memory Verse:

Try your best to live in peace with everyone. Try to be holy. Without holiness no one will see the Lord.
Hebrews 12:14 NIV

Lesson Goals:

1. Learn that Jacob and Esau looked different.
2. Understand that Jacob and Esau chose different work.
3. Recognize that Jacob and Esau had different values.
4. Understand that their parents had favorites.

Last week, we learned about Rebekah. Abraham and his servant prayed for a wife for Isaac. God was faithful to answer. Isaac married Rebekah.

Read the Bible

READ: Genesis 25:21-28 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)

Begin with Prayer

This week we will learn about the sons that God gave Isaac and Rebekah. The Bible says that Isaac prayed for Rebekah because she did not have any children. When Isaac prayed, God answered his prayers. (Genesis 25:21) Isaac learned about prayer and worshipping God from his father, Abraham. When God answered Isaac's prayer, Rebekah was not having one, but two babies. They would be very different. Have you ever seen twins? Sometimes, twins look exactly alike. Other times, they don't look alike.

Esau was born rough and hairy. But Jacob had smooth skin. Probably Esau already looked like the type who would like being outside, doing hard, and maybe dangerous, work. Jacob looked like the type who would like learning, and he would probably be weaker than Esau. (Genesis 25:23-25)

Jacob and Esau were different in the way that they thought, and the way that they lived. Esau became a hunter. He was a very good hunter. He probably was very strong like an athlete.

Jacob stayed around the tents and became a shepherd. He was probably not as athletic as Esau. He was probably quieter and liked being alone. (Genesis 25:27)

God loves all of us, no matter what we look like, no matter what we like to do. God loves us. God loves us, even if we don't always obey Him. The Bible says, that we love God because He first loved us. (1 John 4:10)

Sadly, Isaac and Rebekah (the parents) had favorites. It probably made God sad. Isaac liked Esau best. Esau was the first born son. He was the older son. He was supposed to be the heir. (The one who would receive the largest portion of everything his father had, when his father died.) He also hunted and brought meat to his father which made his father very happy.

Rebekah knew, even before Jacob and Esau were born, that God had said that the older son would serve the younger son. (Genesis 25:23). Jacob stayed around the tents. He was a shepherd. He was probably more gentle than Esau. He was the baby, the younger of the two. He was his mother's favorite. (Genesis 25:27)

Jacob and Esau probably knew that their parents had favorites. That probably made them want to compete against each other. The Bible says, that one day when Esau came in from hunting, Jacob had some stew. Esau wanted the

Jacob and Esau Bible Facts

1. Jacob and Esau were twins.
2. Jacob stayed in the tents.
3. Esau was a hunter.
4. Their parents had favorites.
5. The two brothers competed.

stew. But Jacob didn't want to give it to him. Jacob should have given his brother the food. But he didn't. Jacob sold his brother the food. The Bible says that he asked Esau to give him his birthright in return. Birthrights were the rights that belonged to Esau as the oldest son. In addition to receiving a part, if not all of his father's animal, money, etc., the birthright included the promises made to Abraham. Those promises became Isaac's inheritance. You may recall that God promised the land of Canaan to Abraham. (Genesis 15:7) We know that Esau did not think his birthright was important. Instead he chose to eat a bowl of stew. (Genesis 25:33) If he had believed that his birthright was important, he would not have sold it, so easily for one meal, no matter how hungry he was. Esau was wrong to sell his birthright.

Jacob, on the other hand, must have thought that the birthright was important. Staying near the tents, he probably studied more about the meaning of the birthright and understood it better. He made Esau promise with an oath (to give his word) to sell him the birthright. Jacob was wrong, too. But, being the youngest, and not being his father's favorite (this was not a good thing), probably made Jacob want to have what Esau had. They probably competed against each other for everything. The Bible tells us, "Try your best to live in peace with everyone. Try to be holy. Without holiness no one will see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14 NIV) "Holy" means to be dedicated to serving God. God wants us to be dedicated to serving Him. He sent His only Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins. Jesus obeyed and did everything God asked. God wants us to do the same. Abraham and Isaac were both dedicated to serving God. We will see later if Jacob was dedicated.

Review questions.

1. **Who were Jacob and Esau?** (The twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah)
2. **Where did Jacob stay?** (Jacob stayed around the tents)
3. **What did Esau do?** (Esau was a hunter)
4. **Did their parents treat them the same?** (No, their parents had favorites)
5. **What did the brothers do?** (The brothers competed against each other)

Do you know Jesus? God loves us all the same. I John 4:10 says the we love God because He first loved us. We can know God personally. To do that, we must ask God to forgive our sins and invite Him to come and be a part of our lives. When we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead, then we are saved. (Romans 10:9-10) When that happens, we can know Him. He will help us live for Him.

Prayer Time

1. Take a moment to listen to God.
2. Thank God for sending Jesus so that we can know Him.
3. Ask God to help you to be dedicated to Him.
4. Pray for friends and family members who may compete against each other.

Application

Jacob and Esau were brothers but they looked different and chose different work. God made us in such a way that we are all different. Even our fingerprints are different. Sometimes in families what one person thinks is important is not the same thing another member of the family thinks is important. We call those things values. Jacob and Esau had different values. Jacob understood that there was great value in the birthright. Esau chose to sell his birthright for a bowl of stew. Both Jacob and Esau were wrong in their actions. Their parents had favorites. This was wrong. But it probably made them want to compete against each other. God wants us to get along. God also wants us to be dedicated to Him. Try your best to live in peace with everyone. "Try to be holy. Without holiness no one will see the Lord." **Hebrews 12:14 NIV**

Planning for the next week:

Jacob and Rachel (A Man Finds a Wife) — Genesis 28-30

Preschool Lesson

Read the Bible

READ: Genesis 25:21-28 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)

Sing: “Look All the World Over, There’s No One Like Me,” “Jesus Loves Me,” or another song related to the story.

(Bring construction paper and ink pads. Allow the children to press their fingers and thumbs on the ink pad. Then have them place them on the construction paper. Ask them to create a picture of something happy, like flowers or animals. Remind them that each fingerprint is different.)

Jacob and Esau were brothers. They were twins. That means they were born at the same time. But they looked different and chose different work.

Esau was the oldest. Esau was a hunter. He liked to be outside. He was probably very strong.

Jacob was the youngest. Jacob was a shepherd. He was probably quiet.

God made us in such a way that we are all different. Even our fingerprints are different.

God made each of us special. God loved us so much that He sent His only Son, Jesus, to us. Jesus came so that we can know just how much God loves us. He wants us to live with Him in heaven forever.

Prayer Time

1. Take a moment to listen to God.
2. Thank God for sending Jesus so that we can know Him.
3. Thank God for your brothers and sisters and all the members of your family.

Did you know? You can help a preschooler feel loved.

Consider this: Each child is different. Be sensitive to that. Listen to what they have to say. Give them undivided attention even if it is only for a few seconds. Look them in the eyes. Respond to their questions. Answer the first time they call. Remind them that God loves them and that they are special. Sing “Jesus Loves Me.” Put their name in the chorus.

Learning Activities

- **Memory verse activity**— Allow the children to work in pairs. Ask them to use craft sticks and create the letters for the memory verse. Assign each pair a word. If you have enough children you may assign each pair just one letter. Put the verse together. Ask the children to stand in pairs and say the memory verse.
- **Test your memory**— Have the children stand in pairs. Ask them to face each other and look at each other. Ask them to stand back to back. Then ask them to tell you what color shoes or clothes they are wearing. Ask the pair to tell the story together. Allow several pairs to tell the story.
- **Taste activity**— Bring pudding swirls (two flavors in one).

If possible, bring stew or soup for a snack. Talk about choices. Tell the children God can help us make good choices.

- **Think about it** — Bring pictures of twins. Talk about how even twins are different. Tell the children God made each of us special. Allow each child to tell you one reason they are special. (God made me. God loves me.)

Talk about choices. Ask the children to tell you how they decide to right or wrong. You may need to help them by asking questions. Gear the questions to fit situations your children face.

1. What do you do when your brother gets the last piece of candy?
2. What do you do when your friends want to talk in class?
3. What do you do when a friend wants to skip school?

- **Touch activity**— Cut out circles. Ask each child to draw a picture of Jacob and Esau. Add craft sticks to make them into a puppet. Let the children tell the story.
- **Run and play**— Have the children do a potato sack race. Use plastic trash bags but monitor that carefully.
- **Listen**— Remind the children that God loves them. As they take time for silence before God, encourage them to thank God for loving them and making them special.
- **Sing**— Sing “Look All the World Over, There’s No One Like Me,” “Jesus Loves Me,” or a song related to the story. If you sing, “Jesus Loves Me,” use the child’s name in the chorus. For example: Jesus loves Jeni. Jesus love Jeni. Jesus loves Jeni. The Bible tells me so.

Memory Verse

Try your best
to live in peace
with everyone.
Try to be holy.
Without holiness
no one
will see the Lord.

Hebrews 12:14

NIRV

Word Puzzle

Trace the letters.

Try your

best

to live

in peace.

Word Puzzle

Y L B T N E R E F F I D
Q E I N A T I R E H I I
D G S J B O C A J O H S
E T O A L A E S G P F A
Y I L O R T P E F M I D
E M D P J H R T S L R C
B C U E S A U P E H E S
O S G N R J W B U D G P
A V H E G H E L L V N I
F J D A I G T S A G U V
L L D N P E S I V U O P
O A N X Q Z U D N L Y R

JACOB

ESAU

VALUES

SOLD

STEW

OATH

DIFFERENT

OLDER

YOUNGER

Word Puzzle



JACOB

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YOUNGER

Anagram

1. wnsit-

2. rtnheu-

3. hheepdsr-

4. wset-

5. iitthhrrgb-

6. reifoastv-

7. eeomptdc-

8. seauly-

Anagram

1. wnsit- twins
2. rtnheu- hunter
3. hheepdsr- shepherd
4. wset- stew
5. iitthrrgb- birthright
6. reifoastv- favorites
7. eeomptdc- competed
8. seaulv- values