



Genesis 25:31

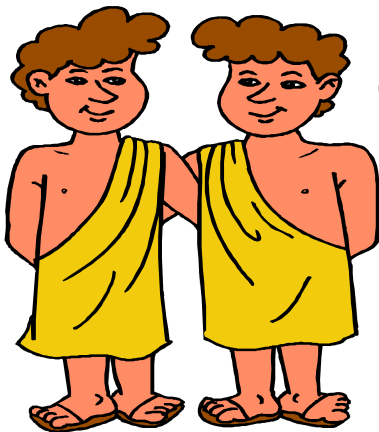
"But Jacob said, 'You must sell me your rights as the firstborn son.'"

Abraham lived to be an old man, and when he saw his son Isaac had grown up and married a fine woman, he was willing to die. He had followed all the commands of God, even to the willingness to sacrifice his son.

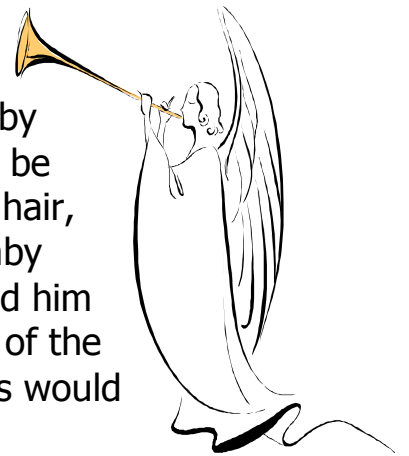
God had blessed Abraham and His promise came true many years later. For God planned into this family would be born Jesus Christ, the Savior of the World.



Isaac and Rebekah were married a long time before they had any children. Rebekah wanted a baby very badly and prayed to God to give her one. Isaac, like his father, wondered how the nations would be blessed since there were no children.

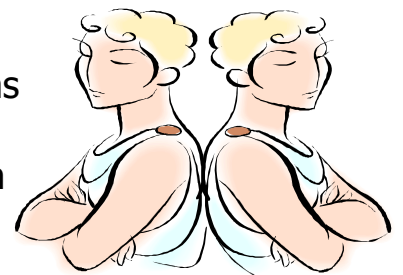


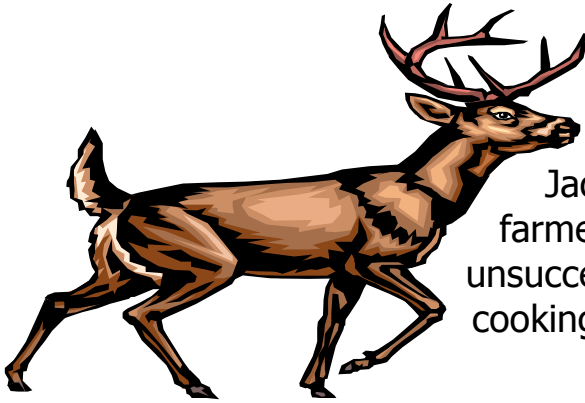
God heard Isaac and Rebekah's prayers by giving them twin sons. The first one to be born was a little boy covered with soft hair, whom they called Esau. The second baby was smooth and tender, and they called him Jacob. Before they were born the angel of the Lord had told Rebekah that the two sons would be two different nations.



One people would be stronger than the other, and the older shall serve the younger. As they grew up it appeared Esau was stronger, for he loved the outdoors and to hunt. Jacob was quieter and more gentle.

The boys were against each other. Esau with his thick hair was Isaac's favorite. Esau would bring the deer meat he had hunted and feed his father, Isaac, who was blind, and tell him of his adventures. He was proud of the strong boy and loved Esau best. Rebekah loved Jacob, and could see that he was stronger in goodness.

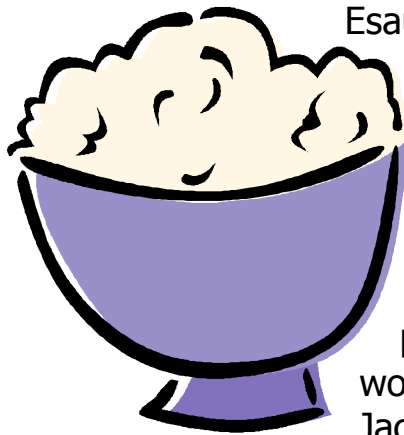




Esau continued his hunting while Jacob was the family shepherd and farmer. One day Esau came in from an unsuccessful hunt and Jacob was cooking a pot of stew.



Finally, Esau grew very tired and said he would give anything for the pot of stew. Jacob said, **"Promise me the birthright shall be mine, and the stew will be yours."**

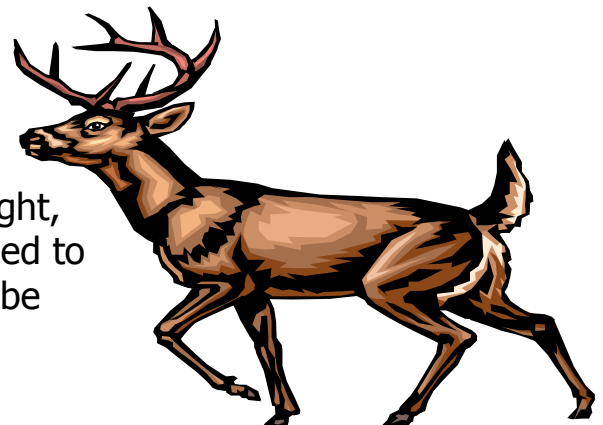


Esau promised and grabbed the bowl of pottage. Esau gave up the greatest thing he owned, for the birthright belonged to the oldest son and meant when the father died he would be the head of the family, the wisest one and closest to God. For just a little food Esau traded these blessings.

This foolish trade was part of God's plan, so that God's promise to Rebekah that the older shall serve the younger would come true. Esau, the older, had given up his birthright to Jacob, the younger.

The time came when Isaac was old that he could not see and had to stay in bed most of the time. He knew he would not live long so he called Esau to him and told him to go hunt a deer and cook and bring him to eat. Then he would give him his blessing that is his birthright.

Rebekah heard Isaac's promise to Esau. Esau went out to find the deer, and Rebekah called Jacob to her. She knew Jacob had bargained for Esau's birthright, and thought this was the time to claim it. They planned to play a trick. They would send Jacob in pretending to be Esau, and Isaac would give to him the birthright.

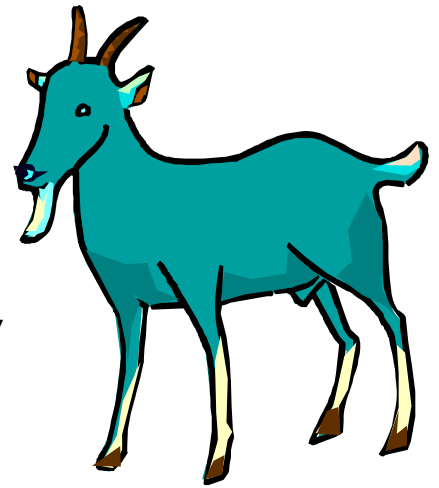


Jacob was hesitant about doing this, and said, **"What if he should discover who I am and become angry with me?"** But, Rebekah said she would take the anger upon herself and hastened to carry out her plan.

Jacob brought two goats from his father's flock and did kill and prepare a stew. It was cooked as deer meat to give to Isaac.



Rebekah took the skins of the animals and wound around Jacob's arms and neck so his father would think he was Esau, who had hairy skin.



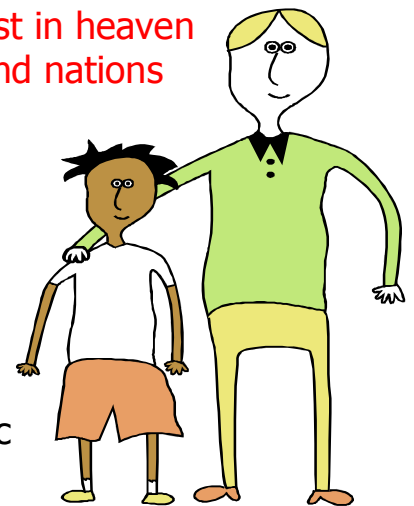
Rebekah also brought out Esau's robe for him to wear. She wanted even the smell of the clothes to help fool Isaac, and lead Isaac to believe it was his eldest son. Giving Jacob the stew and bread, she told him to go to his father.

Jacob said, "Father, here am I." Isaac asked who, and Jacob replied, "I am Esau, your oldest son. I have done just as you asked me." But, Isaac had questions of doubt and he asked Jacob to come near him and he felt of the goat's hair on Jacob. He asked was this really Esau. He had him to come near so he could smell of his clothes, and he felt satisfied this was Esau.

He placed his hands on Jacob and said, "God give you the best in heaven and on earth, plenty to eat and drink. Let people serve you and nations honor you. Let your brothers bow down to you. Let him that curse you be cursed, and blessed be he that bless you."



Jacob received the blessing. Esau came in very soon to make the stew his father had requested. He took the stew to his father, and Isaac asked, "Who is it?" Esau, your oldest son. This voice could not be mistaken.



Isaac realized he had been fooled. He knew it was too late. He perhaps remembered God told Rebekah that the older would serve the younger. Esau begged for the blessing, but it was too late. He had already made Jacob a ruler over Esau.

Esau asked, "Have you no blessing for me, Father." Isaac gave Esau what blessing he could, but it was not the blessing of the birthright, which Esau had sold- to Jacob for a mess of pottage.

Quiz Time

1. What was God's plan for Abraham's family?

2. How many sons did Isaac have?

3. Name the sons of Isaac.

4. Were they different? How?

5. What was each son's occupation?

6. What did Esau exchange for a mess of pottage?

7. What does birthright mean?

8. What had God promised to Rebekah?

9. What did Isaac ask Esau to do?

10. How did Jacob and Rebekah fool Isaac?

11. When did Isaac think Jacob was Esau?

12. What blessing did he place upon Jacob?

13. What did Esau do when he found it out?

Answers:

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|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Jesus would come from Abraham's family | 2 two | 3 Esau and Jacob | 4 different hair |
| 5 hunter and shepherd | 6 his birthright | 7 the head of the family | |
| 8 her two sons would be two different nations | 9 come close so that he could smell his could | | |
| 10 she gave Jacob Esau's coat to wear | 11 the very best of everything and his family would serve him | | |