

Character Study: Isaac
Part 2 – Issues at Home
Genesis 25:19-34

What's happening?

- After their marriage, Isaac and Rebekah had trouble bearing children. Isaac pleaded with the Lord, and the Lord eventually granted them twin boys. The pregnancy was difficult for Rebekah, though, as the boys often struggled together within her. The Lord revealed to Rebekah that two nations would come from her two boys. One would be stronger than the other, and the older would serve the younger. (25:20-24).
- The first child born was named Esau, who grew into a skilled hunter. He was greatly loved by Isaac. Jacob was the second son, and grew to be more of a peaceful man, enjoying home life over the wild. He was greatly loved by Rebekah. (25:25-28)
- Returning from a hunt empty handed one day, Esau requested food from Jacob. Jacob agreed to give him soup in exchange for his birthright. Esau, fearing he would starve to death, agreed. The birthright that was Esau's now belonged to Jacob. (25:29-34)

What's God doing?

> God had given children to Isaac, thereby carrying on the covenant promises through him. However, even before their birth, God began to reveal that Jacob would play a significant role in His covenant plan, even more so that the firstborn son, Esau.

What's to learn?

→ As their boys grew, Isaac and Rebekah began to pick "favorites." Choosing to love and favor one child over another is always a recipe for trouble. The result is that the family structure is pulled apart. Children will despise parents who reject them, and disrespect parents who spoil them. We find that Jacob became self-seeking and Esau became rebellious (note Gen. 26:34-35).

→ When Esau sold his birthright, it meant that he lost the benefits that came with being the first born. As a firstborn, he was heir to a double portion of the family inheritance and leadership in the family. Esau failed to grasp the significance of all that God had promised his father and all that he was giving up. Esau showed poor wisdom by focusing on his temporal, physical appetite, rather than the meaningful, spiritual things.

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