

**Year A, Week 29 (June 15, 2008)**  
**Genesis 25: 19- 34 Jacob and Esau**

**Hymn suggestions:** *Father Abraham (calmly!); Shout to the North and the South*

**Items Needed:**

- Rebekah figure
- Isaac figure
- 2 baby/child figures (make Esau bigger)
- grown Jacob figure
- grown Esau figure (suggestion: the “giant” figure with strange clothes).
- Optional: make a tent by folding a sheet of paper in half

We’ve been talking about how God made a promise with his people. We learned that God chose Abraham and his wife Sarah. He sent them to a new place called Canaan, and he made a promise – or a covenant – with them. He told Abraham that one day he would have as many descendants as there are stars in the sky or grains of sand at the beach.

God told Abraham, “This is my covenant. I will be your God, and you will be my people.”

Even though Abraham and Sarah were old when God made these promises, they did have a boy, whom they called Isaac. When Isaac grew up, he married Rebekah. (*Show Isaac and Rebekah.*)

Isaac and Rebekah wanted to have children, but for twenty years, they couldn’t. So Isaac prayed to God, and God answered his prayers.

When Rebekah was pregnant, she felt like there was a war in her belly. So she asked the Lord to explain, and he told her there were two boys in there fighting. He told her that the older one would be stronger, but the younger one would be the leader.

When the babies were born, the older one was covered with red hair. They called him Esau. (*Show “child” Esau.*) The younger child was born right after Esau – and he came out still clutching his brother’s heel. They called him Jacob. (*Show “child” Jacob and then put both boys away.*)

The boys were very different. Esau was very hairy, and he was always outside hunting. His father loved him – and the meat that he hunted – very much. (*Show grown Esau and Isaac figures.*) Jacob preferred to be inside in a tent and lived quietly. His mother loved him very much. (*Show grown Jacob and Rebekah figures.*)

One day when they were older, Esau was out hunting while Jacob was back at the tent making a bean stew. (*Set out Jacob figure next to optional tent.*)

Esau came back home and said, “I’m starving! Give me some of that stew!” (*Set out Esau.*)

Jacob said, “OK, but first give me your birthright.” In those days, the oldest boy had lots of privileges and blessings, called a birthright.

Esau said, “If I don’t get some food, I’m going to starve to death – and then what good is a birthright going to do me?”

But Jacob said, “No food until you promise to give me your birthright.”

So Esau did promise, and Jacob gave him stew and bread. And so we say that Esau sold his birthright for some porridge.

**Questions without Response:**

- I wonder ... why brothers and sisters sometimes fight like Jacob and Esau?
- I wonder ... if you’ve ever felt that your mother or father or grandparent loves someone better than you?
- I wonder ... if you’ve ever made an unfair trade with someone, like Jacob does with Esau? (Or I wonder if it’s Esau’s fault to accept such a deal?)