

020220 Growth Group Study

Twins at War

Gen 25:19-34



Background: This week we begin a new series on the Life of Jacob: Encountering God in the ordinary and often messy stuff of life. Paul Stevens writes, “As we travel through all the stages of Jacob’s life we discover that God is with Jacob in every aspect of his journey. The Bible is not an instruction manual that contains principles of spirituality. It is a story, a story about God in search of humankind and his progressive establishment of his kingdom on earth. And the amazing thing about this God is that he condescends to come right into the midst of our mundane, messy worlds of home, work and play as the stage where this ‘holy’ work occurs.” Each week we will discover how God is at work forging Jacob’s identity in the midst of a very dysfunctional and fragmented family, one that may be strikingly similar to our own.

Sermon Text: Gen 25:19-34 (ESV)

I. Introduction: The Toledoth of Isaac (19-20)

19 These are the generations of Isaac, Abraham’s son: Abraham fathered Isaac, 20 and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his wife.

II. The Birth of the Twins (21-26)

A. Isaac’s prayer and Rebekah’s conception

21 And Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife, because she was barren. And the LORD granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

B. Rebekah’s prayer the Lord’s oracle

22 The children struggled together within her, and she said, “If it is thus, why is this happening to me?” So she went to inquire of the LORD. 23 And the LORD said to her,

*“Two nations are in your womb,
and two peoples from within you shall be divided;
the one shall be stronger than the other,
the older shall serve the younger.”*

C. The birth and naming of the twins

24 When her days to give birth were completed, behold, there were twins in her womb. 25 The first came out red, all his body like a hairy cloak, so they called his name Esau. 26 Afterward his brother came out with his hand holding Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.

III. Twins Divided from the Womb (27-34)

A. Differing passions

27 When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents.

B. Divided parents

28 Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

C. Differing priorities

29 Once when Jacob was cooking stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was exhausted. 30 And Esau said to Jacob, "Let me eat some of that red stew, for I am exhausted!" (Therefore his name was called Edom.) 31 Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright now." 32 Esau said, "I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?" 33 Jacob said, "Swear to me now." So he swore to him and sold his birthright to Jacob. 34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. As you reflect on the sermon, what stands out to you most?
- b. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- c. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?

2. Sermon questions: The Gift of Mothers

- a. Do you know your mother's story?
- b. Were there any tragic circumstances that shaped your mother?
- c. How did your mother deal with pain and grief?
- d. Did your mother and father communicate honestly with each other?
- e. Did your parents have favorites among their children?
- f. In your home, could you communicate freely with both parents?
- g. List three words that describe your relationship with your mother during your growing up years.
- h. How has time changed your perspective about your mother?