

LESSON 12
ISAAC BLESSES JACOB OVER ESAU
GENESIS 25:19-34 ; 27:1-46



Teacher, please remember that the commentary below is intended to help you in your study, not to be read to your students. Make your own list of applications, using the help from the commentary, but don't necessarily try to cover everything! Think of the students in your class, then be prayerfully selective.

Contents:

Preparation

Memory verses

Theme

Lesson introduction

Verse by verse commentary (suggested location of activities included)

Suggested prayer to close

Attention grabbers

Activities

Bible Text (in full, without commentary)

1. Preparation

- Choose memory verse
- Select attention grabber to start off lesson / break the ice - optional, recommended for younger classes. (see point 7)
- Suggested activities- optional, recommended for younger children (see point 8)

2. Memory verse options (choose **one** for your class session)

For older children:

HEBREWS 12:14 "Pursue peace with all men, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord."

HEBREWS 11:20, "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come."

For younger children:

Ephesians 4:32, "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted . . ."

3. Themes

God wants us to treat each other with kindness

Sin is never right

4. Lesson introduction

In today's lesson, we are going to learn about Jacob and Esau. They were two brothers who had a lot of struggle and conflict. Have you ever had a fight with your brother or sister? For Jacob and Esau, their refusal to get along with each other got them into all kinds of trouble. In today's lesson, we will learn that **God wants us to treat each other with kindness**. As our story is told, think about your friends, brothers or sisters, neighbors, or anybody else you are having a problem loving and consider how God would want you to live with others. We will also discover that Jacob and his mother Rebekah decided to take Jacob's future into their own hands and secure Isaac's blessing by a lie. And **sin is never right**.

5. Verse by Verse Commentary (Key points in bold)

GENESIS 25:19-26

Here we first see Isaac's wife, Rebekah and she is barren, or not able to have children. Isaac went before the Lord in prayer, and the Lord answered Isaac's prayer. It is interesting to note that Isaac's mother, Sarah, was also barren; but God miraculously intervened, and she bore Isaac. God's plans sometimes seem impossible; and sometimes, it seems that nothing can be done to improve a situation. That is when God can intervene and prove His faithfulness! God wants us to trust Him completely. Rebekah did conceive, and she sensed a struggle within her womb that drove her to seek the Lord. When we sense struggle, we should seek the Lord. God explained the struggle to Rebekah and added that the older child would serve the younger child in a future generation.

This was contrary to Old Testament culture. The older son always had supremacy over the younger; the older, received double the inheritance and the birthright. Many times in scripture, we see the Lord reversing the man-made order of things. The Bible teaches us that God's ways are higher than man's ways. This struggle in the womb was a prelude to the struggle these children would have in the future. Soon the twins were born. The first of the twins was red and hairy, so they named him Esau. The second twin was born grasping Esau's heel, so they named him Jacob, which means "one who grabs the heel" or "one who trips up." Now, Isaac and Rebekah named them according to the promise God gave to them (Genesis 25:23). This was just the start of the struggle between these two brothers.

GENESIS 25:27-34

As the twins grew, Esau became a man of the field, a hunter; while Jacob became a man of the tents, a quiet man tending the flock. Now, Isaac loved Esau more, because he was a hunter who provided his father with the game he hunted. We read that Rebekah loved Jacob more. One day, when Esau got back from an unsuccessful hunt, he was "starving." Jacob was making a stew, so Esau asked him for some. Jacob said he would give Esau a portion if Esau would give him his birthright. Wondering what good a birthright would be to a dead man, Esau said Jacob could have it. Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of lentil stew. Now Jacob realized the spiritual significance of that birthright, but Esau despised it. Jacob had probably been waiting for an opportunity like this one for a long time. Maybe his mother had told him about God's promise that the older brother would serve the younger, but it was not right for Jacob to "try" to make God's promise happen. His craftiness got him into trouble. When we trust the Lord and follow Him, our relationships with other people will be right. We will want what is best for them, not what we can trick them into giving us. **God wants us to treat each other with kindness.** It would have been interesting to see how God's promises would have been fulfilled if Jacob had not taken matters into his own hands and acted inappropriately. We know that when God makes a promise, He always keeps it.

Note to teachers:

To fully understand the conflict between Jacob and Esau, read Genesis chapter 27. The comments below are based on Genesis 27. Next week we will study that chapter in more depth. In Genesis 27, four people stand out: Isaac, Rebekah, Esau and Jacob; not one of them is admirable. It seems Isaac, in his old age, is preoccupied with his stomach, anxious for another venison meal before he dies. He also wanted to bless Esau, even though he probably knew God's promises about Jacob; Jacob was the one who should be blessed. Rebekah knew the promise of God for Jacob, but she was not content to wait for the promise. She devised a deceitful plan. Her wrong was not in wanting Jacob to have the blessing, but in how she went about trying to get it for him. Remember that God wants us to trust Him for His promises.

Because Esau sold his birthright, he should never have agreed to Isaac's offer to receive the blessing. He knew that Jacob had the birthright and should be the one to receive the blessing. There was really no excuse for Jacob's actions; he was no longer a youth, but a man of advancing years himself. Jacob lies twice to his father--first, in saying that he was Esau, and second, in saying the venison was found so quickly because of God's favor. We must never lie to get something. God knows all things, and He is the one who blesses us. Lying will definitely have a snowball effect. When one seeks to cover the truth, a small lie can turn into a bigger lie. The bigger lie becomes even bigger in an attempt to continue to cover the truth. Soon the lie has become a whopper, and the consequences that result when the truth is found out are much greater. No matter how hard the truth is to tell, it is always easier than the consequences of a lie. God honors the truth. At the root of many conflicts is our own selfishness. Jacob was impatient and did not want to wait for God to give him what He promised. So, he sinned (lied) in order to get what he wanted. This led to division within the family and between brothers. May we never be so focused on ourselves that we neglect our relationships with others. **God wants us to treat each other with kindness.**

Right after the suspicious Isaac blesses the disguised Jacob, Esau entered the tent with the game he had prepared. Immediately, Isaac and Esau realize they had been tricked. Esau cried out with a loud voice, begging to be blessed; but Isaac realized that God's promise had come to pass and that he would be wrong to try to give the blessing to Esau. The small blessing Isaac did give Esau was of little comfort. Esau realized his descendants would be subject to Jacob. Esau comforted himself with the thought of killing Jacob. When Jacob's mother discovered Esau's plan to hurt Jacob, she convinced Jacob to leave home and travel to her brother Laban's home. How sad! Even though a person who deceives may seem to get what he wants for a season, he ultimately pays a heavy price. Jacob had to leave home. What was supposed to be a short trip ended up taking twenty years. Two brothers and an entire family were divided. **God wants us to treat each other with kindness.**

Jacob's example is contrary to God's standard for our behavior with others. It would have been interesting to see how God would have accomplished his promises had Isaac, Rebekah, Esau, and Jacob been faithful. Now let's jump to the future and take a look at Jacob and Esau's relationship.

GENESIS 27:1-4

Isaac, at 136 years old, realizes his days on earth could be limited. He is anxious to impart the blessing due the firstborn son before he dies. Actually, the Bible tells us Isaac would continue to live another 44 years. Yet, aware of his frail condition, Isaac calls his oldest son to come to him. The Bible notes that Isaac's eyes were "dim," yet not only were they dim physically, but spiritually as well, for it was not Esau who was to receive the blessing, but Jacob (see Genesis 25:23,33). It seemed that Isaac favored Esau over Jacob. He certainly liked the fact that Esau was a hunter and could fix a nice meal for him. Isaac requested Esau to go and prepare him venison—his favorite meal. He would then give the blessing to Esau. Isaac appeared to be more occupied with his desire for good food than he was with seeing God's plan fulfilled. May we never be so occupied with the "affections and lusts" of our sinful nature that we fail to hear the voice of God. **Sin is never right.**

GENESIS 27:5-13

Here we see that Rebekah heard what Isaac had spoken to Esau, fearing God's purposes would not be accomplished, she devised a plan. When we take things out of God's hands and try to "make" them happen ourselves, we can create problems! Rebekah had a promise from God, but she did not wait for him to fulfill it. Have you ever done the right thing the wrong way? We need to "wait" on the Lord--to

trust that He will do what is what is right and best in His time. Rebekah's failure to "wait" will have consequences. **Sin is never right.**

As Jacob raises an objection to his mother's scheme, we see a bit of his character revealed. His objection is not so much that he would be a part of a deceitful plan, but that he could suffer consequences if his deception were found out. It is not a fear of God, but a fear of man. Remember, **sin is never right.** Rebekah foolishly says, "Let your curse be on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get them for me." Rebekah's failure to trust the Lord resulted not only in her own disobedience, but in her son's disobedience. She taught her son to deceive his father. **Sin is never right.**

GENESIS 27:14-29

Jacob agreed to carry out his mother's plan. She clothed him in Esau's clothes, and put skins of kids on his hands and his neck. Jacob lied to his father deliberately. As his father was still unsure about how a meal could be found and prepared so quickly, Jacob said, "Because the LORD your God brought it to me," now bringing the name of the Lord into his deception. We see how one sin leads to another sin; one "little" lie grows to a bigger lie. We must call sin what it really is--sin! We must not justify or excuse it. We must repent and ask for forgiveness. **Sin is never right.** Isaac's suspicions were dismissed; he ate and then proceeded to give to Jacob his blessing. He said "Therefore may God give you of the dew of heaven, of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine (substantial produce). Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you (preeminence among the nations). Be master over your brethren, and let your mother's sons bow down to you (preeminence among his kindred). Cursed be everyone who curses you and blessed (prosperous physically and spiritually) be those who bless you! Jacob received this blessing from his father because of God's grace (Genesis 28:13-15). Isaac thought he was blessing Esau, but God caused the words of blessing to fall upon the man of His choice, Jacob. God ultimately still had control of the situation. The failure of faith leading to deceit will bring with it sorrow, as we shall see; but it cannot interfere with fulfillment of the God's eternal purpose. God has this way of turning things around for His purposes despite our sin and disobedience (see Romans 8:28).

GENESIS 27:30-40

At this point, Isaac may have realized that he had been going against the divine plan of God. Isaac knew that the blessing actually came from the Spirit of God; and now that it was given, it could not be revoked. He now fully realized it was God's will that the spiritual blessing should fall on the line of Jacob. Instead of cursing Jacob, Isaac appeared to be gracious, understanding the will of the Lord had been done. We see Esau exceedingly grieved over the situation, but we must remember that Esau sold his birthright for bread and stew of lentils--it meant nothing to him. He must have known that the blessing was not to be his, but Jacob's. Esau begged and pleaded with his father for a blessing. Isaac did give Esau a blessing. "Behold, your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above. By your sword you shall live, and you shall serve your brother; and it shall come to pass, when you become restless, that you shall break his yoke from your neck."

The blessing seems similar to Jacob's, but it is different. God would make Esau into a nation. His descendants would later become the people of Edom. The land of Edom was a comparative wilderness. He would live by his sword, preying upon others, and serving his brother. The history of Edom, revealed later in the Bible, was a continual struggle against the supremacy of Israel. **Sin is never right.**

GENESIS 27:41-46

It was Rebekah who sent away the son she so loved. She was the one to lead him into sin, and she was the one God used to send him away. What she thought would only be a few days, ended up being 20

years. She probably never again saw the son she so loved. How sad are the consequences of sin. **Sin is never right.** From our lesson this week we can learn a few things.

1. We must not, like Isaac, allow our earthly passions to make us dull to God's plan and will for our lives.
2. We must not, like Rebekah, take matters into our own hands. We must trust in the Lord and "wait."
3. We must not, like Esau, give up our divine privileges (promised blessings) for the temporary satisfaction this world can offer.
4. We must not, like Jacob, deceive and sin against others in order to get what we want. **Sin is never right.**

Let us never forget Galatians 6:7-9, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart."

GENESIS 33.

Jacob has been renamed "Israel" which means "governed by God." He has become a different man. Now twenty years later, Jacob is a man that follows and trusts God, ready to meet his brother again. He did not know how his brother would respond to their meeting. Would he still be angry? Would he still try to kill him? Esau was coming with four hundred men. Such a large group was usually a sign of hostility. Jacob separated his family and sent presents ahead to Esau. When Jacob went out to meet Esau he found, not an enemy, but a brother. Jacob presented Esau a gift that was reluctantly taken because Esau had no need. Jacob's family bowed down to Esau. After they spent some time visiting, they went separate ways. It was not the humble way in which Jacob greeted Esau that resulted in the peaceful meeting, nor was it the presents he was ready to bestow. It was God who changed Esau's heart. How are our relationships with our friends, brothers and sisters, parents, and neighbors? God wants us to show His love to them. Remember that **God wants us to treat each other with kindness.** We represent Jesus to those God has put in our lives. When we have trouble with someone, we need to take it to God in prayer and respond to the situation the way Jesus would. By doing so, we will find both peace with God and peace with men. **God wants us to treat each other with kindness.**

6. Prayer:

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to show kindness to others. Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to keep pure before the Lord and wait on Him for all of His promises. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity to do so.

7. Attention Grabbers

Who Gets the Marble

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

- As many small bags of marbles as the number of children in your class.
- A tennis ball or Ping-Pong ball.
- A lunch size paper bag for each child, an assortment of tiny gifts (gum machine size, like little toys, stickers, erasers, etc.), packets of apple cider or hot chocolate, or whatever other small things you may think a child would enjoy.

Form pairs in your class. Have the two children sit facing each other. Give each group a prize. The prize should be a small bag of marbles. Tell everyone that one person from each team of two will be a winner. Make sure to tell the children to wait so everyone may start at the same time. They also are

not to play with the marbles until after every pair has heard how they worked out their problem. Next, let each pair decide how they will determine who gets the marbles. Make some suggestions; they may want to thumb wrestle, or flip a coin, or play a game of tic-tac-toe and see who wins. After everyone is finished, have the pairs share how they solved the dilemma. Have the winners raise their hands. Ask if anyone just divided up the marbles and shared...wow, what a concept! Explain that sometimes when we want to work things out peaceably, we might have to make some sacrifices (only getting a few marbles instead of a whole bag). Give bags of marbles to the kids who did not get any. **God wants us to treat each other with kindness.**

What if?

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

- A large piece of paper, a rubber band, and a red ribbon.
- Molding clay and cutting and molding tools.
- As many pieces of construction paper and lined sheets of white paper as the number of children in your class, glue, and crayons or markers.

On a large piece of paper write the following "what ifs":

- What if you saw your friend steal some candy, then later offered some to you? Is it okay to steal if you intend to share what's stolen?
- What if you were late getting home and nobody knew. Later your mother asked you if you had come home on time, and you told her you were on time? Is it okay to lie if seemingly no one is hurt by it?
- What if your teacher gave you the honor of taking up the offering, but during the prayer you took a dollar out and put it in your pocket? Is it okay to steal if no one knows how much is there?

Come up with other questions to add to these examples. Roll the paper up like a scroll and put a rubber band around it with a red ribbon tied to it. Using a music player with a CD or cassette of children's music, have the children in your class pass around the scroll as long as music is playing (similar to musical chairs). When the music stops, whoever is holding the scroll must open it and answer the next "what if" question. Have a class discussion about the "what ifs" and the answers given. Be sure to conclude that **sin is never right**. We are going to look at some bad choices that were made by the people in our study, today, and the problems that resulted.

8. Activities:

Activity option: Molded in the Image of God. Bring molding clay and various molding tools to your class. Have your students use the tools to make various shapes and object. Discuss the process of molding the clay into the shape that is desired. In order to mold clay, we have to poke it, smash it and shape it. Does God have to do that to us sometimes in order to mold us into the image of Jesus? Can that be uncomfortable at times? Discuss how Rebekah's deceit in gaining the blessing for Jacob goes contrary to the yieldedness we must have toward the Lord. What might Rebekah have done differently if she trusted that God would accomplish His promises His way? Trusting God is part of what it takes to be molded into the image of Jesus.

Activity Option: Bless You. Have your students make blessing cards with blessings similar to that found in Numbers 6:24-26, "The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace." With construction paper folded in half, glue a 4"x7" piece of lined paper inside and have your class write an original blessing (if your children are smaller, you can have them trace their hands and write "God Bless You"). Instruct your class to find some one in their home, school, or neighborhood who needs to be blessed and pass the card along to them.

9. Bible text (NIV):

Genesis 25:19-34; 27:1-47 ; 33

¹⁹ This is the account of the family line of Abraham’s son Isaac.

Abraham became the father of Isaac, ²⁰ and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddan Aram^[a] and sister of Laban the Aramean.

²¹ Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was childless. The LORD answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. ²² The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, “Why is this happening to me?” So she went to inquire of the LORD.

²³ The LORD said to her,

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

²⁴ When the time came for her to give birth, there were twin boys in her womb. ²⁵ The first to come out was red, and his whole body was like a hairy garment; so they named him Esau.^[b] ²⁶ After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau’s heel; so he was named Jacob.^[c] Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to them.

²⁷ The boys grew up, and Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was content to stay at home among the tents. ²⁸ Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

²⁹ Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came in from the open country, famished. ³⁰ He said to Jacob, “Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I’m famished!” (That is why he was also called Edom.^[d])

³¹ Jacob replied, “First sell me your birthright.”

³² “Look, I am about to die,” Esau said. “What good is the birthright to me?”

³³ But Jacob said, “Swear to me first.” So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob.

³⁴ Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left.

So Esau despised his birthright.

²⁷ When Isaac was old and his eyes were so weak that he could no longer see, he called for Esau his older son and said to him, “My son.”

“Here I am,” he answered.

² Isaac said, “I am now an old man and don’t know the day of my death. ³ Now then, get your equipment—your quiver and bow—and go out to the open country to hunt some wild game for me.

⁴ Prepare me the kind of tasty food I like and bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my blessing before I die.”

⁵ Now Rebekah was listening as Isaac spoke to his son Esau. When Esau left for the open country to hunt game and bring it back, ⁶ Rebekah said to her son Jacob, “Look, I overheard your father say to your brother Esau, ⁷ ‘Bring me some game and prepare me some tasty food to eat, so that I may give you my blessing in the presence of the LORD before I die.’ ⁸ Now, my son, listen carefully and do what I tell you: ⁹ Go out to the flock and bring me two choice young goats, so I can prepare some tasty food for your father, just the way he likes it. ¹⁰ Then take it to your father to eat, so that he may give you his blessing before he dies.”

¹¹ Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, “But my brother Esau is a hairy man while I have smooth skin.

¹² What if my father touches me? I would appear to be tricking him and would bring down a curse on myself rather than a blessing.”

¹³ His mother said to him, “My son, let the curse fall on me. Just do what I say; go and get them for me.”

¹⁴ So he went and got them and brought them to his mother, and she prepared some tasty food, just the way his father liked it. ¹⁵ Then Rebekah took the best clothes of Esau her older son, which she had in the house, and put them on her younger son Jacob. ¹⁶ She also covered his hands and the smooth part of his neck with the goatskins. ¹⁷ Then she handed to her son Jacob the tasty food and the bread she had made.

¹⁸ He went to his father and said, “My father.”

“Yes, my son,” he answered. “Who is it?”

¹⁹ Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau your firstborn. I have done as you told me. Please sit up and eat some of my game, so that you may give me your blessing.”

²⁰ Isaac asked his son, “How did you find it so quickly, my son?”

“The LORD your God gave me success,” he replied.

²¹ Then Isaac said to Jacob, “Come near so I can touch you, my son, to know whether you really are my son Esau or not.”

²² Jacob went close to his father Isaac, who touched him and said, “The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau.” ²³ He did not recognize him, for his hands were hairy like those of his brother Esau; so he proceeded to bless him. ²⁴ “Are you really my son Esau?” he asked.

“I am,” he replied.

²⁵ Then he said, “My son, bring me some of your game to eat, so that I may give you my blessing.”

Jacob brought it to him and he ate; and he brought some wine and he drank. ²⁶ Then his father Isaac said to him, “Come here, my son, and kiss me.”

²⁷ So he went to him and kissed him. When Isaac caught the smell of his clothes, he blessed him and said,

“Ah, the smell of my son
is like the smell of a field
that the LORD has blessed.

²⁸ May God give you heaven’s dew
and earth’s richness—
an abundance of grain and new wine.

²⁹ May nations serve you
and peoples bow down to you.

Be lord over your brothers,
and may the sons of your mother bow down to you.
May those who curse you be cursed
and those who bless you be blessed.”

³⁰ After Isaac finished blessing him, and Jacob had scarcely left his father’s presence, his brother Esau came in from hunting. ³¹ He too prepared some tasty food and brought it to his father. Then he said to him, “My father, please sit up and eat some of my game, so that you may give me your blessing.”

³² His father Isaac asked him, “Who are you?”

“I am your son,” he answered, “your firstborn, Esau.”

³³ Isaac trembled violently and said, “Who was it, then, that hunted game and brought it to me? I ate it just before you came and I blessed him—and indeed he will be blessed!”

³⁴ When Esau heard his father’s words, he burst out with a loud and bitter cry and said to his father, “Bless me—me too, my father!”

³⁵ But he said, “Your brother came deceitfully and took your blessing.”

³⁶ Esau said, “Isn’t he rightly named Jacob^U? This is the second time he has taken advantage of me: He took my birthright, and now he’s taken my blessing!” Then he asked, “Haven’t you reserved any blessing for me?”

³⁷ Isaac answered Esau, “I have made him lord over you and have made all his relatives his servants, and I have sustained him with grain and new wine. So what can I possibly do for you, my son?”

³⁸ Esau said to his father, “Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me too, my father!” Then Esau wept aloud.

³⁹ His father Isaac answered him,

“Your dwelling will be
away from the earth’s richness,
away from the dew of heaven above.

⁴⁰You will live by the sword
and you will serve your brother.
But when you grow restless,
you will throw his yoke
from off your neck.”

⁴¹ Esau held a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing his father had given him. He said to himself, “The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob.”

⁴² When Rebekah was told what her older son Esau had said, she sent for her younger son Jacob and said to him, “Your brother Esau is planning to avenge himself by killing you. ⁴³ Now then, my son, do what I say: Flee at once to my brother Laban in Harran. ⁴⁴ Stay with him for a while until your brother’s fury subsides. ⁴⁵ When your brother is no longer angry with you and forgets what you did to him, I’ll send word for you to come back from there. Why should I lose both of you in one day?”

⁴⁶ Then Rebekah said to Isaac, “I’m disgusted with living because of these Hittite women. If Jacob takes a wife from among the women of this land, from Hittite women like these, my life will not be worth living.”

Jacob Meets Esau

33 Jacob looked up and there was Esau, coming with his four hundred men; so he divided the children among Leah, Rachel and the two female servants. ² He put the female servants and their children in front, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph in the rear. ³ He himself went on ahead and bowed down to the ground seven times as he approached his brother.

⁴ But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept. ⁵ Then Esau looked up and saw the women and children. “Who are these with you?” he asked.

Jacob answered, “They are the children God has graciously given your servant.”

⁶ Then the female servants and their children approached and bowed down. ⁷ Next, Leah and her children came and bowed down. Last of all came Joseph and Rachel, and they too bowed down.

⁸ Esau asked, “What’s the meaning of all these flocks and herds I met?”

“To find favor in your eyes, my lord,” he said.

⁹ But Esau said, “I already have plenty, my brother. Keep what you have for yourself.”

¹⁰ “No, please!” said Jacob. “If I have found favor in your eyes, accept this gift from me. For to see your face is like seeing the face of God, now that you have received me favorably. ¹¹ Please accept the present that was brought to you, for God has been gracious to me and I have all I need.” And because Jacob insisted, Esau accepted it.

¹² Then Esau said, “Let us be on our way; I’ll accompany you.”

¹³ But Jacob said to him, “My lord knows that the children are tender and that I must care for the ewes and cows that are nursing their young. If they are driven hard just one day, all the animals will die. ¹⁴ So let my lord go on ahead of his servant, while I move along slowly at the pace of the flocks and herds before me and the pace of the children, until I come to my lord in Seir.”

¹⁵ Esau said, “Then let me leave some of my men with you.”

“But why do that?” Jacob asked. “Just let me find favor in the eyes of my lord.”

¹⁶ So that day Esau started on his way back to Seir. ¹⁷ Jacob, however, went to Sukkoth, where he built a place for himself and made shelters for his livestock. That is why the place is called Sukkoth. ^[j]

¹⁸ After Jacob came from Paddan Aram, ^[i] he arrived safely at the city of Shechem in Canaan and camped within sight of the city. ¹⁹ For a hundred pieces of silver, ^[k] he bought from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, the plot of ground where he pitched his tent. ²⁰ There he set up an altar and called it El Elohe Israel. ^[l]