

Timeline of Truth – Esau & Jacob: Birth & Birthright (Gen 25:20-34)

<p>²⁰ Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah as wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan Aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian.</p>	<p>1. Review & Timing of Isaac & Rebekah's _____</p>
<p>²¹ Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived.</p>	<p>2. God Gives Isaac and Rebekah _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rebekah was barren</i> • <i>Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife</i> • <i>Rebekah conceived</i>
<p>²² But the children struggled together within her; and she said, "If <i>all is well</i>, why <i>am I like this?</i>" So she went to inquire of the LORD. ²³ And the LORD said to her: "Two nations <i>are</i> in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; <i>One</i> people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger."</p>	<p>3. God Reveals the _____ of Rebekah's Sons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The children struggle inside her</i> • <i>Rebekah inquires of the LORD</i> • <i>The LORD explains:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>2 nations / 2 peoples</i> - <i>The older will serve the younger</i>
<p>²⁴ So when her days were fulfilled <i>for her</i> to give birth, indeed <i>there were</i> twins in her womb. ²⁵ And the first came out red. <i>He was</i> like a hairy garment all over; so they called his name Esau. ²⁶ Afterward his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau's heel; so his name was called Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.</p>	<p>4. _____ and _____ Are Born</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>As God said: TWINS</i> • <i>1st – Red & Hairy: Esau = HAIRY</i> • <i>2nd – Hand Took Esau's Heel: Jacob = SNEAKY</i> • <i>Isaac = 60 years old</i>
<p>²⁷ So the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents.</p>	<p>5. Esau and Jacob _____ & Develop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Same parents, different personalities</i> • <i>Esau – outside, hunter</i> • <i>Jacob – inside, mild (cook?)</i>
<p>²⁸ And Isaac loved Esau because he ate <i>of his</i> game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.</p>	<p>6. Isaac and Rebekah Choose _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Isaac loved Esau</i> • <i>Rebekah loved Jacob</i>
<p>²⁹ Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. ³⁰ And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red <i>stew</i>, for I <i>am</i> weary." Therefore his name was called Edom. ³¹ But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day." ³² And Esau said, "Look, I <i>am</i> about to die; so what is this birthright to me?" ³³ Then Jacob said, "Swear to me as of this day." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. ³⁴ And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised <i>his</i> birthright.</p>	<p>7. Jacob Deals for Esau's _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Jacob cooked a stew (was he scheming?)</i> • <i>Esau came in weary</i> • <i>Esau asked for some stew (Edom = "red")</i> • <i>Jacob offers a deal – my stew for your birthright</i> • <i>Esau reasons for immediate gratification</i> • <i>Jacob seals the deal with Esau</i> • <i>Jacob fees Esau</i> • <i>Esau's ultimate choice rejected what was best</i>

29–34 The story of Esau's rejection of his birthright is purposefully attached to the end of the narrative that introduces the motif of the older serving the younger. It is a narrative example that God's choice of Jacob over Esau did not run contrary to the wishes of either of the two brothers. It is clear from the narrative that Esau was one who "despised" his birthright, while Jacob is portrayed as one who would go to great lengths to gain it. The importance of the contrast between the two brothers can best be seen in the fact that the writer himself explicitly states the point of the narrative in the conclusion of the story: "So Esau despised his birthright" (v.34). In few cases in Genesis do we find such a clear and forthright statement of the writer's own understanding of the sense of the individual stories. We are left with no doubt that the writer saw in this story of Jacob's trickery a larger lesson, that Esau, though he had the right of the firstborn, did not value it over a small bowl of soup. Thus, when in God's plan Esau lost his birthright and consequently his blessing, there was no injustice dealt him. The narrative has shown that he did not want the birthright. He despised it.¹

¹ Sailhamer, J. H. (1990). Genesis. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 2: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers* (F. E. Gaebelin, Ed.) (183–184). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.