

## DAY SEVEN - JACOB

*To do today: Color ornament #7, read the following story and choose the activities you would like to do:*

### *Esau Sells His Birthright*

When the father of a family died in the days of Abraham and Isaac, the first-born or eldest son took his place as the head and priest of the family. This right of the first-born was known as the birthright. It gave to the eldest son not only a double share of the father's property, but also the right to the father's special blessing.

With this special blessing the father handed over to the first-born son the promise of the Redeemer for whom every one was so eagerly waiting. We can now understand why, in the following story, the two sons of Isaac had such a bitter quarrel over their birthright.

Isaac and Rebecca had two sons, Esau and Jacob. Esau, the elder, was rough and strong and grew up to be a hunter. Jacob was quiet and gentle. He lived at home and raised sheep. Esau was Isaac's favorite, because his father liked to eat the food which he brought home from the hunt; but Rebecca loved the gentle Jacob.

One day when Jacob was boiling some pottage, Esau came home from the hunt weak and hungry. He said to Jacob: "Give me of your pottage, for I am very hungry." Jacob answered: "Sell me your birthright, and I will give you to eat." Esau said: "What good will my birthright do me if I die of hunger?" Then he sold his birthright to Jacob, ate and drank, and went away thinking no more about it.

The time came when Isaac grew old and blind. Therefore he called his son Esau and said: "You see I am old and do not know the day of my death. Go out with your bow and arrow, and when you have shot something, prepare a meal for me, such as you know I like so that I may eat, and give you my blessing before I die."

When Esau had gone out, Rebecca called Jacob and said: "I heard your father talking with Esau and saying to him: 'Bring me of your hunting, that I may eat and bless you before I die. Now, my son, listen to what I tell you. Go out to the flock and bring me two of your best kids, that I may prepare the meat for your father as he likes it, so that when he has eaten, he may bless you instead of Esau.'" But Jacob answered: "You know that Esau is a hairy man, and I am smooth. If my father shall feel me and find out who I am, I fear he will think that I wished to mock him and curse me instead of giving me his blessing." His mother answered: "Only listen to me, Go, fetch me the things which I have said." Jacob went and brought the two kids to his mother, and she prepared the meat as Isaac liked it best. Then she dressed her favorite son in Esau's good garments and covered his bare neck and hands with the skins of the kids. Jacob carried the food to his father and said: "My father!" And Isaac answered: "I hear. Who are you, my son?" Jacob answered: "I am Esau, your first-born. I have done as you commanded me." Isaac asked his son: "How could you find food so quickly, my son?" He answered: "It was the will of God that what I was looking for came in my way so quickly." And Isaac said: "Come here, that I may feel you, my son, and may prove whether you are my son Esau or not." Jacob came near to his father, who, when he had felt him, said: "The voice, indeed, is the voice of Jacob; but the hands are the

hands of Esau. And again he asked: "Are you my son Esau?" He answered: "I am." Then Isaac asked his son to bring him the food, and when he had eaten, he said: "Come near me, and give me a kiss, my son." Jacob came near and kissed him. Isaac then spoke the blessing over his son: "God give you the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth. Let people serve you and tribes worship you. Be you the lord of your brethren and let your mother's children bow down before you. Cursed be he that curses you and let him that blesses you be filled with blessings."

### *The Hunter Returns*

Jacob had hardly left the tent, when Esau came with the meat he had prepared for his father and said: "Arise, my father, and eat the meat I have brought you, that you may bless me." And Isaac said to him: "Why! Who are you?" He answered: "I am your first-born son, Esau." Isaac was struck with fear and surprise. "Who is he then," he asked, "that even now brought me to eat? I ate before you came, and I have blessed him and he shall be blessed." Esau cried aloud with disappointment when he heard his father's words. "Bless me also," he begged. But Isaac said: "Your brother deceived me and got your blessing." And Esau answered: "First he took away my birthright, and now he has stolen away my blessing. Have you only one blessing, father? Bless me also." And again he cried aloud. Isaac felt sorry for his son, and blessed him also. But it was not the same blessing that Jacob had received. From that time on Esau hated Jacob and wanted to kill him. When Rebecca heard what Esau wished to do, she sent for Jacob and said to him: "Esau, your brother, wants to kill you."

Go, therefore, to Haran, to my brother Laban and stay with him for a few days. When Esau is no longer angry and has forgotten what you have done to him, I will send for you again." When Esau sold his birthright to Jacob, he gave away a great gift. We are children of God, Heaven is our birthright. We sell our birthright when we commit mortal sin. Esau was foolish to sell that wonderful gift for something to eat. But are we also foolish to sell heaven for the sake of some little thing we want?

### *A Dream of God*

Jacob prepared to go to Haran, where Laban, his uncle, lived. Isaac blessed him once more and said: "Go to the house of your mother's father and there take a wife. God Almighty bless you and make you a great people. I give the blessing of Abraham to you and to those who come after you: that you may possess the land which He promised to your grandfather." On his way to Haran, Jacob stopped to rest. At night he laid his head on a stone and fell asleep. While he was sleeping, he saw a ladder standing on the earth with its top touching heaven. On the ladder, angels were moving up and down and above was the Lord Himself. And God spoke to Jacob in his sleep and said: "I am the Lord God of Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give the land on which you sleep to you and to your seed." Then once more He made the wonderful promise that He would send a Redeemer: "*In thee and thy seed all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed.*"

When Jacob awoke, he said: "Indeed, the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it." And trembling, he continued: "How terrible is this place. This is no other but the house of God and the gate of heaven." In the morning when Jacob arose, he took the stone on which he had laid his head, and blessed it, because he was now the priest of his father's family.

Then he set it up as a sign that the place was holy. He called the place Bethel, which means House of God, and promised that if God would be with him and bring him safely back home, he would give a tenth of all he had to the Lord.

**Now answer the following questions:**

1.) To whom did Jacob go when he left home?

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2.) What happened to Jacob while he was asleep?

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3.) What did Jacob call the place where the angels appeared to him on a ladder?

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4.) What promise did God make to Jacob?

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5.) What did Jacob promise to give if he came home safely?

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**Religion and Superstition**

*My Catholic Faith; A Catechism in Pictures- Rev. Louis LaRavoire Morrow - Imprimatur 1937*

How do we worship God by the virtue of religion?

We do so when we honor and adore Him alone as the Supreme Being.

1. One sins against this virtue by idolatry, sacrilege, simony and all kinds of superstition.
2. Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, veneration of saints, relics, and images, are not opposed to this virtue. What are the chief sins against the virtue of religion? The chief sins against this virtue are:
  1. Idolatry, which is the paying of divine honor to a creature.
  2. Sacrilege, which is the violation or profanation of a person, place, or thing consecrated to God.
  3. Simony, which is the buying or selling of spiritual things or positions.
  4. Superstition, which is the ascribing to certain objects powers above those which by nature they actually possess. Many superstitious practices have some connection with the devil.
    - a. It is superstition to believe in charms, spells, omens, dreams, astrology, and luck. There is no such thing as luck, nor are there lucky or unlucky days, numbers or persons. Everything is permitted or ordained by God for His own purposes.

b. Some of the most common superstitions are:

That Friday the thirteenth is an unlucky day; that the number thirteen is generally unlucky; that traveling or marrying on a Tuesday will bring misfortune; that finding horseshoes is a good omen; that meeting a hunchback and a white horse is a sure sign of coming luck; that if a cat scratches, a spoon falls, or a white moth flies in, a visitor will come; that a dream of falling teeth means a death will occur...

5. Magic, which is the working of wonders by the aid of the devil.
6. Witchcraft, which is causing injury to another through the power of the devil.
7. Spiritism, which is the calling up of the spirits of the dead, usually by the use of mediums, ouija boards, or glasses.
8. Fortune-telling, which is usually mere nonsense' but sometimes the devil is mixed up with it. Catholics are forbidden to consult fortune-tellers.

*Other stories you might like to read if time permits:*

From: Bible Stories for Children

"Esau and Jacob" pg. 19

Anecdotes and Examples by Rev. Francis Spirago

"The Biter Bitten" pg. 63

*Coordinating Bible Verses:* Genesis 25: 1-34, 28: 10-15

**Good things for you to read:**

"The Little Lamp," American Cardinal Reader, Book IV, page 6.

"Correct Behavior in Church," The Catholic Youth Fourth Reader, page 343.

"A Church Underground?" American Cardinal Reader, Book IV, page 248.

"Esau and Jacob," Wonder Stories of God's People, page 3.

"The Lamp of the Sanctuary," Catholic National Reader, Book IV, page 139.



Esau and Jacob