



PARASHAT
TOLDOT
תולדות

Genesis 25:19–28:9

by
Ya'acov Natan Lawrence
& his kids

Note to the adult teacher: It will be necessary for you to give the scriptural context and background for each of the points listed below.

Great Discoveries in This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion)


- 25:24 Birth of Jacob and Esau
- 25:29 Esau Sells Jacob His Birthright
- 26:1 Famine Forces Isaac to Move to Philistia
- 26:6 Isaac Settles in Gerar
- 26:19 The Dispute Over the Wells
- 26:23 YHVH Reconfirms the Abrahamic Covenant With Isaac
- 26:26 Abimelech Reaffirms the Treaty With Isaac
- 26:34 Esau Marries Outside the Family
- 27:1 Isaac Decides to Confer the Birthright Blessing Upon Esau
- 27:5 Rebekah's Scheme to Insure the Blessing Goes to Jacob
- 27:27 Through Trickery Jacob Procures the Birthright Blessing
- 27:41 Esau's Hatred of Jacob
- 27:42 Rebekah Tells Jacob to Flee to Laban
- 28:3 Isaac Confers the Abrahamic Blessing Upon Jacob
- 28:7 Esau Marries the Daughter of Ishmael




Exploring This Week's Parashah:

1 Twins That Would Shake the World

Isaac and Rebekah were married, but were unable to have children. They prayed and YHVH heard them and gave them not one but two boys—twins.




 (a) What were these two boys doing even before they were born? (Read Genesis 25:22.)

 (b) What did YHVH tell Rebekah about these two boys? (Read verse 23.)

-  (c) What was the name of the firstborn son? (Read verse 25.) According to the prophetic word that YHVH gave to Rebekah in verse 23, what was to become of him?
-  (d) What was the name of the second son and what was to become of him? (Read the same verses.)
-  (e) What kind of boys were Jacob and Esau? (Read verse 27.)

2 Two Boys, Two Kinds of People

The Bible reveals throughout its pages that there are two kinds of people on the earth: those who love YHVH and those who care little or nothing about him. As we will see, Jacob was one who loved YHVH, while Esau did not. There was an Esau-type person and a Jacob-type person crucified on either side of Yeshua while he was hanging on the cross.

-  (f) When Yeshua died on the cross, who else was being crucified with him? (Read Luke 23:39.)
-  (g) What was the attitude of the one thief toward Yeshua, and what was the attitude of the other? (Read verses 40-42.)
-  (h) What was to be the reward of the thief who put his faith in Yeshua? (Read verse 43.)



These two men represent two types of people. Both thieves were sinners, but one put his faith in Yeshua while the other one did not. As we shall see below, Esau did not love YHVH, but Jacob did. Both were sinners, but one was accepted of YHVH, while the other one was not.





The twins: Jacob and Esau

3 Exploration: What Kind of Man Was Esau?

We learn a little about Esau from Genesis 25:27.



-  (i) Read this passage. What does it say about Esau?
-  (j) What does the phrase "man of the field" mean? It could mean that he was quite the outdoors man, or it could mean that he was a worldly or carnal man. To be worldly means to be ungodly. Which one do you think he was? Let's explore his life a little further.

In those days, the firstborn son would get a special blessing from the father. He would get a larger share of the inheritance so that he would be better prepared to carry on the family name and tradition. Abraham had passed on to his son Isaac the special blessings that YHVH had promised him in the Abrahamic Covenant. Now Isaac would have to pass on those blessings to one of his twin sons. But which one? Esau or Jacob?


-  (k) Who did Isaac favor to receive this blessing, and who did Rebekah favor? (Read Genesis 25:28.)
-  (l) To whom did YHVH want the blessing to go? (Read verse 23.) It seems that Rebekah never told Isaac about her conversation with YHVH, for he preferred Esau. But it seems that she told Jacob about it. What did Jacob do to try to get the blessing away from his older brother Esau? (Read Genesis 25:29-31.)




Esau sells his birthright blessing for a bowl of beans.

-  (m) Did Esau care about his birthright blessing? Read how he felt about it in verse 32. What strong language does Scripture use to describe Esau's attitude toward his spiritual heritage that was being passed on down to him from his grandfather Abraham? (Read the very end of verse 34.)
-  (n) Because of Esau's raunchy attitude toward his birthright blessing, how does Scripture remember Esau? (Read Hebrews 12:16.)


Hebrews 12:16 uses a couple of strong and negative words to describe Esau. The King James Bible says that he was a fornicator (he loved the world more than YHVH) and a profane (or worldly) person. The Complete Jewish Bible says that he was sexually immoral and godless. What we learn from this was that Esau did not have a heart to follow YHVH, but was a wild and carnal man who pursued his sinful desires. For example, Esau went against his parents desires (see Genesis 27:46; 28:1) and not only married a heathen woman, but several at a time (see Genesis 36:2)! Because of his worldliness and disobedience, his descendants become the sworn enemies of the nation of Israel. Esau turned away from the godly ways of his parents and lost the chance to be a great man spiritually. Instead he became great at being a spiritual loser!

-  (o) So now do you see why Esau sold his spiritual birthright? How much value did he place on his spiritual heritage that was being passed on down from Abraham? What price did he sell it for? (Read Genesis 25:30-34.)



Esau was a man who lived for the moment. If he wanted something, he wanted it NOW and he didn't care what price it cost or how it would affect his future. He took no thought for the future. For him, life was about women and food. He didn't care about his family, his parents, his brother, his future, or his Elohim. That was all worthless to him.

-  (p) Because he despised the things that were important to YHVH what did YHVH say about Esau? (Read Romans 9:13 and Malachi 1:3.) Was Esau one of the heroes of the Bible or one of the all-time losers of the Bible? Why?

4 Exploration: What Kind of Man Was Jacob?

-  (q) In Genesis 25:27, we get our first look at Jacob. (Read this verse.) What kind of man was he?

Some Bible translations say that he was "a plain/quiet man dwelling in tents." The Hebrew word for "plain" is "tam" and means "perfect, complete, sound, wholesome, morally innocent, having integrity and ethically pure."


-  (r) Discuss the various meanings of the Hebrew word "tam." What do you think they mean?
-  (s) How badly did Jacob want the Abrahamic Covenant blessing that YHVH had given to his grandfather Abraham and that had been passed on to his father Isaac? What was he willing to do to get it? (Read Genesis 25:31-33; 27:1-29.)

The way by which Jacob (along with Rebekah's help) went about trying to obtain the blessing was deceitful and wrong, but consider how badly he wanted YHVH's blessing and what he was willing to do to get it. This does not




Isaac blesses Jacob.

excuse his taking matters into his own hands, stepping out of YHVH's perfect will for his life and taking by deceit the blessing YHVH wanted to bring to him in the proper way at the right time.


-  (t) How much do you love the things of YHVH? How much do you want his blessings in your life? (Read Psalm 42:1-2.) How badly did the writer of this psalm want the things of YHVH? (Also read Psalms 63:1; 27:4; 84:4,10.)

Jacob's attitude toward his parents was very different than that of Esau who did not honor the wishes of his parents, but married heathen women. Jacob was different, though.

-  (u) What was Jacob willing to do to follow the directions, wisdom and wishes of his parents? (Read Genesis 28:1-6.) His uncle Laban's home was hundreds of miles away and would require his leaving his home and family and journeying by foot many days to get there. Did Jacob obey his parents? (Read verse 7.)

5 What Did Esau's and Jacob's Future Descendants Become Like?

Both Jacob and Esau had many descendants. Jacob would become the father of the twelve tribes of Israel, which formed the great nation of Israel with millions upon millions of people. Esau, on the other hand, became the father of many of the Arab nations. The Arab and Israeli conflict goes back to the hatred Esau had for Jacob.

-  (v) Read about how this hatred got started and what Esau's attitude was toward his brother. We get some clues in Genesis 27:41-42.

What is the point here? You see, we have a choice. When we are young, we can be either like a Jacob or like an Esau. The choice we make will not only affect our lives, but will affect the lives of many people after us. So make the right choice and choose to obey YHVH, and choose to love the things of YHVH and to do what is right.

