



st Andrew
STAPLEFORD

Jacob

Extracts from Genesis 25-32
(NIV UK & The Story Teller Bible)

Week 1 / 28 July

9 am BCP Communion

Genesis 25.19-34 *Jacob & Esau: Esau Despises his Birthright* page 2

10.30 am All Age & Family Service

The Bad Brother: Jacob Steals the Blessing (The Story Teller Bible) page 15

Week 2 / 4 August

9 am BCP Communion

Genesis 27.1-29 *Jacob Steals the Blessing* page 4

10.30 am All Age & Family Communion

The Runaway: Jacob's Dream (The Story Teller Bible) page 20

Week 3 / 11 August

9 am 9 am BCP Communion

Genesis 28.10-22 *Jacob's Dream* page 7

10.30 am 10.30 am Messy Forest Church in the churchyard

The Cheater Cheated (The Story Teller Bible) page 22

Week 4 / 18 August

9 am CW Communion

10.30 am Sunday Worship

At both services: Genesis 29.1-30 *Jacob is Cheated* page 9

Week 5 / 25 August

9 am BCP Communion

Genesis 32.22-32 *Jacob the Wrestler* page 11

10.30 am All Age & Family Service in the churchyard

The Brothers Back Together (The Story Teller Bible) page 24

Week 6 / 1 September

9 am BCP Communion

10.30 am CW Communion

At both services: Genesis 33.1-20 *Jacob Meets Esau Again* page 13

WEEK 1 / 28 July: Esau Despises his Birthright



Esau Selling His Birthright to Jacob – Michel Corneille the Elder (1601-1664) 1630
Musées Beaux-Arts, Orléans

25 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 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 enquire 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 elder 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. ²⁶ After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to them.

²⁷ The boys grew up, and Esau became a skilful 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.)

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.

WEEK 2 / 4 August: Jacob Steals the Blessing



Isaac and Jacob – Jusepe de Ribera (1591-1652) 1637
Museo del Prado, Madrid

27 ¹When Isaac was old and his eyes were so weak that he could no longer see, he called for his elder son Esau and said to him, ‘My son.’

‘Here I am,’ he answered.

²Isaac said, ‘I am now an old man and don’t know the day of my death. ³Now then, get your equipment – your quiver and bow – and go out to the open country to hunt some wild game for me. ⁴Prepare 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.’

⁵Now Rebekah was listening as Isaac spoke to his son Esau. When Esau left for the open country to hunt game and bring it back, ⁶Rebekah 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.” ⁸Now, my son, listen carefully and do what I tell you: ⁹go out to the flock and bring me two choice young goats, so that I can prepare some tasty food for your father, just the way he likes it. ¹⁰Then take it to your father to eat, so that he may give you his blessing before he dies.’

¹¹Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, ‘But my brother Esau is a hairy man while I have smooth skin. ¹²What 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 her elder son Esau, 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 recognise 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.'

WEEK 3 / 11 August: Jacob's dream



Jacob's Ladder – *Bohemian Master*, early 15th century, ca. 1400
Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest

28 ¹⁰ Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Harran. ¹¹ When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. ¹² He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³ There above it stood the Lord, and he said: 'I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are

lying. ¹⁴Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. ¹⁵I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.'

¹⁶When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, 'Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it.' ¹⁷He was afraid and said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.'

¹⁸Early the next morning Jacob took the stone he had placed under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it. ¹⁹He called that place Bethel, though the city used to be called Luz.

²⁰Then Jacob made a vow, saying, 'If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear ²¹so that I return safely to my father's household, then the Lord will be my God ²²and this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God's house, and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth.'

WEEK 4 / 18 August: Jacob is Cheated



The Marriage of Jacob and Rachel – *workshop of Pietro da Cortona (1596-1669) 1670s*
Ringling Museum of Art, Florida

29 ¹Then Jacob continued on his journey and came to the land of the eastern peoples.

¹³ As soon as Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister's son, he hurried to meet him. He embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his home, and there Jacob told him all these things. ¹⁴ Then Laban said to him, 'You are my own flesh and blood.'

After Jacob had stayed with him for a whole month, ¹⁵ Laban said to him, 'Just because you are a relative of mine, should you work for me for nothing? Tell me what your wages should be.'

¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder one was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷ Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel had a lovely figure and was beautiful. ¹⁸ Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, 'I'll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel.'

¹⁹ Laban said, 'It's better that I give her to you than to some other man. Stay here with me.' ²⁰ So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her.

²¹ Then Jacob said to Laban, 'Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to make love to her.'

²² So Laban brought together all the people of the place and gave a feast. ²³ But when evening came, he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and Jacob made love to her. ²⁴ And Laban gave his servant Zilpah to his daughter as her attendant.

²⁵ When morning came, there was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, 'What is this you have done to me? I served you for Rachel, didn't I? Why have you deceived me?'

²⁶ Laban replied, 'It is not our custom here to give the younger daughter in marriage before the elder one. ²⁷ Finish this daughter's bridal week; then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work.'

²⁸ And Jacob did so. He finished the week with Leah, and then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife. ²⁹ Laban gave his servant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her attendant. ³⁰ Jacob made love to Rachel also, and his love for Rachel was greater than his love for Leah. And he worked for Laban another seven years.

Week 5 / 25 August: Jacob the Wrestler



Jacob Wrestles with the Angel – Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863) 1850
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Jacob decides to return home. He stops on the way.

32 ²² That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. ²³ After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. ²⁴ So Jacob was left alone, and

a man wrestled with him till daybreak. ²⁵ When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. ²⁶ Then the man said, 'Let me go, for it is daybreak.'

But Jacob replied, 'I will not let you go unless you bless me.'

²⁷ The man asked him, 'What is your name?'

'Jacob,' he answered.

²⁸ Then the man said, 'Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.'

²⁹ Jacob said, 'Please tell me your name.'

But he replied, 'Why do you ask my name?' Then he blessed him there.

³⁰ So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, 'It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.'

³¹ The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip. ³² Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the tendon attached to the socket of the hip, because the socket of Jacob's hip was touched near the tendon.

WEEK 6 / 1 September: Jacob Meets Esau Again



Jacob and Esau – Flemish Master, 17th century

Jacob goes to meet his brother, sending lavish gifts ahead of him on the journey.

33 ¹ 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 favour 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 favour 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 favourably. 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 favour 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.

¹⁸ After Jacob came from Paddan Aram, he arrived safely at the city of Shechem in Canaan and camped within sight of the city. ¹⁹ For a hundred pieces of silver, 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.

WEEK 1 / 28 July: The Bad Brother: Jacob Steals the Blessing

The beginning of the account of the two sons of Isaac.

Isaac had two sons.

The older son's name was Esau - which means 'Hairy'.

And the younger son's name was Jacob-which means something like 'Cheat'.

Isaac liked Esau the best because he was big and strong (and hairy!) and could hunt.

One day, when Isaac was old and blind, he asked Esau to go and kill an animal, cook the meat and bring it to him.

'When you have done that,' he promised, 'I shall tell you what you will get after I die.'

Esau ran off, his bow slung over his shoulder and his hunting knife in his hand. But he was in such a hurry that he did not notice his mother, Rebecca, hiding behind the tent.

Which son did Rebecca like best? Jacob, of course. Partly because he stayed at home to help her. And partly because he was clever and sneaky, just like her.



Rebecca decided then and there that Isaac's blessing to Esau should go to Jacob instead. So she went and found Jacob. Together they plotted and planned. And in no time at all, Isaac had a visitor with a steaming plate of meat.

'Back so soon, my boy? My, that meat smells delicious. Bring it here at once, Esau.'

The son brought the meat to his father. The son set it down. But the son was not Esau.

'Here you are, Father,' said Jacob in as gruff a voice as he could muster.

But the old man was not fooled. Isaac may have been blind, but he was not yet deaf.

'Is that really you, Esau? Come here and let me touch those hairy arms.'



Jacob came closer. He stretched out his arms. And wrapped around them were the hairy skins from an old goat! Isaac touched the arms. He felt the hairy skin. And he smiled.

'It *is* you, Esau!' he said. 'Well then, here is my blessing.'

When I am gone, you will have my land and grow many crops. And besides that, I am putting you in charge of the whole family. They must do whatever you tell them!'

Jacob could hardly believe it! So, when his father had kissed him, he ran off to tell his mother. And it was a good thing, for not a minute later, Esau came to his father with another plate of meat.



'I'm back!' he said cheerfully. 'And I can't wait to hear your blessing.'

'What?' exclaimed Isaac. 'I've already given my blessing away!' And he told Esau what had happened.

Esau listened and, bit by bit, his face grew as red as his hair.

'Jacob!' he shouted. 'You cheat! One day I will kill you for this!'

But God was watching. And he had something very different in mind.

WEEK 2 / 4 August: The Runaway: Jacob's Dream

Jacob has cheated his brother Esau out of his inheritance. And now Esau is out to get him.



Jacob ran.

Jacob ran and ran.

Jacob had cheated his brother, Esau. And now his brother wanted to kill him. So Jacob ran.

God watched.

God watched and watched.

God watched Jacob run. And when Jacob was tired and could run no further, when Jacob fell exhausted on the desert floor with only a stone for a pillow, when Jacob was finally ready to listen, God spoke.

He came to Jacob in a dream. There was a ladder, reaching right up to heaven, with angels parading up and down. And at the very top of the ladder stood God himself!

'Jacob,' he said. 'I am the God of your father, Isaac, and your grandfather Abraham. And I am here to make you the same promise I made to them.'

'This land is yours. Your family will be great.

And one day, through your family, I will do something wonderful for the whole world! Now go and don't be afraid, for you can always count on me to protect you.'

Jacob woke up, amazed. He said 'thank you' to God and he left a stone to mark that special place.

Then Jacob ran.

He ran and ran - all the way to his Uncle Laban's house, where his mother had told him he would be safe. And where God knew he would learn an important lesson.

WEEK 3 / 11 August: The Cheater Cheated

Jacob, who had cheated his brother out of his inheritance, gets a taste of his own medicine.

Now Laban had two daughters.

The older daughter's name was Leah - which means 'Tired'.

The younger daughter's name was Rachel - which means 'Lamb'.

Rachel was beautiful. And the moment Jacob set eyes on her, he knew she was the girl for him!



'Wonderful!' said his Uncle Laban. 'Work for me for seven years, and she will be your wife.'

Seven years passed, but Jacob was so in love with Rachel that it seemed no longer than a day.

The wedding was well attended. The dress was beautiful. But when Jacob pulled aside the veil that hid his bride's face, he found himself looking into Leah's tired eyes!

'Oh, I forgot to mention,' grinned Laban. 'Leah is my eldest daughter, so she has to marry first. But you can marry Rachel, next week if you like, as long as you promise to work for me for another seven years.'

Jacob looked at the ground. Now the cheater knew how it felt to be cheated.

What else could Jacob do? He waited a week, married Rachel, and worked another seven years for his Uncle Laban.

WEEK 5 / 25 August: The Brothers Back Together

Jacob has been away from home a long time, and has learned his lesson.

Then Jacob headed home, a very different man from the one who had run away.

Jacob walked.

Jacob walked and walked.

And when his home was no more than a day's walk away, he saw Esau, his brother, walking towards him.

Jacob told his family to stay behind, and walked ahead to face his brother's anger. He wasn't running now. He believed that God would protect him.

And so God did - because Esau was different too.

When he saw Jacob, he ran up to him, reached out his hairy arms and hugged him!

'I'm sorry,' said Jacob.

'I forgive you,' Esau answered.

And the two sons of Isaac became brothers at last.