

THE COMMONS LEADER GUIDE

October 28th
Week 1 - Jacob/Israel - Deceiver

MAIN SCRIPTURE

Genesis Ch. 25:19-34; Ch. 27

MAIN POINTS

- God doesn't choose people to fulfill his purposes based on their character, but based on his grace and divine purpose alone.
- We don't deserve our inheritance, yet God blesses us like firstborn sons.

BACKGROUND

Jacob (a.k.a, Israel) is the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham. God chooses Jacob to be Isaac's heir, and therefore heir to the covenant God made with Abraham (Gen. 12). At that time, Isaac's oldest son, Esau, would have been the natural heir of his father—receiving a double portion of inheritance and holding a unique leadership role in the family. But instead, Jacob uses deceit and trickery to “steal” Esau's birthright and blessing.

We shouldn't be surprised by this, since Jacob's name literally means “supplanter” or “deceiver”! In Genesis 25:19-34, Jacob takes advantage of Esau's hunger and tells Esau to sell him his *birthright* in exchange for stew. Esau rashly yields to Jacob's request. Then, in Genesis 27, Jacob goes a step farther and deceives his aging father into giving him Esau's *blessing*. This blessing was an extension of God's prophetic blessing and promise, and therefore couldn't be revoked.

After reading this story, one can't help but wonder why on earth God chose Jacob, the deceiver, over Esau, the rightful heir? This could be because Esau was impulsive and rash (selling your birthright for some stew?! Come on, man), but it could also simply be to show that God chose Jacob not based on his own merit, but based on God's grace and divine purposes alone. The story of Jacob is one of redemption and deliverance, and it shines a spotlight on God's marvelous grace and sovereignty.

RESOURCES

[Enduring Word Commentary - Genesis](#)

[Why was a father's blessing so highly valued in OT?](#)

[Firstborn: Power Grabs and Patriarchs](#)

UPCOMING COMMONS EVENTS

BAPTISM WEEKEND - This weekend!!

Commons Gathering - 11/18

Costa Rica Mission Trip deadline - 10/31

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

READ Genesis 25:19-34

1. When God answers Rebekah's prayer, he says that “the older shall serve the younger” (v. 23). What do you think is the significance of this? How does this remind you of how Jesus operated in his ministry?
 - *Jesus used insignificant and unexpected people (e.g., his disciples).*
 - *“The first shall be last” (Matt. 20:16).*
2. Besides being the firstborn, why else do you think people at this time (including Isaac) would have viewed Esau as a more fitting choice for heir?
3. What do you think Esau's actions reveal about his character?

READ Genesis 27

1. Why do you think Isaac didn't take his blessing back?
2. Why do you think God allows Jacob to get away with his deceit?
3. What does God choosing Jacob over Esau reveal about God's character?

APPLICATION

1. Do you ever find yourself doing things in your relationships to make yourself feel secure and worthy rather than out of love for that person?
2. The Bible says that Christians are “firstborn sons” of God (Rom. 8:29; Heb. 12:22-23). This means we are already accepted by God and receive Christ's glorious inheritance, even though we don't deserve it and did nothing to earn it (like Jacob). How does this shape how you view your relationship with God?
3. Do find yourself doing things to earn the love of God and/or your salvation? How can you reframe your mindset as you do these things so that you're doing them out of God's unconditional love for you instead of trying to earn God's love?

