Jacob Tricks Isaac

GOD DELIGHTS IN US WHEN OUR WORDS AND ACTIONS ARE TRUTHFUL.



MEMORY VERSE

"Lying lips are an abomination [disgrace] to the Lord, but those who deal truthfully are His delight" (Proverbs 12:22).

Word of the Week—Truthful:

Telling the truth and being honest in the way we speak and act. When we're truthful, we don't lie or do things to trick others.

This week's lesson is based on the story of Rebekah and Jacob's deceit to get the birthright as found in Genesis 27:1-41; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 179-181; and *The Story of Redemption*, pp. 88, 89. **Extra Reading:** *The Bible Story*, vol. 2, pp. 13-18.



SUNDAY

God's Way

Isaac frowned as he looked down at the wells. *Where was all the water?* In the place where fresh water had once pooled, there was just hard dirt. This was no accident; it was the work of his jealous neighbors, the Philistines! Up to no good, they had filled the family's wells with dirt.

What were Isaac and his family to do now with no water for the flocks, the farms, or their family? God knew. He had saved Isaac's family from a terrible famine in the land. With God's blessings Isaac had become a very rich, successful farmer. Now with trouble all around them, God would once again keep them safe. They could always depend on God.

As God led them on a journey to find a new peaceful home, He continued to remind Isaac that He *always* keeps His promises. He told Isaac, "I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants" (Genesis 26:24).

Isaac's descendants, his sons Jacob and Esau, were now all grown up. Jacob's mind still swirled with dreams about the birthright blessing, and Rebekah still believed he must one day have it. She tried to persuade Isaac to give it to Jacob, but he wouldn't listen. Even though careless Esau had swapped the birthright with Jacob for a bowl of stew, the birthright was only Isaac's to give away.

Isaac knew God had given Rebekah an important message: "The older shall serve the younger" (Genesis 25:23). Jacob, not Esau, was to be the family's leader. But it was the custom in those days for the older son to always be the family leader. Isaac was determined to follow the custom and give the birthright to Esau, even though God said it wouldn't happen. Had Isaac forgotten to have confidence in God?

God gives us important messages to help us make good choices, because He knows we don't always think like Him. What does the Bible say about this? **Read Isaiah 55:8, 9.**

PRAY: Ask God to help you listen to important messages He may give you.

Think . . . Then Talk About It:

- *What advice would you have given Isaac about the birthright?*

MONDAY

Father's Instructions and Mother's Plan

Father Isaac took a deep breath. *It was time.* He was now old and blind. It was time to give the birthright blessing. Secretly he called for Esau to come to him.

Issac smiled as he felt Esau's hairy hand in his and smelled the fields on his clothes. In a quiet voice he asked Esau to hunt down an animal, then cook it as a tasty meal for his old father. "Then I will bless you before I die," (Genesis 27:4, ICB).

The birthright blessing would be for Esau. Never mind that Esau didn't care about God. Never mind that he had two wives who worshipped idols. And never mind that God intended the blessing to be for Jacob. Isaac trusted his own thinking instead of waiting for God's wise plan.

While Esau rushed out the tent door, Rebekah hurried off to find Jacob. She had been secretly listening. She had heard everything! Impatient and determined to "help" God give the blessing to Jacob, she quickly took control and hatched a plan. What was Rebekah's plan? **Read Genesis 27:6-10.**

Did God need Rebekah's "help"? What should she have done?

The Bible tells us, "Wait for the Lord's help. Be strong and brave and wait for the Lord's help" (Psalm 27:14, ICB). Sadly, Rebekah just couldn't wait. She decided to do things *her* way.

Sometimes we want the right thing so badly that we do the wrong thing to get it. We can remember, instead, to wait on God and let Him lead. He always does what He says He will do.

Think . . . Then Talk About It:

- *Did Rebekah want the right thing for Jacob?*
- *What was wrong with her plan?*
- *Have you ever wanted the right thing but thought up a wrong way to get it?*

Do: Write down some examples of good things God has done for you. Whenever you're tempted to do things your way, instead of waiting on God, make a list like this. His way is always best!

Pray: You may like to:

- Thank God that you can always trust Him.
- Ask Him to help you remember the good things He has done for you.

For You, Parents:

As a busy parent you too can gain encouragement from remembering what God has done for you. "Morning, noon, and night, let gratitude as a sweet perfume ascend to heaven" (Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing,* p. 253). Why not spend a few moments right now letting your gratitude ascend? It will make you a pleasant person who is like a sweet perfume to those around you.

☐ TUESDAY

A SNEAKY PLAN

Jacob shook his head as his mother whispered her instructions. He wasn't too sure about her plan at all! He really didn't like the idea of tricking his father into believing a lie. And it worried him that he might get found out.

He said to Rebekah, "My brother Esau is a hairy man. I am smooth! If my father touches me, he will know I am not Esau. Then he will not bless me" (Genesis 27:11, 12, ICB).

Jacob also believed that deceiving his father would be a sin—it would be lying. Then he would be cursed instead of blessed. He sure didn't want to be harmed by a curse! He wanted to be truthful. But Rebekah's plan was for him to lie. Be truthful, or listen to his mom . . . What should he do? If you could have whispered in Jacob's ear, what would you have said?

Rebekah tried to convince him to follow her plan. "If your father puts a curse on you, I will accept the blame," she said. "Just do what I said" (Genesis 27:13, ICB).

Jacob nodded. He would do as she said. Now they just had to make it happen, and quickly. There was no time to waste. What did they do? **Read Genesis 27:14-16.**

Busily working together, they did their very best to make sure the dishonest plan would work. How sad to be doing something they knew was wrong. If only they had chosen to be truthful and waited to see how God would give Jacob the birthright.

God is delighted when His children are truthful, especially when they choose not to listen to others who want them to lie or be dishonest.

THINK . . . THEN TALK ABOUT IT:

- *Rebekah said she would take the blame for Jacob. How much blame do you think someone else can take for a bad choice you make?*
- *Say your memory verse. How much delight (pleasure and enjoyment) might God be feeling about what's happening in this story?*

PARENT FAITH TALK:

Share a time you were tempted to be dishonest to get what you wanted. Emphasize how glad you were not to have made that choice.

MISSION CHALLENGE:

It's wonderful to invite our friends to Sabbath School! What's something you like about Sabbath School that you'd like a friend to enjoy with you? Is it a specific song, activity, the way your teacher tells the Bible story, the crafts, or something from nature you've collected at home? Prepare to show or tell your class about this on Sabbath.

PRAY: Ask God to help you to be truthful.



WEDNESDAY

A HAIRY LIE

It felt strange and awkward to have his arms and neck covered in hairy goatskin and to be wearing his brother's clothes. But Jacob did his best to act the lie. Carrying a steaming bowl of stew, he entered blind Father Isaac's tent. He tried his best to sound like Esau as he greeted him gruffly with the word "Father."

Isaac replied, "Yes, my son. Who are you?" (Genesis 27:18, ICB). Just the word "father" was enough to make him suspicious . . . Which son had *really* entered the tent? Jacob fumbled for an answer. He replied, "I am Esau, your first son. I have done what you told me. Now sit up and eat some meat of the animal I hunted for you. Then bless me" (Genesis 27:19, ICB).

He hadn't planned to tell a lie; only act one. But he thought he had gone too far to suddenly be honest now! What happened next? READ GENESIS 27:20-24.

One lie led to another and then another. Jacob lied with his words, his food, the feel of his skin, and even his smell! Isaac's doubt was wiped away, and he was finally tricked. He sat back and ate the tasty stew, all the while believing it had been caught and cooked by his daring son Esau. When the bowl was empty, Isaac called Jacob closer and spoke God's beautiful birthright blessing over him. "May God give you plenty . . . May nations serve you . . . May everyone who blesses you be blessed" (Genesis 27:28, 29, ICB).

Jacob left the tent happy that those words of blessing had made his dream come true. But God's dream for Jacob had not come true that day. Our loving God cannot lie. He will never lie and will never delight in lies.

THINK . . . THEN TALK ABOUT IT:

- *What three things did Jacob do that God had warned against? Read* ***Leviticus 19:11****.*
- *Have you ever told a lie to cover up something you did wrong? How did you feel?*
- *What would help you to tell the truth or correct a lie you have told?*



DO: Plan to help your mom cook a tasty stew for dinner one night this week. Share this week's story while you eat it together. **Lentil Stew Recipe:** Sauté one chopped onion. Add one grated carrot, zucchini, and celery stick. Once sautéed, add five cups of water and bring to a boil. Add two cups of green lentils, three potatoes (peeled and cut in small cubes), and one can of condensed tomato soup. Simmer for 40 minutes or until lentils are soft. Yum!

PRAY: Thank God for warning you in His Word that it is never a good idea to lie.



THURSDAY

AN ANGRY BROTHER

Clutching a bowl of his father's favorite stew, Esau walked quickly toward his father's tent. He was determined to have his double share of Isaac's wealth and get rich quick. He entered the tent soon after Jacob had left. "Father," he said, "rise and eat the food that your son killed for you. Then bless me" (Genesis 27:31, ICB).

Isaac replied, "Who are you?"

Esau said, "I am your son—your firstborn son—Esau" (Genesis 27:32, ICB).

Isaac's hands shook, and his body trembled. *No!* His own son Jacob had deceived him! Then God flashed the truth into Isaac's sad heart: he had made a mistake by stubbornly wanting to give the birthright blessing to Esau when God had always planned for Jacob to have it. What did sad Father Isaac have to say to Esau? READ GENESIS 27:33.

Esau cried out as if someone had hit him. The terrible news about his cheating younger brother was just too much. He cried and pleaded for the blessing three times. But Father Isaac *could not* and *would not* give the blessing twice—it now belonged to Jacob. Old Father Isaac was determined to be truthful.

The Bible tells us, "A person must do these things to enjoy life and have many, happy days. He must not say evil things. He must not tell lies" (1 Peter 3:10, ICB). Being truthful is God's way, so it brings us "happy days," while lies hurt others badly.

SING: As a family, listen to, sing, or play on a musical instrument "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing." Talk about the words or phrases in this hymn that might be hard to understand, and what this hymn is about.

PRAY: Ask God for the courage to be truthful so that you won't hurt others.

THINK . . . THEN TALK ABOUT IT:

- *Whom do you feel most sorry for in the story so far?*
- *Has anyone lied to you or tricked you? How did you feel? How did you respond?*
- *Have you hurt someone by lying to them? What could you do to make it right?*

☐ FRIDAY

God's Big Love

God's little family didn't feel like a happy family anymore. Isaac was disappointed. Jacob was weighed down with guilt. Rebekah was bitterly sorry. And Esau cried and raged in anger. They had all been reminded why God says it is never a good idea to lie.

If only Isaac had listened to God, if only Rebekah had waited for God, and if only Jacob had trusted God, things would surely have turned out differently. But God didn't want them to stay angry and hurt and discouraged by "*If only* . . ." They couldn't change the mistakes they had made, but they could remember how huge and wonderful God's love is.

What else could they remember about God's love?

Read Psalm 118:1.

This message of love is so important that God says it again in Lamentations 3:22, 23: "The Lord's love never ends. His mercies never stop. They are new every morning. Lord, Your loyalty is great" (ICB).

God's big heart of love can forgive us. We can remember how much He loves us and learn to trust Him more and more.

Think . . . Then Talk About It:

- *What did Jacob need most from God's loving heart at this part in the story? Read* ***Jeremiah 31:34, last part****.*



Friday Night

Share and Praise

Sing "Jesus Loves Me" together. As you sing, remember :

- Jesus will always love you.
- He is strong enough to help you do the right thing.
- He will forgive you when you don't, when you ask Him to.

Draw

Draw a big red heart. Inside it, write the things you have learned about God's love this week.

Family Journal

- What mistakes were made in this week's story?
- What have you learned this week about being truthful?

For You, Parents

Consider starting a family tradition to bless your child (children) every Friday evening. Affirm the uniqueness of each child and the good things you have noticed during the week about him/her.

Pray

Hold hands in a family circle and pray a popcorn prayer (pray one sentence each, here and there) of praises to God.

A Tangled Web

More than 200 years ago a Scottish author named Sir Walter Scott wrote a poem about a man called Lord Marmion. A greedy man, Lord Marmion decided he must marry a rich and beautiful woman, Clara de Clare, who was already engaged to a nobleman. Marmion told and acted out a string of lies about the nobleman. It caused Clara to break off her engagement to the man she truly loved. But his lies and deceit didn't get him what he wanted. Clara didn't want to marry Lord Marmion!

Two lines from the poem have become very famous because they express a truth so well.

"Oh, what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practice to deceive!"

Once we tell one lie, we often have to tell or act another and another, until in the end it is hard to tell what the truth is. People get very hurt as a result. It is just like a spider weaving a web of many strands to catch its dinner. A fly caught in a sticky spider's web will find it hard to escape. In the same way people rarely escape the sad consequences of lies. How much better it is to be truthful!

Fast Facts:

- *There are more than 45,000 different types of spiders in the world.*
- *Tangle-web spiders make messy-looking webs in bushes or on buildings. Their webs are sometimes known as cobwebs.*
- *Tangle-web spiders like to hang upside down in the middle of their webs as they wait to catch crickets and ants that get tangled up.*

