

## Jacob and Esau

When Abraham's son Isaac became a young man, he married Rebekah. She had twin boys named Jacob and Esau.

Esau was born first, and it was the custom in those days that the firstborn (oldest) son would receive a special blessing from his father. The son would become the head of the home when his father died. He would also get twice as much land as his brothers, and twice the number of animals. This was his **birthright**.

As the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter. One day, on returning from one of his hunting trips, he met Jacob who was cooking some stew. Esau was very hungry and when he smelled the stew, he said, "I've got to have some of that stew right now!"

Jacob saw this as a chance to get from Esau what he'd been wanting for years – his birthright. "Okay," Jacob said, "but first sell me your birthright."

Esau replied, "I'm about to die [of hunger] anyway. What good will my birthright be then?"

So Jacob told Esau to make a special promise to hand over his birthright, which he did.

Many years later, when Isaac was old and could no longer see, he knew that the time had come for him to pass on the special blessing to his eldest son. So he told Esau to go hunt some wild game and prepare him a tasty meal.

