

Jacob and Esau

Genesis 25:19-34

by Don Falkos

copyright 2015 Donald Falkos Storytelling LLC

Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah. Twenty years later, Rebekah finally became pregnant. She knew she was going to have twins because she could feel them struggling with each other. When she asked God why this was happening, the Lord replied, "Your two sons will become two separate nations. The younger will be the strongest, and the older will serve him."

When Rebekah gave birth, the firstborn was very hairy. He was named Esau, which means "hairy". The second son was born holding on to Esau's heel. He was named Jacob, which means "heel".

As they grew up, Esau became an outdoorsman, a hunter, while Jacob was a more stay-at-home kind of guy. He was Rebekah's favorite. Isaac loved to eat the wild game his older son hunted and so he preferred Esau.

One day when Jacob was cooking some lentil stew, Esau returned from a hunting trip exhausted and very hungry. He said to his brother, "Give me some of that red stew!"

Jacob replied, "I'll give you some stew if you give me your rights as the firstborn son."

"I'm starving! What good is my birthright if I'm dead?"

So Esau swore an oath, selling all his rights as the firstborn to his brother, Jacob, in exchange for some bread and some red lentil stew. That's how Esau got his other name, Edom, which means "red".