

I'll Do It My Way!

The Life of Jacob

Characters: Isaac, Jacob, Esau,
Rebekah, Narrator

Props: 2 bowls

Rebekah
Isaac

Fuzzy gloves
Dark glasses

Scarf

Narrator: Abraham's son Isaac and his wife Rebekah went many years without having any children. Isaac prayed to God and He gave them twin baby boys. In those days the first son had special rights just because he was born first. That was called his birthright, his right by birth. While Rebekah was pregnant with her sons, God told her an amazing thing.

He said, "The older child and his family will serve the younger child and his family."

This was amazing, because He said the younger son would receive the birthright rather than the older. This birthright included God's very special promise to their grandfather, Abraham, to bless the whole world through his descendants. This was God's Incredible Plan. He is in control and He chose the younger son to receive the birthright and His promise. When the boys were born, Isaac and Rebekah named the first one Esau, a word that means red or hairy, because he was red and hairy when he was born. The second one they named Jacob, which sounds like the Hebrew word for heel, because he was born hanging onto his brother's heel.

The brothers grew up with very different personalities. Esau loved the outdoors.

(Enter Esau, acting like a hunter stalking game as first, then sniffing the air, shading his eyes to look far away, and smiling as he stalks toward the far end of the room.)

Jacob was quiet, and liked to stay around the tents and help his mother.

(Enter Jacob pretending to have a large stock pot. He sits on a chair and stirs the "soup.")

One day Esau came in from outside very hungry and he spotted some soup Jacob was making.

(Esau comes to Jacob dragging, groaning and acting as if he is about to pass out.)

Esau: Let me eat some of that red soup, for I am weak from hunger.

Narrator: Jacob realized this was a way to get something he wanted.

(Jacob gives the "used car salesman look" with raised eyebrows, wringing his hands. Whispers aside to the audience, "It'll be a piece of cake to take that birthright")

Jacob: You must sell me your rights as firstborn son if you want **my** soup.

Esau: *(dramatically)* I am so hungry that I will die if I don't eat. What good will the birthright do me if I'm dead? You've got a deal.

(Shakes hands so hard he almost knocks Jacob over. Jacob mimes handing him a bowl and spoon from the pot and they exit together with Esau pretending to slurp greedily.)

Narrator: That's a high price to pay for a bowl of soup! Esau was thinking only of his hunger in the moment, not of the value of his birthright with God's incredible future promise. Jacob knew the value of this birthright, he really wanted it and took advantage of Esau's lack of interest.

Have you ever wanted something so bad in the moment you forget about everything else?

Many years passed and Isaac was old and almost blind. He decided it was time to pass on his blessing to the right son. Do you remember who is supposed to have the birth right?

(Enter Isaac and Esau with Esau leading him. Isaac shuffling. Rebekah follows behind—may mime sweeping. Esau guides Isaac to a chair.)

Back in Isaac's time a blessing wasn't just a good thing that happened... or something to say when someone sneezed. It was something very special that every father passed on to his children when he was ready to die. In the blessing the father would tell each child what God would do for them and what things they would inherit from their father. And the birthright was part of the blessing to the oldest son. Old man Isaac was a miracle for his Parents, Sarah and Abraham. God promised Abraham that He would bless all the people of the earth through Isaac's descendants. Now Isaac was old and it was time to give the blessing to his sons.

Isaac *(to Esau with Rebekah listening in)* I am very old and I don't know when I will die. Go hunting for me and fix the meat just the way I like it, and then I will give you my blessing.

(Rebekah looks worried and scurries out the door. Esau hugs Isaac then leads out the door himself. Rebekah and Jacob re-enter with a bowl, Jacob wearing a tunic like Esau's and pulling on fuzzy gloves and a scarf.)

Narrator: Rebekah overheard this and became worried that Isaac would give the birthright to Esau rather than Jacob. So she hurried to prepare a tasty meal for Isaac. Jacob put on some of Esau's clothes and tied goatskin onto his hands and neck so he would feel hairy like Esau. He wanted to trick his father into giving him the blessing.

Jacob: *(A poor attempt at a voice change)* Here is your meal, father.

Isaac: Is that really you, Esau?

(Isaac accepts the bowl but grabs Jacob's hand and pulls him near. He hugs Jacob's neck, sniffs loudly as his clothes, and gives a huge smile.)

Isaac: Now **that's** my Esau!

Narrator: Isaac was a bit suspicious of Jacob's voice, but when he touched his clothes and his arms he believed Jacob's lie. Isaac gave Jacob the blessing, including the birthright. Then he sent Jacob away.

(Isaac has Jacob kneel down, holds his hands over Jacob in blessing, then shoos him away and "eats" his meal. Exit Jacob, pause, then enter Esau with another bowl.)

Esau: Here is your meal, father.

(Isaac looks shocked. He draws Esau close and they mutter together quietly as the narrator continues speaking. Esau helps Isaac up and they exit slowly with Isaac looking sad and Esau looking furious. Esau mutters "I'll get him for this!" under his breath several times as he heads out the door.)

Narrator: Esau and his father soon realized the trick Jacob had played on them. Isaac was very sad and Esau was so angry he planned to murder Jacob. Jacob received the blessing that God said would be his, but he got it his way, not God's. Because he did it his way he had to run to a far-away place to be safe from his brother. He was all alone. And while he was gone, his mother died. He never got to see her again.

God promised to work His plan through Abraham's descendants. As Abraham's grandson, Jacob was a part of that promise. God chose Jacob's line through which to continue His plan. Jacob didn't have to lie and trick his way to get it. If Jacob had only allowed God to work out His plan, Jacob would have received the good things God promised, without cheating his father, angering his brother, and having to run away.

Even though Jacob didn't depend on God, God still continued to work with Jacob. It was God's plan to bring the Messiah through Jacob's family line. And God's plan will always come true. **"People can make all kinds of plans, but only God's plan will happen" (Proverbs 19:21).** *Some people plan to be good so they can go to heaven. But God says that no one can ever be good enough. Even Jacob messed up. God's plan is to be everyone's friend. That is why Jesus died on the cross to die the death we actually deserve. But only when you tell God you want that death to be your replacement does this promise apply to you! When you do, we also get awesome blessings that God promises to us!*