

Jacob & Esau: Start with an Open Heart

Scene 1 (Gen 25:19-26)

Narrator: How can you know where you are going if you don't know where you came from? Many years ago, Abraham's son Isaac married Rebekah. After they were married for a little while...

Rebekah: *(to Isaac)* Darling?

Isaac: Yes, dear?

Rebekah: Wouldn't it be nice if our house was ... a little bigger?

Isaac: You want me to build a second floor? With these oil prices?

Rebekah: No, no... it would just be nice to have something to cuddle.

Isaac: You want to cuddle? Why didn't you say so! *(comes in for a cuddle)*

Rebekah: No! *(pushes Isaac away)* Pitter patter of little feet. *(Isaac still looks confused)* Ya know, feet – in the house?

Isaac: You want a pet lamb? I mean, I guess we could...

Rebekah: Geez! I want kids! How are you not getting this?

Isaac: Oh, kids! Yes, of course. Well, sure. That sounds lovely. We could make a whole army of mini-Isaacs to carry on my great and glorious name.

Rebekah: Okaaaay. But we've been married for 20 years.

Isaac: Has it really been that long? Why I remember when I first saw you from across the field...

Rebekah: *(interrupting)* Isaac! Focus.

Isaac: Yes, sorry. You know what I'm gonna do for you?

Rebekah: What, dear?

Isaac: I'm gonna pray that you can have all the kids you want. *(Isaac kneels)* Holy God, it's me, Isaac. Thanks for my wife. You remember her? She's such a super lady. Anyway, she's ready to be a Mom and I think she'd be mega-amazing at it. Plus, you told my Dad that he would have more descendants than the number of stars. So, I think it's time. Please and thank you. Amen.

Narrator: And God said, "Isaac, I have heard your prayer. Rebekah will become a mother."

Isaac: Thanks, God! Hey Rebekah! Guess what?

Rebekah: Chicken butt!

Isaac: No, not now. Seriously, why do you do that? Why?

Rebekah: Chicken thigh!

Isaac: Rebekah, God answered my prayer! You're going to be a mom!

Rebekah: Really? When?

Isaac: Chicken hen. Ack. You've got me doing it, too. Soon, now! Well...in 9 months.

Rebekah: Woo-hoo! (*puts a pillow under her shirt*)

Narrator: Rebekah and Isaac were happy, but her pregnancy was far from easy.

Rebekah: OW! OW, OW, OW!

Isaac: What is it? What's wrong?

Rebekah: I think there must be two of 'em in there 'cause they won't stop kicking and fighting each other. Knock it off in there, you two. (*pauses and winces*) Don't make me come in there!

Isaac: Oh, you poor thing. Sit down and rest.

Rebekah: Why is this happening to me?

Isaac: I dunno. I've never been pregnant before.

Rebekah: (*glares at Isaac*) Well, I know that! I'm not a fool. But I've known lots of pregnant ladies and they didn't have round the clock wrestlemania in their bellies! I'm gonna pray about it. (*kneels in prayer*) Loving God, thank you for the babies. I really wanted them and you answered our prayer. So, I don't want you to think that I'm not grateful – super grateful over here – but, holy Lord, what is happening?! What should I do?

Narrator: And God spoke to her: "Two nations are in your womb and two peoples born of you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the elder shall serve the younger."

Rebekah: So you're saying they're never gonna play nice? Thanks for answering my prayer, God.

(*Rebekah tries to get up and falters. Isaac comes over to help her up.*)

Isaac: You sure were deep in prayer there, Rebekah. What did God say?

Rebekah: Oh, nothing much. You know, woman stuff.

Isaac: Got it. Not my business.

Rebekah: Ooh, ooh, ooh, I think it's time to give birth. (*Rebekah waddles off-stage*)

Isaac: Good luck!

Narrator: So the time came for Rebekah to give birth and she did have twins in her womb.

Rebekah: (*off stage*) Ow, ow, ow, awooga, awooga, eep eep eep!

Narrator: Childbirth is not easy. Be sure to thank your moms, kids.

Rebekah: (*off stage*) Yowza, yowza, JINKIES!

Narrator: The first baby that came out was red all over – just covered in rough, red hair.

Rebekah: (*off stage*) You're like a fur baby – all rough and hairy! Let's name him Harry!

Isaac: (*listening intently*) No, please, no.

Rebekah: (*off stage*) What about Esau?

Narrator: Esau meant "rough" and fully developed. Rebekah was *really* impressed that he had more hair than most babies.

Isaac: Well, alright. If you like Esau, let's do that.

Narrator: The second baby that came out was gripping his brother's heel.

Rebekah: (*off stage*) Oh, little second born, you didn't make it! You'll always have an older brother. I bet he'll be an ankle-biter. Let's name him Jacob!

Narrator: Jacob means, "the one who follows on the heels of another," but it also means "usurper."

Isaac: (*to Rebekah*) Excuse me, usurper? Like, one who lies and cheats and takes stuff from other people?

Rebekah: (*off stage*) Come on, Isaac. I like the way it sounds: Esau & Jacob – our boys.

Isaac: Oh, alright. Esau & Jacob it is.

(Rebekah returns to Isaac with two baby dolls)

Rebekah: Isaac, meet your sons.

Isaac: They don't look any happier together now than they did in the womb. Give me my firstborn! *(Isaac picks up Esau)* Hi, little hairy guy. You're my little Esau. Yes, you are! Yes, you are!

Rebekah: Well, I'm just fine with my little Jacob. Hi, Mr. Heel Grabber. You're gonna be big and great and strong and better than your brother. Yes, you are! Yes, you are!

Isaac: Wait, what did you say?

Rebekah: *(faking innocence)* Oh, nothing. Let's take the boys for a walk.

(Rebekah and Isaac exit)

Scene 2 (Gen 25:27-34)

Narrator: And so the boys grew up like brothers do – fighting constantly. And they were very different people.

(Esau enters grandly)

Esau: Would you look at all these people! My adoring fans – thank you, thank you for coming to see me. I am Esau, the great and mighty hunter. I have the keenest eye, the fastest draw, the sharpest shot of anyone anywhere in the world! Yes, I am fantastic. Thank you for noticing.

(Esau goes to the front row and offers to autograph bulletins)

Narrator: And then there was Jacob...

Jacob: *(groans)* Would you give it a rest, Esau? So you're a hunter – who cares?

Esau: *(returns to the chancel)* Who cares? I'm carrying on the noble tradition of our forefather – the first warrior and hunter – our great, great, great (I dunno, uncle?) Nimrod. I am the next Nimrod in our family.

Jacob: Yeah, Esau. That's something to be *really* proud of – a...mmm, let me do the math here *(does calculations in the air)*. Got it! A second cousin ten times removed. *(shakes head)* What a Nimrod....

Esau: Exactly! Thank you for the compliment. Besides, it's better than you...hanging around Mom all day.

Jacob: I do not! I'm raising sheep and goats.

Esau: Ooh...sheep and goats...I'm so scared. Do their soft fur and gentle eyes give you nightmares?

Jacob: No. Knock it off.

Esau: Knock what off? (*starts poking Jacob*) Knock what off?

(*Isaac enters*)

Isaac: (*to Esau*) Ah, my son: joy of my heart, light of my eye, proudest achievement of my whole life...

Jacob: Umm...hi, Dad. I'm here, too.

Isaac: (*innocently*) Yes, hello there, Jacob. (*to Esau*) So, best son ever, what'd you bring me? You got some rabbit? Quail? Venison?

Esau: Nothing yet today, Pop. I'm off to the woods now.

Isaac: That's my boy!

(*Esau exits and Rebekah enters*)

Jacob: Moooom, Esau's such a jerk. He was bragging and poking me and making fun of me for raising sheep and goats.

Rebekah: There, there, Jacob. You know you're smarter and nicer and better than he is.

Isaac: What?! Rebekah, what are you saying? How dare you talk about Esau that way when he's *clearly* the best of the bunch.

Rebekah: About Esau? How about you ignoring little Jacob all the time when he's so obviously better than Esau. He's got more friends, he's got more charm, and he's got better hair.

Isaac: Better hair? You're nuts, woman!

Rebekah: Harumph.

(*Isaac and Rebekah storm off*)

Narrator: This happened pretty much every day in their house. Everyone thought they were right and no one would budge or be even a little bit nicer to one another. Then, one day, Jacob was cooking a stew.

Jacob: (*putting things into a pot*) I'll show that big meany....tries to talk about me like I don't matter. He's the one who doesn't matter.

Esau: (*offstage*) The greatest son is coming home.

Jacob: (*to himself*) What does he want, a parade?

(*Esau enters and throws himself down across a few chairs dramatically*)

Esau: So – hungry. Must – eat.

Jacob: What, my stew?

Esau: Yes! That red stuff. Gimme. Please. OOooh, I'm dying of hunger!

Jacob: Oh, so the great and mighty hunter didn't catch anything in the woods, huh? Need your little brother's amazing, delicious, hearty, lentil stew? (*takes a bite*) It's so delicious. Mmm. Yummy, yummy.

Esau: It smells so good. Please! I'll give you my nerf gun.

Jacob: Nope.

Esau: My sling shot?

Jacob: Uh-uh.

Esau: Ten army men that are only a little bit melted?

Jacob: Not a chance.

Esau: What could you possibly want? (*in a high pitched voice*) So hungry!

Jacob: Sell me your birthright.

Esau: Birthright? Who needs a birthright when you could starve to death? To death!

Jacob: Do we have a deal?

Esau: Yeah, sure, whatever.

Jacob: You have to swear.

Esau: I swear.

Jacob: Pinky swear. Cross your heart and hope to die.

Esau: I cross my heart. I swear. Anything you want – just give me the food!

Jacob: Here you go. Sucker!

(Esau eats his food hurriedly)

Narrator: You saw it here, folks. Esau did not know how to haggle.

Esau *(to narrator)*: That's what you think....this stew is amazing!

(Jacob goes to the right and Esau goes to the left while eating enthusiastically)

Narrator: Don't listen to him. Having the birthright meant twice the inheritance and all the authority and the respect of being head of the family when the time comes. This was...well...not Esau's best day for good decisions.

Scene 3 (Gen 26:34-28:5)

Narrator: Let's skip ahead a bit to when Jacob and Esau are 40 years old. Esau had decided to get married and, well, we already know he wasn't a patient guy so he married a couple of women who were nearby.

(Rebekah and Isaac enter. Isaac is wearing sunglasses and Rebekah supports him as he walks)

Rebekah: *(to Isaac)* Ooh, that son of yours with his Hittite wives. They have more gods than hairs on their heads or sense in their brains.

Isaac: Yes, I would say that he chose...poorly. I want to sit. *(Rebekah helps him sit down and then hides beside the pulpit and very obviously eavesdrops)* Esau! Come to me, my son.

Esau: *(runs over)* Yes, father!

Isaac: My son, I may be old, but, boy, do I still look good. I'm pulling it off, right?

Esau: Sure, Dad, you're the coolest hundred-year-old guy I've ever met.

Isaac: But, seriously, I'm pretty old now and who knows how long we've got on this planet. Go hunting for me. You know how to make a meal just like I like. Bring it to me and I will give you your final blessing.

Narrator: Now, you might have noticed that Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to Esau. So when Esau went out hunting, Rebekah seized the opportunity.

Rebekah: *(grabs Jacob)* Jacob! Your father is about to bless your brother. Now listen to me and do what I say. Get two tasty looking goats and I'll make a nice dinner for your father. Then you can give it to him and he'll bless you instead. He's so blind he'll never know the difference!

Jacob: I don't know about this, Mom. I mean, Esau is a hairy guy and I'm...well, I'm getting there. Maybe I'll be hairy one day. But he'll grab my arm when I come near and he'll know that it's a trick. Then he'll think I'm mocking him and he'll give me a curse instead of a blessing.

Rebekah: You just do as I say and I'll take care of the rest.

Narrator: So, Jacob went out and got the goats for his mother. Then Rebekah got Esau's fanciest clothes and dressed Jacob in them and she put the goat skins around his hands and his neck.
(*Rebekah dresses Jacob*)

Jacob: (*smells the clothes*) P-U does that guy sweat a lot.

Rebekah: Quiet now and hurry. Take this food before your brother comes home!

(*Jacob walks over to Isaac while Rebekah hides behind the pulpit again*)

Jacob: Father.

Isaac: Here I am. Who are you, my son?

Jacob: I am Esau, your firstborn. I did what you told me so eat this meal so you can bless me.

Isaac: (*amazed*) How did you find the meat so quickly, my son?

Jacob: The Lord your God made me successful.

Isaac: Come near so that I can tell if you're really my son Esau or not. (*Jacob moves closer and Isaac feels his arm and hands.*) The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. Are you really my son Esau?

Jacob: I am.

Isaac: Really?

Jacob: Yep.

Isaac: Really?

Jacob: YES!

Isaac: Good enough for me. After my supper, you will get your blessing. (*Eats quickly.*) Come near – let me hug you. (*Jacob comes in for a hug and Isaac makes a loud sniffing smell.*) That's Esau's smell alright – woods and sweat and animal. Now, your blessing: may God give you the dew of heaven and fatness of the earth.

Jacob: (*a little disappointed*) Wet skies and fat land...sounds okay so far.

Isaac: Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you.

Jacob: Brothers bowing down? Now that's more like it! Thanks, Dad! Gotta go. Bye!

(Jacob runs off stage)

Narrator: So Jacob high tailed it out of there and just as soon as Isaac finished his blessing, Esau came back from hunting and prepared the meal for his father.

(Esau enters with plate in hand)

Esau: Come on, Dad! Sit up and have this hungry man dinner so you can bless me.

Isaac: *(startled)* Who are you?

Esau: Quit messing around, Dad. It's your firstborn, Esau.

Isaac: *(shaking with anger)* Then who was it that brought me food and I ate every last bite and blessed him? Consarn that rassa-frassin', fur-bearin', flea-bitten, lily-livered varmint!

Esau: *(very dramatically falls to his knees)* Noooooo! Why? My father! Bless me, too! Bless-me-too!

Isaac: Your brother came like a snake in the grass and he slithered away with your blessing.

Esau: Oh, is that why you named him Jacob so that he could trip me up? First my birthright and now he stole my blessing, too! Don't you have any blessing left over for me?

Isaac: Look, son, I already made him master over you and gave him all his brothers as servants. There's not really a lot left over for you.

Esau: Please, anything!

Isaac: Your house will enjoy the fat of the earth and the dew of heaven. Yet you will live by the sword and you will serve your brother. But when you grow restless, you will throw off his rule.

(Rebekah is very obviously eavesdropping)

Esau: *(comes forward, speaks to himself)* If I ever get my hands on that lying, sneaky, jerk face...I'll kill him. Bwa-ha-ha-ha. *(Esau exits)*

Rebekah: Sweet fancy Moses! My poor little baby boy will get hurt. I have to warn him. Jacob!

Jacob: *(enters)* What, Mom? What is it?

Rebekah: Sooooo, you know that plan I had?

Jacob: Yeah....

Rebekah: Well, it turns out that your brother is just a bit...just an eentsy bit madder than I thought he'd be.

Jacob: I mean, how mad could he be? I already had the birthright.

Rebekah: See, yeah, that's what I was thinking, too, but, ummm, it turns out that he wants revenge.

Jacob: Revenge?

Rebekah: Well, he kinda sorta wants to...murder you?

Jacob: Murder me? But I'm my favorite person!

Rebekah: I know, honey. Me, too. But we won't let that happen. I want you to run away.

Jacob: Where can I go?

Rebekah: Go to my brother Laban's house in Haran.

Jacob: Well, how long do I have to stay away?

Rebekah: Oh, not long...just until he forgets what you did to him. Erm...I'll let you know. Just go! I don't want to lose both of you in one day! Run!

(Rebekah helps Isaac off the stage)

Scene 4 (Gen 28:10-22)

Narrator: So, Jacob high tailed it out of there once more and journeyed on to a certain place to set up camp because the sun had set.

Jacob: Well, it's certainly not as comfortable as home, but I guess I can make it work.

Narrator: And so Jacob fell asleep.

Jacob (*happy sleeping sounds*): Hee-mee-mee-mee. Hee-mee-mee-mee.

Narrator: And he dreamed that there was a ladder set on the earth. It reached up to heaven and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

(Angel walks in with ladder)

Jacob: (*scared*) Aah! Angel! (*Jacob bows down*)

Angel: I am many angels of the Lord. Listen to me.

Jacob: (*looks up*) You can't fool me, there's only one of you!

Angel: I am all the angels! See my beautiful glow that echoes in eternity!

Jacob: It's very lovely.

Angel: Silence, mortal! I have a message from God. God says: this land is your land, this land's got lots of sand. So listen to me before things get out of hand. The Lord is with you wherever you go. God will bring you back just wait and see.

(*Angel exits with the ladder*)

Jacob: Surely the Lord is in this place – and I didn't even know it! I've gotta set up a shrine here so everyone knows how important this place is.

(*Jacob sets up a sign "Watch Your Step: Holy, Holy, Holy"*)

Scene 5 (Gen 29:1-30:24)

Narrator: So, Jacob continued on his journey and ended up in the land of Mesopotamia. He came to a well and bumped into Laban's daughter Rachel who was coming to water her sheep.

Rachel: Come on sheep. It's watering time! Don't lag behind – there's enough water for everybody. Oh, shoot, I need some help to get the stone off the well.

Jacob: (*sheepishly*) Umm, umm. Excuse me. I can, um, I can help with that.

Rachel: Oh, really? Thanks! That's so nice of you.

Jacob: Yeah, you're pretty.

Rachel: What?

Jacob: Oh, I said, umm, that's a pretty large number of sheep you have there.

Rachel: Yeah, they belong to my father.

Jacob: Cool. I'm coming for a visit. My name's Jacob. Here's some water for your sheep.

Narrator: Then Jacob kissed Rachel and wept aloud.

Jacob (*to the narrator*): What?!

Rachel (*to the narrator*): We just met and I don't know him. I mean, the picking up the stone thing was helpful, but I'm not about to kiss him.

Jacob: Yeah, that feels weird.

Narrator: Okay, how about this: then Jacob hugged Rachel to say hello.

Rachel: I'm good with that. You good?

Jacob: Yep. (*They hug*)

Rachel: Anyway, it's cool that you're here. I'll run and get my father so he can greet you. (*Rachel runs off stage*) Faaaaaather! Jacob's here.

(*Laban and Leah enter*)

Laban: Welcome to my home! I see you've met my younger daughter. Isn't she a peach? Meet my oldest daughter, Leah!

Leah: Hiya, stranger! Welcome to the ranch! We don't get many out of town visitors around here.

Jacob: Oh, yes, umm, nice to meet you.

Narrator: I don't know if you noticed before, but Jacob had a thing for Rachel. He was just trying to play it cool. But really, he thought she was graceful and beautiful. Leah, on the other hand...

Jacob: (*to Leah*) I bet you have a really great personality.

Leah: (*Leah rolls her eyes*) Yeah, same to you.

Laban: Well, Jacob, look, if you're going to stay here, you'll be working for me. But, hey, you're family so what do you want to get paid?

Jacob: Well, sir, I will work for you for seven years to marry your younger daughter Rachel.

Laban: Seven years' labor for one daughter? You got yourself a deal. (*They shake hands*)

Narrator: So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed like only a few days to him because he was so much in love with her.

Jacob: (*giggles*) Hi, Rachel.

Rachel: (*giggles*) Hi, Jacob.

Jacob: Okay, now, Laban. Let me get married because I held up my end of the bargain.

Laban: Agreed. Let's have a wedding!

Narrator: Back in those days, people got married with really thick veils. Veils were so thick you couldn't see the bride's face at all. So, Laban snuck his older daughter Leah in at the last minute.

(Rachel and Leah put on veils and stand on either side of Jacob)

Laban: Alright, marriage is happening. Very good. Now, take your wife's hand here *(puts Leah's hand in Jacob's hand)* and you'll be good to go!

Narrator: But the next morning, his wife took off her veil.

Leah: Hi, honey!

Jacob: Blah! What? How? You're not the one I wanted to marry!

Leah: Well, I'm not exactly pleased as punch over here either. It was Daddy's idea!

Jacob: Laban! How could you do this to me? You know I'm in love with Rachel! We agreed on Rachel! I worked for SEVEN YEARS for Rachel. And you know what that woman is? *(points to Leah and looks at her)* NOT RACHEL!

Leah: Like you're such a prize...

Laban: Jacob, Jacob, you have to understand how we do things here in Mesopotamia. We don't let the youngest daughter marry before the oldest daughter. That's embarrassing for them there. And you wouldn't want to do that, would you? No, of course not. So, I'll tell you what I'll do: you can go ahead and marry Rachel, too, if you'll serve me for another seven years.

Jacob: Well of all the low-down sneaky unfair... What kind of person would trick their own family for their own private gain?

Leah: Really, Jacob? Don't you remember how you happened to be hiding out here?

Jacob: That's totally different! I didn't...I wasn't... *(pause)* Oh.

Narrator: So, Jacob had been good and tricked and he agreed to Laban's terms. He would marry Rachel, too, and work for Laban for seven more years.

Rachel: Oh, Jacob, I love you so much!

Jacob: I love you, too, Rachel! You're the best of all the women that ever was anywhere ever! But you're ESPECIALLY better than your sister Leah.

(Rachel and Jacob stick out their tongues at Leah. Leah sighs)

Narrator: So Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah. Everybody knew it. And the Lord saw that Leah was unloved and he took pity on her.

(Angel enters with a basket of baby dolls)

Angel: The time has come for each of you to enter your time for motherhood. Step back, Jacob, this doesn't concern you. I want each of you to take your marks there and there. *(Rachel and Leah go to starting lines on opposite sides of the chancel.)* Now, whoever gets to the basket first will become pregnant and bear a child. On your marks, get set, go!

(Rachel and Leah race to the basket and Leah gets there first.)

Leah: A son! I will name him Reuben because God looked on my unhappiness and blessed me. Maybe now Jacob will love me, too.

(Leah hands the baby to Jacob)

Rachel: That was just dumb luck. Come on, we're racing again!

Angel: On your marks, get set, go!

(Rachel and Leah race to the basket and Leah gets there first.)

Rachel: Not again!

Leah: Another son! I will call him Simeon because the Lord heard how hard I have it and wanted to help me.

(Leah hands the baby to Jacob)

Rachel: Right, you have it hard... Help me out, angel!

Angel: Okay, one more time. On your marks, get set, go!

(Rachel and Leah race to the basket and Leah gets there first.)

Leah: I am unbeatable! I'll call this son Levi because three sons to zero means my husband will be joined with me forever. In your face, Rachel!

(Leah hands the baby to Jacob)

Rachel: I'm not gonna give up. No matter how many times you win.

Angel: On your marks, get set, go!

(Rachel and Leah race to the basket and Leah gets there first.)

Leah: This child will be called Judah because I praise the Lord for his birth.

(Leah hands the baby to Jacob)

Rachel: Jacob, we need to talk.

Jacob: *(puts all the baby dolls down on the pew)* What is it, dear?

Rachel: Give me children or I'll die!

Jacob: Rachel, I'm not God. I can't control these things! Why don't you ask the angel? Pray to God about it?

Rachel: No, take my maid Bilhah.

(Bilhah wanders in)

Bilhah: Umm...did I hear my name?

Rachel: Yes. Bilhah, marry Jacob.

Bilhah: You're serious? You want me to marry Jacob?

Rachel: Yeah, you're my maid so I'll get credit for all the kids that you have. Then I can rub it in Leah's smug face.

Bilhah: On the one hand, that's not very romantic. On the other...Leah has been getting pretty smug on her rugrat high horse. Okay, I'm in!

Rachel: Hey, angel! I've got a pinch hitter here.

Leah: Pinch hitter? That's against the rules!

Angel: *(checks rule book)* Actually, no. Pinch hitters are allowed.

Rachel: It's on.

Leah: Bring it.

Angel: On your marks, get set, go. *(Leah and Bilhah race. Bilhah wins. Rachel and Bilhah rejoice. Leah scowls. Bilhah hands the baby to Rachel)* On your marks, get set, go. *(Leah and Bilhah race. Bilhah wins. Rachel and Bilhah rejoice. Leah scowls. Bilhah hands the baby to Rachel)*

Bilhah: I did it! I actually won. First my son Dan and then my son Naphtali. I'm a mom!

Rachel: Well, we're their mom. You did this so our side could win, remember?

Leah: Ooh, I can't believe how sneaky you are, Rachel. Well, two can play at this game. Zilpah?

(Zilpah wanders in)

Zilpah: Oh, no.

Leah: Come on, Zilpah, trusty handmaid.

Zilpah: Leah, I know what you want to ask. Look, it's not a competition.

Leah: It wouldn't be a competition except that they're catching up. Come on...please!

Zilpah: Oh, alright. I can't bear to see you unhappy.

Narrator: I'm gonna cut in here because between these 4 women, they ultimately have 13 children. Quit racing, you guys need your rest.

Rachel, Leah, Bilhah, Zilpah: Thank you. *(They all flop down with the babies on chairs)*

Rachel: Wait, did I ever get my own son?

Narrator: Yes, after they have 11 children, you give birth to Joseph

Rachel: God does love me! Thanks, God!

Angel: God says you're very welcome. *(Angel exits)*

Scene 6 (Gen 30:25-33:11)

Narrator: We're gonna skip ahead a bit again. Jacob figures out that it's time for him to go home. He's served his 14 years, he has more wives and kids and flocks than he knows what to do with and he is ready to face the music.

Jacob: You all remember I told you about how my brother wants to kill me.

Zilpah: Maybe if you sent some gifts?

Bilhah: Like some goats and sheep and camels and cows and donkeys?

Rachel: That sounds like a wonderful idea.

Jacob: Yeah, the thing is, I heard that Esau was coming out to meet me and he had 400 men with him.

Leah: 400? What shall we do?

Jacob: Alright, stick with me now, I'm gonna send you all ahead of me: servants and livestock, wives and children.

Leah: You're hiding behind your wives?

Jacob: No, no, no. I'm giving him a present – like Zilpah suggested. And then he'll see all of your adorable faces and...well, come on, who could be angry when they look at little Joseph?

Rachel: He is a cutie.

Leah: Like all of our babies!

Zilpah & Bilhah: Yeah!

Jacob: The messengers will go out in front and say, "To my lord Esau: Thus says your servant Jacob, 'I have lived with Laban as a foreigner and stayed away until now; I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, and servants; and I sent them to my lord Esau, so that I may find favor in your sight.'"

Zilpah: You think that'll work?

Jacob: What else can I do? Oh, I'm gonna pray: Holy God, you told me to return to my home country. You know I'm not worthy of all your love and mercy and forgiveness. I only had a walking stick when I left home and now I have more than I could ever imagine. Please don't let my brother hurt me or any of us because I'm afraid of him. But you said you would protect me so I'm counting on you, God. Amen. Go on ahead, everybody. I'll catch up.

(Everyone exits except Jacob)

Narrator: And so, Jacob was alone.

Angel (*enters*): Hello. (*Angel and Jacob start circling one another*)

Jacob: You, again? What are you doing here?

Angel: What are you doing here?

Jacob: I'm going home.

Angel: You are wrestling, Jacob.

(They lock arms)

Jacob: I'm not. I'm just going home.

Angel: Always fighting. Always running.

Jacob: Not any more.

Angel: Fighting Esau, fighting Laban, fighting Jacob, fighting the Lord

Jacob: I'm going home. I'm going to prevail.

Angel: No more running. *(The angel strikes Jacob's hip)*

Narrator: Just then, the angel knocked Jacob's hip out of joint and Jacob limped, but he would not let go.

Angel: Let me go, the dawn is breaking.

Jacob: I will not let you go, unless you bless me.

Angel: Again with the blessing? Didn't you learn your lesson last time? What is your name?

Jacob: Jacob.

Angel: You won't be called Jacob anymore. Your name will be Israel because you have wrestled with God and with people and you have prevailed.

Jacob: Please tell me your name.

Angel: You cannot know my name, but you shall have my blessing. You can't run away any more. You may limp, but you serve the one, true God. *(Angel exits)*

Narrator: And the angel left. Jacob crossed the river to rejoin his family and they saw Esau coming.

(Family enters from right. Esau enters from left.)

Jacob: Alright, people, this is the big moment. I want you all to stand in a line, but I'll go ahead of you. *(Jacob comes to the front of the line and bows to the ground many times)*

Esau: *(runs to see Jacob, lifts him off the ground and hugs him)* Jacob, who are all these people?

Jacob: This is the family that God has graciously given your servant. *(Family bows)*

Esau: Why did you send all those animals ahead of you? What was that all about?

Jacob: I wanted to apologize.

Esau: But, Jacob, I already have more than enough. Keep what you have for yourself.

Jacob: No, really, take the gift. I've feared this moment for so long. Seeing your face now, smiling at me, it's like seeing the face of God!

Esau: You, little stinker. Life is great! And you don't have to trick or trap people to get what you need. I was mad for a long time, but after awhile I figured – what's the point? You're the only brother I've got.

Jacob: Really? Thanks, Red.

Esau: Any time, Heel-Grabber.

Narrator: How much simpler it would have been to start with an open heart! God doesn't need our tricks and schemes to bring blessing into the world. Let faith be your guide, let kindness be your rule, and never forget to look to the Lord. Amen.

Jacob & Esau: Start with an Open Heart

By

Rev. Elana Keppel Levy
January 2018



Troubadour: *(to the tune of "American Pie" by Don McLean)*

A long, long time ago
 I can still remember
 How that family used to fuss and fight.
 There was Jacob and his brother Red
 And parents going out their heads.
 Can nothing make these grumpy people smile?

But Jacob did what he could do
 To trick his brother with some stew.
 He wanted all the birthright
 He didn't have much foresight.
 I can't remember if I cried
 When I heard of Esau's injured pride.
 But something shattered deep inside
 Those days that Jacob lied.

So bye-bye, mister confidence man
 Thought that stealing was a good thing
 'Til you got caught and ran.
 And all your family round you
 Tried to look you in the eye
 Singin', "knock it off with all of your lies."
 "Knock it off with all of your lies."

Did you sleep where angels tread,
 With an angel's ladder by your head
 Pouring blessings onto you?
 Do you believe that G-d's with you,
 That the promise comes without a coup,
 And can you trust that G-d has the long view?
 Well, I know that you proclaimed your faith
 'Cause I saw you mark that holy place
 You worshipped and adored
 Your one and only Lord.

But then you went and met a pretty girl
 With a face that set your heart 'awhirl
 But just then all your luck unfurled,
 Those days that Jacob lied.

I started singin' bye-bye, mister confidence man
 Thought that stealing was a good thing
 'Til you got caught and ran.
 And all your family round you

Tried to look you in the eye
 Singin', "knock it off with all of your lies."
 "Knock it off with all of your lies."

For fourteen years
 You've been working hard
 Your uncle never let down his guard
 But you've got wives and family.
 When your wives cried out for
 Daughters and sons
 Your attentions were so
 Cruelly won
 And their lives were full
 Of yells and cries.
 Oh, and while the boss
 Was hoarding wealth,
 The liar grabbed his flocks by stealth.
 The boss man chased him down
 But they found common ground.

And while Jacob traveled back toward home,
 He met a man who chilled his bones,
 And he made sure he could not roam
 Those days that Jacob lied.

We were singin' bye-bye, mister confidence man
 Thought that stealing was a good thing
 'Til you got caught and ran.
 And all your family round you
 Tried to look you in the eye
 Singin', "knock it off with all of your lies."
 "Knock it off with all of your lies."

Years of running cannot last forever.
 The past comes back to find you wherever
 Tempers flare or do they fall?
 The liar sent his kin before
 With scads of gifts for ol' Esau's door
 With [2 beats] Jacob in the way back on the floor.
 Now the brother's heart
 Was made anew.
 On his brother's
 Crimes he did not stew.
 They both got up to hug,
 Oh all their heartstrings they did tug!
 'Cause the brothers chose to find new ways;

The path of lying never pays.
Do you believe in what can change
When Jacob stopped the lies?

We can stop singin' bye-bye, mister confidence man
Thought that stealing was a good thing
'Til you got caught and ran.
And all your family round you
Tried to look you in the eye
Singin', "knock it off with all of your lies."
"Knock it off with all of your lies."