

# Blessings and Birthrights

## Bible Verse

The LORD bless you and keep you (Numbers 6:24).

## Did You Know?

**T**he birth of Jacob and Esau, twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah, continues the story of the descendants of Abraham. It is through Jacob, who had twelve sons, that the descendants of Abraham really began to multiply.

Rebekah's sons fought with each other before they were born, setting the stage for a complex relationship that lasted throughout their lives. When Rebekah asked God why her pregnancy was so difficult, God told her that two nations were struggling inside of her. Rebekah eventually gave birth to twin boys. Esau was born first, but the second son, Jacob, came out holding on to Esau's heel.

As the oldest son, Esau was entitled to the birthright. The birthright was a blessing and conferral of rights usually passed on to the oldest son. Israel and some other ancient cultures gave special privileges to the oldest son in a family. The birthright brought with it a leadership role in the family and a larger share of the inheritance. Although the birthright was usually passed on to the oldest son, other stories of the time indicated that it could be forfeited.

The ancient Hebrew concept of "blessing" is also important to our story. It was believed that a blessing released a power that determined the character and future of the person being blessed. Once spoken, it could not be taken back. Genesis 27 tells the story of Rebekah and Jacob conspiring to convince Isaac to bless Jacob instead of Esau.

For more Bible background information, go to [DeepBlueKids.com](http://DeepBlueKids.com).

## Exploration Points

Children will:

- hear the story of Jacob and Esau.
- explore the story of Jacob and Esau through mission and service opportunities.
- discover that no matter what we do, God blesses us.
- learn that we can share God's love and bless others.

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## UNIT 3

## Missions Station

## Bible Story

Genesis 25:29-34;  
27:1-46

## Anchor Point

God blesses us.

## My Plan

- ☐ Bible Story—Blessings and Birthrights
- ☐ Bible Verse Round
- ☐ Be a Blessing All Children
- ☐ Make Blessing Bags All Children
- ☐ Make Blessing Certificates Younger Children
- ☐ Stealth Blessings Older Children
- ☐ Worship



## Station Setup

*Write the Bible verse on a large sheet of mural paper or a piece of posterboard, and hang it where the children can see it. (The LORD bless you and keep you. Numbers 6:24)*

### BIBLE STORY—BLESSINGS AND BIRTHRIGHTS

**SAY:** Our Bible story today is from the first book of the Bible.

**ASK:** What is the first book of the Bible? (*Genesis*)

**SAY:** This is a book about families and blessings. Before I tell you the story, you need to know what a birthright is. In Biblical times the oldest son often received special privileges such as being given more land than the other sons. Daughters were not given any land and had few privileges. When the father died, the oldest son became the leader of the family. This was referred to as the birthright.

- Tell the children the following story:

Esau and Jacob were the twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah. Esau was the oldest son. He was an outdoorsman who liked to hunt. Esau was big and strong and had lots of red hair. As the oldest son, Esau would receive the birthright when Isaac died.

Jacob was the younger twin. Jacob was quieter and smaller than his brother. He liked to stay at home rather than go out hunting. One day Jacob was at home making stew when Esau came home from hunting. Esau was hungry, and when he smelled the stew, he asked Jacob to give him some. Jacob saw a chance to get something from his brother and said, "I'll give you some soup if you sell me your birthright." And just like that, Esau traded his birthright for a bowl of stew that Jacob was making. That's how little he cared about it!

Now when Isaac grew old, he called Esau to him. He told Esau to go hunting and make him some food. Isaac said that after he ate the food he would give Esau his blessing.

Rebekah overheard Isaac talking to Esau. She called Jacob and told him that she would make some food for him to take to Isaac so that Jacob would receive the blessing instead of Esau. Jacob went along with Rebekah's plan. Rebekah even gave Jacob some of Esau's clothes to wear so he would smell like his brother. She put goatskin on his arms and neck so he would feel hairy like Esau.

Jacob went into Isaac's tent, gave him the food and asked for a blessing. When Isaac asked who he was, Jacob told him, "I'm Esau, your oldest son." Isaac was tricked into giving Esau's blessing to Jacob.

When Esau returned from hunting and went to Isaac, he discovered what Jacob had done. Esau was furious with Jacob. When Rebekah heard how mad Esau was, she sent Jacob away to live with her brother so he would be safe.

## BIBLE VERSE ROUND

- Show the children the Bible verse poster.
- Encourage the children to read the verse with you.

**SAY:** This verse is a blessing from the Bible.

- Divide the children into three groups. Assign each group a number: one, two, or three.

**SAY:** We're going to say the verse three more times. This time we'll say it as a round. That means each group will start and stop at different times. The second group will start after the first group says, "The Lord." The third group will start after the second group says, "The Lord." You'll need to pay attention to the others in your group so you can stay together.

- Encourage the children to say the verse three times as a round, cueing each group when to come in.

## Activity Options

*Choose from the following activities as your time and the children's interests allow.*

### BE A BLESSING—ALL CHILDREN

**Supplies:** mural paper, markers, scissors

**Before Class:** Cut a large piece of mural paper. In the center of the paper write the words, "I am blessed. I can bless others."

- Place the paper where the children will be able to write on it.

**SAY:** In our Bible story Isaac gave Jacob a blessing. A blessing is an affirmation or a way to indicate that someone is special. Blessings can be spoken like the blessing Isaac gave Jacob. Blessings can also be things that can be seen or touched, such as a certificate or even a smile. A beautiful sunrise can be a blessing. Some blessings are big and some are small. All blessings remind us that we are special and loved by God.

- Invite children to brainstorm examples of blessings they have received that made them feel loved.

**SAY:** We've received many blessings. God blesses us every day. The blessings we receive don't stop with us. We can pass those blessings on and share God's love with others. We can be blessings. It might be as simple as giving someone a hug or telling them you love them. You can be a blessing by helping someone in need. There are so many possibilities.

- Invite children to brainstorm ways that they can bless others.

### ≈ TIPS ≈

Hang the mural paper in your room.

**SAY:** You have a lot of great ideas!

- Show the children the mural paper you have prepared.

**SAY:** We're going to write your ideas on this paper. You can also draw pictures to show how you can be a blessing. You have so many great ideas that I think we can fill up this entire paper with ideas of ways to be a blessing.

- Encourage children to work together to write and draw ways they can bless others.

## MAKE BLESSING BAGS—ALL CHILDREN

**Supplies:** **Leader's Guide—p. 8**, gallon-size plastic zippered bags; scissors; transparent tape; items to fill bags: socks, nonperishable food items such as snack crackers or granola bars, toothbrushes, toothpaste, small packages of wet wipes

**Before Class:** Make copies of "Blessing Bag Labels" (p. 8).

**SAY:** Sometimes people encounter difficulties and challenges in life that make it hard for them to remember that they are blessed. People who are homeless or hungry or have lost their jobs may find it hard to remember there are people who care about them. Today we're going to make Blessing Bags. You'll take a bag home with you, and keep it in your family's car to give to someone you see who is in need.

- Show children a pair of socks.

**ASK:** How might a clean pair of socks be a blessing to someone who is homeless? *(He or she might not have money for socks. It's important to take care of your feet and keep them warm.)*

- Repeat this question for the other items that will go in the bags:
- Food items *(People who are in need are often hungry.)*
- Toothbrushes and toothpaste *(People in need cannot afford dental care. It is important to care for your teeth.)*
- Wet wipes *(These help provide a way to keep clean.)*

**SAY:** The first thing we'll do is label the bags that will hold all the items. We'll tape a blessing on each bag.

- Have the children work together to cut out the labels for the blessing bags.
- Encourage the children to tape each label onto a plastic zippered bag.

**SAY:** Now we'll fill the bags with blessings.

- Have the children work together to make piles of like items and remove any excess packaging.
- Place the items in a line on a table or on the floor. You should have six different piles: labeled bags, pairs of socks, packaged food items, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and wet wipes.

### ≈ TIPS ≈

Fill enough blessing bags so each child will have a bag to take home.

If you wish to have the items for the bags donated rather than purchase them, request donations prior to the Sunday you will be teaching this lesson.

- Have each child open a plastic bag, place one item from each pile in the bag, and reclose the bag.
- Have the children place the filled bags in a pile.

**SAY:** There are many different reasons why a person might be in need or homeless. God loves all people. We can provide reminders for people that they are loved. During our closing time today, we'll bless these bags, and then you will take a bag home.

## **MAKE BLESSING CERTIFICATES—YOUNGER CHILDREN**

**Supplies:** Leader's Guide—p. 9, crayons, rubber bands, ribbon, scissors

**Before Class:** Make copies of "Blessing Certificate" (p. 9).

**ASK:** How does it make you feel when someone tells you that you're special or that they love you?

**SAY:** It feels good to be reminded that we are loved. Today you're going to make a blessing reminder to give to someone who is special to you.

- Invite children to decide whom they will make blessing certificates for.
- Give each child a "Blessing Certificate."
- Encourage each child to fill in the name of the person he or she will give the certificate to.
- Invite each child to decorate the certificate.
- Remind each child to sign the certificate.
- Have each child roll up the certificate and secure it with a rubber band.
- Let each child cut a piece of ribbon and tie it around the certificate.

**SAY:** Remember to give your certificate to the person you made it for. It's sure to make the person feel blessed. It's good to bless other people.

## **STEALTH BLESSINGS—OLDER CHILDREN**

**Supplies:** Leader's Guide—p. 10, crayons, markers, colored pencils, scissors, tape

**Before Class:** Make copies of "Stealth Blessings" (p. 10).

**SAY:** Today we've been talking about blessings. It feels good to be reminded that God loves us and we are blessed.

**ASK:** Do you like fun surprises?

**SAY:** Today we're going to make stealth blessings. We'll leave some of them around the church for people to find as a surprise. You'll be able to take some of the blessings home so you can surprise your family and friends with them.

- Give each child a copy of “Stealth Blessings.”
- Encourage each child to decorate and cut out the hearts.
- Have the children distribute some of the blessings throughout the church where people will find them, such as in a hymnal or taped to a mirror in a bathroom. Let the children decide where to distribute the blessings.

**ASK:** How does it make you feel to leave these stealth blessings? How do you think people will feel when they discover the blessings?

- Encourage each child to take some blessings home for her or his family and friends.

## Worship

**Supplies: Leader’s Guide—p. 7,** Blessing Bags assembled earlier

**Before Class:** Make copies of the “Reproducible Family Letter” (p. 7).

**SAY:** Earlier we put together Blessing Bags containing items that would be useful to someone in need who may be homeless. Each of you will take a bag home with you. Ask your family if you can keep the bag in the family car. If you and your family are driving somewhere and you see someone who is in need, stop and give him or her a Blessing Bag. Ask an adult to help you give out the Blessing Bags. You’ll also have a letter to take home that explains the Blessing Bags.

- Hand out the Blessing Bags to the children.

**SAY:** Right now we are going to bless the Blessing Bags we have made, and we will bless you to be a blessing to others.

- Have the children hold their Blessing Bags up in the air.

**PRAY:** God, we ask your blessing on these bags. May these items help make someone’s life just a little bit better. We ask that you bless the people who will receive these bags. Surround them with your love that they may feel your presence. Bless us that we may be a blessing to others.

- Encourage the children to say, “I am blessed to be a blessing.”

**SAY:** Amen.

- Send a family letter home with each child.

# Reproducible Family Letter

Today we heard the story of Jacob and Esau and explored blessings through mission and service opportunities.

One of the projects we did today was assemble blessing bags for persons in need in our community. Each bag contains personal care items as well as other items that are useful to people who do not have a home. We have prayed over these bags, asking God to use them to bless others.

## Do This Activity at Home With Your Family

### BLESSING BAGS

Each child is bringing home a blessing bag.

If you choose to do so, add more items to the bag. Some possibilities include: gift cards for fast food restaurants or grocery stores, additional hygiene products, nonperishable food items, or a note of encouragement.

Keep the bag in your car. When you see someone on the road asking for help or money, give him or her the blessing bag from the safety of your car. Ideally, have your child give the bag to the person so that he or she can experience the act of blessing others.

God has blessed us. We hope that these bags may bless those in need throughout our community.



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## Blessing Bag Labels



We hope that the items in this bag will be a blessing to you. Know that you are special and cared about.



We hope that the items in this bag will be a blessing to you. Know that you are special and cared about.



We hope that the items in this bag will be a blessing to you. Know that you are special and cared about.



We hope that the items in this bag will be a blessing to you. Know that you are special and cared about.



## Blessing Certificate




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**you are loved by God!**

**I think you are pretty special, too!**

**Thank you for being you!**


## Stealth Blessings



God loves  
you!



The Lord bless  
you and keep you.  
Numbers 6:24




You are  
special to  
God!



Bless you!



You are  
blessed!



Have a  
fabulous  
day!

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