

date: **10/1/17****Bible Passage: Genesis 25:19–34; 27**  
(Jacob and Esau)

## God Is Lord

### REMEMBER VERSE

**Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.**  
**Psalm 90:2**

## Inspire

*Shares personal stories from fellow ministry leaders about how God has worked in their lives*

The classic hymn “It Is Well with My Soul” came from a man who understood pain. Horatio Spafford had sent his wife and four daughters ahead of him to England on a family trip. Tragically, their ship collided with another and sank in just minutes. Spafford’s wife survived, but their daughters did not.

Shortly after, Horatio sailed to meet his wife. While floating past the place where his daughters died at sea, he wrote the famous hymn. The first stanza reads:

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,  
When sorrows like sea billows roll;  
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,  
It is well, it is well with my soul.

In the midst of his darkest pain, Spafford acknowledged that he was at peace because of Christ. Though this first stanza addresses his grief, the others focus on Christ’s redemptive work on the cross. The third stanza reads:

My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!  
My sin, not in part but the whole,  
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, o my soul!

God is surely the Comforter. But the even more exciting truth is that God is bigger than our situations. He is 1

the Redeemer, the Savior, and the lover of our souls. In the midst of messy circumstances and painful relationships, even if we lose everything, God is still Lord.

*Tori Funkhouser*  
**ROCKHARBOR Church**

## Equip

*Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage*

God is Lord over everything and everyone who has ever existed or will ever exist. And He was Lord over Jacob and Esau, the sons of Isaac and Rebekah. In the culture in which Jacob and Esau lived, the birthright and the blessing were special privileges bestowed upon the oldest son. The birthright gave the oldest son the privilege of a double portion of the inheritance as well as the title of priest, judge, and leader of the family.

The blessing, on the other hand, was intangible and spiritual. The patriarch could speak the blessing only once because the words could not be undone. Because Isaac had spoken his blessing over Jacob instead of Esau, he had no blessing left when Esau begged him to “bless me—me too!” (Genesis 27:34).

The Old Testament biblical blessing was a prayer and public declaration intended to bestow upon the older son favored status with God. It was a sign of special favor meant to result in prosperity and success. Culturally, people in the Bible placed a great deal of importance upon blessings and curses. Modern readers may miss this importance.

Rebekah seemed to understand the importance of the blessing. She said she would take a curse upon herself if Isaac discovered her plan to give Jacob the blessing instead of Esau. Jacob may have also understood the spiritual significance of the blessing—more so than Esau, who in despising his birthright (Genesis 25:34) also despised his spiritual heritage.

As the story of Jacob unfolds in the following chapters of Genesis, we see a young man humbled and changed by a powerful personal encounter with God and by circumstances that force him to depend on God. Through it all, God is shaping Jacob into the kind of man He wants Jacob to be.

## Support

*Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word*

In Romans 9, Paul adds an interesting perspective to the narrative of Jacob and Esau. In verses 11–16, Paul writes, “Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God’s purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls—[Rebekah] was told, ‘The older will serve the younger.’ Just as it is written: ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.’ What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! For he says to Moses, ‘I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.’ It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God’s mercy.”

Paul reminds us in these verses that God is sovereign. The situation with Jacob doesn’t make sense; some of us may be furious with Jacob for his deceit and his treachery, and we may wonder why God would allow this imperfect man to benefit from God’s blessings. But Paul reminds us in Romans that God is in control and that<sup>2</sup>

God calls whomever He wants to call. God is merciful, and He wants us to desire Him. And, let's face it: We really can't judge Jacob too harshly. There's a little bit of Jacob in all of us.

As you lead the kids through this lesson, remind them that God is sovereign and good. God is Lord over everything, and He is Lord of our lives—even when situations are hard, when things don't make sense, and when relationships are hurtful. Offer your children grace as you pray over the difficult situations in their lives. Encourage parents to pray through the trials in their families together with their children.

## SMALL GROUP SECTION

### EXPLORE// 10 min.

Small Group Leaders

*Children engage in fun, creative activities designed to pique their curiosity about the day's portion of The Big God Story.*

## Pass It Down

Isaac's twin sons, Jacob and Esau, were very different. They even looked different. Esau was hairy, but Jacob's skin was smooth. We all have unique traits we share with our families (even if we're adopted). From our senses of humor to our eye color to the types of things we like to do in our free time, there's no mistaking that we're a part of our families! In this activity, children pass a ball in unique and fun ways.

#### SUPPLIES

- Ball (soft, small)

#### RELATE

Invite children to join you in a circle. **What physical or personal traits have people in your family passed down to you? For example, maybe you're very good at math like your dad or have green eyes like your grandma. In your family, what makes you unique from the others?** Interact with kids' responses. **We're going to play a game during which we pass a ball around the circle in unique, quirky ways.**

Start a game that involves passing a ball around the circle. During the first round, have each child pass it to the next child in the exact same way. For each round after that, direct your kids to pass around the ball in unusual ways—over the head, behind the back, under the leg, with right hand only, etc. After a couple of rounds, mix it up by allowing kids to pass the ball to anyone in the circle, not just the person next to them. Play as many rounds as time allows, changing the directions each time.

## LARGE GROUP SECTION

### DISCOVER// 30 min.

Host/Worship Leader/Storyteller

*Children participate in discovering God's Word through Bible Verse*

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*memorization, interactive storytelling techniques, and worship as response.*

## Traditions and Remember Verse

### SUPPLIES

- Mementos for your church Traditions (rocks, marbles, gum balls, etc.)
- [Remember Verse image](#) (see Resources)

### RELATE

Give the children mementos (such as rocks, marbles, or blocks) for accomplishments such as memorizing the Remember Verse or bringing their Bibles. Have them put the objects into a clear container or add them to a structure, and celebrate when it's complete.

This week's Remember Verse focuses on a character trait of God that's highlighted in today's portion of The Big God Story.

**Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. Psalm 90:2**

## Connect

Encourage the members of your community to get to know one another through engaging questions, energizing games, and creative activities.

### Question

**In your family, are you the oldest, middle, youngest, or only child? What are some good things and some difficult things about being in that place in your family?**

## The Big God Story

**Bible Passage: Genesis 25:19–34; 27**

**Storytelling Technique: Acting with Props**

**God Is Lord**

### SUPPLIES

- [Timeline image](#) (see Resources)
- [God is... images: Good; All Powerful; Beautiful; Faithful; Holy; Kind; Loving; Mighty; Wonderful; Just](#) (see Resources)
- Bibles
- Name tags (4)
- Marker
- Chair
- Faux fur (clothing or piece of fabric)
- Man's flannel shirt

**SET UP**

Write “Rebekah,” “Isaac,” “Esau,” and “Jacob” on the name tags. Place the chair at the front of the storytelling space. Set the faux fur and flannel to the side, a few feet from the chair.

**RELATE**

**I want to start out today by taking a little survey. If you have a brother or sister, stand up. If you have a good friend, stand up. Now, if you’ve ever had a disagreement with your brother, sister, or friend, keep standing. Wow! We all have something in common with the two brothers in today’s part of The Big God Story. However, what happened between them was a lot more serious than a simple argument. Have kids sit down. Today we’re going to hear about a family divided, a family that failed to trust that God is Lord. Instead, they tried to control what happened in their lives, and it didn’t turn out well. Before we begin, let’s pause and pray together.** Lead children in Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.

**Last week we heard about how God asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son Isaac. Abraham knew God well and trusted Him, so Abraham obeyed God. At the last minute God stopped Abraham from killing Isaac and provided a substitute sacrifice. Isaac grew up and married a woman named Rebekah, and she gave birth to twin boys. While she was pregnant, the twins inside her belly wrestled with each other, and Rebekah asked God, “Why is this happening to me?” (Genesis 25:22). God is Lord. He knows all things, and He knew what would happen. God told Rebekah her two sons would always fight with each other and the older one would serve the younger one.**

**Let’s turn to Genesis 25:24–26 to see what these twins were like after being born. Read verses as kids follow along. Not only did Jacob and Esau look different, but they also acted differently. Esau loved to go outside, hunt, and get dirty. Jacob was happy to stay close to home.**

**As the son born first, Esau had more privileges, money, and power in the family—this was called a birthright. But the Bible says Esau didn’t care about his birthright as firstborn. In fact, one day, Esau got so hungry he gave his birthright to Jacob in return for a bowl of stew! But Esau still had one privilege as the firstborn that was even more important than the birthright: a special blessing from his father. This blessing was different from the kind of blessing you receive at the end of every lesson. This type of blessing was a serious prayer that could only be given one time.**

Ask four volunteers to act out the narrative and give them the name tags (Rebekah, Isaac, Esau, and Jacob). Tell the actors to act out what happens, without speaking, using the props when appropriate. Have Isaac sit in the chair with Esau standing near him. Rebekah and Jacob can stand a few feet away.

Encourage children to open to Genesis 27 and follow along. **Now Isaac was very old and had gone blind. One day Rebekah overheard Isaac say to Esau, “Hunt some wild game for me. Prepare me the kind of tasty food I like and bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my blessing before I die” (verses 3–4).**

**Rebekah wanted Jacob to have the blessing instead of Esau. Instead of trusting that God is Lord and believing that God would bring about His plans for Jacob, Rebekah plotted to trick her husband Isaac into blessing Jacob instead. While Esau was out hunting, Rebekah told Jacob, “Go out to the flock and bring me two choice young goats, so I can prepare some tasty food for your father” (verse 9). Jacob did as his mother asked. Since Esau was a big, hairy man, Rebekah covered Jacob in the goatskins and one of Esau’s shirts to trick Isaac into thinking Jacob was Esau. Rebekah puts the flannel shirt on Jacob**

and places the faux fur over his arms.

**Jacob came to his father dressed in the goatskin. Isaac asked, “Who is it?” (verse 18). Jacob replied, “I am Esau your firstborn” (verse 19). Isaac felt his hairy arms to make sure. He also smelled him before asking him one more time, “Are you really my son Esau?” (verse 24). Jacob lied again and said that he was, so Isaac blessed him.**

**When Esau learned about his brother’s trick, he was furious. Esau burst out with a loud and bitter cry and said to his father, “Bless me—me too, my father!” (verse 34). But Isaac had already given the special blessing, and it could be given only once. Have actors return to their seats while everyone gives them a round of applause.**

**We might wonder why God, the ruler of all things, would let that happen. Remember, God had told Rebekah that the older child would serve the younger one. God is Lord. Nothing surprises Him. God knew all along that Jacob would be given the blessing. God had a plan for Jacob and Esau in His story. When things like this happen in our own lives, things that don’t make sense, we can remember who God is. *Tech: Cue all 10 God is... images.* God is Lord, even when you’re confused, feel alone, and can’t see His plan for your life. He’s always in charge, and He controls everything.**

**There may be times in our lives when we experience pain. But we can trust God because of all of the things we know to be true about Him. God is always good. When we face hard times we don’t understand, we can pray and ask God to help us trust Him. The better we know God, the easier it becomes to trust Him. We can always know that His plans are best. Share a story of a time you trusted God’s control of your life during a hard situation.**

## SMALL GROUP SECTION

# RESPOND// 15 min.

Small Group Leaders

*Children reflect on what the Holy Spirit is teaching them and respond through creative activities and games.*

## Reflect: God Is Lord

Encourage the kids to open their Bibles and read the suggested passages.

### Questions for Younger Kids

- **What did God tell Rebekah while she was still pregnant?** Genesis 25:23
- **What is a *blessing*?**
- **Why was the blessing so important?** Genesis 27:28–29
- **Why did Isaac bless Jacob instead of Esau?** Genesis 27:19–24
- **Did Esau want the blessing?** Genesis 27:34

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## Questions for Older Kids

- **What did God tell Rebekah while she was still pregnant? Why is this important?** Genesis 25:22–23
- **What was so special about being the firstborn son?**
- **What is a *blessing*?**
- **Why was the blessing so important?** Genesis 27:28–29
- **How do we know the promise God made to Abraham also applied to Isaac?** Genesis 26:3–5
- **One of the promises God made to Abraham was that through his descendants, the whole world would be blessed. How do you and I benefit from this blessing?**

## BLESS// 5 min.

Small Group Leaders

*Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing may be prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.*

### SUPPLIES

- [Psalm 47 Call-and-Response template](#) (see Resources)
- [Remember Verse cards](#) (see Resources)
- Bible

### PREPARE AHEAD

Print a copy of the Psalm 47 Call-and-Response template for each child.

### RELATE

Encourage the children to hold their hands in front of them, palms up. This posture symbolizes a willingness of heart to respond to God's Holy Spirit and receive what God has for them. Invite them to remain in this posture as you bless them.

Today your children will have the opportunity to participate in the time of blessing by reading lines of response after the leader. Pass out the copies of the *Psalm 47 Call-and-Response* template, and encourage the children to follow along so they know when it's their turn to say a line.

Open a Bible and lead the kids in the following call-and-response reading of Psalm 47:

Leader: **Clap your hands, all you nations;**

Children: Shout to God with cries of joy.

Leader: **For the LORD Most High is awesome,**

Children: The great King over all the earth.

Leader: **He subdued nations under us, peoples under our feet.**

Children: He chose our inheritance for us, the pride of Jacob, whom he loved.

Leader: **God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the LORD amid the sounding of trumpets.**

Children: Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.

Leader: **For God is the King of all the earth;**

Children: Sing to him a psalm of praise.

Leader: **God reigns over the nations;**

Children: God is seated on his holy throne.

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Leader: **The nobles of the nations assemble as the people of the God of Abraham,**

Children: For the kings of the earth belong to God;

Everyone together: **[God] is greatly exalted.**

Close your time by blessing the entire group:

**May you know that God is Lord over all things, including your life. May you know His presence each day.**