



Shabbat Table Talk Page

General Questions:

- What's the *name* of this week's Torah reading? (Toldot / תולדות)
- What does the Hebrew name *mean*? ("generations")
- Which chapters of the Torah are included in the reading? (Gen. 25-28)
- What are some of the main events? (Rebekah's pregnancy; the birth of Esau/Jacob; Esau sells his birthright; God blesses Isaac; Isaac blesses Jacob; Jacob flees to Haran)



Specific Questions:

- How long did Isaac and Rebekah have to wait before they had children? (20 years)
 - Why do you think God made them wait so long? (God wanted their prayers)
 - What was strange about Rebekah's pregnancy? (warfare between two divided nations)
 - Who were her twin sons? Who was born first? (Esau/Jacob; Esau was first)
- What does the word "Esau" (עֵשָׂו) mean? ("completely made," from *asah* [עָשָׂה], "to make")
- What does the word "Jacob" (יַעֲקֹב) mean? ("grappler of the heel [עָקַב]")
- What did Esau grow up to be? (a hunter (צֹדֵד) who lived in fields)
- What did Jacob grow up to be? (a man who studied Torah in tents of learning [אֵשֶׁת אֱלֹהִים])
- Whom did Isaac prefer and why? (Esau, because he was first born, "bechor")
- Whom did Rebekah prefer and why? (Jacob, because he was the child God prophesied would become chosen)
- Why was Jacob cooking soup? (Abraham had died that day and was preparing a meal for his bereaved father; Esau had been out hunting as usual)
- What did Esau give in exchange for a bowl of bean soup? (his birthright)
- What did Rebekah tell Jacob to do in order to get the blessing from Isaac?
- To whose house did Rebekah send Jacob after he fled from Esau? (to her brother Laban, who lived in Haran)

Some Discussion Ideas:

- Why couldn't Isaac see? (midrash: tears of the angels during the Akedah; prejudice that only the firstborn should receive the blessing; etc.)
- Why didn't Isaac believe his wife Rebekah? Was Rebekah justified in deceiving her husband?
- Why do Jews serve beans during the mourning period?
- What inspires you about the events recorded in this portion?
- Where do you see Yeshua in this week's Torah portion?