

The Real Housewives OF THE BIBLE



PART 1: REBEKAH

Dishonesty always reaps distress. Mistakes made by mothers seem to be particularly deadly, because they are trusted so instinctively. Mothers are meant to be the guardians and restorers of relationships within a family. Rebekah abdicated that responsibility by setting deceitful havoc in motion, forcing circumstances to fit her wishes. Her entire family suffered the ill effects, and Rebekah lost much more than she gained. Her example reminds us of the pain we can inflict on our children with “too much mothering.” Her example warns us of the dangers of running ahead of God, not waiting for Him to act.

BIG IDEA: *Those you love may suffer when you insist on your own plans.*

Isaac was the miracle son born to Abraham and Sarah in their old age. Isaac married Rebekah. She was greatly loved by her young husband. She gave birth to twin boys, Jacob and Esau. Favoritism became a problem within the family. Isaac was drawn to the firstborn son Esau; Rebekah loved Jacob better.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Did your mother or father speak a blessing over you—offer a prayer on your behalf, serve a special meal, present you with a family heirloom—to launch you into the world? How might such an event impact a person’s life?
2. Rebekah was so in control she was out of control! What have you observed about people with control issues—their motives, their methods, and their results? In light of Rebekah’s personality, how would you differentiate between these words: control & manipulation? Confidence & arrogance? Determination & obsession? What areas of your life might benefit from less control on your part and more control of the Holy Spirit?
3. *With your Bible or the Bible App, read the account of this family in Genesis 25:19-28.*

This is the account of the family of Isaac, the son of Abraham. When Isaac was forty years old, he married Rebekah. Isaac pleaded with the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was unable to have children. The Lord answered Isaac’s prayer, and Rebekah became pregnant with twins. But the two children struggled with each other in her womb. So she went to ask the Lord about it. “Why is this happening to me?” she asked. And the Lord told her, “The sons in your womb will become two nations. From the very beginning, the two nations will be rivals. One nation will be stronger than the other; and your older son will serve your younger son.” And when the time came to give birth, Rebekah discovered that she did indeed have twins! The first one was very red at birth and covered with thick hair like a fur coat. So they named him Esau. Then the other twin was born with his hand grasping Esau’s heel. So they named him Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when the twins were born. As the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter. He was an outdoorsman, but Jacob had a quiet temperament, preferring to stay at home. Isaac loved Esau because he enjoyed eating the wild game Esau brought home, but Rebekah loved Jacob. Genesis 25:19-28

4. What special information had the Lord revealed to Rebekah?
5. What may have been her reasons for favoring Jacob?
6. There was another reason why Esau had proven to be a disappointing son for Rebekah. What was that? (Genesis 26:34-35)
7. According to Old Testament law, the eldest son rightfully inherited the family birthright and blessing. Though Rebekah had the promise of God’s word (that in this case, the older would serve the younger), she seemed to feel constrained to help God fulfill His plan. Read Genesis 27 and observe the part Rebekah played in helping Jacob cheat his brother out of his blessing. What was her role in this devious plan? (Genesis 27:5-17)



8. Do you think Rebekah carefully conceived her deception of Isaac in advance or overheard her husband talking with Esau and made a sudden decision to intervene? Had Rebekah *not* taken matters into her own hands, what might have happened? If you've ever tried to help God, what was the result?
9. What was the result of Rebekah's deceit in the experience of the family? (Genesis 27:41-43)
10. How might Rebekah have avoided the estrangement between her children?

MOVING FORWARD

Rebekah had been chosen to fill a sacred spot in Isaac's life. When he lost his mother Sarah, the presence of his wife comforted him (Genesis 24:67). Perhaps the young bride was homesick and discouraged about the expectation to live up to the legendary Sarah. Like her mother-in-law, she did not become pregnant until the Lord took away her barrenness. Her mothering was marred by playing favorites.



Whatever her reason for sowing conflict and friction in her family, Rebekah helped to rip up relationships and to bring sadness that lasted for years.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

As wives and mothers, we are often greatly tempted to try to force another person's life to fit our preconceived notions of what is best. Take a few minutes to reflect on ways in which this possibility might evidence itself in your life and family. What comes to mind? What command does God give us when we are tempted to take matters into our own hands (Proverbs 3:3-6)?

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:3-6

