

A Good Shepherd
Sacred Story

Birth of Twins

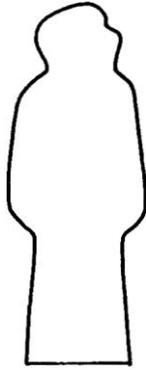
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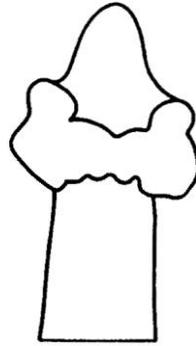
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BIRTH OF TWINS MATERIALS

- small wicker basket to hold:
 - wooden figure of Isaac
 - wooden figure of Rebekah holding twins



Isaac



THE BIRTH OF TWINS GENESIS 25:19-27

ACTIONS

After speaking, stand up and go to the shelf. Carrying the story with both hands, walk back to the circle.

After speaking, allow 10-15 seconds of silence while you reverently touch one of the wooden pieces to center yourself and the children.

Place the Isaac figure in center front of you.

Sadly shake your head.

Fold your hands in prayer and look up.

Nod your head and smile.

Place the Rebekah figure next to the Isaac figure.

Hold up one finger. Then touch your hair.

Hold up two fingers. Then reach down and take hold of your heel.

WORDS

Watch carefully where I go to get this story so you will know where to find it if you choose to make this your work today or another day.

All of the words to this story are inside me. Will you please make silence with me so I can find all the words to my story?

The baby named laughter, Isaac, grew to be a man of God.

He married a young woman named Rebekah.

Like Sarah, Rebekah could not have children for a long time.

Then Isaac prayed to God. Isaac asked God to remember Rebekah and give her a child.

God did remember Rebekah and she did become pregnant.

When it was time for the baby to be born Rebekah had twin boys.

The first twin born had a lot of bright, red hair so they named him Esau.

The second twin was born holding onto his brother's heel. They named him Jacob.

Isaac was sixty years old when his twin sons were born.

Important things happened with the twins, but that is another story.

WONDERING QUESTIONS:

I wonder what Isaac said when he prayed for Rebekah to have a baby?

I wonder what color hair Jacob had?

I wonder if Isaac and Rebekah laughed when their babies were born like Abraham and Sarah did?

Place the wooden figures back in the story basket one at a time.

Watch carefully how I put this away so you will know how to work with these materials if you choose to make this your story today, or another day.

After speaking, stand and carry the basket back to its shelf. Return to the circle.

Watch carefully where I put this story so you will know where to find it if you decide to make this your work today or another day.

Dismiss the children to their work, ONLY when everyone has chosen their work for the day.

It's time to choose what you will do for your work today. Remember, if you paint, you must have a smock. Let's begin.

BIRTH OF TWINS TEACHER HELPS

The emphasis of this story is that God chose to intervene in the lives of Isaac and Rebekah with the birth of Jacob and Esau. We are told in Genesis 25: 11 that after Abraham died God blessed Abraham's son, Isaac. God's promise to Abraham was continued through his son. Again, we find the promise of a great nation put in the womb of a barren woman.

In this story there is not the amount of disbelief put into the characters of Isaac and Rebekah as there was in Abraham and Sarah. Of course, they didn't wait as long, either. Isaac prayed to Yahweh to give Rebekah a child and the Lord granted his prayer.

But even during the pregnancy Rebekah was aware of something unusual about her unborn children. The words the Lord gave her when she asked about her concern were not comforting. Yahweh told her that there were two nations growing inside her and that they would be separate empires. The unusual thing was that the older child would serve the younger.

We do not share this part of the story with the children at this time. In later stories, as these events transpire, they will be made known to the children.

When the children are born, Esau is first. He is red and hairy. The name Esau is a play on the words "Edom" and "Seir", both referring to a region and the people therein. Jacob, born second, is called a "heel grabber". From the beginning, Jacob was anxious to try to get that which belonged to Esau.

We stop the story at this point. But we suggest the next story told is that of the sold birthright and stolen blessing. Our objective in this story has been accomplished. The covenant is made sure once the children are born. The stories that follow stand on their own.

The first wondering question will give the children an opportunity to think about the prayer Isaac prayed when he asked God to give Rebekah a baby. Encourage their imaginative answers by having them suggest one or two words Isaac might have used. Don't be surprised if young children bring up "please" or "I really want" as some of their phrases.

The second question talks about Jacob's hair color. Since much is made in the story of the color of Esau's hair, it is fun to wonder what color hair Jacob had. It probably wasn't red, because we most likely would have been told that. Often children will respond by naming their own hair color or, in this case, that of a sibling.

Our story of "The Baby Named Laughter" sets the stage for loving, excited parents. Most young children respond to the third wondering question by saying, "Yes, the parents of the twins were as excited as the parents of Isaac." Some children may say that the parents were surprised because there were two babies. Those with twins in their family may say that the parents knew they would be tired or have a lot of work to do. The intent of this question is to encourage children to understand that babies are much loved and much wanted in this world, both now and in the time of Isaac. Even though, as adults, we know this is not always the case, I believe it is very reassuring for children to understand that babies in families are a cause for celebration and joy.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR OLDER CHILDREN:

Even though the brothers in this story were twins they were obviously very different. Think about the twins you know. Do they act alike or different? Is it easier to tell them apart by how they look or by how they act?

In this story Isaac prayed and God remembered Rebekah and gave her the babies. Do we have to pray for God to remember us? Does God ever forget us?

What is your favorite story about you when you were a brand new baby? Was there something special about your birth? Share your story with the rest of the class, if you like.