

Daily devotions for 2019



**Day 11**  
Jacob, part 1

### **What's in a name?**

Genesis 25 v19-34 and 27 v1-29

*“After this his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau’s heel, so he was named Jacob”*  
Genesis 25 v26

The story so far – Abraham, ‘Father of many’, had one son, Isaac – ‘laughter’ – born late in life to his barren wife. Now Isaac’s elderly barren wife is pregnant with twins ‘jostling’ each other in the womb and fighting to be first to emerge.

Esau, ‘the hairy one’, wins the battle but hot on his heels and holding on tight was Jacob, ‘the heel-grasper’ – a Hebrew idiom meaning deceiver or trickster. Nice name!

Rebekah, the mother, had been told by God (possibly when she was groaning at the non-stop jostling!) that there were two nations in her womb and that the older would serve the younger. But how could God be right when the firstborn inherited everything and Isaac, the father, loved Esau more? Maybe Rebekah decided she needed to give God a helping hand by feeding Jacob with stories of this prophesy or maybe Jacob was jealous of Esau’s relationship with Isaac and all the benefits of getting out first. Whatever the case, Jacob tricked Esau into handing over his birthright and later, on Rebekah’s instructions, shamelessly lied and deceived his elderly father to get the firstborn’s blessing – living up to his name!

God had the plan in hand. Was Rebekah afraid God might be wrong so took action herself? Do we do this sometimes? Jacob lived up to his name as it was what was expected of him. What ‘names’ or expectations do we live up to or allow to define us?

### **Prayer**

Dear Father, Thank you that you have a plan and purpose for each of us. Help us to trust that you have it all in hand. Amen.