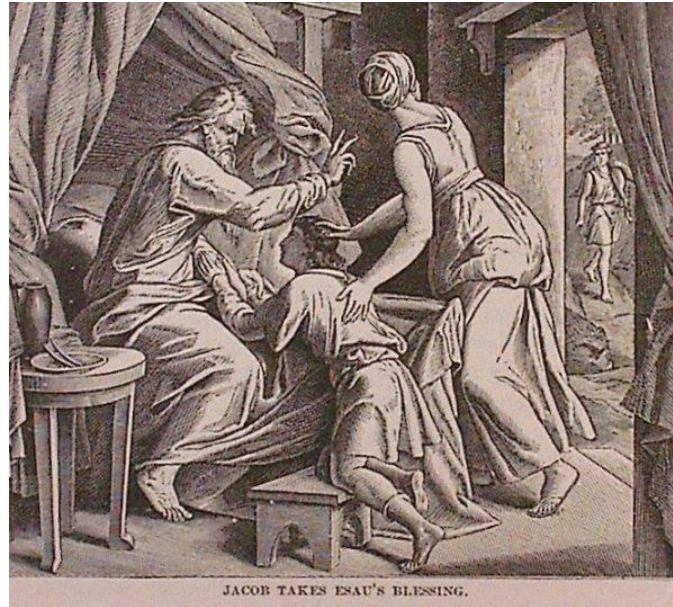


Conflict Resolution



Esau and Jacob

“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vain glory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (1 John 2:16), and “Whence come wars and whence come fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your pleasures that war in your members?” (James 4:1).

Esau and Jacob were two brothers, twins, whose life is filled with Conflict, and more times than not, without successful Resolutions. Nevertheless, the scriptures allow the reader to learn lessons that will assist a diligent learner of the scriptures to avoid like situations. Our consideration in this segment will delve into the physical scenario surrounding the conferring of Esau’s sold birthright upon Jacob.

“And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his elder son, and said unto him, My son. And he said unto him, Here am I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death. Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me venison. And make me savory food, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat. That my soul may bless thee

before I die. And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it. And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying, Bring me venison, and make me savory food, that I may eat, and bless thee before Jehovah before my death. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats. And I will make them savory food for thy father, such as he loveth. And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, so that he may bless thee before his death. And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man. My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver. And I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing. And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son. Only obey my voice, and go fetch me them. And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother. And his mother made savory food, such as his father loved. And Rebekah took the goodly garments of Esau her elder son, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son. And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck. And she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob. And he came unto his father, and said, My father. And he said, Here am I. Who art thou, my son? And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy first-born; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because Jehovah thy God sent me good speed. And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not. And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father. And he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands. So he blessed him. And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am. And he said, Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought it near to him, and

he did eat. And he brought him wine, and he drank. And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. And he came near, and kissed him. And he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which Jehovah hath blessed. And God give thee of the dew of heaven, And of the fatness of the earth, And plenty of grain and new wine. Let peoples serve thee, And nations bow down to thee. Be lord over thy brethren, And let thy mother's sons bow down to thee. Cursed be every one that curseth thee, And blessed be every one that blesseth thee” (Genesis 27:1–29).

As can be readily seen, there’s a lot of wrong going on. Didn’t Esau swear to sell his birthright, and agree to the price? As a profane person, i.e., “From profanes, “before (i.e. outside) the temple, therefore unholy, polluted, secular” (ISBE), did Esau Isaac would not have agreed to the transactions? Which may have been the thinking of Rebekah, and Jacob as they found it necessary to deceive Isaac to accomplish the desired end: so many unanswered questions.

We are not told how many years had passed between the Esau selling his birthright and the conferring, but some time had passed. The twins were past their fortieth year, as Esau had taken two wives from among the Hittites, which was “a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah” (Genesis 26:34–35), and to add insult to injury, “Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Paddan–aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father. And take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a company of peoples. And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee. That thou mayest inherit the land of thy sojournings, which God gave unto Abraham. And Isaac sent away Jacob. And he went to Paddan–aram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother. Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan–aram, to take him a wife from thence. And that as he blessed him he

gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Paddan-aram. And Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father. And Esau went unto Ishmael, and took, besides the wives that he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth, to be his wife" (Genesis 28:1-10).

As sin bears its fruit, so it did with Esau. He sold his birthright, but once it was gone, Esau, "afterward desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place for a change of mind in his father, though he sought is diligently with tears" (Hebrews 12:17). Actions, oaths, and decisions have consequences. Even though, as Isaac said, "Thy brother came with guile, and hath taken away thy blessing," Isaac's conveying of the birthright and the blessing was final.

The fruit of the conflict: "And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob. And the words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah. And she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice. And arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran. And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away. Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him. Then I will send, and fetch thee from thence. Why should I be bereaved of you both in one day? (Genesis 27:41-45). In our next segment: The Resolution.