

Esau Planned to Kill Jacob

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain how God made it clear to both Abraham and Isaac through whom the line of Christ would come. In our topic today, we will see the anger of Esau when he found out that Jacob had been given the blessing instead of him.

In Genesis 27:30-36, we read, “Now it happened, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. He also had made savory food, and brought it to his father, and said to his father, ‘Let my father arise and eat of his son’s game, that your soul may bless me.’ And his father Isaac said to him, ‘Who *are* you?’ So he said, ‘I *am* your son, your firstborn, Esau.’ Then Isaac trembled exceedingly, and said, ‘Who? Where *is* the one who hunted game and brought *it* to me? I ate all *of it* before you came, and I have blessed him—and indeed he shall be blessed.’ When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, ‘Bless me—me also, O my father!’ But he said, ‘Your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing.’ And *Esau* said, ‘Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright, and now look, he has taken away my blessing!’ And he said, ‘Have you not reserved a blessing for me?’” In these verses, we see what happened when Esau came to his father with his savory stew.

Esau probably brought the savory stew to his father with great happiness because he thought he was going to receive the blessing. When he came to the tent of his father, he asked his father to come and eat that stew and then give him the blessing. Suddenly, that happiness was totally changed. His father asked him the question, “Who *are* you?” He immediately replied that he was Esau, the firstborn son of Isaac. Suddenly, his father began to tremble and shake. He asked a second time, “Who?” Then, Isaac realized what had happened. He now understood why the voice had sounded like Jacob. He knew immediately that the voice had sounded like Jacob because it was indeed Jacob. Isaac then said, “Where *is* the one who hunted game and brought *it* to me?” Esau learned that his father had already received a savory stew and that Isaac had eaten it. Then, Esau heard words that changed his happiness to fear and anger. Isaac said, “I have blessed him—and indeed he shall be blessed.” Esau immediately knew that Jacob had brought his father a savory stew and that his father had eaten that stew.

In addition, his father had given the blessing to Jacob and now said that Jacob was the one who would be blessed. Isaac realized that he had been wrong to try to give the blessing to Esau because God had said, in Genesis 25:23, “And the LORD said to her: ‘Two nations *are* in your womb, two peoples shall be separated from your body; *one* people shall be stronger than the other, and the older shall serve the younger.’” Isaac had tried to give the blessing to Esau because Esau was his oldest son. However, Isaac saw that God had promised that blessing to Jacob, Now, Isaac realized that God had caused him to give the blessing to Jacob so he said Jacob would certainly have that blessing. Isaac said that Jacob had come with deceit and had taken away the blessing of Esau. Esau said “Jacob” was certainly the name that fit Jacob because that name means *supplanter* and that is what Jacob had done two different times. Then, he said that

Jacob had taken away his birthright. Here, we see that Esau had deceived himself. He had sold the birthright to Jacob for a bowl of stew because he did not want the spiritual leadership in the family. However, he did want the blessing, and now, Jacob had taken that also. As a result, Esau asked his father if his father had another blessing for him.

Genesis 27:37-40 says, “Then Isaac answered and said to Esau, ‘Indeed I have made him your master, and all his brethren I have given to him as servants; with grain and wine I have sustained him. What shall I do now for you, my son?’ And Esau said to his father, ‘Have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me—me also, O my father!’ And Esau lifted up his voice and wept. Then Isaac his father answered and said to him: ‘Behold, your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, And of the dew of heaven from above. By your sword you shall live, And you shall serve your brother; And it shall come to pass, when you become restless, That you shall break his yoke from your neck.’” Esau wanted to know if his father had another blessing for him, but Isaac first told him what he had said in the blessing he gave to Jacob.

In the blessing Isaac had given to Jacob, he had said that Jacob would be the master over his brothers and that all of his brothers would be his servants. Isaac had also said that the crops of Jacob would be blessed. Then, Isaac asked Esau, “What shall I do now for you, my son?” Isaac felt that he had given the complete blessing to Jacob, and he now asked Esau what he could give to him. Esau did not like what he heard when he heard how his father had blessed Jacob. He felt that his father could also give him a different blessing. As a result, we see that Esau answered his father, “Have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me—me also, O my father!” Isaac did give a blessing, but it did not reverse the blessing that he had given to Jacob. Isaac then said that Esau would receive the blessing that would be provided by the earth. He would live in a place where the land was fertile but not like the land that Jacob received. That land would be watered by the dew, that came during the night, so there would be food for his animals. His crops would also be watered by the dew. This meant that he would experience some blessings.

However, the blessing Isaac gave to Esau also said that Esau would live by the sword and that he would serve his brother. The fact that he would live by the sword meant that he would frequently fight with others. Then, Isaac said, in this blessing, that Esau would serve his brother. This part of the blessing was the part that Esau really hated because it did not undo what Isaac had said to Jacob in his blessing when he said Jacob would be the master of his brethren and that his mother’s sons would bow down to him. Esau became filled with bitterness at the thought of bowing down to his brother. Hebrews 12:15-17 says, “Looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there *be* any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.” Here, we see that bitterness took root in the life of Esau. That was the reason he could not inherit the blessing, because there was no repentance in his life. He was told that the day would come when he would finally break off this yoke and no longer serve his brother.

However, Esau was not happy with that blessing. Genesis 27:41-46 says, “So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, ‘The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob.’ And the words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah. So she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said to

him, ‘Surely your brother Esau comforts himself concerning you *by intending* to kill you. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice: arise, flee to my brother Laban in Haran. And stay with him a few days, until your brother’s fury turns away, until your brother’s anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereaved also of you both in one day?’ And Rebekah said to Isaac, ‘I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these *who are* the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?’” Here, we see that Esau became filled with hatred toward his brother because of that root of bitterness.

He immediately began to plan to murder his brother because of that hatred. He felt that his father would soon die and that once his father died, he would kill his brother. He must have talked to others about his plans because his mother heard that he planned to kill Jacob. As a result, Rebekah sent a messenger to get Jacob and tell him what Esau had decided to do. From what we read, we see that his way of comforting himself was to think about what he would do to Jacob after their father died. Here, we see that when people are bitter, the thought of taking revenge brings comfort to those who are planning the revenge. That is why Jeremiah 17:9 says, “The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked; Who can know it?”

Rebekah had a plan to protect Jacob that she suggested to him. She told him to flee to the home of her brother, Laban, in Haran so that he would be a long distance away and Esau would not be able to find him. She said that he could stay there for a few days until the anger of Esau had passed away. She said that once Esau forgot his anger, she would send a message to him so he could return home. She did not want to have both of her sons killed. The reason she spoke about both of them being killed was due to the fact that if Esau killed Jacob, some relative would avenge that murder by killing Esau and she would lose both of her sons. That message never came from Rebekah to Jacob, even though Jacob spent twenty years in Haran.

Rebekah also had to get Isaac to agree to let Jacob go. However, she gave Isaac a different reason to send Jacob to the house of Laban in Haran. In this way, she also chose to deceive her husband again. Instead of telling Isaac about the plan of Esau to kill Jacob, she told Isaac that the wives of Esau were causing her to experience grief so she did not want Jacob to also marry a wife from the Hittites. She said that then her life would not be worth living. Again, one of the things that we see is that when we tell lies, it leads to more lies. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn the importance of speaking the truth in their own lives and also help them learn to teach others the importance of speaking the truth. Ephesians 4:15 says, “But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ.” Here, we see that speaking the truth in love is a key part of our spiritual growth. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children show others the importance of speaking the truth.