

Breathing room



Very nice picture of a family. The children look close together in age, so I imagine there is the usual wrangling over possessions, money and possessions, etc.. Truthfully, every family is a little different and each one has its own strengths and weakness. I have always enjoyed the story of Esau

and Jacob (listed according to age) because it gives insight to what can really happen in family dynamics.

Genesis 25:28-34 Complete Apostles' Bible

(28) And Isaac loved Esau, because his venison was his food, but Rebecca loved Jacob.

(29) And Jacob cooked a stew, and Esau came from the plain, and he was weary.

(30) And Esau said to Jacob, Let me taste of that red stew, because I am fainting; therefore his name was called Edom.

(31) And Jacob said to Esau, Sell me this day your birthright.

(32) And Esau said, Behold, I am going to die, and for what good does this birthright belong to me?

(33) And Jacob said to him, Swear to me this day; and he swore to him; and

Esau sold his birthright to Jacob.

(34) And Jacob gave bread to Esau, and a stew of lentiles; and he ate and drank, and he arose and departed; thus Esau despised his birthright.

Genesis 27:1-41 Complete Apostles' Bible

(1) And it came to pass after Isaac was old, that his eyes were dimmed so that he could not see; and he called Esau, his older son, and said to him, My son; and he said, Behold, I am here.

(2) And he said, Behold, I have grown old, and know not the day of my death.

(3) Now then take the weapons, both your quiver and your bow, and go into the plain, and get me some venison,

(4) and prepare some meats for me, as I like them, and bring them to me that I may eat, that my soul may bless you before I die.

(5) And Rebecca heard Isaac speaking to Esau his son; and Esau went to the plain to procure venison for his father.

(6) And Rebecca said to Jacob her younger son, Behold, I heard your father speaking to Esau your brother, saying,

(7) Bring me some venison, and prepare some meats for me, that I may eat and bless you before the Lord, before I die.

(8) Now then, my son, listen to me, as I command you.

(9) Go now to the cattle and bring me from there two choice kids, tender and good, and I will prepare the meats for your father, as he likes.

(10) And you shall bring them in to your father, and he shall eat, that your father may bless you before he dies.

(11) And Jacob said to his mother Rebecca, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth-skinned man.

(12) Perhaps my father may feel me, and I shall be before him as one ill-intentioned, and I shall bring upon me a curse, and not a blessing.

(13) And his mother said to him, On me be your curse, my son; only listen to my voice, and go and bring them for me.

(14) So he went and took and brought them to his mother; and his mother prepared the meats, as his father liked them.

(15) And Rebecca, having taken the fine clothing of her elder son Esau which was with her in the house, put it on Jacob her younger son.

(16) And she put on his arms the skins of the kids of the goats, and on the bare parts of his neck.

(17) And she gave the meats, and the loaves which she had prepared, into the hands of Jacob her son.

(18) And he brought them to his father, and said, Father; and he said, Behold I am here; who are you, son?

(19) And Jacob said to his father, I, Esau your firstborn, have done as you told me: come, sit and eat of my venison, that your soul may bless me.

(20) And Isaac said to his son, What is this which you have quickly found?

And he said, That which the Lord your God presented before me.

(21) And Isaac said to Jacob, Come close to me, and I will feel you, son, if you are my son Esau or not.

(22) And Jacob came close to his father Isaac, and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.

(23) And he knew him not, for his hands were as the hands of his brother Esau, hairy; and he blessed him,

(24) and he said, Are you my son Esau? And he said, I am.

(25) And he said, Bring it near to me, and I will eat of your venison, my son, that my soul may bless you. And he brought it near to him, and he ate, and he brought him wine, and he drank.

(26) And Isaac his father said to him, Come close to me, and kiss me, my son.

(27) And he came close and kissed him, and smelled the smell of his garments, and blessed him, and said, Behold, the smell of my son is as the

smell of an abundant field, which the Lord has blessed.

(28) And may God give you of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, and abundance of grain and wine.

(29) And let nations serve you, and princes bow down to you, and be master over your brother, and the sons of your father shall reverence you; accursed is he that curses you, and blessed is he that blesses you.

(30) And it came to pass after Isaac had ceased blessing his son Jacob, just when Jacob had gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

(31) And he also had prepared meats and brought them to his father; and he said to his father, Let my father arise and eat of his son's venison, that your soul may bless me.

(32) And Isaac his father said to him, Who are you? And he said, I am Esau, your firstborn son.

(33) And Isaac was amazed with very great amazement, and said, Who then

is it that has procured venison for me and brought it to me? And I have eaten all of it before you came, and I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed.

(34) And it came to pass when Esau heard the words of his father Isaac, he cried out with a great and very bitter cry, and said, Bless me -- me also, father!

(35) And he said to him, Your brother has come with subtlety, and has taken your blessing.

(36) And he said, Rightly was his name called Jacob, for behold, this second time has he supplanted me; he has both taken my birthright, and now he has taken my blessing! And Esau said to his father, Have you not a blessing left for me, father?

(37) And Isaac answered and said to Esau, If I have made him your master, and have made all his brethren his servants, and have strengthened him with grain and wine, what then shall I do for you, son?

(38) And Esau said to his father, Have you only one blessing, father? Bless me -- me also, O my father! And Isaac being troubled, Esau cried aloud and wept.

(39) And 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.

(40) And you shall live by your sword, and shall serve your brother; and there shall be a time when you shall break and loosen his yoke from off your neck.

(41) And Esau was angry with Jacob because of the blessing, with which his father blessed him; and Esau said in his mind, Let the days of my father's mourning draw near, that I may kill my brother Jacob.

I know its a long series of verses, but what happened? The older son was loved by the father for his lifestyle and the younger by the mother. Instead of treating them equally, there was favoritism; this led to a world of trouble.

Jacob tricked his brother out of his birthright as the oldest (Gen. 25) and then with the encouragement of his mother tricked his father into giving him the preferential fatherly blessing (Gen. 27). The unfortunate reality is that this sort of manipulation happens all too often and causes bad feelings for many years. So it was then and now. I bet there are a few of you out there who would disagree with the last two sentences, so I would ask you to once again focus your attention on the picture above. Notice that the mother is sitting on someone (probably the oldest child) and that says a great deal. All children are different and my guess is this one was the underdog in the family (whether actually deserved or not) and therefore put down at every opportunity. Give the kid a break and a little breathing room; it may just solve a lot of problems. As far as Issac and Rebecca go, they just needed to work out their difference without involving the kids; end of story!