

Your Brother Esau Wants to Kill You, Flee at Once to My Brother Laban in Haran

27: 41-45

DIG: What was Rebekah afraid of? Were her fears justified? What was her plan? What would have happened to Esau if he would have killed his brother? When would she see Jacob again? Why?

REFLECT: When have you held a long-term grudge? If that person is a believer are you taking communion in an unworthy manner (First Corinthians 11:18)? Are you still holding on to it? How has it affected you? How has it affected those around you?

Esau's complaints and tears had then turned into hatred for his brother. There was no genuine repentance in him. Therefore, he held a grudge against Jacob (Hebrew: Ya'akov) because of the blessing his father had given him. Then he made a resolution. Expecting his father to die soon, he said to himself: The days of mourning for my father are near (27:2), although Isaac would live for another forty-three years. Then, he vowed, I will kill my brother Jacob. To him, life was not worth living if he could not get rid of Jacob. His threatening words were overheard and brought to his mother's attention. When Rebekah was told what her older son Esav had said, she once again took action (27:5-13). She sent for her younger son Ya'akov and said to him: Your brother Esau is consoling himself with the thought of killing you (27:41-42).

Here again, we see Rebekah quickly taking things into her own hands when she said: Now then, my son, do what I say to you: Flee at once to my brother Laban in Haran (27:43). This is a distance of four hundred and fifty miles, a very long distance by camel in those days. So she would have to lose Jacob to save him. She instructed: Stay with him for a while until your brother's fury subsides (27:44). Knowing what a hothead Esav was, she assumed his anger would quickly pass away and Ya'akov could soon return.

When your brother is no longer angry with you and forgets what you did to him . . . indicates that she knew it would take time for the wound to heal. She was correct in assuming that eventually Esau would prosper materially and would be forgiving toward his brother Jacob (33:1-16). I'll send for you to come back from there. But this will never happen because she will die before this could take place. Her fear was this: Why should I lose both of you in one day (27:45)? If Esav had killed his brother, he would have had to be executed according to God's covenant with Noah. Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of Elohim had God made man (Genesis 9:6, and also see Second Samuel 14:6-7).