

March 27th

A SON'S DEMISE PART TWO

“And Jacob lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, Esau was coming, and four hundred men with him. So he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two female servants. And he put the servants with their children in front, then Leah with her children, and Rachel and Joseph last of all. He himself went on before them, bowing himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. But Esau ran to meet him and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.”

Genesis 33:1-4

“The Prodigal Son. A story that transcends time. Two sons. Two brothers. One father. You don't get much information about the prodigal's attitude toward the older brother. But you do get from the older brother how he sees his younger brother. The oldest can't even bring himself to call him his brother. Instead, he states in his anger, “But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!” Anger and resentment. Jealousy and pride. You may have a brother, sister, son, or daughter that is a prodigal. These realities bring deep wounds to family and friends. Esau and Jacob are no different. When we left Esau yesterday, we unpacked the ugly truth that it was his family that pursued Jesus to kill Him as a baby. Is there anything in Esau's life that shows any sign of redemption? What can his story teach us about forgiveness and second chances?

Esau's story offers a glimpse from the Old Testament on family strife, bitterness, forgiveness, and redemption. It had been twenty years since Jacob left Isaac. Now as he was returning, he knew that he would have to face Esau. To make restitution for stealing the blessing from Esau, Jacob offers him over five hundred livestock. He seems quite nervous that Esau is bringing four hundred men with him to make good on his promise to end Jacob's life. But God. We see another action that completely baffles Jacob. Esau runs to see his brother and embraces him! Wow, what a turnaround because of God's grace! There's never a guarantee that time passed dissolves deep held grudges. But God. We see that Esau has come full circle. His early life of passion and impulsiveness gives way to his forgiveness for his brother's betrayal. How do we know that Esau forgave his brother? He took Jacob's gift. This acceptance shows that reconciliation was made between the two brothers. Bitterness and rage have been replaced by joy and forgiveness. After they part ways, the next time we see Esau and Jacob together is when they buried their father.

Men, what does Esau's life teach us? God is never finished with His work. You never know what God is going to do in people's lives. Even in the lives of prodigals that spend decades in defiance to God's ways. Satan works to shame too many of God's men that blame themselves for where their children stand with God. Training a child in God's ways never guarantees that a child will follow God's ways. The Proverbs verse isn't a slam dunk guarantee, but a wise way to train a child. God often chooses not to work with guarantees. Instead, He works within the margins of life's uncertainties to bring Him glory...even when the timeline isn't our timeline. Esau's life shows that a graceless life can turn into forgiveness and reconciliation...not only between people, but also with God. Our role is to pray faithfully and never stop asking God to intervene to save. How will you cling to your God's purposes today?

Spend some time reflecting on relationships that have been wounded or destroyed in your life. Ask God to teach you in these relationships and continue to pray for reconciliation between God and your relationships.

For Further Reading: Luke 15:11-32