

## THE CHILDREN'S RECORD.

Esau was the elder and the head of the family. This was a specially honorable thing because of the promises made to Abraham. But Esau cared little for it. One day when he came home very hungry from a long hunt and asked his brother for some food, Jacob took advantage of him, and said, "Sell me your birthright, and I will give you some." Esau cared little for the promises made to his grandfather, and little for the honor of being head of the family. All he wanted was a free roving life, and so he told Jacob that he could have it.

The shrewd Jacob was not satisfied with a mere promise. He asked Esau to take an oath that he would sell his birthright and he did so. It was wrong of Esau to think so lightly of it. It was wrong for Jacob to take advantage of him, but Jacob became a better man later in life, while Esau, marrying heathen wives became worse.

I fancy some boy saying, "Catch me selling such a birthright for a trifle;" but there are a great many Esaus. Many are selling their health for a little indulgence in eating and drinking, and late hours and fast company. Many are selling their souls, their offer of happiness and heaven, their eternal well being, for a little momentary indulgence in sin.

Don't be so foolish as to part with your birthright.

**March 11th.**

### JACOB AT BETHEL.

Les. Gen. 28 : 10-22.      Gol. Text, Gen. 28-15.  
Mem. vs. 20-22.      Catechism, Q. 92, 93.

Twenty-five years after Jacob had bought Esau's birthright, and when the brothers are what we would call old men, fifty-seven years of age, and their father, one hundred and seventeen years old, and blind; he asked Esau to go hunting one day and get him some special kind of meat that he liked well and said that he would give him a blessing.

Esau went to hunt, but his mother, who wished Jacob to get the blessing, got him to kill a kid and she made some food and took parts of the skin and put upon Jacob's wrists, to make him more like Esau, who had a great deal of hair on his arms.

Jacob took the food to Isaac, said that he was Esau, and got the blessing. Esau came and was very angry, and the mother sent Jacob away for a little while to where her brother lived. She never saw him again for it was forty years before he came back.

Both he and his mother did wrong. God had promised that Jacob should be the chief, and they should have waited for God to work out His plans in His own way. They did wrong and both of them suffered sorely for it in later

life, for Rebekah never saw Jacob again, and Jacob suffered much on account of the deceit of others.

Laban deceived him and gave him Leah instead of Rachel, and then deceived him with regard to his wages. After that, his sons deceived him regarding Joseph's death, and brought to him the great sorrow of his life. Good people sometimes fall into sin. God loves them, and forgives them, but they generally reap bitter fruit from their sowing.

Jacob began to feel the results of his sin when he had to leave home for fear of his brother, and started out alone with his bundle on his back, for what was to him a far away place, for there were no railroads, and no hotels by the way. But he was used to outdoor life. An Arab will lie down out of doors and sleep soundly.

One night, two or three days after leaving home, night came on, and, making his supply of course bread which he carried with him, he lay down, with not a very soft pillow, and was soon asleep.

A strange dream came to him. A great ladder or pathway reaching from earth to heaven, and angels going up and down. And then away at the top of it God seemed to stand and He made to Jacob the grand promises that He had made before to Abraham.

Jacob awakened in great fear. God seemed very nigh and he felt guilty and unfit to be near One who was holy and good. But God knew how he felt and did not reproach him for his sin. He left conscience, God's voice to the heart, to do that work.

Jacob was penitent and made vows that he would serve God, and that he would give God a tenth of all that he should get.

This lesson teaches us :

1. That we should never do evil that good may come. Do right at all times and leave the rest to God.

2. Wrong doing bears bitter fruit even though the sin be forgiven,

3. God is very merciful to the penitent.

1. We should return to God not less than a tenth of what He gives us.

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