

## GENESIS 33:12-17 ISRAEL IS STILL JACOB

<sup>12</sup> Then Esau said, "Let us be on our way; I'll accompany you."

<sup>13</sup> But Jacob said to him, "My lord knows that the children are tender and that I must care for the ewes and cows that are nursing their young. If they are driven hard just one day, all the animals will die. <sup>14</sup> So let my lord go on ahead of his servant, while I move along slowly at the pace of the droves before me and that of the children, until I come to my lord in Seir. "

<sup>15</sup> Esau said, "Then let me leave some of my men with you." "But why do that?" Jacob asked. "Just let me find favor in the eyes of my lord."

<sup>16</sup> So that day Esau started on his way back to Seir. <sup>17</sup> Jacob, however, went to Succoth, where he built a place for himself and made shelters for his livestock. That is why the place is called Succoth.

Jacob's name has changed and his character has changed, as have his relationships. Where he was in conflict with God and men, he is now reconciled with God and men. Although there was a radical transformation in Jacob, the reader will note how easily Jacob slipped back into his old ways. He just could not help but lie to Esau in order to give him the slip. However valid his reasons might have been for not going with Esau, Jacob once more used deception to accomplish his goal.

There is a reminder here to us that a renewed life is not a passive experience. God created us a free moral agents and through conversion he does not take away our ability to choose, but he gives us the power to choose rightly. Without the intentional practice of choosing God's way instead of our own, we are in constant danger of falling back on our old habits. You may argue that with conversion your ticket to heaven is punched, but know that the quality of the ride will be determined by the consistency with which you choose to follow Jesus. It is no coincidence that discipleship and discipline have the same root.

**Lord Jesus, you died so that I might live and sent your Spirit so that I might have the opportunity to live in your righteousness; make me ever mindful of my need to align my will and my actions with your will. Whenever I choose wrongly correct me through your Spirit that I might repent and return to the path of obedience to you. Amen.**