

The Parable (Story) of the Old Man and the Young by Wilfrid Owen

So Abram rose (got up), and clave (split) the wood,
and went,

And took the fire with him, and a knife.

And as they sojourned (stopped) both of them
together,

Isaac the first-born spake (spoke) and said, My
Father,

Behold the preparations, fire and iron,

But where the lamb for this burnt-offering?

Then Abram bound (tied) the youth with belts and
straps,

And builded (built) parapets (walls) and trenches
(ditches) there,

And stretchèd forth the knife to slay (kill) his son.

When lo! an Angel called him out of heaven,

Saying, Lay not thy (your) hand upon the lad (boy),

Neither do anything to him. Behold,

A ram caught in a thicket (bushes) by its horns;

Offer the Ram of Pride instead of him.

But the old man would not so, but slew (killed) his
son,

And half the seed (children) of Europe, one by one.

RSR Hirsch on Esau and Jacob

As the boys were growing up it became more and more clear how completely different they were in personality and way of life..."Bring up the child according to their way" is the important Jewish principle of education: it is true that the aims of Jewish education are the same for all children...The methods, however...must necessarily differ in accordance with the natural talents, inclinations and general nature of the child. What is appropriate for and to the benefit of one child, may be extremely harmful to another. Jacob and Esau just do not fit on one school bench. If Esau's parents had come early to the sad conclusion that their son was not at all inclined towards "boring spiritual" activities, they might have succeeded in developing his good traits to such an extent that he could still have been called a worthy grandson of Abraham.