

POPULAR STORIES

CHAPTER 10

ESAU DESPISED BIRTHRIGHT

Genesis 25: 24-34

Our subject is “Esau Despised Birthright.” Esau and Jacob were twins. They had great advantages over other children in the world. God sent them the gospel. They had parents who believed God. From their youth up both were taught to fear and believe God.

Genesis 25: 25: And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau.

Esau was the firstborn which meant he had the birthright? It meant that upon the death of his father, who was also the firstborn, he would be made head over his father’s house. The firstborn would become the prophet, priest and king over all his brothers and sisters in the house. He would be given preeminence in power when the father gave to him a double portion of all the father’s possessions. Also, as a descendent of Abraham, the firstborn received God’s promised inheritance, Canaan. The true, spiritual children knew that Canaan was a type of heaven itself. Furthermore, through the one God recognized as the firstborn, the Messiah would come. That was considered the highest possible honor in the whole world for the Messiah to come through your tribe. All of this belonged to Esau because the birthright was his.

Genesis 25: 26: And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau’s heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac *was* threescore years old when she bare them. 27: And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob *was* a plain man, dwelling in tents.

Esau was a man of the world, “a cunning hunter, a man of the field”—active, strong, and ambitious. Jacob was “a plain man”, ordinary, quiet. Jacob “dwelt in tents.” He stayed close to home, he was a shepherd, and he was unambitious for the present world but sought the world to come.

Genesis 25: 28: And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of *his* venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Isaac looked on the outward appearance so he loved Esau. Rebekah believed the word the Lord had told her, “the elder shall serve the younger.” (Gen 25: 23) Jacob was a chosen child of God.

Genesis 25: 29: And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he *was* faint:

Jacob was making red lentils. This was the meal of mourners so some think this was the day Abraham died, which would make these boys fifteen years old. Esau suddenly appears from the field faint: weary, exhausted, and starving. His flesh is weak and his lust is strong

Genesis 25: 30: And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red *pottage*; for I *am* faint: therefore was his name called Edom.

Esau said, “Feed me with that red, red.” So his name—the nation that came from him—was called Edom, which means “red.” In one sense, Esau is a picture of Adam. Adam came first. But he sinned. Therefore, all Adam’s descendants became earthy like him. But Esau also represents a worldly man hungry for earthy things rather than hungering and thirsting after Christ and his righteousness.

Genesis 25: 31: And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.

Rebekah had probably told Jacob the word of God. But the only way for Jacob to receive the birthright is if the firstborn willingly gives it to him. He has been looking for the opportunity to get the birthright. So Jacob seizes the opportunity he is given.

In one sense, Jacob typifies Christ. Christ was second in time after Adam but he was God's true Firstborn Son. Like as Jacob took hold of Esau's heel from the womb, from the womb Christ served God, taking hold of Adam's heel, as he came forth to redeem Christ's people from Adam's sin. But Jacob is also a true, elect child of God. He represents all true, elect children of God. The child of God hears the gospel of Christ, like Jacob heard. We look for the opportunity to seek Christ the Firstborn who freely gives us the right of the firstborn through faith by grace. The believer makes straight paths for our feet to Christ seeking to be healed by Christ, we seek Christ our Peace, Christ our Holiness. By the grace of God, we seize every opportunity God gives us to draw nearer to Christ in faith.

Genesis 25: 32: And Esau said, Behold, I *am* at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?

Esau was hungry at that moment in time. The gospel promise of Christ, the Bread from heaven, seemed far off to Esau. He says, "Behold, I am at the point to die and what profit shall this birthright do to me?" What profit will Christ be to me right now? Right this minute? Esau represents the man who is willing to give up eternal, divine blessings—even to forsake Christ—for the temporary, earthly gain, of the immediate present.

Genesis 25: 33: And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. 34: Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised *his* birthright.

Jacob, like true believers, was willing to part with the earthly for the spiritual. But Esau, like the worldly sinner, was willing to sell the birthright and all the blessings that went with it to temporarily gratify his flesh. He traded eternal inheritance with Christ for a bowl of beans. He did so with total disdain for birthright, "he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. Thus Esau despised birthright." He despised God the Father and his Christ.

So the point of this message will be to look at Esau selling the birthright, as a sinner who trades Christ for the temporary earthly things of this life.

CHRIST THE FIRSTBORN

The firstborn, and the blessing of birthright, typify Christ and the blessings he gives to all God's elect who are brought to believe on him.

Romans 8: 29: For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

God's Firstborn, Christ Jesus, was faithful as the Firstborn. So now he is Head—the Prophet, Priest and King—over the whole house of God—over you and I who he has called to be his brethren.

Colossians 1: 18: And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. 19: For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

Hebrews 3: 1: Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; 2: Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses *was faithful* in all his house. 3: For this *man* was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. 4: For every house is builded by some *man*; but he that built all things *is* God. 5: And Moses verily *was* faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; 6: But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Christ the Firstborn faithfully honored God his Father. He faithfully fulfilled the law of God his Father. Christ faithfully redeemed all the children of God his Father. He faithfully glorified God his Father declaring God just and Justifier of all who believe on Christ Jesus. (Rom 3: 26)

Believer, he did that for you and me who rest all our hope in him! God the Father has given Christ all the blessings of the Firstborn and Christ has made each of his brethren firstborn sons in him. We are the church of the firstborn.

Hebrews 12: 22: But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23: To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24: And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel.

For every child of God, whose names are written in heaven, Christ the Firstborn has made us firstborn sons. We are the church of the firstborn.

Remember, what it meant to have the birthright?

Christ is Head of the House—Prophet, Priest and King—over all his brothers and sisters in his house in heaven and in earth. And by Christ's precious blood, by the Holy Spirit, he has made us kings and priests unto God. (Rev 1: 6; 5: 10)

Also, Christ has all Preeminence. A double portion of all God the Father's possessions went to Christ the Firstborn. "In all things Christ has the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." What does that mean for you, believer? "And ye are complete in him." (Col 1: 19; 2: 20) Scripture says by Christ's power and grace, we shall "reign with him."

Furthermore, Christ received his Father's eternal inheritance. The good news for each believer is that Christ has made us heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Christ has the highest honor and we shall be glorified together with him, if we suffer for his name unto the end. (Rom 8: 17)

So you see the birthright and the blessing of the firstborn represent the blessings that believers are given through Christ the Firstborn. Christ is the Firstborn and every believer is a firstborn son in Christ.

LEARN FROM ESAU

Now let's learn from Esau. Every believer is to continue believing on Christ unto the end that we might receive all the blessings of our eternal inheritance with Christ.

Believer, never take for granted your birthright. Ever flee to Christ. Ever look to Christ. Through faith in his Son, God freely gives the greatest joy that can be had.

If you have yet to believe on Christ then repent from your works, cast all your care upon Christ and rest in God's Firstborn Son until he brings you home to glory.

The blessings of the firstborn are unsearchable riches. What could possibly make anyone want to trade these blessings for anything in this earth?

All who rest our hope in Christ know the joy of the total absolution of all our sins. Christ removed every stain of sin from his people. He totally obliterated the sin of his people. In Christ there is no sin. God says to every truly needy sinner, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa 1:18) To all who believe on Christ, God says, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer 31:34)

All who believe on Christ know what it is like to have the law's curse totally removed. Every neglect of perfect love in his people was poured out in fury on Christ the Firstborn. He satisfied justice for every child he represented. Through God-given faith in his Son, he teaches us the full freedom from the curse of the law was wrought for us. Who can measure the value of a clear conscience before God? Who can describe the riches of knowing God sees no sin in me, only the perfect righteousness of his Son?

Through faith in Christ, God freely gives the peace of reconciliation to God. The greatest of all joy is beholding God smiling upon us with the same delight as he does his Firstborn Son! What peace to have the Father's sweet embrace as a firstborn child of God in Christ the Firstborn! For all who believe on Christ, there is firstborn sonship with the God our Father. We are heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ, if by God's grace we continue resting in Christ until the end.

To those quickened by his Spirit and made firstborn sons in God's Firstborn, God says, "All things are yours; [his pastors are yours], whether the world, or life or death, or things present or things to come; all are yours. And ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." (1 Cor 3: 21-24)

His throne of grace is yours! Believers have a place where we can pour out our heart to God. We have his throne where we can speak things we would not tell our nearest loved one. We have access with boldness through faith in Christ our High Priest and our Advocate. (Heb 10: 19-23)

The Holy Spirit is yours to keep open your heart, to teach you hidden wisdom, and to keep you all your days.

What I am trying to declare is that there is only unspeakable riches for those who believe on Christ unto the end. Those are the things represented in the birthright.

Yet, though he had right to all these everlasting blessings, Esau sold his future, for the present. He traded spiritual blessings, for momentary, fleeting, earthly gratification.

Are we like Esau? Will we despise such unmeasurable good? What on earth could we trade heaven for? Will we trade it for unsubstantial pleasures, which vanish through our fingers like sand! What can be better than this gospel birthright?

Is it the pleasure of your senses? They will decay and wither with your flesh. Will you take those at the expense of pleasures at God's right hand for evermore? (Ps 16: 11)

Is it earthly honors? The applause of men? Who would trade “the crown of righteousness” that “fadeth not away” for an earthly crown that men continually try to steal away? (2 Tim 4: 8; 1 Pet 1: 4; 5: 4)

Will you barter the unsearchable riches of Christ for fleeting earthly riches? For riches that will rust and canker? (Ja 5: 3; Mt 6: 19-20)

STANDING BEFORE THE FATHER

Suppose you go through life never giving a second thought to these things. Suppose you become wildly successful in this life. Esau did! He ate, rose up and went his way. He gave up these riches and never gave it a second thought...until...

The time came when Esau stood before his father. Then he greatly desired his father’s blessing. But it was too late. Isaac gave the blessing to Jacob just as God will give the blessing to all his Jacob’s who seize Christ the Firstborn through faith in this day of grace.

We read, “Esau his brother came in from his hunting.” (Gen 27: 30) Sinner, one day you will come in from hunting your worldly riches. You will have to stand before God the Father in the day of judgment. As we read the following, think of the day of judgment. Think of Isaac as God the Father. Put yourself in Esau’s place as one who refused Christ and met God without a Mediator.

“And Isaac his father said unto him, Who *art* thou? And he said, I *am* thy son, thy firstborn, Esau.” (Gen 27: 32) Esau took for granted that he was still the firstborn. But he sold that right for the world. So his father told him it was too late. He told him that Jacob had received the blessing and Jacob shall be blessed.

“And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, *even* me also, O my father...And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son? And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, *even* me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.” (Gen 27: 34, 37-38) But it was too late!

God the Holy Spirit gives us the application in Hebrews 12. When God chastens his children in this life, it is not pleasant. But God does it to make us to keep us separated from this world, to keep us partaking of Christ our Holiness, the Author and Finisher of our faith.

Hebrews 12: 12: Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

Remember how Esau came in faint? What should Esau have done? What should we do?

Hebrews 12: 13: And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Make straight paths to Christ lest we prove we were never truly saved by grace and be turned out of Christ the Way.

Hebrews 12: 14: Follow Peace with all and Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

In all things continue to follow Christ our Peace and our Holiness without which no man shall enter into God’s holy presence. Run the race looking to Christ.

Hebrews 12: 15: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God;

Lest we prove to have never truly been a child of God's grace.

Hebrews 12: Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled; 16: Lest there *be* any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. 17: For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

Esau found that his father would not repent and give him the blessing. So shall it be for any sinner who trades Christ for the temporary fool's gold of this present evil world. God will not repent and give the blessing of eternal inheritance to those who pass through this life despising Christ. The context shows us that the exhortation is for us to flee constantly to Christ, to God's throne of grace, to Christ our Holiness and our Peace. He says to all who believe that we have not come to Mt. Sinai and the law. But we have come to Mt Zion, to the true church of God, to his throne of grace.

Hebrews 12: 24: And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. 25: See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not we escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven:...

Believer, when you are weak, run to Christ. When you are chastened of God our Father, run to Christ. At all times, run to Christ. And never even think of selling this precious birthright. It will be proven that we are truly called of God and made firstborn sons in Christ, the Firstborn, if by his preserving grace we continue to the end resting in Christ. May God use these words to draw us ever closer to Christ to rest in him forevermore!

Amen!