

**TITLE:**

**Despising our Birth Right**

## Scripture Reading: Genesis 25:29-34; 27:36-38

And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint:

**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.

**31** And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.

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

**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.

## Scripture Reading: Genesis 27:36-38

**36** And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?

**37** 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?

**38** 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.

Esau was Isaac's favorite son. So Esau cannot fault Isaac for his loss of birthright and blessings.

The incident in **Genesis 25:29-34** told the story of Esau's loss

**Genesis 5:27** tells us the Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field. He loved adventure and loved being away from home. Jacob on the other hand was a peaceful man, living in tents.

Jacob was a homebody, content to be at home. Bible commentator said that Jacob was the one who fulfilled the normal expectations of a nomadic, patriarchal figure.



The term 'peaceful' which indicated he was 'mild' and 'quiet' actually meant a complete, normal, or regular nomadic leader. The same adjective was also used of Job which described a person of integrity and patriarchal characteristics.

**Gen. 25:23.** YHWH had already told his wife, Rebecca, that

- two nations are in her womb.
- two people will be separated from her body.
- And one people shall be stronger than the other
- And the older shall serve the younger.

Esau saw Jacob had cooked the wonderful smelling and delicious lentiles. One wonder if this event was premeditated and had been repeated. The clue was found in **Genesis 25:30** when Esau said, 'feed me with the SAME red pottage.'

The use of the term 'cooked' (literally boiled) may be a hint. It took time to prepare the lentils and it had the wonderful smell that Esau was familiar with.

Another translation of **Genesis 25:30** put it as 'Please let me have a swallow of that red stuff there, for I am famished.' This is a strong term for 'eat'. It literally means 'to gulp down'. This is the first of several clues which show that Esau was a secular-minded man. The things of faith and the responsibilities of home life were simply not a concern to him. It was obvious that Jacob took advantage of Esau's weakness. The question is, was it because of:

- The prophecy
- The well-being of the family
- Self-interest



**Genesis 25:32** says, 'Behold, I am about to die; so of what use then is the birthright to me? This has been interpreted basically in three different ways:

- An exaggeration
- That he really expected to die at a young age
- Another example of his lack of concerns for spiritual things.

From the Nuzi Tablets of the same period, we understand that the transfer of birthright was possible legally.

Esau on the other hand, has characteristics of people in the last days:

- He ate
- He drank
- He went on his way
- He despised his birthright.

'Thus Esau despised his birthright.' It denotes 'to view as worthless' or even 'view with contempt'. The rabbis depict Esau as a very evil person. **Hebrew 12:16** shows him as being spiritually immature. He took his spiritual and family life lightly.

# **1. Esau's privilege as first-born**

To understand why Esau suffered terribly for this we need to understand the privilege given to him

## **A. He belonged to the first-born**

This eldest son's special position was widely recognized in Israelite ritual.

## **B. It includes a large inheritance.**

He was supposed to receive a double inheritance share under Moses' law

### **C. He will also receive a special paternal blessing.**

In Esau's family the entire blessing of Abraham which is the agreement that God would make him a father of many nations.

### **D. Esau was supposed to assume the leadership in the family, having special place during mealtime.**

This brings us back to the patriarchal role: male head of the family.



## **E. And according to God the first-born belong to YHWH.**

When we received Christ as our savior, we became the first-born of God's family and even our earthly family. But like Esau and Reuben, we failed so miserably being the first born. Our characters and our attitudes betrayed us showing we too like Esau despised our birthright. We don't take seriously our faith. Like Esau, we love to eat, rise up and go, the characteristics of the last day people where Jesus said, the people ate, drank and rose up to play. We have failed. But then In the New Testament God sent Jesus who was the first born of his mother, Mary. As such, Jesus was taken to the temple by Joseph and Mary to be offered to God as first born (signify that he belonged to God).

Jesus was also the first born of his heavenly father. He is the first born of all creation, not in a sense that he was a created being but rather that as God's son he was his agent in creation and hence has authority over all created things. But for our sake, he was rejected as the first-born, became sin for us and the Father turned away his face when he was hung on the Cross. But when Jesus was resurrected he did something for us to give us hope once more than to be first-born.

Because of His death, he restored our firstborn birthright status. Jesus is the first born in the new creation by being raised from the dead and is thus LORD over the church. Finally God's people, which is us can be described as first-born who are enrolled in heaven since we share the same privileges as Jesus the first born son. **James 1:28 says,** 'And it was a happy day for him, when he gave us our new lives, through the truth of the word, and we became as it were, the first children in his family.'



## **2. Our Privileges as firstborn**

We are also the first fruits, the first children in his family, like Esau we enjoy tremendous privileges.

Firstly the LORD is our inheritance.

Secondly, we can enjoy the double portion of his inheritance. Included is the double portion of His Holy Spirit. We have received the mantle of God just as Elisha had received the mantle of Elijah.

Thirdly, God has also given us honorable privileges that the people in darkness are not able to enjoy.



- When the power of darkness threatens us, God will give us victory over the devil because of Jesus' name
- God promised to lead us in great care and when we walk through problem and trials in life, we will not stumble because he is with us
- We can call him ABBA father, because we are child of the most powerful family. God's family

### 3. Despising our birthright

**Hebrew 12:16 says,** 'Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat, sold his birthright.'

To despise is to regard with contempt, distaste, disgust, or disdain; scorn; loathe.

Many Christians today. They look at their Christian heritage with shame. They dislike the restriction, the controls of being a Christian. Some even hate (which comes from the word loathe) being in a Christian family. So they react like Esau. We like Esau, counted our Christian privileges as nothing. We are not interested in any double portion of God's Holy Spirit.

Esau's responsibility was that he was expected to assume the spiritual leadership of the family. He also was required to provide food, clothing, and other necessities for his mother until her death and all unmarried sisters until their marriage. Esau was certainly not interested in maintaining any spiritual responsibilities. Nor was he interested in providing for his mother. He was only interested in himself. Have you wondered why Rebecca was so intent on having Jacob, instead of Esau taking over the spiritual leadership of the family? Definitely she saw something in Esau that told her that he definitely was not the man.

Esau's action reflected his carnal attitude (lifestyle) for we have already seen, he was both a fornicator and a profane person. The term fornicator refers to his immorality while the word profane refers to his utter disregard for spiritual thing



