



Lesson 17 – Jacob and Esau

Based on Genesis 24, 27

1) What does the Scripture say about Jacob and Esau?

Genesis 25:20-21 And Isaac was forty years old when he took _____ to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian. And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife _____.

Genesis 25:22-23 And the children _____ together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD. And the LORD said unto her, _____ are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.

Genesis 25:25-26 And the first came out red, all over like an hairy _____; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's _____; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them.

2) How were they different?

Genesis 25:27-28 And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning _____, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah _____ Jacob.

Esau grew up loving self-gratification and centering all his interest in the present. Impatient of restraint, he delighted in the wild freedom of the chase and early chose the life of a hunter. Yet he was the father's favorite. The quiet, peace-loving shepherd was attracted by the daring and vigor of this elder son, who fearlessly ranged over mountain and desert, returning home with game for his father and with exciting accounts of his adventurous life.

Jacob, thoughtful, diligent, and caretaking, ever thinking more of the future than the present, was content to dwell at home, occupied in the care of the flocks and the tillage of the soil. His patient perseverance, thrift, and foresight were valued by the mother. His affections were deep and strong, and his gentle, unremitting attentions added far more to her happiness than did the boisterous and occasional kindnesses of Esau. To Rebekah, Jacob was the dearer son.

3) What promise kept ringing in Rebekah and Jacob ears?

Genesis 25:23 and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall _____ the younger.

The promises made to Abraham and confirmed to his son were held by Isaac and Rebekah as the great object of their desires and hopes. With these promises Esau and Jacob were familiar. They were taught to regard the birthright as a matter of great importance, for it included not only an inheritance of worldly wealth but spiritual pre-eminence. He who received it was to be the priest of his family, and in the line of his posterity the Redeemer of the world would come.

On the other hand, there were obligations resting upon the possessor of the birthright. He who should inherit its blessings must devote his life to the service of God. Like Abraham, he must be obedient to the divine requirements. In marriage, in his family relations, in public life, he must consult the will of God.



Isaac made known to his sons these privileges and conditions, and plainly stated that Esau, as the eldest, was the one entitled to the birthright. But Esau had no love for devotion, no inclination to a religious life. The requirements that accompanied the spiritual birthright were an unwelcome and even hateful restraint to him. The law of God, which was the condition of the divine covenant with Abraham, was regarded by Esau as a yoke of bondage. Bent on self-indulgence, he desired nothing so much as liberty to do as he pleased. To him power and riches, feasting and reveling, were happiness. He gloried in the unrestrained freedom of his wild, roving life.

4) What happened after one of Esau's adventures?

Genesis 25:29-31 And Jacob sod _____: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: 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. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy _____.

5) What did Esau reply?

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

6) Jacob replied...

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

A short time at most would have secured him food in his father's tents, but to satisfy the desire of the moment he carelessly bartered the glorious heritage that God Himself had promised to his fathers. His whole interest was in the present. He was ready to sacrifice the heavenly to the earthly, to exchange a future good for a momentary indulgence.

7) What were Esau's future marriage choices?

Genesis 26:34-35 And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife _____ the daughter of Beerli the Hittite, and _____ the daughter of Elon the Hittite: Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah.

They were worshipers of false gods, and their idolatry was a bitter grief to Isaac and Rebekah. Esau had violated one of the conditions of the covenant, which forbade intermarriage between the chosen people and the heathen; yet Isaac was still unshaken in his determination to bestow upon him the birthright. The reasoning of Rebekah, Jacob's strong desire for the blessing, and Esau's indifference to its obligations had no effect to change the father's purpose.

8) What did Isaac do when he was very aged?

Genesis 27:1-2 And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called _____ his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, here am I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my _____:

Genesis 27:3-4 Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some _____; And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may _____ thee before I die.



Isaac, old and blind, and expecting soon to die, determined no longer to delay the bestowal of the blessing upon his elder son. But knowing the opposition of Rebekah and Jacob, he decided to perform the solemn ceremony in secret, in accordance with the custom of making a feast upon such occasions.

9) Did Isaac fool his wife?

Genesis 27:5-7 And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it. And Rebekah spake unto _____ her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying, Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and _____ thee before the LORD before my death.

10) What was her plan?

Genesis 27:8-10 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the _____; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth: And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may _____ before his death.

11) Did Jacob question whether they'd get caught?

Genesis 27:11-13 And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a _____ man, and I am a smooth man: My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a _____; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing. And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy _____, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me them.

Jacob did not readily consent to the plan that she proposed. The thought of deceiving his father caused him great distress. He felt that such a sin would bring a curse rather than a blessing. But his scruples were overborne, and he proceeded to carry out his mother's suggestions.

12) What else did she do to fool Isaac?

Genesis 27:15-17 And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son _____, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son: And she put the _____ of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck: And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

It was not his intention to utter a direct falsehood, but once in the presence of his father he seemed to have gone too far to retreat, and he obtained by fraud the coveted blessing.

13) What was the Blessing?

Genesis 27:28-29 Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: Let people _____ thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: _____ be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.

Jacob and Rebekah succeeded in their purpose, but they gained only trouble and sorrow by their deception. God had declared that Jacob should receive the birthright, and His word would have been fulfilled in His own time had they waited in faith for Him to work for them. But like many who now profess to be children of God, they were unwilling to leave the matter in His hands. Rebekah bitterly repented the wrong counsel she had given her son; it was the means of separating him from her, **and she never saw his face again.**



From the hour when he received the birthright, Jacob was weighed down with self-condemnation. He had sinned against his father, his brother, his own soul, and against God. In one short hour he had made work for a lifelong repentance. This scene was vivid before him in afteryears, when the wicked course of his sons oppressed his soul.

14) What happened when Esau returned from the hunt?

Genesis 27:30-31 And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the _____ of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may _____ me.

15) With much sorrow, what did he tell Esau?

Genesis 27:35 And he said, Thy brother came with _____, and hath taken away thy blessing.

Trembling with astonishment and distress, the blind old father learned the deception that had been practiced upon him. His long and fondly cherished hopes had been thwarted, and he keenly felt the disappointment that must come upon his elder son. Yet the conviction flashed upon him that it was God's providence which had defeated his purpose and brought about the very thing he had determined to prevent. He remembered the words of the angel to Rebekah, and notwithstanding the sin of which Jacob was now guilty, he saw in him the one best fitted to accomplish the purposes of God. While the words of blessing were upon his lips, he had felt the Spirit of inspiration upon him; and now, knowing all the circumstances, he ratified the benediction.

The promise given was not to be recalled. The birthright which he had so carelessly bartered he could not now regain. "For one morsel of meat," for a momentary gratification of appetite that had never been restrained, Esau sold his inheritance; but when he saw his folly, it was too late to recover the blessing.

16) What does the Book of Hebrews tell us about Esau?

Hebrews 12:16-17 Lest there be any fornicator, or _____ person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was _____: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

Esau was not shut out from the privilege of seeking God's favor by repentance, but he could find no means of recovering the birthright. His grief did not spring from conviction of sin; he did not desire to be reconciled to God. He sorrowed because of the results of his sin, but not for the sin itself.

17) What same spirit resides in man today?

1 Corinthians 15:32 ...let us eat and drink; for to morrow we _____.

Multitudes are selling their birthright for sensual indulgence. Health is sacrificed, the mental faculties are enfeebled, and heaven is forfeited; and all for a mere temporary pleasure, an indulgence at once both weakening and debasing in its character. As Esau awoke to see the folly of his rash exchange when it was too late to recover his loss, so it will be in the day of God with those who have bartered their heirship to heaven for selfish gratifications.

Can you see you have far more than you know?

Would you like to receive your birthright?

When is the time to just trust God?