

- Jacob and Esau (Gen 25:19-28)

#1. Esau Sold His Birthright (Gen 25:29-34, Num 3:12-13, 8:18)

- The Decree of God (Mal 1:2-3, Rom 9:13, Gen 12:3,22:18,26:4,28:14,Acts 3:25,Gal 3:8)

#2. Children of the Promise (John 1:13, Rom 9:8-13, 4:12-16)

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- Be Not Like Esau (Heb 12:14-17, 2:3)

Please open your Bibles to the First Scroll in your Bibles, Genesis chapter 25:19 (2X). Today we are going to look at the phenomenon of Jacob and Esau, more particularly: their Birthright. The title of this sermon is "The Birthright" (2X).

- **Jacob and Esau** (Gen 25:19-28)

Let us begin to read God's Word here in Gen 25:19,

Genesis 25:19 ¶ And these *are* the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac:

Genesis 25:20 And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian.

Genesis 25:21 And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she *was* barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

Genesis 25:22 And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If *it be* so, why *am* I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD.

Genesis 25:23 And the LORD said unto her, Two nations *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.

Rebekah had been barren for 19 years. But now Isaac saw that she had conceived. God had not forgotten His promise to Abraham that "in his Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen 22:17). Now Isaac and Rebekah believed that she bare in her womb all the hope of the salvation of the world. It is quite normal that the baby moves in the mother's womb, and this causes a little discomfort. But this time Rebekah was in severe pain, so much so that she asked God to reveal to her why she was in so much pain. God revealed to her that there were two nations in her womb, which means that the descendants of these twins shall not live together, but they will be two different nations, and they will be two manner of people, which would be divided the one from the other. Moreover, the one people shall be stronger than the other, which means that they will fight against each other, and they will be killing one another, but one of the two shall be the winner. Who shall be the winner? The younger of the twins shall be the winner, because the elder shall serve the younger. And even though both these children were descendants of Abraham, yet only one of these two peoples were going to be the bearers of the Covenant of God, whereas the other was going to be their adversaries. It means that God would cut off from His church the descendants of the elder. This was God's prophecy, and this was God's plan. Nothing happens outside of God's plan. Undoubtedly this must have grieved Isaac and Rebekah with a deadly sorrow. It meant that God received one of their sons, but God rejected the other. In the meantime they could still see the goodness of God on display for their younger son. And now we read in verse 24,

Gen 25:24 And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, *there were* twins in her womb.

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

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.

Genesis 25:27 And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a "plain" man, dwelling in tents.

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

The name Esau means "Hairy". He was the firstborn. Immediately after him came out his younger brother at the while his hand holding Esau's heel as if he wanted to pull him back, because he wanted to be born first. That is why he was called Jacob, meaning "Supplanter". This name "Supplanter" has an evil ring to it. This name would be given to a schemer who always tries to trap you into his nets. Jacob was a schemer. Esau grew up to be a very knowledgeable hunter, whereas Jacob grew up as a "plain" man. Actually, that word "plain" is not the word plain at all, but it literally means "Perfect". Jacob was a "perfect" man, because God looked at him as if he was perfect, in spite of all his sins.

When God looked at us, His people, before we were "Born Again", God called us "sinners", which is not a nice name at all, because it means that we are subject to the wrath of God. But after we have become "Born Again" God calls us "saints", which means "most holy ones", because when God looks at His saints God sees no sin. If Christ paid for all our sins then we are perfect in God's sight.

#1. Esau Sold His Birthright (Gen 25:29-34, Num 3:12-13, 8:18)

That was a dumb thing to do. We read in verse 29,

Genesis 25:29 ¶ And Jacob sod (= boiled) pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he *was* faint:

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 (= red)

Genesis 25:31-32 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I *am* at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?

Genesis 25:33 And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.

Genesis 25:34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised *his* birthright.

Jacob made a red soup that smelled so good that Esau absolutely had to have it. If Jacob had any love for his brother Esau he would have given Esau a bowl of soup. And how was God going to accomplish that the elder shall serve the younger? Well, here we see an example how God operates. God accomplishes His plans through the sins of mankind and through our human weaknesses. And here both Jacob and Esau were involved in sin. Esau was not dying; he was just exaggerating his hunger. Jacob grabbed the opportunity to sell this meal for a high price. Today we call this "gauging". Jacob had his eyes on the birthright of his brother for a long time, and Esau did not care for it one way or the other. So Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of lentil soup. That is why his 2nd name was Edom,

because Edom means "Red", and Esau who was covered with red hair loved the soup, which was red. Therefore his name was Edom, which in the Hebrew text is written the same way as Adam. The words Edom, and Adam, and Red are written in the Hebrew letters the same way. Esau was given another name like Jacob was given another name later. Jacob's name was changed to Israel, which means "Prince of God", and it was the name given later to Christ. Jacob was of the family of Christ. But Esau's name was changed to Adam, which means "Red", like the red dirt of the earth. Esau was of the family of Adam. What is the significance of this?

We all come into the world like Adam after his sin in the Garden of Eden. We all are born as sinners who are drawn to sin, rather than to doing something good. We all have an Adamic body which lusts after sin. And after a life full of sin our body dies and is buried into the dirt, which is red. All the reprobate are born like Esau, who remained in his Adamic body, and was never saved. Esau is representing all those who die unsaved. But if we are like Jacob, we too are born with an Adamic body which lusts after sin. But then at a certain point in our life God will give us a change of heart. It means we become "Born Again", which means we receive a new soul from God the Holy Spirit, and we become of the family of Christ, Israel, and we become the Israel of God. Therefore Jacob is representing all those who are going to be saved by Christ.

Here in Gen 25 we see the beginning of the prophecy God revealed to Rebekah before the children were born. What was this birthright that Esau sold? Please turn about 190 pages to your right, to Num 3:12 (2X). The birthright included a double portion of the material inheritance the firstborn receives from his father. The firstborn receives twice of what the other children get. But there is more to the birthright than material blessings. The firstborn receives the privilege to be the priest of the family. Of course, God can overrule that choice, but this privilege belonged to the firstborn. For example, among the children of Jacob the firstborn was Reuben. Because of Reuben's sin God transferred that privilege to Levi. We read in Num 3:12,

Num 3:12 And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be mine; Numbers 3:13 Because all the firstborn *are* mine; *for* on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: mine shall they be: I *am* the LORD.

And then in Num 8:18 (2X) we read,

Numbers 8:18 And I have taken the Levites for all the firstborn of the children of Israel.

Moreover the firstborn inherited the authority of acting as the judge in his family. Esau despised his birthright. Aside from the material blessings, Esau despised the honor of being the priest and the judge in the family. But there is more that Esau despised. But first we have to understand:

- **The Decree of God** (Mal 1:2-3, Rom 9:13, Gen 12:3,22:18,26:4,28:14,Acts 3:25,Gal 3:8)

Please turn now to the end of the OT, to Mal 1:2 (2X). God spoke here to the nation of Israel through the prophet Malachi. In Mal 1:1 God said: "The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi". In other words, The oracle, or the prophecy of the Word of the Lord to Israel. Then verse 2, Malachi 1:2-3 I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, "Wherein hast thou loved us"? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.

What is "the Decree of God" in this passage? The first part of the Decree of God in this passage is this: "I loved Jacob, and God said this in the imperfect tense, which means that God was not finished loving Jacob. God loved him in the past, God still loves him in the present, and God continues to love him in the future. In our day we have seen the evidence of that: God allowed Israel to become a nation again in 1948. Then God said: "I hated Esau", and God said this in the perfect tense, which means that God completed His hating of Esau in past, because God "laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness". Historically, this is what God did to the kingdom of Esau. But when God instructed the Apostle Paul to write in Rom 9:13, "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated", both the words "loved" and "hated" are actually in the Aorist tense. The Aorist tense is used to indicate an action that has begun in the past, continues through the present, and continues into the future. God loves Jacob and God hates Esau in that way. But in the NT the names Jacob and Esau represent groups of people that are different from those in Malachi. God indicated in Malachi that He is speaking about the kingdoms of Israel and of Edom. But in Rom 9 God is speaking about Jacob as representing all the Elect, and Esau as representing all the Reprobate.

It was the Decree of God that Esau would have no appreciation for his birthright. Esau did not become a reprobate because he despised his birthright. Esau despised his birthright, because he was a reprobate. As a reprobate Esau had absolutely no appreciation for spiritual things pertaining to the Messiah. Please turn now to Gen 22:18 (2X). When God spoke to Abraham the first time God said in Gen 12:3, "in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed". Not Abraham himself, but one of his descendants, the Lord Jesus Christ, who would be a blessing to all the families of the earth. It was God's decree that Christ should be a descendant of Abraham. God repeated this in Gen 22:18, Genesis 22:18 And in thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

The evidence that Abraham was a child of God was that Abraham obeyed God. And God again promised him, "in thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed", where "thy Seed" refers to the Lord Jesus Christ. Turn to Gen 26:4 (2X). About 80 years later God repeated His promise to Isaac Genesis 26:4 And I will make thy Seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

Again we read the characteristic words: "in thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed",

which indicated to Isaac that through him would come the Messiah who would be a blessing to all the nations of the earth. The Lord Jesus Christ would save a people for Himself by saving a remnant from all the nations of the earth. Isaac did not use these words in his blessing of Jacob, but God corrected that by personally speaking to Jacob. Please turn to Gen 28:14 (2X). There in Gen 28 Jacob was on his way to his uncle Laban to find a wife. While he slept God appeared to him and said, in Gen 28:14, Genesis 28:14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

The promise that the Messiah would be born from their lineage was given to Abraham, to Isaac and here to Jacob: "in thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed". This was an integral part of the covenant promise to the patriarchs. God repeated this in the NT. Please turn to Acts 3:25 (2X). In entrance to the temple at Jerusalem sat a man who was lame from his mother's womb. Using the Apostle Peter as His instrument God healed this man so that he could leap and walk. Then Peter preached a sermon and toward the end of the sermon he said, in Acts 3:25, Acts 3:25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, "And in thy Seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed".

God repeated this again in Gal 3:8, Just listen as I read, Galatians 3:8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, "In thee shall all nations be blessed".

Therefore when we read that Esau despised his birthright, it meant that Esau despised the honor that from his lineage the Messiah would be born. This was an enormous slap in the face of God. But it proved that Esau was a reprobate, and this was the Decree of God. God's promise to Abraham was passed on to Isaac and from him to Jacob. Please turn about 70 pages to your right, to Rom 9:9 (2X).

#2. Children of the Promise (John 1:13, Rom 9:8-13, 4:12-16)

In Rom 9:8 God states the principle that: "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed". This is an important principle, which we have already seen in John 1:13, where God says: "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God". In other words, those who are in the bloodline of saints are not necessarily counted for the seed of Abraham. Only those who are the "Children of the Promise" are counted for the seed. But who are the Children of the Promise? Then God gave five examples of who are the Children of the Promise. The first example is in Rom 9:9, Romans 9:9 For this *is* the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son.

These words were said more than 2000 years earlier in Gen 18:10. What was so important that Sarah would have a son, which she will name Isaac? Well, Isaac was the son of promise. Through this son of promise we must look forward to the promised Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who would come as

a descendant of Isaac. Which means that Christ will also represent all those whom God has placed in Christ from before the foundation of the world. All who receive from God faith, the evidence of salvation, are the Children of the Promise. What faith is this? It is not the faith of Christ, but it is the faith of Abraham, according to Rom 4:12,16. And how do we characterize Abraham's faith? Three times do we find in the NT that "Abraham believed God". It does not say, "Abraham believed in God", because the devils also believe in God, and tremble. But "Abraham believed God", which means that Abraham believed all that God has said. This is the faith that unites the body of believers: We believe all that God has written in the Bible. The second example of Children of the Promise begins in V. 10,

Rom 9:10 And not only *this*; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac;
Romans 9:11 (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

Romans 9:12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.

Romans 9:13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

This is the most hated passage of Scripture by those who preach another gospel. But this is the second example identifying the Children of the Promise. Esau's name was changed to Edom, which means "Adam". Esau remained in the Adamic state in which he was born until the day of his death. And we know that the Adamic state in which we were born is a state of sin and enmity against God. It is a state in which people are willing ambassadors of Satan and will be condemned to Hell with Satan, for "Hell is made for the Devil and his messengers". Therefore Esau represents all the Reprobate who ever lived. Jacob's name was changed to Israel, which means "Prince of God", a name given to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jacob was saved at some point in his life, because Jacob was one of God's Elect. Jacob became a friend of God in spite of all his sins. Therefore Jacob represents all the Elect of God who have been placed in Christ from before the foundation of the world. They are the Children of the Promise. What did God say to Rebekah? "The elder shall serve the younger". In our terminology it means that all the Reprobate in the world are here to serve the purpose of God in the lives of all the Elect. They are to inflict the chastening of God on all His children, because that is God's way of teaching us to remain faithful. They are to persecute all God's children, because this is for our benefit and it is for us a sign that we are His faithful ambassadors. They are to ridicule and cut down the self esteem of God's children, because this is God's way of keeping us humble. They are to bring false gospels into the world, so that we will be forced to study God's Word carefully in order to remain faithful. These are just a few of the many ways in which all the Reprobate serve the purpose of God.

- **The Purpose of God** (Rom 9:11,13, 3:12, Eph 2:3, Jer 31:3) is emphasized in verse 11,

Romans 9:11 (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

Do you see in this verse "the purpose of God"? It says "In order that the purpose of God according

to election might stand". In other words, God says that here is a prime example of God's election of human beings: "Jacob have I loved", means that Jacob was elected unto salvation by God. God chose him unto salvation before the foundation of the world. In this life on earth Jacob was being prepared for eternal bliss with God. "Esau have I hated", means that God passed by Esau and would leave Esau in his sins. God chose to pass him by before the foundation of the world, because our God is a God who "knows the end from the beginning", even before He started creating this universe. Is this really what God says? Absolutely yes, because God says: "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil". Before the children could have contributed anything to their salvation, or to their condemnation, God already made up His mind: "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated". God does not say, "Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I loved a little less". Absolutely not! God says, "Esau have I hated", and the Greek word here cannot be misconstrued to mean anything else than "Hated". These days all kinds of preachers say: "God loves everybody". "God hates the sin but loves the sinner". Those words are not found in the Bible. If we hold that the Bible is the authoritative Word of God, then we dare not change what God says here in Rom 9:11-13. When God says that He hates certain persons already before they were born, then we dare not turn God's words around to make it mean something else. Even when we dig into the Greek text and analyze it back and forth, we cannot make it say something else than this: "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated", and God said this before the children were born. In other words, this is what Election is: "Not of works, but of Him that calleth". It does not depend on our works, but it only depends on God who calleth. Give God all the honor and all the glory that belongs to Him. Do not rob God of His glory by saying that God looked down the corridors of time and God saw that Jacob would turn to God and Esau would neglect God. Not at all! God says: "Not of works, but of Him that calleth". What does that mean, "Not of works"? This is very plain and simple. It means that there was nothing that we could do in the far future that would sway God's decision to love us or to hate us. In fact, when God looked down the corridors of time all He saw were wicked sinners. "There is NONE that doeth good, NO NOT ONE!" Moreover we read in Eph 2:3 that "we were all by nature the children of wrath, even as others". Those who say that God looked down the corridors of time, and God foreknew who would turn to Him, and God rewarded them with eternal life, these are liars and are robbers of God's glory. They make the Bible say something else than it really says. They have adulterated the Word of God with a gospel of their own fabrication. And when they bow down and worship this god that they have made, they commit spiritual fornication with this idol that they have created, and they are leading many astray who are following their teaching. God will hold them accountable for this sin, and for the sin of causing so many others to be damned through their lies.

But look at the wonderful things this passage is saying to us. God says: "look at the wonderful grace that is on display through the process of Election". We were on the way to Hell because of our sins. We deserved to go to Hell. There was absolutely no possibility of saving ourselves from this slippery slide

into Hell. But now, suddenly, we heard that we have been pardoned, because the Lord Jesus Christ took our place and He endured the fires of Hell in our place. He did that because He loved us, because He said here in Rom 9:13, "Jacob have I loved", and in Jeremiah 31:3 God said: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee". Yes! God says this to us! What did it cost Christ to love us that way? It cost Him everything He had. For our sins He was forsaken by God. For our sins He had to endure the second death, the lake of fire, because that was the penalty we would have to endure if we would have to pay for our sins. How can we do anything else but love Him?

Please turn to the Epistle to the Hebrews 12:14 (2X). Esau despised his birthright. People will say: "I will never be as stupid as Esau, I will never make such a mistake". But paraphrased God says:

- **Be Not Like Esau** (Heb 12:14-17, 2:3)

There is a good likelihood that you will be like Esau. It is only if the grace of God rests upon you that you will not be like Esau. Most people live in this world as if this is all they should live for. This is where the action is, and this is where their focus is. They might care for their finances in the near future, but they have no regard for eternity future. Just like Esau they want to enjoy the present and they despise their spiritual mandate. What is our spiritual mandate? God made us to worship Him and enjoy Him forever in glory. If we neglect that, then we are despising our birthright. Where is our focus? Do we live for the here and now, or is our focus on eternity future? What is important in our live? Do we care only for our present enjoyment? That is what Esau cared for. Do we want the world right now, or are we concerned for our eternity future? Look at what goes on in our own heart and mind: that which is important to us indicates if we truly have become saved. Do we look for a life full of happy experiences, or do we want a life that is filled with faithfulness to God? God placed us in this world to prepare us for eternal life. There are only two options: Either you have prepared for eternal life, or you have prepared for eternal death. That is the decision every human being is faced with.

Therefore God wrote in Heb 12:14-17 the following words:

Hebrews 12:14 Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

Hebrews 12:15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled;

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

Hebrews 12:17 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.

A characteristic of a child of God is that he pursues holiness. If we do not pursue holiness we shall not see the Lord. A characteristic of the elders is that they are diligent in their oversight of the congregation, or else someone might lack of the grace of God, or else bitterness might spring up among

us, or else a fornicator, or a profane person, or a Reprobate like Esau might be among us. When Esau sought repentance for his sin of selling the birthright, he did not find it, since repentance is a gift from God, and God did not give it to him. Please turn to Hebrews 2:3 (2X). Here is the thorn that sticks in the flesh of those who bring a free will gospel. Esau neglected his eternal future. He figured there would still be time to repent. But God said in Heb 2:3,

Hebrews 2:3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*;

Like Esau, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? What is this great salvation that we must not neglect? It is the salvation that the Lord Jesus Christ provided by laying down His glory and coming to earth as a man, to suffer for all His Elect the penalty due to them for their sins. This is why God had to "give His only begotten Son" to such severe punishment for all those who believe in Him. However no one would of their own initiative believe in Him, because we were all sinners at enmity against God, and God says, "There is NONE that seeketh after God". Therefore the only way God could save anyone is to give some of these sinners this faith. And now we can experience this grace of God at some point in our life when God the Holy Spirit gives us a new heart and gives us the faith to believe this Gospel.

The hymn, # 378, we are going to sing reflects this great salvation that God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit have provided for us, unworthy sinners. But we believe all that God has written about this great salvation, and we believe the glorious future we shall enter into.

I know not why God's wondrous grace to me He hath made known,
Nor why, unworthy, Christ in love Redeemed me for His own.

I know not how this saving faith to me He did impart,
Nor how believing in His Word wrought peace within my heart.

I know not how the Spirit moves, convincing men of sin,
Revealing Jesus through the Word, creating faith in Him.

I know not what of good or ill may be reserved for me,
Of weary ways or golden days, before His face I see.

And then the refrain:

But I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able
to keep that which I've committed unto Him against that day.

What a marvelous and wonderful grace of God for unworthy sinners.

Amen.

Let us turn to the Lord in prayer.