

## EXPOSITION OF GENESIS

### Message #61

### Genesis 25:27-34

One of the most tragic names in the entire Bible is the name Esau. He is a man who literally forfeited his divine inheritance for a bowl of soup. There is nothing more detestable to God than one who would forfeit his inheritance for the sake of some immediate gratification of the flesh. It is no wonder that God said, “I have loved Jacob, but I have hated Esau” (Malachi 1:2-3). Hebrews 12:15-17 connects this episode to a Grace Age believer involved in sexual immorality.

**SOME IN THE FAMILY OF GOD WILL FORFEIT THEIR ETERNAL INHERITANCE FOR THE GRATIFICATION OF SOME INSTANT FLESHLY DESIRE, BUT OTHERS WILL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO GAIN THEIR ETERNAL INHERITANCE.**

Esau represents a man who is so dominated by his own passions that he is willing to forget about his spiritual inheritance and his rewards. Jacob represents a man who is so consumed by God's will that he will go to great lengths to assure himself of a spiritual inheritance and rewards.

Undoubtedly when we get to Glory, there will have been many Esau-types who would rather give up their eternal inheritance so they could give into their temporary passions. There will also be a few Jacob-types who did whatever it took to gain eternal rewards.

Dr. James Strahan, a Hebrew scholar of England in the late 1800s, writes: “Esau and Jacob were contrasts from the first, and as they grew up, the differences between them became more and more marked (*Hebrew Ideals In Genesis*, p. 206).

**CONTRAST #1** - The contrast in personal character. Genesis 25:27

We are immediately introduced to a major contrast in character - Esau became a skillful hunter of the wild whereas Jacob was a righteous reflective man who stayed among the tents. Dr. Allen Ross said: “Esau is the sportsman, rough, wild, free, boisterous, and exciting; Jacob is the settled man, stable, quiet, thoughtful and civilized” (*Creation & Blessing*, p. 448). It is no coincidence that the one, who will inherit the great blessings, will be the submissive, humble, individual who learned to function with other people, and not the isolated “he-man” who generally went his own way, and did his own thing. The loud, dominate, isolationist who plays by his or her own rules will never go anywhere in eternity. In this life, Esau got what he wanted, but with God he was nothing.

**CONTRAST #2** - The contrast of parental affection. Genesis 25:28

Isaac, who loved wild game, loved Esau. Rebekah loved Jacob. The text clearly states that Isaac's partiality is solely based on his own self-gratification - he loved wild game. Here is a major weakness of Isaac - food - and it will be this very weakness that will be exploited and cause Isaac to make a major mistake (Genesis 27: 1 -40). The text does not say why Rebekah loved Jacob. It may be because of the promise of God (Genesis 25:23) or because of Jacob's quiet, thoughtful, reflective personality (Genesis 25:27). God's sovereignty is seen here because

He will accomplish His will when the key parent favors the wrong child, as Calvin observed (*Genesis*, p. 49).

**CONTRAST #3** - The contrast of personal success. Genesis 25:29

This is very intriguing because the Hebrew implies that even though Esau was the skilled hunter, the one who was successful at catching and cooking game was Jacob - he had something to cook and Jacob had nothing. Esau, by his hunting, could not catch anything, but Jacob, by his cooking, could catch Esau.

**CONTRAST #4** – The contrast in self-control. Genesis 25:30-31

What is described in these verses is one who is out of control and one who is in complete control; Esau is so dominated by his passions that, according to the Hebrew, he asks Jacob to feed him the stew in such a way as to let him gulp it down (Allen Ross, *Creation & Blessing*, p. 450)“ The “red stuff” (v. 30) is a red lentil soup/stew which is still a favorite in Palestine. It is made of onions, garlic, rice and olive oil and is served with lamb or other meat (John Davis, *Paradise to Prison*, p. 233). This is a good food to gulp down.

Jacob, on the other hand, was very calm and controlled; he knew exactly what he wanted and how to get it. Esau wanted his appetite appeased at any cost but Jacob wanted God’s will at any cost.

The birthright was very important in Biblical times. It included temporal, physical, spiritual and eternal blessings, plus it meant one received a double portion of the paternal inheritance (Deuteronomy 21 :17; I Chronicles 5: 1-2). It also meant that the one who possessed the birthright was the head of the family (W. H. Thomas, *Genesis*, p. 230). Esau; is so undisciplined that Jacob will use his weakness to get the birthright for himself. Although this is no stellar moment for Jacob, he did want God’s blessings and he did want to be used by God more than anything else.

**CONTRAST #5** - The contrast in future objectives. Genesis 25:32-34

The Hebrew word “despise” (25:34) means that Esau considered the birthright to be nothing or worthless compared to the bowl of soup and God identifies him as “godless” (Hebrews 12:16). Notice how emotional and irrational Esau is, “I am famished”, “I am about to die”, “let me swallow that red stuff.” Jacob is very calculated in his thinking. Decisions made emotionally and irrationally are usually not of God. God’s will is calculated, thoughtful.

The Apostle Paul kept himself disciplined at all times because he did not want to toss away his rewards like Esau did (I Corinthians 9:24-27). One question we all need to ask is who are we most like - Jacob or Esau?