

Genesis 27D (2011)

- The conspiracy of Rebekah and Jacob has done its work, and Jacob has received the blessing, which means the birthright has been honored
 - Jacob will receive all of the father's inheritance
 - Not just the double portion
 - Isaac foolishly assigned his entire inheritance to Jacob, thinking he was Esau
 - That fact might not have been clear enough from the blessing we read last week
 - It simply mentioned the dew of heaven and fatness on earth, etc.
 - But the all inclusive nature of the blessing will soon become apparent when the time comes to give Esau his portion
 - We're going to find that there is nothing left
 - Isaac thought he was outsmarting Rebekah and Jacob and even God Himself
 - He reckoned he could allocate everything to his favorite son and settle the matter
 - Instead, he did exactly the opposite of what he wanted, which was exactly what God intended
 - Isaac's attempt to outmaneuver God reminds of a classic exchange between a young boy praying to the Lord

Johnny - God how long is a million years to you?

God - It is but a second Johnny.

Johnny - God how much is a million dollars to you?

God - It is but a penny to me

Johnny - God can I have a penny

God - Just a second

- So now it's time to watch the other shoe drop as Esau returns

[Gen. 27:30](#) Now it came about, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had hardly gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

[Gen. 27:31](#) Then he also made savory food, and brought it to his father; and he said to his father, "Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that you may bless me."

[Gen. 27:32](#) Isaac his father said to him, "Who are you?" And he said, "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau."

[Gen. 27:33](#) Then Isaac trembled violently, and said, "Who was he then that hunted game and brought it to me, so that I ate of all of it before you came, and blessed him? Yes, and he shall be blessed."

[Gen. 27:34](#) When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me, even me also, O my father!"

- Obviously, Isaac never expected a second visitor after giving the first blessing
 - Obviously, he never expected the second son to appear
 - Which means Isaac had no intention of granting a blessing to Rebekah's son, as Isaac called Jacob
 - Further proof that Isaac was intending to give Esau everything
 - Esau announces himself, but notice his description
 - He answers he is Esau, the firstborn
 - Esau is using that term to emphasize his supposed right to the blessing
 - He might have been the first child born physically, but in terms of the birthright, he was no longer the firstborn
 - He had sold that right
 - So Esau's description in this context is a lie, in that it implies he has rights to something he sold
 - When Esau announces himself, Isaac trembles in fear
 - The word "tremble" in Hebrew is *charad*, which means shaking with great fear, not in anger
 - Isaac wasn't furious at the deception, he was exceedingly shaken and frightened by his recognition that God had been working against Isaac's plan

- Just the recognition that he had entered into a contest of wills with the Living God brought the fear of God's wrath and judgment to Isaac's heart
- Good King Jehoshaphat said it this way

[2Chr. 19:7](#) "Now then let the **fear of the LORD** be upon you; be very careful what you do, for the LORD our God will have no part in unrighteousness or partiality or the taking of a bribe."

- As the reality of the moment sets in, Isaac is horrified
 - He has just blessed someone with his entire inheritance and patriarchal authority over the entire family
 - As Isaac himself acknowledges, indeed, that person will be blessed
 - Isaac has given away the farm and left him flatfooted
 - When Esau hears this story, he immediately realizes what has happened
 - And different than his father, Esau's cry is bitter and sorrowful
 - He is suddenly sad at the prospect of having no inheritance whatsoever
 - In desperation, he appeals to his father to give him some kind of blessing
 - What he means is give me something for an inheritance
 - He was clearly shaken by the prospect of having nothing at all
 - Once again, we see evidence that Isaac's blessing to Jacob was total and complete, leaving nothing behind
- Why was Esau so upset?
 - Didn't Hebrews tell us that Esau despised his birthright?
 - Let's take a second look at that passage

[Heb. 12:15](#) See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;

[Heb. 12:16](#) that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal.

[Heb. 12:17](#) For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.

- First, notice the context of these comments by the writer to the Hebrews
 - The writer is warning about the possibility that someone in our midst may have come short of the grace of God
 - These unbelievers are a source of bitterness and trouble within the body of believers
 - And by their presence they defile the body of Christ
 - This is the context of the author's comments concerning Esau
 - As we've already seen, Esau is an unbeliever, a godless man
 - And now the reader uses Esau as an example of the problem of a bitterness that causes trouble among believers
 - Esau is exactly that kind of person
 - He is the unbeliever in this family of otherwise God-fearing people
 - And because he has come short of the grace of God, he will now be a bitter root causing trouble in this family
 - And he will be the source of much trouble
 - We remember that he has married two ungodly women and they are a source of misery for Isaac and Rebekah
 - And now he will be a source of trouble in the matter of the blessing
- The second thing we notice is that Esau's sale of his birthright was proof, according to this writer, that he was a godless man
 - In fact, Esau despised his birthright, which explains why he sold it for only a bowl of stew
 - The birthright was normally just an earthly inheritance
 - But in Isaac's family, it gained additional significance because it also included a spiritual promise from God

- At this point in our story, Esau is clearly upset at the prospect of losing the birthright inheritance
 - But based on Hebrews, we conclude that Esau desired the earthly inheritance that he's lost now
 - But he despised the heavenly promises in the birthright, which is why he sold it so casually
 - We must conclude that Esau expected to find a way around the sale when the time came
 - Perhaps he expected Isaac's favor for him to win the day
 - In any case, Esau's willingness to sell proved his lack of faith in God's promises
 - It proved he was a godless man who had come up short of God's grace
 - But now that he is faced with the full reality of what he had done, his attitude changes
- This leads us to the third thing we learn from Hebrews...after Esau realized that the Lord had intervened to hold him to his bargain, he was sorrowful
 - Esau wanted to repent, but there was no place found for repentance
 - It's important to look closely at the sentence structure in v.17 of Hebrews 12
 - First, Esau desired to inherit the blessing
 - Who did he seek the blessing from? Isaac
 - And then it says Esau was rejected in his pursuit for the birthright
 - Who rejected him? Isaac, of course
 - Isaac cannot bless Esau with the birthright because it's already gone
 - Then the writer says Esau found no room for repentance
 - The writer is saying that Esau had no capacity or desire to repent of his unbelief in God's promises
 - His sorrow was strictly a response to losing the material blessing

- So Esau lacked a repentant heart for his despising of God's promises
 - As a result of his lack of repentance, Esau could not obtain what he desired, that is an inheritance
 - The writer ends the verse by saying that he (Esau) sought "it" with tears
 - What did Esau seek? The birthright inheritance, of course
- So putting it all together, the writer says that Esau was a godless man, an immoral man
 - He became a root of bitterness in a family of God-fearing believers
 - He despised the spiritual blessing that God had poured out on this family
 - And as a result of his unbelief, he was willing to part with the spiritual blessings of the birthright for next to nothing
 - Yet he still counted on receiving the material inheritance by hook or crook
 - When God stepped in and excluded Esau from any inheritance whatsoever, he cried tears of sorrow but not tears of repentance
 - Paul reminds us that not all sorrow is godly sorrow

[2Cor. 7:10](#) For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.

- The unbelieving world will experience great sorrow in their lives from time to time
 - This sorrow is the result of sin and it is an experience common to all men, believer and unbeliever
 - But for the unbeliever, it is the only kind of sorrow that is possible, and it ultimately leads nowhere
 - Therefore, Esau's lack of repentance and lack of faith prevented him from receiving the thing he sought
 - Because he rejected God's promises of eternal inheritance, he lost both the eternal and the earthly inheritance

- And because Jacob was blessed with faith, he gladly received the promises of God and therefore he was to receive blessing both then and now
- This pattern is still at work in the world today
 - The world desires to have earthly wealth and they cry tears of sorrow when they lose it
 - But in their desperation to obtain and hold on to something that is destined to fail and burn up, they completely ignore – and even despise – the promises found in the word of God
 - So in the end they will lose both the earthly and the spiritual blessings
 - Because they try to obtain what they cannot keep, they fail to gain what they cannot lose
 - The believer, on the other hand, is called to leave behind the chase for worldly things, and in the process rest in the promises of God
 - As a result of that refocus, the word of God promises that they will gain far more than they lost
 - Several verses come to mind

[Luke 18:28](#) Peter said, “Behold, we have left our own homes and followed You.”

[Luke 18:29](#) And He said to them, “Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God,

[Luke 18:30](#) who will not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life.”

[Luke 9:24](#) “For whoever wishes to save his life will **lose** it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.

- So what can Isaac do for his bitter and unrepentant son under the circumstances?

[Gen. 27:35](#) And he said, “Your brother came deceitfully and has taken away your blessing.”

[Gen. 27:36](#) Then he said, “Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he has supplanted me these two times? He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing.” And he said, “Have you not reserved a blessing for me?”

[Gen. 27:37](#) But Isaac replied to Esau, "Behold, I have made him your master, and all his relatives I have given to him as servants; and with grain and new wine I have sustained him. Now as for you then, what can I do, my son?"

[Gen. 27:38](#) Esau said to his father, "Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father." So Esau lifted his voice and wept.

[Gen. 27:39](#) Then Isaac his father answered and said to him,
 "Behold, away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling,
 And away from the dew of heaven from above.

[Gen. 27:40](#) "By your sword you shall live,
 And your brother you shall serve;
 But it shall come about when you become restless,
 That you will break his yoke from your neck."

- Isaac begins with a statement that is half truth, half lie
 - Isaac says your brother came deceitfully...this is true
 - Jacob used deception, which is a form of lying, to obtain the birthright
 - But that statement ignores the obvious truth
 - Jacob was led to be deceptive because Isaac and Esau were themselves deceptive in scheming to award the birthright unjustly
 - If anyone should be accused of trickery, it would be these two men
 - And then Isaac speaks a falsehood himself
 - He describes the birthright as belonging to Esau
 - It does not belong to Esau and hasn't since he sold it
 - By using this phrase, Isaac gives birth to the false story that Jacob was a deceiver who stole the birthright
 - He was a deceiver, but he deceived to keep something that God had already given to him
 - Do you know the story of the spies and Rahab, the Harlot?
 - Remember that in that story Rahab uses a deception to protect the spies

- Her deception was a sin, though it was used to further the purposes of God
 - Another example of God working through the sin of men to accomplish His good purposes
- And the same here
 - Jacob sins – and he pays a price for his sin – but he is working in the will of God
- In v.26 Esau take the accusation a step further
 - He notes the irony in Jacob's name, that he was a supplanter having stepped into Esau's place
 - It's important to note that Esau acknowledges that the birthright had been sold
 - But then he claims it was an unfair sale
 - He is trying to rewrite history to position himself as the victim
 - Again, these are the testimonies that have led so many to think that Jacob was the offender here
 - But should we base our view of Jacob on the testimony of two men who were beaten at their own game of deception?
 - Or do we take the counsel of God's word that tells us that Jacob was the peaceful, God-fearing man who was to be blessed by the Lord?
 - So Esau asks his father if there is anything left to distribute to him?
- Now Isaac breaks the bad news to Esau – there is nothing left
 - Jacob is to be Esau's master and all Jacob's relatives are to be Jacob's servants
 - This was an especially hard declaration, and now Isaac regrets having pronounced it
 - But a moment earlier he was willing to give that kind of preference to Esau

- I suspect Isaac viewed Esau something like the way Israel later came to view Saul when they chose him to be king
- Saul looked the part and made the people feel good about themselves, but he was not a man chosen by God
- That man was David, the shepherd boy
- Similarly, Esau is a man that Isaac can imagine being a powerful leader over the family, unlike the weaker and timid Jacob
 - So Isaac tries to place Esau in the place of prominence and cuts out Jacob entirely
- Now Isaac has to break the news to Esau that there is nothing left
 - Jacob received the best of heaven and earth that Isaac had to offer
 - And Isaac adds rhetorically what can I give you? Meaning, I have nothing to give you
 - So we see proof that the first blessing was everything Isaac could offer
- Then Esau in desperation asks if you have only one blessing? Can't you pronounce something for my sake?
 - But unlike godless Esau, Isaac is God-fearing, and this experience has awoken Isaac to his sinful blindness, spiritually speaking
 - He realizes that this entire episode has God's fingerprints all over it
 - And if God wanted Jacob to receive everything, then trembling Isaac isn't about to try a second time to challenge God
 - So Isaac resists any attempt to pronounce a blessing on Esau
 - When Esau pushes him, Isaac does the only thing he can do at this point
 - Isaac confirms that Esau has been forsaken by the Lord
 - He declares a blessing that is essentially a series of contrary statements compared to what was given to Jacob
 - While Jacob receives the best of everything, Esau will be far away from Isaac's inheritance

- He will be separated both from the fertility of the Land of Israel but from the grace and mercy of Heaven
- Furthermore, Esau will be a people that live by the sword, being the hunter that he is
- He will serve Jacob except that Esau's people will be in constant rebellion to Jacob's people
 - Thus assuring that the two families never have affinity for one another
- Historically, we see the truth of this blessing
 - The Edomites, who descend from Esau, were always Israel's enemies
 - And any time Israel conquered the Edomites, they inevitably rose up again
 - Eventually, they became known as the Idumeans
 - The Herod dynasty were Idumeans, or Edomites
 - When Jerusalem was destroyed in AD66, they were wiped out along with most of the Jews
 - But there is also a deeper spiritual truth reflected in these blessings
 - We know that Jacob's blessing is a reflection on God's plan for Israel and all believers brought into the New Covenant
 - But this "blessing" on Esau is also a confirmation of God's eternal decree at the fall in the Garden
 - God said that the seed of the woman would have enmity with the serpent and her seed would battle with the seed of the serpent
 - The seed of woman is first and foremost Christ, born of a virgin, and He battles with Satan, the serpent
 - But the seed also represents all those who descend from these two persons
 - The seed of the woman are all believers in Christ
 - While the seed of the serpent is a representation of all unbelievers who are sons of disobedience, Paul calls them

- And God declared in the Garden that there will always be enmity between these two seeds
 - Here we see God ensure that separation on a national basis
 - It starts with these two brothers who will forever be enemies, at least at some level
 - And their respective families will find no common ground over the centuries, since God calls His people to be separate from the world
 - But then God will also use the unbelieving world to chastise the unfaithful Israel, which is how He used Edom
- When Christ comes and the Kingdom is set up on earth, Edom will be an uninhabited land, according to Jeremiah and Isaiah
 - While Israel will be filled with the glory of the Lord and the abundance of His people
 - Then we will see the final and full measure of this promise come to fruition
 - While we wait today, remember that we are called children of the promise because we rest in what will be rather than what is today