

# Kings Norton Baptist Church

Sunday 21<sup>th</sup> January 2024 10 am

Don't be godless like Esau

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Welcome to all.

Opening Scripture and prayer

Hymn MP 41 At the Name of Jesus

Scripture Psalm 71 (page 585)

Prayer of praise and thanksgiving.

Children's talk - two sides of the same coin

**In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps.** Prov 16:9

Chorus MP 378 Jesus shall take the highest honour

MP 570 Reign in me

Notices Chris, Joyce funeral, Hazel Nash,

Can I again ask that you attend the Thursday Church Prayertime. This is one hour together to read and pray. What is it that is more important? The room is warm. Most of you can just jump in the car, if you would like a lift ring me.

Missionary focus

Prayer and share time.

Reading Genesis 27:1-17, 18-40 (page 28)

[ see also Hebrews 12:14-17 (page 1211) ]

Hymn O Great God (on Bulletin)

Sermon: Don't be godless like Esau

Hymn mp 103 Come ye faithful raise the anthem (Mayhew)

Closing Prayer

[Sermon Index Database](#)

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## Prayer and Exordium

▪ Years ago, my father divorced my mother for another woman. That was in 1972, the consequences of that decision are still being felt today.

At a certain point my father made a decision to give up on the marriage vows he'd made before man and God - and go off to live with another woman.

It was a choice between fulfilling his God given responsibilities, - or to follow the desires of his heart.

It was essentially a choice between going God's way - or going his way - these things always are. Here the important issues of judgment and eternity were given up for the temporary, the here and now.

So it was with Esau when he sold his birthright. We read of that in Genesis 25.

Here in Genesis 27 we see played out the consequences of what Esau did those many years before.

**'The message all around is "do what suits you – all will be fine".'**

**'Choices do have consequences', always, whether we see it now clearly or not. Everything said and done will be, will be brought before the bar of God.**

You would be right in thinking at this point "well there's no hope for anyone!"

Quite, but God is merciful. God is not only Just - He is also merciful and He is gracious. I can say, as many can say: *"there but the grace of God go I"*

What that means is that while in this life there's a chance to change, the sinner can repent and live – or the one once repentant, can return to his sin and die.

But remember the decisions you make are an outworking of who you are. They are an expression of your character. Consider the fool from your class at school, you knew then where he was one day to end up.

⇒ **As surely as night follows day the consequences will come, they do come.**

Esau is an example of that, he was a fool, and today we see the result. Sadly he didn't see it – at least not until it was too late.

But there is also another parallel truth running through this passage – and that is the ruling nature of God's hand on events. As we had earlier: **In his heart a man plans his course, - but the LORD determines his steps.** Proverbs 16:9

That sermon of 26<sup>th</sup> November (2023) on Genesis 25 was entitled 'Election'. That is equally obvious here in Ch 27 as we will see.

Everywhere in the Bible man's responsibility - and God's sovereignty – are seams running together in a rock. Here as in many other places they surface.

I hope you have no doubt about that, not only is the teaching here clear on the matter - but usefully several NT passages give us a commentary on this event.

Esau sold his birthright – and by birthright we mean his right as the eldest son to inherit the property – as many cultures do. In OT this property, the land equates to eternal life with Christ. He is our inheritance.

When Esau sold his birthright – something he chose to do – and was responsible for – we also see the unfolding of the Lord’s will in Election. The theme of this passage, and indeed of the whole Bible, is that the Lord God chooses some - and rejects others. This is an essential fact, for if God is sovereign which he is, it can be no other way. It’s the God glorifying truth.

Let us now come to the day Isaac is to give pronouncements, his judgments to his two sons Esau and Jacob. Ch 27

### Overview

Isaac is old and his sight has gone, we have the picture of a man near the end of his life’s journey. He is around 137 and yet he is to live another forty years, dying at the age of 180. See Gen 35:28,29

Isaac calls his older son Esau, and Esau comes to him, “**here I am**” he says. 27:1 Esau, believing he is about to receive the inheritance as the firstborn, rushes off to hunt for game and cook the meal his father so likes.

Meanwhile Rebekah who remembers the Lord’s promise to her son Jacob schemes to have Jacob receive it instead while Esau is away from the home.

This is what happens as we read v5 to v30.

Then Esau returns 30 **After Isaac finished blessing him and Jacob had scarcely left his father’s presence, his brother Esau came in from hunting.** and his father asks “**who are you**” x2 v32.

Doesn’t that remind you of the Lord’s chilling words in Matthew 7 **Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’** Mt 7:23

Esau doesn’t receive the blessing even though he seeks it with tears.

That then is what happens. Let’s consider a few points before we come to Esau:

### What of Isaac?

Why did Isaac go ahead with blessing Esau? Shouldn’t he have been more thoughtful of the Lord’s earlier word to Rebekah about the older serving the

younger? Shouldn’t he have been more willing to be governed by what he knew of the Lord’s Will, than his own inclination?

### What of Rebekah?

Rebekah is mindful of the divine promise – her end aim to see Jacob have it - is good - but her means of getting there - is bad.

### What of Jacob?

Jacob deceives his father. He dresses up as his brother so as to trick him. He lies when asked who he is, “**I am Esau you firstborn**” v19 it’s a bare faced lie. Again when Isaac asked 24 “**Are you really my son Esau?**” “**I am,**” x2 **Jacob replied.** He lied.

### *So now what of Esau?*

We start back with the selling of his birthright. You remember what happened in Gen 25. v.29 **Once when Jacob was cooking some stew** his brother Esau returns from hunting weary and famishing, and he barter his birthright for a pot of lentils. What kind of bargain is that! The fool!. **Food for the stomach – and the stomach for food - but God will destroy them both!**

That choice revealed his heart. Your choices reveal your heart. It is easy to see what people are like by the things they choose to do.

He was presumptuous. He had downplayed the importance of eternity and assumed it would come automatically, thinking “*it will all work out fine in the end*” Is that how you approach life, death and eternity? Many do. I will leave it, I’ll be fine, it’s not urgent, it can wait, there’s time.

He tries to justify his foolish decision. “**Look I am about to die,**” x2. he exaggerates. And as I told my children ‘*exaggerating is lying*’. His thoughts are on the here and now. He regards his birthright – his future inheritance - as of no value. He is only interested if it is profitable to him in the present life. It is the things of the moment that are important to him – not the things of eternity. Is there someone here who thinks like that? Do you want only to improve your lot now? - **Your status, your looks, your reputation, your possessions, your achievements?**, what is it for you? with little or no thought for what is to come – which is far more important. – yes it’s far more important!

When Jesus was hungry and able to turn the stones into bread – and he had the power to do so - he didn’t. His eye was always on the Lord His God. “I trust Him to take care of my needs now”. There’s a lesson we could all learn.

Esau, **swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob.. So Esau despised his birthright.**” Esau swore an oath! In the name and presence of God he doesn’t hesitate to sell his birthright, even making God a witness of his ingratitude.

No wonder we are told in Hebrews **See that no-one .... is godless like Esau**

Esau was responsible. He had the birthright, but he gave it away. He blames his brother when he sold his birthright to him. v36 What is Esau like? rather than confess his sin - he turns in hatred towards his brother.

### *The Day comes*

Then the day comes – the day to cash in, the day to reap what was sown. The day – the doorway - to eternity. The D day. Which way will that decision those years ago – now take him? What about you? How about you?

The two pronouncements are found in v27-29 for Jacob and v39-40 for Esau.

Isaac had blessed Jacob saying 28 **May God give you of heaven’s dew and of earth’s richness-**

But to Esau 39 (NIV) **"Your dwelling will be away from the earth’s richness, away from the dew of heaven above.**

⇒ **So Jacob has it – and Esau misses it.**

Some translations such as AV do not include the ‘away from’ that is found in the different Hebrew word derivatives which adds ‘from’

Help is at hand though for there’s a difference in another way if you compare the blessing given to Jacob and Esau.

To Jacob we read first of **heaven** and second of the **earth** v28

To Esau we have just had in v 39 first the **earth** and second **heaven**

Does that crossover from of heaven and earth show one will have temporary blessing and the other eternal. Did not Esau choose temporal and disregard the eternal?

And to Jacob he has not only eternal favour, but also an abundance of temporal blessing as well. **and of earth’s richness - an abundance of grain and new wine.**

### Esau cannot reverse things later

We can see that Esau knows he has not received favour from God for he seeks it with screams and tears. He knows that he has now lost – what he pawned earlier, and it cannot be retrieved.

⇒ **“Esau, it’s too late!” he has missed it - he seeks it with tears**

Isaac had said to Esau of Jacob: **“and indeed he will be blessed!”** 34 **When Esau heard his father’s words, he burst out with a loud and bitter cry and said to his father, "Bless me—me too, my father!"**

Esau persists in imploring the blessing, yet it is the cry of desperation a wail of desperation, which is the reason why he obtains no benefit, it is not the broken hearted cry of faith, he has not entered by the gate of faith.

The writer to the Hebrews explains **Afterwards, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. He could bring about no change of mind, though he sought the blessing with tears.**” Heb 12:14-17

### *How will it be for you?*

When that Day of pronouncement comes what will He do with you?

Remember when you leave this world all is set in place, it is too late to change

As we are told in Luke 16 a great gulf, a great chasm is fixed so on-one can cross over, - in either direction.

If you neglect to follow God when he calls you now – then afterwards – you will call upon him in vain, he will turn his back.

Now the door is open, now is the day of salvation, now is the time to **"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near."** (Isa 55:6).

The Holy Son of God who took all onto himself to remove the stain of a sinners guilt, all of it, paid the price in full. All has been done - now come.

Take him up on this limited time offer – This is the right time. Come now to the cross, confess, turn, repent, believe and cross over, while you can. Don’t leave it. Give over your life to Him, this he requires of you – It is a life on loan.

We have all made quick, rash, and foolish decisions, and they will have eternal consequences. But the Love and Grace of the Lord Jesus can change it.

⇒ **How dreadful to make the wrong decision, but then just leave it.**

Do not postpone something you must do now. Do not think all will be fine in the end. No. May there be no-one here deluded into a false security. Multitudes go to hell with their mouths full of good wishes. The desire of the slothful and unbelieving kills them. Many will seek to enter in, but as with Esau, will not be able, because they didn’t earnestly seek it while they could, Jesus said: **“Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.”** Lu 13:24

*The Lord’s works out everything according to his eternal Will*

Jacob may have tricked his father Isaac but no-one can trick God. Esau may have tried to persuade Isaac to change his mind – but you cannot at that time do that to God.

⇒ **Do not say Jacob had it because he deserved it!**

It is the Lord's Will, his eternal Will, that this blessing should go to Jacob.

He did not deserve it - far from it. Nor do any of us here deserve it.

It is a gift, given to whom the Lord chooses. He said: "**I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.**"

Romans 9:15

You cannot do anything to earn God's favour. **It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy.**" Rom 9:16

⇒ **The Lord wills what he will.**

Paul goes on to say that **Rebekah's children had one and the same father, our father Isaac. Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God's purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger." Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."**

**"What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." Ro 9:10-15**

Isaac recognized God's Divine hand in these eternal pronouncements. Isaac is lead along within the Lord's will, he is recorded in Hebrews 11 the Hall of the faithful **"By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future."** 11:20

### **Peroration**

The NT writer to the Hebrews applies these things to you and I this morning.

We, the household of faith are to live separated Godly lives **Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no-one will see the Lord.** If you live that Holy Christ indwelt life it confirms that you are bound for Heaven - you belong to God.

It is so important that we all have a responsibility to watch over one another, to warn one another. **See to it, we are told, that no-one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.** A bitter root grows into a bitter group, It is all our responsibility to that we do not have that in our midst. Yes it defiles many, complaining, gossiping is like us all bathing in dirty water.

4a

**See that no-one is sexually immoral**, this also affects us all

▪ **Church with singles co-habiting should he say something - Yes!**

We are all to watch out for each other because the progress of the Lord's work will be stopped if there's sin in our midst.

▪ **This afternoon at Crusaders we are going to be looking at Achan's sin at Jericho. His sin stopped the progress of all.**

That produces a great frustration as efforts are made - but again and again they come to nothing

**or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son.**

In other words may no-one here be like Esau who undervalued his spiritual birthright, and sold it for a morsel of meat. Let no-one be careless of the Lord's favour bought at great cost through the blood of Christ. What it is saying is - If you have Jesus today then don't sell him off for a morsel of meat, that is the vain and temporary things all around us in this world.

Esau had everything going for him - yet he is described as godless.

Had he decided his hunting was more important than the things of God? He is set up as an example of how not to be ... Don't be like .... **godless Esau. !**

That is all our responsibility, if a brother or sister should slip back, then each of us are charged with intervening. I know it's not easy to say something in case that person is uppity, snappy, offended, yes it will happen, but we are told to make sure, to **See that no-one is misses the grace of God**

Esau had profanely sold the birthright, and thought he would still be fine.

He was justly punished for his contempt of the Lord's Holy things which he foolishly deprived himself. **Afterwards, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. He could bring about no change of mind, though he sought the blessing with tears.**" Heb 12:14-17

⇒ **Love speaks the truth, love warns for eternity is at stake.**

James says **remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.** Jas 5:20

If you have received the Lord's Grace then live that Christ-like, God honouring life. Live in the Faith, guard your conscience, do not cause it to condemn you.

Gen 27 is a picture of the end judgment, the final divine pronouncement, one that cannot be reversed. For those chosen in Christ the word of God stands,

**I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed;**

\_\_\_\_\_END

4b