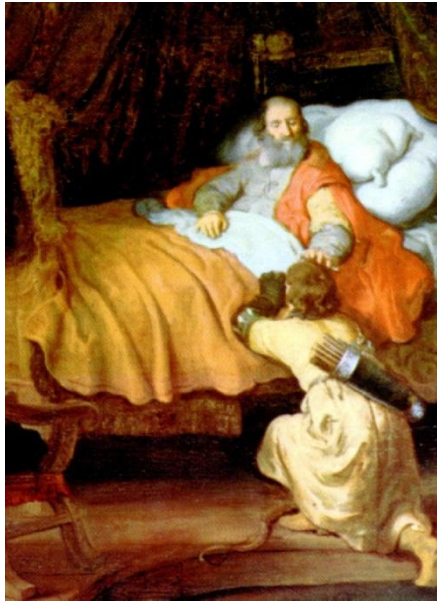


# SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

## LESSON 8



## ESAU SELLS HIS BIRTHRIGHT

*Scripture Texts: Genesis 25:27-34; Hebrews 12:16-17*

After twenty years Isaac and Rebekah had twin sons, Esau, the elder, and Jacob, the younger. Jacob took advantage of Esau's weakness. The devil takes advantage of our weaknesses. Esau sold his greatest treasure for nothing. He would never be able to regain his birthright. It is a tragedy to cast away our confidence in Christ.

When we are born of God, we have a birthright. We are **heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ**. All of God's riches are ours. It is necessary for us to look **diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God (Hebrews 12:15)**. Jesus said, **Watch**. Value your birthright.

**MEMORY VERSE: Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.**  
—Revelation 3:11

### DAILY READINGS:

- Mon.—**Genesis 25:19-28** Birth of Esau and Jacob.
- Tue.—**Obadiah 1-15** Esau's descendants punished for sins.
- Wed.—**Romans 2:1-11** God's righteous judgments.
- Thu.—**Hebrews 2:1-9** Neglect hazardous to receiving birthright.
- Fri.—**Hebrews 10:23-39** Great danger in casting away salvation.

**Devotional Reading: Hebrews 12:14-25** Esau's tragic mistake.

### Sell Me Your Birthright

**Genesis 25:27-31** Jacob **sod**—boiled—**pottage**—a dish of boiled vegetables and meat. He was a **plain man, dwelling in tents**—a quiet keeper around home. **Esau came from the field . . . faint** from hunting and hunger. He was a **cunning hunter, a man of the field . . .** **Esau said to Jacob, Feed me . . . red pottage**—probably made with red lentils, a favorite variety. **Therefore . . . called Edom**—Edom means *red*. The descendants of Esau were called Edomites and his land, Edom. **Jacob said; Sell me this day thy birthright**—the rights, advantages, privileges, and authority belonging to a person because of birth, especially, as in Esau's case, the rights of the firstborn. This was an unreasonable price for a meal, taking advantage of Esau's desire and weakness.

Jacob cunningly took advantage of Esau's temporary weakness to take from him his most valuable possession. Satan is ever watching for weakness in us to deceive and rob us of our salvation. He offers us his cheap wares at a weak moment. He tells us our hope is already gone, and we may as well take what he offers. If we listen to him, we soon find we have lost God out of our hearts. From every side, Satan tempts us to seek pleasure from him, to serve self, to be discouraged, etc. Look carefully. See the real source of the temptation. God will show us where our decisions will lead us if we will lean on and trust Him. Say no to the devil every time. There is safety and help in Jesus Christ.

### Despised His Birthright

**Genesis 25:32-34** **Esau said . . . I am at the point to die**—this was obviously a great exaggeration. The devil always causes our situation to seem greater than it really is. **What profit . . . this birthright . . . ?** If he should die, he could not use it. **Jacob said** —here is my chance—**Swear . . . and he swore**—bound his promise

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by an oath. He sold his birthright to Jacob. How cheap might you be selling your birthright from your Heavenly Father? What did Esau receive for this precious possession? **Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink**—it was momentary, it was soon gone. **Rose up, and went his way**—a way now without a birthright. **Thus Esau despised his birthright**—set it at naught, disregarded it, and treated it with contempt.

Esau is a type of those who cast away salvation for the empty promises of sin. He was discouraged. He felt it of no use to keep his birthright. That is the lie Satan tells each of us. Discouragement always works to the enemy's advantage. Discouragement is a treacherous tool of the devil. In a moment, Esau did something he could not undo in this life or in the next. It is being done every day. One, in a moment of anger, takes a life and pays with his own. Another gives way to greed or lust or despair and reaps sorrow for eternity.

If instead, one in a moment of hope yields to the Spirit's call and commits his soul to God, he will reap the joys of salvation. If he then holds fast what God has given and goes forward, growing in grace, he will have multiplied blessings eternally. Pray continually. Fear sin. Keep trusting God.

### Found No Place of Repentance

**Hebrews 12:16-17 Lest . . . any fornicator**—one who brings something foreign into the place of that which belongs—**or profane person**—with no respect for sacred things—**as Esau**. He was a spiritual fornicator and profane when he **sold his birthright**. **When he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected**—when Isaac gave Jacob the chief blessing (next week's lesson). **He found no place of repentance**—no way to change it, it was too late—**though he sought it carefully**—remorseful now—**with tears**. Then **he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry . . . Bless me, even me also, O my father (Genesis 27:34)**. Sad and tragic was the realization of what he had done. His birthright was lost forever, and he could not change it.

The worse part of Esau's experience was that it was final. He had to suffer the consequence of his decision afterward. We do not like to think of a time when any person can be past the hope of salvation. Yet at death, the time to be saved is past, and sometimes one's act places the point earlier than that. To cast away one's confidence in Christ, to say no to the Holy Spirit is very dangerous, foolish, and unwise. (Read **Hebrews 10:35**.) Somewhere on that road is the point of no return. Tragic beyond words is the case of one who passes it.

### Hold Fast

**Revelation 3:11** When we are born of God, we have a birthright. God's entire storehouse is opened to us. **I come quickly**—Christ will return and then the Judgment. In view of that, **hold that fast which thou hast**—never give up what you have from the Lord—**that no man take thy crown**—that **crown of righteousness** which is to be the reward in Heaven for everyone who obtains it (**2 Timothy 4:8**). We must not lose it!

### JUST A THOUGHT

**Work is the yeast that raises the dough.**

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.  
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