

Are You Living Under the Curse of Esau?

Most of those people reading this today will have a familiarity with Jacob and Esau from the book of Genesis, especially the story of the trading of the birthright for what the Bible calls a bowl of “red red stuff,” often translated as lentil stew. However, because most people focus on Jacob and how he deceived his brother and later his father, they miss an extremely valuable Biblical truth and, as a result, they live lives short of the fullness of God’s promises.

The story of Jacob and Esau takes up only eight verses:

“So the boys grew. Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a calm man, living in tents. Isaac loved Esau, because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field and he was famished. So Esau said to Jacob, ‘Please feed me some of that red stew, for I am famished.’ Therefore his name was called Edom.

Then Jacob said, “First sell me your birthright.”

Esau said, “Look, I am about to die; of what use is the birthright to me?”

Then Jacob said, “Swear to me this day.” So he swore to him, and he sold his birthright to Jacob.

Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew. Then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way.

Thus Esau despised his birthright.” (Gen. 25:27-34)

Yet these verses hold the key to vast blessings for those who understand them and apply the precepts to their lives. Looking at the event, we find that Esau is hungry and tired. He feels like he is about to die. How many times in our walks with God have we felt that way? We struggled through our day searching for something that satisfy our hunger, and it seems beyond our reach, to the point where we feel spiritually totally spent spiritually; we feel like unless something happens soon, we will spiritually die. At that moment, a Jacob often enters our lives, just as Jacob entered Esau's life, with an offer of something that will satisfy our hunger. Or at least they will try to convince us that what they are offering will bring fullness and satisfaction to our souls. These offerings will always come in the form of false doctrines and compromises of the flesh.

Looking further, we see that because Esau despised the birthright he had, he is willing to exchange it for temporary fleshly gratification. Many believers will also. When they don't see or feel victorious, or they look around at others and find themselves lacking blessings in their own eyes, they will also trade their promise for a temporary bowl of stew.

The part that too many miss when reading about Esau and Jacob is that the entire exchange between the two, and the following results, are just as false as the lies that satan would tell you and I today. Looking closely, Esau's birthright was never his to exchange for the soup; the birthright of the firstborn is a covenant promise of God with the firstborn. It cannot be revoked by anyone, just as God's promises to us cannot be traded for other things. Romans 11:29 says, "For the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable."

So we find that Esau didn't have the ability to trade his birthright to Jacob. As we read on in the story, Jacob never actually takes the birthright (the physical one). Remember, the birthright is the double portion of inheritance, which included inheriting the father's land and house. Jacob goes on

to deceive his father and ends up running away from his brother and living with Laban. So Esau got angry at Jacob for stealing something that Jacob never actually stole. As a result, Esau lived for years in anger while still possessing everything that he was angry with Jacob for stealing.

This is exactly what often happens to believers today. Just as with Esau, they feel tired, hungry and defeated. At that moment, Jacob will enter the picture offering to give them what they desire. But just as when Satan tried to tempt Yeshua, that which he offered was not something he had the ability to give. Matthew 4:8-9 says, "Again, the devil took Him up on a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their grandeur, and said to Him, 'All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.'"

When Satan offered all the kingdoms of the world, it was no different than Jacob offering to purchase the birthright. Satan didn't own the world, and Jacob could not possess the earthly birthright.

Too many believers live their lives having settled for less than the reality of what they actually possess. Esau lived for over 20 years in the house that he believed his brother stole from him, on land he believed his brother stole, and tending to herds he believed his brother stole. All the while he was in total possession of his entire birthright.

As a children of God, you have many promises, including what we read in 3 John 1:2: "Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, even as your soul is well."

The key to prosperity is in rejecting the lie of Satan when he would tell us that in a moment of weakness and hunger we traded away an eternal promise for a momentary fleshly craving. It is a lie because we do not own God's promises, and because we do not own them, we cannot trade them away. {eo}

Eric Tokajer *is author of* With Me in Paradise, Transient Singularity *and* OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry.