**Esau – A Life of Self Indulgence**

**Gen 27:41 – 28:9**

We have much to learn from Esau. He remained an unbeliever all of his life in spite of his family’s embracing of the Abrahamic Covenant and the message of Abraham’s seed, the Messiah (Gal 3:14). Isaac, Rebekah & Jacob all were saved and they represent the spiritual part of life. Jacob in comparison with Esau represents the struggles of developing & living out the new man in Christ. Esau represents the worldly, old man who is focused on the material world, self-indulgence & angry, vengeful, punishing disappointment.

**Esau is one who refused to ever learn what God was trying to teach him. He stubbornly indulged the natural tendencies, his personality & temperament that he inherited from his family.**

* Doers refuse to become thinkers, to slow down and look at their motives, focusing only on what gets done and what is left to get done.
* Thinkers/feelers refuse to become doers, overthinking everything, indulging in their visions and dreams while not accomplishing much.

**The natural talents, personality, temperament & predispositions toward certain aspects of life (lascivious & ascetic) that you inherit from your bloodline are not intended to fully determine the manner in which you approach your life, especially your spiritual life. Personality & temperament must be intentionally surrendered to the Spirit and are not an excuse for not examining your motives or doing God’s will.**

**Genesis 25:29-34** And when Jacob had cooked stew, Esau came in from the field and he was famished; 30 and Esau said to Jacob, “Please let me have a swallow of that red stuff there, for I am famished.” Therefore his name was called Edom. 31 But Jacob said, “First sell me your birthright.” 32 And Esau said, “Behold, I am about to die; so of what *use* then is the birthright to me?” 33 And Jacob said, “First swear to me”; so he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. 34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew; and he ate and drank, and rose and went on his way. **Thus Esau despised his birthright**.

* Impulsive, reckless & irresponsible – self-indulgent based on his careless, doer temperament

**Hebrews 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 **16** that *there be* no immoral (pornos – self-indulgent) or godless (common, worthless) person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a *single* meal.

* It wasn’t selling his birthright that made Esau self-indulgent & worth-less, it was because he had consistently rejected Christ that made him indulgent to the moment to sell his birth-right.

**Gen 27:41** So Esau bore a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him; and Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob."

* Grudge – ***satam*** – hold anger & bitterness, desire to punish while imagining revenge; Gen 49:23 hatred;

Gen 50:15 –when Jacob died Joseph’s brothers believed that he was bitter & would take revenge; Job 16:9 hate; Job 30:21 persecute;

* Said to himself – Inner dialogue; Talking to self is how we think – all thinking is verbal/visual; Esau is visualizing killing his brother in anger and seeing him die in agony.
* I will kill him – ***harag*** – commit murder; Esau hates Jacob for receiving the blessing & plans to kill him

**Rabbinic Traditions**

[Genesis 25:27](https://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/bible.show/sVerseID/686/eVerseID/686) describes Esau as "a skillful hunter, a man of the field." As the story unfolds, it becomes clear that he has a powerful black mark against him, yet despite this stain on his reputation, probably almost everyone, upon first impression, would choose Esau as a friend and companion over Jacob. "Man of the field" depicts him as a person of physical vigor, virile, an outdoorsman and frontiersman, a kind of Daniel Boone of ancient times. We would likely find him to be frank, impulsive, generous, even chivalrous—but also careless and sensuous.

It appears that [Isaac](https://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/library/sermon/id/1563/isaac.htm) gravitated toward him almost instinctively. If he wanted anything done, Esau was a man who could do it. As Isaac aged, he leaned increasingly on Esau's strengths. Esau seems to have been a warmhearted man who sincerely loved his aged father, with whom he was gentle and quick to respond to when he needed anything. We need to understand that Esau was not a vile person. Today, we would label him as a common, ordinary, good citizen and neighbor. He was simply worldly. Because his interests were not the same as God's, he paid little or no attention to the things of [God](https://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/library/booklet/id/421/god-is-what.htm). He is one of the Bible's major portraits of a worldly person.

In today’s Torah portion, we are introduced to a character who struggled his entire life. He struggled in the womb of his mother, and he struggled as he was being born. We’re told that his twin brother held onto his heel for dear life as they both emerged from the womb. True, as he was growing up, his father appreciated him -- but not his mother: she favored his younger brother. He was impulsive, and foolhardy: after all, he was willing to sell his birthright, his legal privilege for a double portion of his father’s estate, for a mere bowl of stew! And that same brother who held onto his heel as they were coming out of the womb was more than happy enough to take advantage of his weaknesses. As he grew, things didn’t get easier. Years later, his mother and brother colluded in tricking him out of the blessing that his father intended to give to him, compounding undoubtedly his sense of being unappreciated and unloved. I’m speaking, of course, of Esau, who generations of Jewish Biblical interpreters saw as the embodiment of a wild, uncivilized man (a term the Bible uses to describe his uncle, Ishmael; see Gen.16:12). Esau, the child who was dis-favored by God, by his mother, and eventually even by his father as well, is seen by the rabbis as disobedient and violent, and possessing the wrong priorities. After all, in this week’s portion, years after he grows up, he marries two Hittite women, a “source of bitterness to both his father and his mother” (Gen. 26:34-35) -- even though it had already been the custom in his family, going back at least to his grandfather, Abraham, to find a member of the clan, based in Haran, to marry. And after he discovered that his brother, Jacob, had tricked their father and stolen his blessing, he actually threatened to kill Jacob, which brought pain and anxiety to both of his parents. When he realized that his marriages outside of the Abrahamic tradition hurt his parents, he married his aunt, daughter of Ishmael, rubbing in their faces. Later, after he had made his own fortune when Jacob returned, he had forgiven and forgotten ever wrong Jacob had done to him.

He was a man who simply acted out his inherited nature, rejecting God & the gospel, preferring to indulge who/what he wanted to be.

1. **It seems obvious to parents that human beings inherit characteristics from their particular bloodline.**
2. Children inherit facial features, abilities, predispositions & personality from parents
3. Children come out of the womb with similar temperaments to their parents & relatives.
4. **It has become established science that the personal experiences of a grandparent or parent can impact their DNA that then is passed down to subsequent generations.**
5. Scientists will put animals under the stress of a minimal food supply, close to starvation, causing the animal to adapt in ways that are then passed down to the next generation.
6. Train mice to associate the smell of cherries with a predator (cat) and the next generation inherits that association of cherry smell to cats, having no exposure to daddy mouse or to a cats.
7. Human children inherit tendencies & are predisposed toward certain behaviors practiced by previous generations – addictions, sexuality, trends
8. The children emerge from the womb with those predispositions and must determine how to manage their own personalities and tendencies.

**Isaac** – what was the psychological impact on him of being tied down as a sacrifice by his father? Mistrust of authority figures, of God? How did that event impact his genetics & his life as a husband & father?

1. **The material part of our body & soul that forms in the womb is the result of God allowing the genetic wheel to spin so that Adam’s corrupted genetics & nature form to make us a unique individual.**
2. In the womb, the combined inheritance from both parents forms the body & brain that is joined to the immaterial part of us, our soul, adding NeShemah to become a living soul.

* Soul is the real you, the original child you, you that makes choices & goes on to the next life.

1. The soul is given a neural network to develop beliefs, thoughts, feeling & actions so that we can choose what we will believe about Christ – our faith choices are evidence in the A/C.
2. We are given a body as our home, for transportation, pleasure & service in obedience to our soul
3. God allows the blend of inherited corrupted genetics that forms our bodies & so our personalities, tendencies & temperament with which we are born, but none of that is connected to God.

* All of our personality & choices are destined for the Lake/Fire until we trust in Christ.

1. As cute & loveable as we are as babies, what we are at birth is not from God - **Psalm 139:13** for you formed my inward parts; you weaved me in my mother's womb.

* God is in charge of how our inherited genetics is formed in the womb but what we are when we emerge from the womb is corrupted by Adam’s sin and our selfish nature.

1. **There exists a common fallacy that says however I came out of the womb, with a certain personality & disposition, that is the way God intends me to be and live out my life – “that’s just the way I am”**
2. If I am born with predisposed to same sex attraction (perversion) then that is the way that I am supposed to be and how I should live my life.
3. If I am born with an impulsive personality then my mission is to accomplish all the doings that I can in my day and my life in spite of the fact that God evaluates what I do based on my motives.
4. If I am a thinker, then my job is to plan and the doers need to do the doing. If I am a feeler dominant person then I am intended to use how I feel moment to moment to make my decisions.
5. God’s plan is communicated by specific principles, understood & empowered through the Spirit & takes precedence over our natural tendencies.
6. **As we are forming our initial beliefs & strategies for meeting our needs [acceptance, approval, affection, ability to accomplish] we learn to use our strengths and hide our weaknesses – take the easy road**
7. Esau was strong physically, in tune with nature, hunter instinct, outgoing yet he was impetuous, didn’t think through before deciding, emotional more than rational, vulnerable to be deceived.
8. He/we used his strengths to earn his father’s approval but his actions gained his mother’s disapproval.
9. He likely overwhelmed & even bullied the quieter Jacob earning his mother’s anger from the start

* She became protective of Jacob, while planning to take Esau’s birthright to give to Jacob

1. Rebekah allowed how she felt and her natural tendencies to rule her life as seen by her unhealthy favoritism toward Jacob over Esau – messed up Jacob and all of his children
2. Esau didn’t stop to think through the spiritual aspects of the Abrahamic covenant, he was only interested in acquiring his grandfather’s material wealth.
3. He didn’t think through his marital choices, seeking to gratify his immediate needs, ignoring that his parents were believers & that he should marry a believer, but he wasn’t saved himself.
4. **Esau reminds us that our natural self, the old man self might be materially/humanly successful or have a great personality but that who we are in Christ & who God wants us to be in the Spirit are very different.**
5. Successful in business & financially secure yet God’s promise to provide is worth more than your 401k

**Deut 8:3** "And He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not understand, nor did your fathers understand, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD

* God’s promise of provision is more certain than having the actual provision itself

1. Naturally fun personality & good at making friends yet life in the Spirit has nothing to do with personality and walking in the Spirit might require you to lose all of your friends.
2. Doer personality & able to get amazing things accomplished but you don’t stop to smell the roses or to pay attention to the emotional needs of the people in your life – too busy checking boxes.
3. Thinker personality sits solitaire figuring out the intricacies of life but gets little done – The Feeler and Empath overflow with compassion but are unable to draw healthy boundaries.
4. Personality & earthly success have nothing to do with spiritual life which is about serving the Lord by serving needs of others by being sensitive & aware of what the Spirit is revealing in the moment
5. Esau indulging his natural talents & personality became very successful without the firstborn birthright but he died an unbeliever and I wonder if he ever stopped to ask what his wives were feeling.
6. **Life in the Spirit for the growing believer who is committed to spiritual service will develop fruit that speaks to both our personal status and the way we relate to others.**

**Galatians 5:22-23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

1. Love – ***agape*** – unconditional commitment to edify by only doing good & never any harm to others
2. Joy – ***chara*** – rejoicing & inner happiness as a response to grace
3. Peace – ***Eirene*** – judicial peace with God & inner peace from God freeing us from anxiety
4. Patience – ***makrothumia*** – restrain when provoked, resist the desire to judge & become angry
5. Kindness – ***chrestetos*** – useful, helpful, generous, goodness to those in need
6. Goodness – ***agathosune –*** the quality of being concerned about the welfare of others
7. Faithfulness – pistis – the quality of consistently acting out your faith
8. Gentleness – ***prautes*** – humility expressed in respect & kindness to others
9. Self-Control – ***egkrateia*** – quality of having power over one’s inner self