

# The Character of Esau

GENESIS 25:19-38

31 January 2025

Esau and Jacob picture for us the old nature and the new nature of the Christian today. The old nature is fleshy, carnal, and worldly. The new nature is spiritual and heavenly minded. The old nature is older (born first; the first birth) and stronger than the new nature (born second; the second birth). However, "The elder shall serve the younger" (vs. 23). This takes place when the second-born surrenders his life to God.

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## 1. ESAU WAS A CARNAL MAN WHO PUT HIS TEMPORAL LUSTS BEFORE HIS GOD.

- a. His primary focus was on the things that would give him immediate (but temporary) pleasure or satisfaction.
  - b. The things of God were not important to him. God, by His foreknowledge, knew the character of Esau and foretold how Jacob would surpass him in spiritual matters.
  - c. Esau gave up his birthright and he lost the blessing that should go to the firstborn. If he'd cared about the things of God, he would have been an important patriarch of God's chosen people in the lineage of Jesus Christ. Instead, the phrase "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" occurs 32 times in the Bible, and not "Abraham, Isaac, and Esau."
  - d. Warning! Don't give up your relationship with God for momentary satisfaction.
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## 2. HE WALKS BY SIGHT AND NOT BY FAITH (Vs. 32)

- a. Esau was certainly told about God's promise to his grandfather, Abraham (Gen. 12:2, 13:16, 15:5, 22:17) to greatly multiply his seed on the earth and make him a great nation.
  - b. Esau had the same promise as Abraham and Isaac, but he didn't believe it or he would have worshipped the God who gave the promise and cherished anything connected to it (e.g. the birthright).
    - i. His Grandpa and his father had faith in God, but he needed to exercise his own faith.
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## 3. HE VIOLATES THE WILL OF HIS AUTHORITY FIGURES (Gen. 26:34-35)

- a. He grieved his parents by marrying ungodly women, which he knew they disapproved of.
  - b. 400 years later, God would give His people the Ten Commandments. Only one of those commandments includes a reward for obeying it. Obey your parents and you will live long on the earth (Exodus 20:12, Ephesians 6:1-3).
    - i. Clearly, it is God's desire that we obey those who have authority over us. It's obviously very important to our well-being that we obey this command.
      1. They know what's best for us today and for our future.
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4. **HE SEEKS BLESSING, NOT REPENTANCE** (Gen. 27:30-38, Heb. 12:12-17)

- a. Esau had many tears: not because he realized he was wrong and was therefore sorry for his foolish actions and for his disregard and irreverence toward God. His tears came when he realized what he had lost. His sorrow was for himself: purely selfish (Heb. 12:17).
  - b. When you're receiving the rod of correction, you need to seek the reason for that correction and repent of the misdeed. Don't just ask God to stop the correction and fix the problem. Confess your guilt and get your heart right with God.
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5. **HE GOT BITTER WHEN IT LOOKED LIKE HE WAS BEING HELD AT A HIGHER STANDARD THAN OTHERS**

(Heb. 12:15)

- a. Esau saw Jacob doing wrong and not being punished for it. This made him bitter because every time he did wrong, there were serious consequences.
    - i. God dealt with Jacob when it was the right time (Gen. 32:24).
  - b. Children get upset when their parents don't let them do things that their friends are allowed to do. Be careful! That's going to make you bitter against your parents. Don't let it ruin your life. Stop worrying about what other people are "getting away with" while you're being left out or mistreated. Trust God to deal with each person as needed.
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**THE RESULTS OF BITTERNESS / MANY BE DEFILED (Heb. 12:15)**

**Numbers 20:14-20** 400 years later, there were millions of descendants of Jacob and Esau who still couldn't get along. That bitterness defiled all the descendants of Esau (Edom).

Your heart condition affects more people than you think.

If your heart is right, you can influence thousands or even millions of people to receive Christ and go to heaven.

If your heart is bitter, you'll waste your life and possibly cause thousands or millions to go to hell.

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