

Esau

TEXT: Genesis 25:27-34; Hebrews 12:14-17

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: Genesis 27:30-40

KEY VERSE: Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you. — Jeremiah 5:25

In the previous lesson we learned that Isaac's attributes included submission, meditation, affection, peaceableness, and prayerfulness. It was noted that these are qualities we can each develop. An analysis of Esau's character teaches us that it is possible to live without these qualities, but the consequences are not what anyone would desire.

1. Genesis 25:30 indicates that Esau was given the name *Edom*, which means "red," in memory of his having sold his birthright for red pottage. Using this incident, and other clues in the text, outline a possible personality profile of Esau.

2. As the Children of Israel left Egypt and journeyed toward Canaan, what kind of response did they receive when seeking to pass through the territory of Edom, whose people, the Edomites, were the descendants of Esau? See Numbers 20:14-21. What significance do you see in this as it relates to Esau's failure?

3. Galatians 4:7 indicates that our spiritual birthright is our privilege to be born into the family of God, and to become joint heirs with Christ himself. Without that experience of salvation we are heirs of no good thing, but as sinners entitled only to eternal punishment. Compare our spiritual birthright with the physical birthright of Esau's time.

4. Esau sold his birthright because he apparently did not consider it of much value compared to his physical need at that moment. People today are faced with a choice based on how much they value their spiritual birthright. Name some things for which the spiritual birthright is exchanged.

5. What are some ways we can protect our spiritual birthright?

6. How do we know that Esau lived to regret selling his birthright? Did his regret do him any good? See Hebrews 12:17.

7. What do you think is the most important lesson to be learned from a character study of Esau?