



Treasures for the Soul

Series 17 Episode 2

THE BLESSING OF THE FIRSTBORN (PART 1)

Message Date: April 26, 2020

PROLOGUE

Brothers and sisters, today's topic for Treasures for the Soul is **The Blessing of the Firstborn (Part 1)**. The firstborn is a very important concept to the Israelites. Hebrews chapter 12 mentions Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. You can find the whole story in Genesis 25, which mentions that Esau despised his birthright. The firstborn will receive a double portion of the inheritance, as well as a special blessing from his father. Genesis 27 talks about how Jacob deceived Esau and stole the blessing of the firstborn. Today, we should especially treasure being the firstborn of God and the blessings of it.

MESSAGE

Let us first read more Bible passages regarding the firstborn. The Israelites have a strong concept about the firstborn, as we've read from the Book of Hebrews.

Hebrews 12:14-17 says, **“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.”**

Here, it mentions Isaac's son, Esau, **“who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.”** I believe this true account of Esau is unforgettable to many of us. For one bowl of lentil stew, Esau sold his birthright. The firstborn inherits special blessings. We are the church of the firstborn. We are the most blessed ones among all the firstborn of the whole universe.

Genesis chapter 25 mentions Esau selling his birthright. Isaac and Rebekah had two sons. Esau, the firstborn, was a skillful hunter, and he was hairy. Jacob was a quiet man.

Let's read Genesis 25:27-34, **“When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents. Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob. Once when Jacob was cooking stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was exhausted. And Esau said to Jacob, ‘Let me eat some of that red stew, for I am exhausted!’ (Therefore his name was called Edom.) Jacob said, ‘Sell me your birthright now.’ Esau said, ‘I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?’ Jacob said, ‘Swear to me now.’ So he swore to him and sold his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.”**

As you can see, the birthright must have been very precious; otherwise Jacob wouldn't have desired for it. In fact, it is extremely precious. Do you think Esau was really going to die without that lentil stew? Today, we should treasure to be God's firstborn and live out such an identity.

Let us continue to read. Genesis 27:1-4: **“When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim so that he could not see, he called Esau his older son and said to him, ‘My son’; and he answered, ‘Here I am.’ He said, ‘Behold, I am old; I do not know the day of my death. Now then, take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me, and prepare for me delicious food, such as I love, and bring it to me so that I may eat, that my soul may bless you before I die.’”**

The firstborn receives a double portion of the inheritance. He also receives from his father a special great blessing.

When Esau went to hunt game, Isaac's wife, Rebekah, helped Jacob by preparing delicious food for Isaac so that he could bless Jacob instead of Esau. **"And you shall bring it to your father to eat, so that he may bless you before he dies."** (Genesis 27:10) Rebekah really wanted Jacob to receive the blessing because she loved Jacob. (Isaac and Rebekah each loved one of the two sons.) Together, Rebekah and Jacob deceived Isaac.

Let us continue to read Genesis 27:18-41: **So he went in to his father and said, "My father." And he said, "Here I am. Who are you, my son?" Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn. I have done as you told me; now sit up and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me." But Isaac said to his son, "How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?" He answered, "Because the Lord your God granted me success." Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come near, that I may feel you, my son, to know whether you are really my son Esau or not." So Jacob went near to Isaac his father, he felt him and said, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." And he did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands. So he blessed him. He said, "Are you really my son Esau?" He answered, "I am." Then he said, "Bring it near to me, that I may eat of my son's game and bless you." So he brought it near to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank.**

Then his father Isaac said to him, **"Come near and kiss me, my son." So he came near and kissed him. And Isaac smelled the smell of his garments and blessed him and said, "See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field that the**

Lord has blessed! May God give you of the dew of heaven and of the fatness of the earth and plenty of grain and wine. Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be everyone who blesses you!"

As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, when Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, Esau his brother came in from his hunting. He also prepared delicious food and brought it to his father. And he said to his father, "Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that you may bless me." His father Isaac said to him, "Who are you?" He answered, "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau." Then Isaac trembled very violently and said, "Who was it then that hunted game and brought it to me, and I ate it all before you came, and I have blessed him? Yes, and he shall be blessed." As soon as Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry and said to his father, "Bless me, even me also, O my father!" But he said, "Your brother came deceitfully, and he has taken away your blessing." Esau said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has cheated me these two times. He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing." Then he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" Isaac answered and said to Esau, "Behold, I have made him lord over you, and all his brothers I have given to him for servants, and with grain and wine I have sustained him. What then can I do for you, my son?" Esau said to his father, "Have you but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father." And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

Then Isaac his father answered and said to him: “Behold, away from the fatness of the earth shall your dwelling be, and away from the dew of heaven on high. By your sword you shall live, and you shall serve your brother; but when you grow restless you shall break his yoke from your neck.” Now Esau hated 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 approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob.”

Here, we see that Jacob had taken away two things: the birthright and his father’s blessing. Esau also received a blessing from his father, but it was far more inferior compared to the blessing of the firstborn. A father blessed his sons according to God’s will. As a man of faith, Isaac trusted that his blessing to Jacob, whom he thought was Esau, would come to pass. Hence, he became afraid when he realized that he was deceived, and he was blessing Jacob instead of Esau.

About

TREASURES FOR THE SOUL

“And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.” (Acts 20:32)

Paul loved the brothers and sisters in Ephesus! However, he could not always stay with them. He longed for them to understand God’s words and to be able to stand firm in the truth.

The Lord has given us precious truths. We want to share these truths in an organized way by producing short messages with clear topics. This way, we hope the listener can absorb the truths more easily. We hope to help brothers and sisters to build their foundation so that we may all know God and His purpose more deeply. Both audio messages and notes are available for download.

Brother Daniel Yu has shared with us the abundant enlightenment that he received from the Lord. We translated his messages with the aim to share them with non-Chinese brothers and sisters. This way we can learn and progress together, and receive the same blessings.



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