

ALL FOR A LITTLE SOUP

Genesis 25:29-34 ... "Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. And Esau said to Jacob, 'Please feed me with the same red stew, for I am weary.' But Jacob said, 'Sell me your birthright as of this day.'...So he ... sold his birthright to Jacob. And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright."

One's birthright is the recognition of being the first born and, therefore, eligible to inherit his or her parent's properties upon their death. Jacob and Esau were twins, born to Rebekah and Isaac (Abraham's son). We are told in previous verses that Esau was Isaac's favorite son, because he was a manly man, a hunter. Jacob preferred an easier and less demanding life; a stay-at-home boy who became his mother's favorite.

When Rebekah was pregnant, she asked the Lord why her babies appeared to be struggling against one another in her womb. God told her, in verse 23, that "Two nations are in your womb, two peoples shall be separated from your body; one people shall be stronger than the other, and the older shall serve the younger." At their birth, Esau came out first, making him the oldest by a minute or two.

Jacob was rather cunning and Esau proved himself to be a fool. One day after returning to the family tent from his work, Esau asked Jacob to share his meal with him, which Jacob agreed to do if Esau gave up his rights as Isaac's first-born son. Esau foolishly agreed and enjoyed a good meal at the expense of giving up all his right to inherit his father's herds and lands. Later, Esau exhibited more foolish behavior by marrying women from the enemies of God's people, which was forbidden by God. But Jacob was later renamed "Israel" by God, and became the father of the Jewish race.

Have you ever made a dumb mistake that you had to pay for many times over? It might have been as slight as lying to someone, or taking a Mango from someone else's tree without permission. Did you feel guilty? Now consider the effect of giving up your inheritance for a bowl of soup, disobeying God, and causing troubles for an entire nation and the world for thousands of years. That is what Esau's foolishness accomplished. Many of us make little mistakes from time to time. However, when those mistakes are serious in nature, they can affect your entire family or community. Each morning upon waking, ask God to guard your mind and heart, and to give you wisdom for the decisions you will make that day. Oh, and before you go to work, make your own lunch!

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