

## Genesis – Week 63 – Esau have I hated – Bible Study Helps

### Title: Esau Have I Hated: How to Forfeit God's Blessings

Sermon Summary: This sermon examines Genesis 25 and the birth of Jacob and Esau, addressing the controversial statement "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" from Romans 9. The sermon refutes Calvinist interpretations of unconditional election and predestination, arguing that God's choice of Jacob over Esau was based on His foreknowledge of their character and choices. The message emphasizes that Esau forfeited God's blessings through pride, carnality, and despising his birthright, while Jacob, though flawed, was more spiritual and chose God. The sermon warns believers against forfeiting eternal blessings through worldly pursuits and challenges them to prioritize their relationship with Christ above all else. It demonstrates that God's "hated" of Esau represents His disfavor toward Esau's wickedness and rebellion, not predestined damnation, and that God desires all people to be saved but will not force salvation upon those who reject Him.

### Key Points:

- Isaac and Rebekah faced the same faith test as Abraham and Sarah regarding barrenness, requiring them to trust God's promises
- God's Word was clear that Isaac's seed would bring forth the Messiah, and God was able to fulfill His promise
- Isaac entreated the Lord earnestly for 20 years before Rebecca conceived twins
- God prophesied that two nations were in Rebecca's womb and the elder would serve the younger
- The struggle within Rebecca represented the ongoing battle between flesh and spirit in believers' lives
- God chose Jacob over Esau based on His foreknowledge of their character and choices
- Esau represents the carnal, proud person who despises spiritual blessings for temporary pleasure
- The book of Obadiah reveals Esau's (Edom's) pride, violence against his brother Israel, and ultimate destruction
- Hebrews 12:17 shows that Esau forfeited his blessing and found no place of repentance though he sought it with tears
- God's use of "hate" regarding Esau indicates choosing to love him less in comparison
- Jesus used similar language about "hating" family members to emphasize that disciples must love Him supremely above all relationships
- Calvinism's teaching on unconditional election misinterprets these passages by ignoring their context about God choosing Israel as a nation
- Believers today risk forfeiting eternal blessings at the judgment seat of Christ through carnal, selfish living
- God's foreknowledge is not predestination at a personal individual level; He knows the end from the beginning but gives humans genuine choice

### Scripture Reference:

- Genesis 25:19-26 (primary passage - the birth of Jacob and Esau)
- Genesis 17:16-19 (God's promise regarding Isaac)

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- Genesis 15:4-5 (Abraham's seed shall be as the stars)
- Romans 9:1-13 (Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated)
- Malachi 1:1-4 (God's love for Jacob and hatred of Esau)
- Obadiah 1:1-4, 12-15 (prophecy against Edom/Esau)
- Hebrews 12:14-17 (Esau as example of forfeiting blessing)
- Luke 14:25-26 (hating family to follow Christ)
- Jude 24 (God is able to keep you from falling)
- Psalm 119:9-11 (hiding God's Word in your heart)
- Isaiah 48:3-5 (God declares things before they happen)

### Stories:

- Isaac and Rebekah's 20-year struggle with barrenness, mirroring Abraham and Sarah's faith test
- Rebecca's inquiry of the Lord about the struggle within her womb and God's direct answer
- An experience creating a 30-page Bible study on prophecy, expecting people to fall down and worship God, only to receive the response "that was really interesting"
- An example of speaking with a newly saved person who had been taught false Calvinist doctrine about being chosen
- A video of a 2-4 year old child reciting 26 Bible verses, one for each letter of the alphabet, demonstrating the capacity to memorize Scripture
- The historical account of Edom refusing passage to Israel in Numbers 20 and their violence against their brother nation
- Manasseh's story from 2 Chronicles 33 as an example of God hearing the prayers of even the most wicked when they humble themselves
- The contrast between Cain and Abel as another biblical pair where one was rejected due to choosing sin over obedience
- The future scenario of believers standing at the judgment seat of Christ next to martyrs and faithful saints, potentially weeping over forfeited blessings

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### Discipleship Questions

How does Isaac's 20-year prayer for his barren wife challenge our understanding of persistent faith, and what situations in your own life require this kind of earnest, long-term supplication?

When Rebekah experienced struggle within her womb and went directly to inquire of the Lord, what does this teach us about seeking God's answers for our personal struggles rather than relying solely on human wisdom?

God declared that 'the elder shall serve the younger' before the twins were born, overturning cultural norms and expectations. How does this demonstrate God's sovereignty in choosing instruments for His purposes regardless of human traditions?

The sermon contrasts Jacob and Esau as representing the spirit versus the flesh within believers. What does the ongoing struggle between these two natures reveal about the reality of genuine salvation?

Esau despised his birthright and traded it for immediate gratification. In what ways do modern believers forfeit eternal blessings by choosing temporary, carnal pleasures over spiritual priorities?

The statement 'Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated' is explained in context of God's choice of nations and response to their actions. How does understanding this as corporate rather than individual election help your view of God's character?

Hebrews 12:17 says Esau 'found no place of repentance' despite seeking it with tears. What does this sobering warning teach us about the danger of repeatedly choosing sin over God's blessings?

The book of Obadiah reveals Esau's pride, violence against his brother, and refusal to help Israel in distress. How do these character traits help explain why God chose Jacob despite his flaws?

Jesus taught that disciples must 'hate' their family members in comparison to their love for Him. How does this radical call to prioritize Christ above all relationships apply to your daily decisions and commitments?

At the judgment seat of Christ, believers will see opportunities they forfeited for eternal rewards. What specific changes might God be calling you to make today so you won't stand with regret at that future moment?

## Small Group Guide:

### "Esau Have I Hated" - Genesis 25

#### Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

**Icebreaker Question:** Have you ever made a decision you later regretted because you chose immediate satisfaction over long-term blessing? Share briefly.

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#### Key Scripture Passages

- Genesis 25:19-26
- Romans 9:10-13
- Malachi 1:1-4
- Hebrews 12:14-17
- Luke 14:25-27

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#### Main Points Recap

##### 1. The Problem: Rebekah's Barrenness (Genesis 25:19-21)

- Isaac and Rebekah faced the same faith test as Abraham and Sarah
- God's promise was clear, but they couldn't accomplish it on their own
- Isaac "entreated" (earnestly begged) the Lord for 20 years

##### 2. The Miracle: Twins Struggling in the Womb (Genesis 25:22-26)

- God prophesied: "Two nations are in thy womb"
- "The elder shall serve the younger" - an unusual reversal
- Rebekah sought God directly for understanding

##### 3. The Doctrine: God's Choice and Human Responsibility

- God chose Jacob based on His foreknowledge
- Esau forfeited God's blessings through his own choices
- The phrase "Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated" relates to God's national choice, not individual salvation predestination

## Discussion Questions

### Understanding the Text

1. **What does it mean that Isaac "entreated" the Lord for his wife?** How does this differ from casual prayer? What can we learn about persistent, passionate prayer from Isaac's example?
2. **Why did God tell Rebekah "two nations are in thy womb"?** What is the significance of viewing Jacob and Esau as representing nations rather than just individuals?
3. **Read Romans 9:10-13 together.** What is the context of this passage? Is Paul teaching about individual salvation or God's sovereign choice in bringing forth the Messiah through a specific lineage?

### Confronting False Teaching

4. **The sermon addressed Calvinism's teaching on "unconditional election."** What is the difference between:
  - o God choosing a lineage/nation for His purposes
  - o God predestining individuals for heaven or hell before birth
5. **How does Hebrews 12:16-17 clarify God's relationship with Esau?** What does it mean that "when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected"? Could Esau have made different choices?

### Personal Application

6. **What are you "entreating" God for right now?** Are there promises in God's Word you're struggling to see fulfilled? How does Isaac and Rebekah's story encourage you?
7. **Read Luke 14:25-27 about "hating" family to follow Christ.** What does Jesus mean by this? How does this help us understand the "Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated" statement?
8. **Esau traded his birthright for a bowl of stew (Genesis 25:29-34).** What "bowls of stew" are you tempted to trade God's blessings for?
  - o Comfort over obedience?
  - o Pleasure over purity?
  - o Money over ministry?
  - o Approval over faithfulness?
9. **The sermon mentioned the Judgment Seat of Christ for believers.** How does understanding future rewards (or loss of rewards) affect your daily choices now?

### Going Deeper

10. **Read Obadiah 1:1-4, 10-15.** What characterized Esau's descendants (Edom)?
  - o Pride (v. 3)

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- Violence against his brother (v. 10)
- Refusing to help family in need (v. 12-14)

How do these sins show up in our lives today?

11. **The sermon emphasized that "God is able."** What impossible situation are you facing that requires you to trust God's ability rather than your own?

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## Key Takeaways

- ✓ **God's Word is always clear and true** - our problem is never God's Word, but our faith and obedience
- ✓ **God has foreknowledge** - He exists outside of time and knows the end from the beginning
- ✓ **The "hated" language** is comparative - choosing to love God more than anything else (Luke 14:26)
- ✓ **Esau forfeited blessings through his choices** - he was profane, proud, and chose immediate gratification over eternal blessing
- ✓ **We can forfeit blessings too** - not salvation, but rewards and usefulness for God's glory
- ✓ **The struggle within Rebekah** represents the flesh vs. spirit struggle in every believer

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## Practical Applications

### This Week, I Will:

1. **Pray earnestly** about one specific promise or need, following Isaac's example of persistent prayer
2. **Examine my priorities:** Write down areas where I'm choosing "a bowl of stew" (temporary pleasure) over God's blessings
3. **Study God's Word** on one struggle I'm currently facing (following Rebekah's example in Genesis 25:22)
4. **Evaluate my love for Christ:** Am I loving Him "more" than family, comfort, reputation, or possessions? (Luke 14:26)
5. **Repent of pride:** Like Esau, pride leads to destruction. Where am I operating in pride rather than humility?

## Memory Verse

**Hebrews 12:16-17** - "Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

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## Closing Reflection

### Silent Reflection (2-3 minutes):

- Is there any area where I'm forfeiting God's blessings through sin, pride, or choosing the flesh over the Spirit?
- What specific step will I take this week to "choose God" like Jacob rather than "choose sin" like Esau?

### Group Prayer:

- Pray for faith to trust God's promises even when circumstances seem impossible
- Pray for wisdom to make eternal choices rather than temporal ones
- Pray for repentance where we've been "profane" like Esau
- Thank God that He is "able" to do what we cannot

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## For Further Study

- Read Genesis 25:27-34 (next week's passage) - Esau sells his birthright
- Study the life of Jacob throughout Genesis 25-50
- Read the entire book of Obadiah (21 verses) about Edom's destruction
- Compare pairs in Scripture: Cain/Abel, Ishmael/Isaac, Jacob/Esau

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*"God's Word was clear. God was able. The question is: will we trust Him and choose Him over our flesh?"*

# 5-Day Devotional:

## Choosing God's Blessings Over Temporal Pleasure

### Day 1: God Hears Your Earnest Prayers

**Reading:** Genesis 25:19-21; James 5:16

**Devotional:** Isaac entreated the Lord for twenty years before Rebekah conceived. The word "entreated" means earnestly beseeching, begging with urgent request. This wasn't casual prayer but passionate, tear-filled intercession. God was entreated of him—He heard and answered. Perhaps you've been praying for something that seems impossible. Your body, your circumstances, your resources may be "dead" like Abraham and Sarah's were, but God specializes in resurrection power. The question isn't whether God is able—He always is. The question is: are you praying with the earnestness that demonstrates you truly care? God answers passionate prayers that align with His will. Don't give up. Keep beseeching Him.

**Reflection:** What are you earnestly praying for? Is your prayer life marked by passionate intercession or casual requests?

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### Day 2: The Struggle Within

**Reading:** Genesis 25:22-23; Galatians 5:16-17

**Devotional:** Rebekah felt a struggle within her womb and inquired of the Lord. God revealed two nations, two manners of people were fighting inside her. As believers, we experience a similar struggle—flesh versus spirit. This internal conflict is actually proof that God is working in you. The flesh wars against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. If you have no struggle, you may not be saved. But if you're constantly battling between doing what you want and what God wants, that's evidence of spiritual life. The key is yielding to the Spirit. Rebekah didn't ignore her struggle; she went directly to God for answers. When you're struggling, don't consult the world first— inquire of the Lord through His Word.

**Reflection:** What internal struggles are you facing? Have you taken them to God's Word for answers?

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## Day 3: God's Foreknowledge and Your Choices

**Reading:** Romans 9:10-13; Malachi 1:1-5

**Devotional:** "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" troubles many readers. This isn't about God arbitrarily choosing one for heaven and one for hell. God lives outside time—He has foreknowledge of all our choices. He knew Esau would despise his birthright, choose pride over humility, and reject spiritual blessings for temporary pleasure. God chose Jacob not because Jacob was perfect, but because Jacob would choose God. God's "hatred" of Esau was His righteous indignation against Esau's wickedness, pride, and violence against his brother. God is angry with the wicked every day because they refuse to repent. The beautiful truth? Esau could have inherited the blessing. He forfeited it through his own choices. Your eternal destiny and earthly blessings depend on your choices today.

**Reflection:** Are you choosing God or choosing sin? What blessings might you be forfeiting through carnal living?

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## Day 4: Don't Despise Your Birthright

**Reading:** Hebrews 12:14-17; Genesis 25:29-34

**Devotional:** Esau sold his birthright for a single meal—he was so carnal, so focused on immediate satisfaction, that he traded eternal blessing for temporary pleasure. The Bible calls him "profane" and warns us not to be like him. When he later wanted the blessing, he was rejected, though he sought it with tears. It was too late. How often do we trade God's blessings for a "morsel of bread"—entertainment, comfort, money, pleasure? Every believer will stand at the judgment seat of Christ where our works are revealed by fire. Imagine standing next to the martyrs and faithful saints, realizing you forfeited eternal rewards for temporary satisfaction. Today you still have opportunity. Don't despise your spiritual birthright. Choose God's blessings over worldly pleasure while there's still time.

**Reflection:** What temporary pleasures are you choosing over eternal blessings? What needs to change today?

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## Day 5: Loving Christ Above All

**Reading:** Luke 14:25-33; Matthew 10:37-39

**Devotional:** Jesus said you must "hate" your father, mother, spouse, children, and even your own life to be His disciple. This shocking language arrests our attention. He doesn't mean literal hatred—He means your love for Him must be so supreme that all other loves pale in comparison. It's choosing to love Him more, them less. Your relationship with Christ must take priority over every other relationship. This is the heart of discipleship. God used the word "hate" regarding Esau in this same comparative sense—He chose Jacob because Jacob chose Him. Today, Jesus asks: Will you love Me more than your comfort, your family, your plans, your life? True discipleship costs everything but gains infinitely more. Don't forfeit eternal blessings for temporary attachments. Choose Christ above all.

**Reflection:** What relationships or comforts compete with your devotion to Christ? How will you demonstrate that you love Him most?

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**Closing Prayer:** Father, help us to be like Jacob, choosing You over temporary pleasure. Give us earnest hearts that seek You passionately. May we never despise our spiritual birthright or forfeit eternal blessings for momentary satisfaction. We choose You today. In Jesus' name, Amen.