

## Scripture Reading

### **A reading from the Book of Genesis** (*Genesis 25:27-34*)

The boys grew up, and Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was content to stay at home among the tents. Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob. Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came in from the open country, famished. He said to Jacob, "Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I'm famished!" (That is why he was also called Edom) Jacob replied, "First sell me your birthright." "Look, I am about to die," Esau said. "What good is the birthright to me?" But Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left. So Esau despised his birthright. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

### **Reflection – Hold on tight to our glorious birthright**

**Birthright of the first born male of the ancient Jews.** Isaac and Rebekah had twins. At birth, Esau came out first followed by Jacob. Therefore, Esau was considered the first born of their parents. In the ancient Jewish family the first born male comes with the privileges of assuming the leadership role in the family and the right to a double portion of his father's inheritance compared to the other sons. God's special blessings were implied. Esau and Jacob were very different. Esau was easily given over to satisfying his earthly appetites over spiritual blessings. He loved to hunt although there was no need to hunt for food as they have ample livestock. Jacob, though cunning, had the wisdom to recognize something definitely worth having. God, for His part, for the purpose of continuing the covenant He made with Abraham and election of the Messianic line, chose Jacob who gave rise to 12 tribes, one of which gave rise to Jesus Christ.

**Esau was an example of unholiness despising his birthright and the blessings of God.** *See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son. Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. Even though he sought the blessing with tears, he could not change what he had done (Hebrews 12:16-17).* Through his foolishness, Esau lost his birthright and the special blessings of his father, Isaac. He had shown himself unworthy of the privileges of the first born son. *Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the Lord. "Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have hated, and I have turned his hill country into a wasteland and left his inheritance to the desert jackals." (Malachi 1:2-3).* God is love. He cannot hate one of His children in the way that we understand 'hate' in human terms. His 'hate' lies in excluding Esau from the Messianic line and choosing Jacob instead.

**Our glorious birthright through Jesus Christ.** Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God. He is the heir of everything that belongs to God. *All that belongs to the Father is mine (John 16:15).* Through our faith in Jesus Christ we become co-heirs with Jesus in inheriting the Kingdom of God! *It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith (Romans 4:13).* *If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:29).* Jesus said to His disciples: *Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom (Luke 12:32).* This then is our inalienable birthright through Jesus Christ: the Kingdom of God! Eternal life, our glorious eternal inheritance!

**Let the eyes of our heart be opened to the unfading hope that we have in the eternal glorious inheritance that comes to those with faith in Jesus Christ** (Cf. Ephesians 1:18). The story of Esau is a good reminder to us to hold on tight to what is holy and eternal: the glorious eternal life offered to us from God. If we are careless like Esau, our earthly appetites can become strong and overwhelming. The spiritual world is a reality that lasts and lasts even though it may be deemed "useless" from the point of view of those who like Esau cannot see beyond his/her immediate earthly appetites.

**Conversation with Jesus:** Precious Lord, thank You for making me a co-heir of Your glorious eternal inheritance. Make me worthy to receive my birthright. Do not let Satan blind the eyes of my heart to this glory which I will share with You in heaven. Help me rise above all earthly appetites so that I can always keep my eyes fixed upon what awaits me in my true home. Bestow upon me and fellow believers the heavenly wisdom to eschew earthly attractions but to cling on tight to what is holy and eternal. At the end of my life, may I say together with St Paul: I have competed well, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Lord, save me from demonic deception and help me hold on tight to my glorious birthright! Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.