

Case Study: Esau – Keep What You Have For Yourself

Description

4 But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him.
5 [Esau] looked up and saw the women and the children and said, Who are these?
6 Then the maids came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves.
7 And Leah also with her children came near, and they bowed themselves. After
8 Esau said, What do you mean by all this company which I met? And he said, This
9 And Esau said, I have plenty, my brother; keep what you have for yourself.
10 But Jacob replied, No, I beg of you, if now I have found favor in your sight,
11 Accept, I beg of you, my blessing and gift that I have brought to you; for
12 Then [Esau] said, Let us get started on our journey, and I will go before you.

Genesis 33:4-12

Whenever we think of Esau, typically our mind immediately shifts to selling his birthright for a bowl of stew, or possibly to his moment extreme anger when he vowed to kill Jacob when after their father's death. These moments were very real, but only provide a snapshot of Esau's life. I'd like to take the chance to present a different side of Esau, one that is likely ignored, or most likely not even known. The scene that we'll jump to is when Esau and Jacob meet again for the first time since Jacob left after deceiving his father. It had been at least 20 years since Esau and Jacob had seen one another, and their last interaction was negative, with Esau vowing to murder Jacob in revenge. Time has 1 of 2 effects on people, it can allow our pain/offense to become deep-rooted and difficult to overcome, or it can serve as part of the healing process as time separates us from the moment of pain and allows us to mend the wound and forgive. In the case of Esau, I believe that time was a healer, not particularly that he was healed from the pain and disappointment that experienced with Jacob stealing his birthright, but rather time allowed for Esau to receive other blessings that "compensated" for what he feels that he lost. I believe that Esau considered the blessings that God provided him such as the land of Seir, and other forms of wealth to possibly be evidence that he had actually "won." I think we'd have to go a little deeper to fully understand the scene above

40 By your sword you shall live and serve your brother. But [the time shall come]

Genesis 27:40 AMPC

Isaac foretold Esau when he blessed him that he would be a slave to his brother until HE decided to removed the yoke of unforgiveness and jealousy from his life. I believe that Esau lived for years in bondage to the thought that Jacob had stolen something from him that God wasn't able to replace. A scarcity mindset is very dangerous, because it feeds the thoughts that God doesn't have anything else for me because someone else is blessed. Esau's early belief that Isaac was the provider of blessings caused him to ignore the power of God and instead focus on the means and provisions of man. This is where time because a healer, because I believe that even Esau learned that God is provider of blessings, despite his lack of reverence for God. During the at least 20 years since Esau and Jacob had separated, God had provided Esau with so much increase that he probably had not even thought was possible. Esau's time which had previously been filled with thoughts and plans of revenge towards

Jacob, had become distant memories as his blessings accumulated. Once Esau achieved a level of success where felt contentment, he no longer felt slighted or cheated by Jacob, which was reflected in this verse:

And Esau said, I have plenty, my brother; keep what you have for yourself.

Genesis 27:9 AMPC

This line could be interpreted as forgiveness and deliverance in that Esau doesn't accept or desire anything from Jacob. I believe that in that way, time has "healed" Esau's wounds and allowed him to see his brother in a healthier light than he previously did. As Isaac told him previously, he would wear a yoke around his neck that would forever bind him in an oppressive way to Jacob until he tore the yoke from his own neck. Esau isn't perfect, but we can learn this lesson from him; God is the provider of blessings, and what God has for you, nobody else can take from you.

Reflection Time

What yoke are still wearing around your neck? Is there anything in your life that you feel that someone has stolen from you? If you encountered the person who had previously offended you, what would be your response to them? Even without a true relationship with God, I believe that Esau demonstrated the principle of forgiveness that Jesus spoke about later when he ran to meet his brother Jacob, hugged and kissed him, and offered to travel the journey with him. Ask God to heal the broken places in your life, and allow him to reach the areas to do the work that only he can do, and receive the blessings that are reserved only for you.

Category

1. Case Studies

Tags

1. Case Studies
2. Esau
3. Forgiveness
4. Genesis
5. Lent 2024
6. March 2024
7. Old Testament

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