

Peace be with you, listening friends. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return today to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

In our last program, we looked into the story of **Abraham's sacrifice**. The Gospel gives us an interesting summary of this important story when it says:

"By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promise was about to sacrifice his one and only son even though God had said to him, 'It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.'

Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death."

Our last five lessons have been taken up with stories from the life of the prophet Abraham.

There are many more stories in the Torah about Abraham which we have not explored. Unfortunately, we do not have time to read them all.

However, before we leave Abraham and go on to the stories of his descendants, there is something that God said to Abraham that we should know about.

One day, God told Abraham what would happen to his offspring. He said,

*"Know for certain that your descendants will be **strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and ill-treated four hundred years. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterwards they will come out with great possessions."***

With those words, God was announcing that the descendants of Abraham would become slaves in the land of Egypt.

God also promised that after four hundred years He would deliver them from the dominion of the people of Egypt.

Four lessons from now, in the will of God, we will begin to see how these precise prophecies were fulfilled, just as God told Abraham.

Then, in chapter twenty-five, the Scriptures say:

"Abraham left everything he owned to Isaac. Altogether, Abraham lived a hundred and seventy-five years. Then Abraham breathed his last and died at a good old age, an old man and full of years; and he was gathered to his people.

His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, in the field of Ephron...the field Abraham had bought from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah."

Thus, Abraham, the friend of God, entered the presence of the Lord, whom he knew and loved.

How can we conclude and summarize our lesson concerning Abraham the prophet of God?

Perhaps with two questions and their answers.

The first question is this: **Why did God ask Abraham to move and go to another country?**

Answer: Because God planned to make of Abraham a new nation through which the Redeemer would come into the world.

The second question is this: **Why did God judge Abraham as one who is righteous and accept him into His holy presence forever?**

Answer: Because Abraham believed what God said even if it was not easy. Abraham was saved by faith in God's promises and not by his own works.

This is what the Scriptures declare when they say: *"Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called God's friend."*

In chapter twenty-five in the book of Genesis, the Scriptures continue with the history of Abraham's descendants.

Let us now continue in the Torah and learn the story of **Isaac and his twin sons**.

The Scripture says:

This is the account of Abraham's son Isaac. Abraham became the father of Isaac, and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddan Aram and sister of Laban the Aramean.

Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was barren. The Lord answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, "Why is this happening to me?"

So she went to enquire of the Lord. The Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger."

*When the time came for her to give birth, there were **twin boys** in her womb. The first to come out was red and his whole body was like a hairy garment; so they named him **Esau**.*

*After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau's heel; so he was named **Jacob**.*

Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to them.

The boys grew up, and Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was a quiet man, staying among the tents.

Thus, we see that Isaac and Rebecca had twins, whom they named **Esau** and **Jacob**, *Ya'qub* in Arabic. They were twins, but that doesn't mean they were the same!

As Esau grew up, he set his affections only on **the things of the world** which are temporary, but Jacob valued **the things of God** which last forever.

Esau did not care about the promises that God had made to Abraham, his grandfather, and to Isaac, his father, concerning the new nation which would arise from them. However, Jacob did care about God's promises.

Esau was the firstborn. Therefore, humanly speaking, he was the one who should have received the inheritance of the firstborn. He should have become the father of the great nation which God had promised to his grandfather, Abraham, and to his father, Isaac.

However, even before the twins were born, God told Rebecca, their mother, *"the older will serve the younger."*

God, in His foreknowledge, was announcing that the inheritance of the firstborn and the descendants of the new nation would come **through Jacob** and not through Esau.

As for Jacob, he should have waited for God, leaving all in the hands of the One who had the power to give him the inheritance in His appointed time.

However, **Jacob did not wait for God**. Let us read on now to see how Jacob acted in order to take the inheritance from Esau, his older brother.

The Scriptures say:

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!"...

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.

Do you understand what Esau did? He exchanged his inheritance as the firstborn son for a little bit of food!

Imagine a very rich man who has two sons. The man has fields and houses, and riches and lots of money. The firstborn is the one who should inherit most of his wealth. However one day, the elder comes in from the bush, and sees his younger brother cooking fish and rice.

The firstborn says to his younger brother. "I am starved, give me some of that rice to eat!" However, the brother replies, "I will not give it to you, but I will sell it to you."

The elder asks, "How much will you sell it to me for?"

The younger brother says, "Your rights of inheritance as the firstborn."

The elder replies, "Sold! I am hungry enough to die. Of what use is my birthright to me?"

So the elder swears to hand over to his younger brother his whole inheritance!

Then the firstborn sits down, eats and drinks, gets up and goes on his way.

What can we say about this firstborn who exchanged fields and houses, and riches and authority for one bowl of rice and fish?

We can say just one thing: "**How stupid!**"

Just as this firstborn despised the blessings of his father and the riches of the world, in the same way **Esau despised the blessings of God and the riches of Eternity.**

The things that Esau despised were infinitely more valuable than the riches of the world, because that which Esau despised was the right to be a part of the new nation through which the Savior of the world would come.

What does God want to teach us today through the story of Esau and Jacob?

God wants to warn us not to follow in the footsteps of Esau by trading the riches of Eternity for the pleasures of the world which are passing away.

Listen to what the Word of the Lord declares about this. It says:

*"What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits **his soul**? Or what can a man give in exchange for **his soul**?"*

*"See to it that no one misses the grace of God...or is godless like **Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son.**"*

Esau missed out on the grace of God, because he did not value the things of God.

Thus, God is warning us, saying: Do not walk in the footsteps of Esau! Do not despise the blessings I want to give to you!

How about you? Do you want God's blessings?

God loves you and wants to bless you greatly, but you must give Him first place in your life.

You must value the Word of God more than food and money. Then you will begin to understand what the Scriptures mean when they say: ***"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him."***

God wants to bless us greatly. He wants to forgive all our sins, change our wicked hearts, purify us and fill us with His love, joy, peace and assurance.

And these blessings are only part of the inheritance which God wants to give to every descendant of Adam!

However, you must seek the things of Eternity **with all of your heart**. He who does not desperately want God's eternal blessings will never receive them.

As we sometimes hear, "Whoever wants honey must brave the bees."

Do you want to receive God's blessings? Then you must seek to understand what God has promised in His Word.

Do you know His wonderful promises, which are so great that they surpass human understanding? Do you cherish them? Or are you merely seeking after the things of the world?

The Word of God shows us that there are only two kinds of people in the world: Those who **value the world** and seek after the things of the earth, and those who **value eternity** and seek after things which are above.

Which kind of person are you?

Listen to what is written in the Psalms, in the first chapter:

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.

He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

***Not so the wicked!** They are like chaff that the wind blows away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.*

For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish!

How about you? In which way are you walking?

Are you walking in the way of those who **treasure God's promises**? Or are you like Esau who **traded the promises of God** for the passing things of the world?

The Word of God warns us, saying:

*"What good will it be for a man if he gains **the whole world**, yet **forfeits his soul**? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?"*

*"Do not work for **food that spoils**, but for **food that endures to eternal life**, which the Redeemer will give you. On him God...has placed his seal of approval."*

"See to it that no one misses the grace of God...or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son."

Fellow listeners, this is where we must stop today. Next time, in the will of God, we will continue in the Torah with the story of Jacob....

God bless you as you carefully consider this warning from His Word:

"See to it that no one misses the grace of God, like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son."

If you would like more information about *The Way of Righteousness*, please visit the website: one-god-one-message.com.

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