

Election and Reprobation #12 Concerning Jacob and Esau

by John Calvin

John Calvin's sermon explores the themes of divine election and human deception through the story of Jacob and Esau, emphasizing God's sovereignty in fulfilling His promises despite human flaws.

Duration: 57:04

Scripture: Genesis 27:36, Exodus 24:18, Matthew 6:33, Romans 1:16, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 1:3, Hebrews 9:22

Topics: "Election And Predestination", "Sovereignty Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the power of the preaching of the gospel and how it is the means through which believers are saved. He emphasizes that when the grace of God is preached and the blood of Jesus is proclaimed as the true purification for our sins, God works through the words spoken by a human being to bring about salvation. The preacher also draws parallels between God's use of his creation, such as bread, to nourish and strengthen us, and his ability to work in ways that go against the natural order of things. He concludes by highlighting the importance of understanding God's election and how it is the foundation for understanding the events described in the Bible, even when they seem foolish or chaotic from a human perspective.

Transcript

The sermon we'll hear on this Lord's Day is the twelfth sermon of Jacob and Esau, taken from the book, Sermons on Election and Reprobation, based on the Old Path Publications edition of 1996. And the minister John Calvin uses for his text the book of Genesis chapter 27, beginning in verse 11, reading from the translation as he has provided it. But Jacob said unto Rebekah his mother, Behold, my brother Esau is a rough, hairy man, but I am of a smooth skin.

Peradventure my father will feel me, and I shall be unto him as a seducer, and so I shall bring upon me a curse and not a blessing. Unto whom his mother said, Thy curse be upon me, my son. Only hearken unto my voice, and go thy ways, and bring it unto me.

Therefore departing, he took it and brought it unto his mother. And his mother took it and made dainty dishes, even such as his father loved. Afterwards, Rebekah taking the most precious garments of Esau her eldest son, which were with her at home, she put them upon Jacob her youngest son, and putting upon his hands the skins of kids from amongst the goats, and upon the smooth of his neck, she put the

dainty dishes which she had made with bread in the hand of her son Jacob.

So he coming unto his father said, My father, who said, Behold me, who art thou my son? Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau, thine eldest son. I have done as thou hast commanded me. Now rising, sit down and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.

We have here to continue the purpose which was yesterday expanded on. That is, that God directed Isaac, Rebekah, and Jacob in such way that despite the faults that were within them, he ceases not to put that in execution which he had determined concerning the blessing of Jacob and rejecting Esau. And yet this is not too clear, Isaac, for his part, as though he had not foully faulted, and that the same fault had not been found in Rebekah and in Jacob, but God passes them over.

And so we see that God waits not upon men, neither depends upon them, when the matter stands for the performance of his counsel. It is very true that he will use them to serve his turn, but he shows notwithstanding that he works all alone and of himself. And when his creatures serve him as instruments, it is no farther than it pleases him, and not as though he were bound by any necessity.

Yes, and though that things in respect of men go quite backward as it seems, yet this shows that his power is sufficient, so that it needs no help from others. Now we have said that in this matter of Jacob it may be seen how he fell into doubt, and this was contrary to faith. It is necessary, therefore, that God on the one side supplied this lack.

Concerning that, that it is said that he should bear the curse, it is for that he knew that his father was ordained to this, that he must ordain an inheritor, not only for worldly and transitory benefits, but of the promise which belongs to the spiritual life. He knew this, and therefore he respected not only a mortal man, but the living God. Now touching Rebecca, she says the curse be upon her.

We see how she was ravished, as was yesterday handled, in such manner that she spoke as it were at random, but there is no doubt that in the meanwhile she did not know that this could do no hurt. It is true that she did not regard her fault, for although she had a good ground to obey God, and so to deal that his election might stand in full strength, yet regardless, she ought not in the mean season to have made such a craft to bear sway, wherein there was nothing but deceits and lies. For God, as we have already said, is able enough to accomplish his own work, and to bring his own counsel to an end.

He needs not to borrow anything of us. It is not lawful, therefore, by a stronger reason to go about to advance his truth by our lies, but Rebecca does it, so that in this behalf she cannot be excused. But this example is not here set before our eyes to the end that we also should imagine the same, for it will fall out that at all endeavors we shall be ready to mingle our fantasies, that our matters may go well.

And this is even as much as if we thought not God to be wise enough, or rather, as if he were not strong enough, or had not the means in his own hand to bring matters to a good end and issue. But in so doing, we do, as a man would say, control God, to say, very well, let him work, but after what manner? Not according to his counsel, and according to his power and infinite strength, but according to some light thing. And we will, first of all, have that thing done which we have imagined and forged in our own brain.

For we will say, I find this to be good. This will be a very good and necessary means. But are we so exceedingly wise that we must immediately undertake this thing and that we must put our hand to the business in such way? But Mark, God has not so ordained by his work, lo then, a rashness not to be

borne.

And yet this is very common, and everyone shall find of this vice in his seed, but so much the rather ought we to learn to add nothing of our own, seeing we have always this corrupt meddling which we must either this way or that drive out of our heads. And when we shall, so have wrought after our own manner and fashion, we shall do nothing else but entangle and bring it all down. But if God does not lay such faults to our charge, and does yet nevertheless accomplish his work, this is not to the end we should boast ourselves therein.

As often times, they which have overreached themselves can say, Oh, it has fallen out well. Yes, but this is because God has pardoned this falling. And that nevertheless, he does not cease to support us even though we were not worthy of it.

Let us learn therefore in no way to excuse our presumptions when God shall make that to prosper which we have noddily and wickedly attempted. But so much the rather, let us magnify his mercy when we shall see that although we have fought against his work, that he yet has not ceased to give it his course. This is that briefly which we have to bear away concerning this place.

Now it follows after that Jacob went to seek two kids which he brought unto his mother that she might dress some dainty meat such as she knew Isaac loved. And after that she clothed Jacob with Esau's garments and put the skins so upon him that it seemed he was a hairy and rough man. But here men might judge that this was a very childish deed and a very gain for as much as it was a counterfeit meat for she took of a kid instead of some venison.

And after that, the father had eaten and was well filled, he blessed his son and that this was, as it were, a reward for his dinner. And again, that Jacob came in a clothing disguise as if he had been upon a stage acting his brother Esau under color of his garments and had his head, his neck, and his hands. And in all this, nothing was seen but a matter of laughter.

But to the end that we should be kept in reverence and make our profit of this history, let us learn to look unto God's election of which mention was made before. For if we have not this foundation, it is certain that in all that Moses rehearses, we shall not find anything that may move us or give us any persuasion that this was guided and governed from above. But when we shall be resolved that God had given the birthright to Jacob before he was born, notwithstanding, we have to note in seeing these things so stupidly and foolishly ordered by men of an unadvised zeal, that therefore we cease not to say, Lo, God, who is always unchangeable, although men through their sturdy boldness and foolish presumption trouble and turn all upside down, yet nevertheless must His counsel remain entire and perfect.

This therefore is that which we have to note to the end we may make our profit of this history. when it is said that Jacob came to his father and said unto him, I am thy son Esau, eat and drink, by this we may see how men harden themselves when they have once attempted to do anything of an unadvised zeal, how they wax bolder and bolder. At the first, Jacob doubted.

If I, he says, be found as a mocker before my father, he will curse me. But by and by, he cares for nothing. He speaks as boldly and frankly as if it should have been said that he was sure to be in Esau's place.

But by this, we have to note, before we begin anything, to think whether we have allowance from God and whether he will guide us. And to see that in all our doing and enterprise there be nothing but mere

obedience. For if we begin once, as they say, to break our bound, and that we imagine to do this and to do that, howsoever at the beginning we had some scruple and did make great difficulty thereof, in the end, we shall shut our eyes and pass further.

And when all the objections of the world shall come before our eyes, yet we shall become obstinate. For as much then as men are so hardened in their foolish and rash counsels, and that we see such a notable example of this in our father Jacob, so much the rather. As I have said already, must we take heed that we move not a finger breadth, till we know whether God will allow that which we do, and that we have taken counsel of his word.

For then, we cannot be too bold when we shall be subject unto him, and when there shall be no foolish high opinion in us to follow our own fantasy. But we can do nothing of ourselves, howsoever small it be, which is not too much. And therefore, as I have said, let us learn to begin well, to the end, such an end may follow as we should desire.

But in this which is here contained in Moses, we may have a type which shall not be unsuitable. And this is, that although Isaac was deceived, that Esau was not there, and that Jacob, through his slights, obtained his blessing, yet for all this, we have here an image of that blessing which is given unto us of God. For it is said in the first chapter of the Ephesians, verse three, that we are blessed with all heavenly graces and spiritual gifts.

And after what way? Saint Paul adds, in Jesus Christ. For if God should look upon our persons, we must be his enemies, and he must necessarily detest us by reason of sin. Seeing therefore it is so, it is necessary we be blessed outside of ourselves, that is to say, in the person of our head.

And moreover, we must be clothed with the robe of our Lord Jesus Christ. For what can we bring but altogether filthiness and pollution? We are wholly made in iniquity, therefore we must be as stink before God. But when we are clad with the obedience of his only Son, O then, lo a sweet savor in which we are acceptable unto him.

So that although, as I have said already, in respect of men, there was nothing but confusion, and as they say all was jumbled together, yet nevertheless we may apply this to our prophet, Jacob was a looking glass of the whole church, and yet were we blessed in his person, as he was blessed in the person of his elder brother. For the question is not here of finding it altogether same. If a man say that Esau resembled not Jesus Christ, it is very true.

But yet, in comparison, it needs not that every part and parcel agree together. It is sufficient that we see some agreement and likeness in part, as it is said, that the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ shall be as a thief in the night. And what? Will he steal? It were a foolish thing to think thus.

But it is enough that we see that they which are asleep in the world shall be taken upon the sudden. So now, when he speaks of the birthright of Esau, and that Isaac represented the person of God, and that Jacob was blessed under the robe and countenance of his brother, in this we see that that was accomplished which we alleged even now. Namely, that we shall be put back if we come in our own name, and in our own person, to get favor before God.

But when we shall come there under the shadow of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the firstborn amongst all the children of God, see how we are received. But notwithstanding, it is said that Isaac demanded, Who

art thou, my son? I am thy son, Esau. But in this, he trusts not himself, and though it may appear that there was some fraud, for he says unto him, Come near unto me, that I may feel whether thou be my son Esau or no.

We see here that Isaac doubted, and yet nevertheless, the blessing ceased not in respect of God to have his virtue and effect, as also it is said that he blessed him in the presence of God. But it is very true that if we have our eyes fastened upon Isaac, we shall say that this act was ill-guided, and that he deserved not to be accounted in any degree of perfection, but that God brought it. As I have said, not only when the inferior means failed, but when they were contrary, and that it seemed that this had been utterly to abolish that which was determined.

But so much the rather, it necessitates us well to note that howsoever God use men in his work, and does them this honor to serve in that as instruments, yet there is nothing on their part. As we may say in 1 Corinthians chapter 3, verse 7, He that planteth, and he that watereth, is nothing. But here Isaac, instead of planting and watering, did rather pluck up, and cut off the blessing of God to make it barren, and without fruit.

But howsoever it was, yet was God therein served. For whether he had planted or watered, he had done it but in part. But he did it not wholly, and as he ought.

And yet in the mean season, as I have said, the goodness of God overcame. Whatsoever was faulty and defective in his creatures. Howsoever it were, we may well say that Isaac, in doubting, deserved to be deprived from that state and office which was given him.

That is to say, that he had lost the grace of God, wherein the salvation of the whole world was included. Lo, the treasure which was committed unto him, but he by his unbelief deserves to be stripped of it. But God would not have it so.

And to whom shall we attribute this? It must necessarily be that his mercy be here magnified, seeing that in man there is not only not any help to that, nor anything that answers unto it, but quite against it. And let us note that none was more dulled of God than he was. It is true that we saw before that he had dim eyes, and that he was so weak with age that he was as a man half dead.

But yet this came not to pass naturally, that hearing the voice of Jacob, he was so foully deceived that he thought not once there is some fraud in the matter. He doubts of it, and yet nevertheless goes on. And although it was against his will, yet he blesses Jacob instead of Esau.

It must necessarily be, therefore, that God dulled him so that it was not of age only. And this is now which I have said, that God guided his work so that although men hinder and prevent it, and it seems to have been as if they should pull quite contrary, nevertheless the end and issue was such that it appears that God executed that which he had pronounced following his secret election which was made before the world. And so we know in all that Isaac did, there was nothing but a kind of stupidity and foolishness that he was so dull.

He had no understanding. He discerned nothing, nor had any judgment. And yet, despite this, God makes this to prevail.

After what manner? How is it that he makes the bread which we eat to be of strength and to nourish us? When we shall have well eaten, and drunk, and shall be refreshed and satisfied, so as he who neither can

bow his arm nor his legs shall have no strength to travel. Shall we say that this is because the bread has any power, any life, or any moving? But when we see that the bread gives us that which it has not, and the corn and wine and other meats, this is to show us that God uses not his creatures in such a way, in any work, that we should occupy ourselves in that which we see with our eye. But that we should always bend to this, that as he disposes the order of nature, and likewise guides and governs us, yes, and that against nature, that many times he will work quite contrary to that that is accustomed unto us in such a way that we shall be astonished at that occurrence, and chiefly when the question is of our salvation.

And yet we must not imagine that we bring anything to that for our part, but that it is God that must accomplish all, who began it, and will perform it. And moreover, if he work after a strange and unusual manner, and that there be nothing but an outward show of folly, let us know as St. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1.25 that the folly of God is greater wisdom than all the wisdoms of the world. Now he calls it the foolishness of God after our opinion, because he works in a contemptible manner that we might be seized and overcome in that, thinking, what is this that God will say? It seems that he jests and mocks.

We will conclude of it even so. And this is the cause why St. Paul says in that passage that it is folly, because men rest themselves upon their outward senses. But howsoever it be, this surpasses all the wisdom of the world.

Mark then what we have to bear away. And when we shall well remember this lesson here, we shall not be as a great sort of giddy heads, who take all these facts at adventure, and thereupon mock themselves, as though all that were here reversed by Moses were nothing else as a man would say, but foolish trifling. But when we shall have learned this, which is here showed us by St. Paul, it is certain that we shall have another manner of sobriety, and that we shall not give over to adore the secret of God, although at the first appearance he does not glorify himself.

But we shall always look to the beginning and to the end, and not to those means which may give us occasion and beget in us some offense, or which may swallow us up. To be short, we see that God directed Isaac in such manner that he was altogether blind. We will not say, therefore, that God gave Isaac any fight here.

To the end he might do that which appertained to his office, knowing well the cause why, and knowing all the proceeding of the matter. But he was blinded. And yet he held him as it were by the hand, and led him as a blind man who sees nothing.

And indeed, we see in the church something that answers to this, or else comes very near it. For as it was said yesterday, Romans 1.16 tells us, The preaching of the gospel is the power of God to salvation to all believers. When therefore we preach the grace of God, whereby we are reconciled, inasmuch as our faults are pardoned us in our Lord Jesus Christ, and that the blood which he shed for us is the true purification from them to cleanse us, lo then God, who opens the heavens and calls us unto himself, even though the word proceed from the mouth of a man.

But in the mean season, I know not to whom this shall be available, for everyone shall be a witness of his own faith. And when I speak and have not received my part in it, woe be upon me. And I should be more than blind, as also they have been who shall have preached the gospel and shall be witness of the grace of God and shall draw poor sinners to salvation.

Despite this, there is nothing remaining for them but condemnation. And why so? For they are as actors in whom there is no affection nor zeal. So then, God will be served oftentimes of a people who are worth nothing, who are as dogs in the very outcasts.

And yet despite this, they are as the ministers of his power to draw those to salvation that are in the way of destruction. Moreover, there are mercenaries that preach for their belly and have no regard but to themselves, or else would make themselves to be very well esteemed. And yet are these nevertheless the instruments of God for the salvation of all believers.

And oftentimes the best, they I say, that equip themselves most faithfully to do their duty, to call poor sinners to salvation, to be guides and examples to all others. These shall not yet find what God will do. And why so? They sow the seed and know not how God will make it profit.

And oftentimes they think to bless and they curse. And for what reason or purpose? Because it must necessarily be that the vengeance of God be prepared for all despisers. The gospel is preached to the end we might find God merciful to us all.

But there are many that through their contempt and ingratitude heap upon themselves their own damnation. For the gospel shall be unto them a savor of death. Unto death.

As Saint Paul says in 2nd Corinthians chapter 2, verse 16. That is to say a deadly savor. That only the breath shall be enough to swallow them up.

As we see yet at this day that God works by the ministers of his word that some are altogether blind. Others are blind in part. For the hirelings of whom we have spoken they are altogether blockish and know nothing.

But the good and faithful ministers although it be so that they know that they have their eyes dim yet they are ignorant how God will make their labor to profit. Or in what way. And often times their purpose is quite overthrown.

This then is that which we have to learn. And in the meantime seeing God has declared unto us that his word is the open way to the heavenly life and that he will ratify all that which shall be pronounced by this means by men in his name. Let us keep us to that and not doubt whatsoever lack shall be in us as well concerning him that speaks as him that hears.

That yet nevertheless when we shall receive this word by faith and it shall be faithfully and in truth handled unto us we shall be partakers of this blessing. And in this we may see the beastliness of all those false wretches of the papacy for mark on which they have founded that idol which they have to make a god of a morsel of bread. They say that the priest have no intention to consecrate it.

It is nothing. And in that the bread is turned into God. It is by the intention of him which consecrates.

So as I speak of their own doctrine they must be idolaters in all their masses if they make not this condition. So how do we know they say whether the priest which consecrates does his business as he ought to or whether his mind be upon his kitchen or chambermaid. For in so doing the bread remains bread.

There is no God. And why so? For they say if his intention be not there it is nothing. But it is very true that they show very well how one error draws another.

For because it seems to them that there is a change made of the bread into the substance of our Lord Jesus Christ for which they have invented that same charm and spell they add straightway the intention. But in spite of this we see that they know nothing of the nature of the sacraments. I cease now to speak of this conversion which they imagine and call transubstantiation but if he that ministers the sacrament and has this charge and calling if he holds the people bound to his intention, what shall this be? A wicked man that shall baptize.

He may mock God and by this means quite obstruct and make the sacrament ineffectual. And after when he shall minister the sacrament of the supper, the poor people shall in that respect be mocked who come there to seek a pledge of their salvation. He in that thing manifestly despises God.

To be short they must hold the power of God which he most notably sets forth in the sacraments. Shut up in their fist and what a blasphemy is this! And how the testable! But see how far they are come. For it is certain that in the mass if they had an angel there yet it should never cease to be a devilish thing.

But to the contrary if there were a devil in the supper which is ministered yet it could not hinder God from accomplishing his work. We must not look to the worthiness of him which gives the bread or the wine in the supper. But God has so instructed us in that that he has given power to the visible sign.

It is he that works by his Holy Spirit. So as we be not deceived when we come to that place but shall be truly united and joined unto him. Lo then what we have to bear away upon this place to make our profit of it.

But now let us come to the blessing which Isaac gave. After he had kissed his son he says Lo the savor of my son is as the savor of a field which God hath blessed. Though we see that he was deceived yet under the savor of this borrowed garment he accepts Jacob his son as if he had been his firstborn.

Lo then how the savor through which we are accepted unto God proceeds from him which is the firstborn in the house. Namely from our Lord Jesus Christ. Moreover he adds the Lord give thee the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth abundance of wheat and wine.

Here at the first appearance a man would judge that this blessing imported nothing but that Jacob should be fat and well nourished. For Isaac does not mention here any spiritual gifts as we have showed before that it was not for any earthly conveniences nor for riches, profit or pleasures that Jacob must be blessed. How shall these things therefore be reconciled? But we have to hold this rule that is given us in the Holy Scriptures.

Namely that the grace of God was always clothed as it were with some types until that our Lord Jesus Christ came. For when the fathers would obtain pardon of their sins they had some beast slain and the blood was shed. Sometimes the fat was burned and the blood was sprinkled.

And what a brute beast I beseech you, blot out our sins of which we are guilty before God? How could blood do it that had nothing in it but corruption? And again when fat is burned it so stinks as it cannot be endured. And what shall this make for the pacifying of God towards men? What? But should a man say in all these that God would keep his people in earthly things? But we must always come to that pattern which Moses saw in the mountain according to which he has spoken and mark also where we are sent by Saint

Paul and by Saint Stephen. So then as the sacrifices imported more than they showed so let us note that in all the rest God has in such manner guided the people in them that always some obscurity was mingled among for it must necessarily be that this should be kept till the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to the end that we should simply and clearly see the grace of God and the spiritual life.

It is said that our Lord Jesus Christ is the first fruits of those that rise again. And why so? We cannot attain unto that resurrection which is promised unto us and to that heavenly life unless we see him to march on before us. Our bodies returning into dust what can they promise us? The end of all men is nothing but despair.

It seems that all shall be abolished and as Solomon says the death of a dog and of a man as touching the body shall be all one and the same. So then if we look not up to the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ it is certain that all here shall be as it were confused. But when we shall know that he has overcome death and is ascended into heaven then we have an easy access.

But it was not so neither under nor before the law for the fathers had not the sight of our Lord Jesus Christ but in a shadow. It is true that they attained to that heavenly life as well as we. They had one and the same spirit of adoption.

They called upon God for their father. But for all that this was a far off and these things were dark unto them and thus let us note for this cause that they had no such revelation as we have in the gospel. For it behooved God to draw them by such means as were fit for them.

And this is that which Saint Paul says in Galatians four verses one and two. That they were governed as young infants and that the law was like unto a tutor. For although an infant be already the heir of his father yet he has not the occupying of the substance for as much as he is not able to take it in hand.

But he is under the direction of his tutor and though he do it yet he has no liberty to do it. Thus then although the fathers under the law were heirs of the kingdom of heaven as we are yet so it is that they had this servile subjection unto it under which they were kept as under a tutor. And for what reason? Because this honor as I have said must rather be kept until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

If the ancient fathers had not been advanced little by little and as it were by degrees to come to everlasting life. Seeing these things were yet so dark unto them. And our Lord Jesus Christ was so far off.

What had this been? Had they attained their purpose? Thus it was necessary for God to help them and to reach out his hand unto them. And in this respect was the land of Canaan as a pledge and a gauge unto them. That God had appointed a better inheritance for them than in this world.

For they might have returned to the country where they were born, which was more fertile than this of Judea as might appear. Mark, Abraham and Isaac pinched with famine and if they had looked to nothing but to have been nourished here upon earth, they would have forsaken that land of promise. But they rested there and for what purpose? To enjoy it after their death? Of necessity therefore, they must think of a more high thing than this visible earth.

And they must take it in another respect than to say we have here all that we can desire. But they took the land of Canaan as a pledge that God gave them. Until they should come into the possession of that heavenly life.

So then, when we see in this blessing of Jacob, that he speaks of the dew of heaven and of the fat of the earth, of abundance of corn and wine, it means not that Isaac would only pray for this, that his son might be fed as a hog in a pigsty, and that he should be fat and full here beneath. But he followed the order that God had appointed at that time. Namely, that he did give unto them pledges of a thing that was much more excellent.

And that so it is, Isaac adds a little after, that his son should rule over his enemies, and that all nations should bow their knees before him. And by what right does he give him this? Lo, Isaac a poor stranger, that must hire the land where he sets up his pavilion, and must live as it were by the favor of another. And yet nevertheless, he makes his son here a king of kings, and all the world to come and do him homage, and that he shall bring the whole earth into subjection.

We see then very well that he troubles not himself with earthly things, but he joined both together. Namely, he takes earthly blessings as pledges, to the end to bring his son further off. And in the meanwhile, he has his path right that might lead him to the kingdom of heaven, as was promised him.

Now we know that things are offered to us in our Lord Jesus Christ, that may make us forget both honors, and all highnesses, dignities, and nobilities of the world. This therefore is the thing we have to mark upon this place. It is true that even at this day, it must necessarily be that those temporal blessings which we receive from the hand of God, should be unto us, as it were, pledges of his goodness.

But there are sometimes more, sometimes less. For in respect that the ancient fathers had not the same light as we have, and were in shadows and types, this is the cause why God would not so well testify his favor unto them, as he has done unto us at this day. For in the gospel, we have our Lord Jesus Christ.

And it is said that we must be fashioned after his image. Now we know that he had nothing in this world, but all kinds of miseries and confusions. For we see how he was crucified.

So as it seemed that he had been utterly forsaken of God his Father, he was in extreme distresses and anguishes. Thus then, we must be fashioned to him after another fashion than they were, who were so led by types. Furthermore, when we shall compare Jacob with Esau, we shall yet better know, as we shall find afterward, that when Isaac blessed Esau, that the blessing which he will use will be a great deal more large and rich than that which he uses here towards Jacob his son.

And yet nevertheless, this was not to bless him to that heavenly life. But he says unto him, My friend, there be not, there be not two blessings. Seeing that is taken from me, it must stand, and God has blessed him whom I have blessed.

For as much as he has appointed me the minister thereof, it must necessarily be that it even so stand, as it has been done. I have no more right in it. I must hold myself contented to have blessed once.

And yet afterwards, he blessed Esau in spite of this. And how? What, is there any contradiction? No. Not so.

But this is to show us that there was not any other heavenly blessing to say that he whom he blessed should be the head of the church and that Jesus Christ should come of his race. This was no longer in the hand of Isaac, as he confesses. But concerning the benefits of this world, and that which might satisfy the creatures, he gave him more abundantly than he did to Jacob.

Now then, we may easily see that Isaac, speaking here of the dew of heaven, of the fat of the earth, and of great quantity of corn and wine, he means not that his son should trouble himself in these, but he simply sets these types before him which were pledges, as I have said, to draw him further. This therefore is the thing that we have to mark. And with that, let us note that when it is said that Isaac had declared, the voice is the voice of my son Jacob, but the hand is as the hand of Esau, that God had yet purchased this for him.

It is true that all this was done through error, but yet besides this error, he had some certain knowledge, and the Lord did in such way notify him of it, to the end, to show that the blessing belonged to Jacob, as also in truth, it must be reserved for him. Although this had not come to pass, that is to say, even if Rebecca had not used this ill deceit, yet God knows full well how to hold Isaac's mouth, as also he held the mouth of Balaam. Behold Balaam, who was a liar, who was hired, and came also to curse the people of God, if it had been possible for him, to the end, to get gifts of Balak.

But nevertheless, God did so turn his tongue, that when he thought to curse, in spite of his defiance, he blessed them. But Isaac was not as Balaam, for his purpose was not to resist God, nor to abolish his election, but he was blinded with a foolish love, which he bare unto his son. As we have said, and our Lord could well enough govern his tongue, when he would, to cause him to bless Jacob.

But now, when he imagined to bless his son Esau, yet nevertheless, does God draw this from his mouth, the voice is the voice of my son Jacob. Now this was the principle and chief of the blessing, even the voice. For Isaac gave nothing of his own, but he was a witness of the favor of God, and as it were an herald to publish it.

So then, for as much as he found nothing of Esau but the apparel and the touching, he must not rest himself in that, on that, for as much as he found the voice in Jacob. By this we may see that God would even now already allow it. Although that Isaac knew not what he did, nevertheless, the blessing must be turned to Jacob.

Thus much concerning this word. Moreover, for the conclusion, let us mark well when it is said, that all people shall be subject to Jacob. That this is not to the end that he should have any earthly empire or dominion in this world, either he or his.

It is true that they ruled in the land of Canaan, but howsoever it was, yet they did not bring all nations into subjection. In the time of Solomon it is true that God exalted his people far and wide, but this was in a type, for it must come unto our Lord Jesus Christ, who was the head of both men and angels. So then, that which Moses here rehearses of the sovereign dominion, it is certain that it cannot agree neither to Jacob nor to his children, nor to all their posterity, until that we come to our Lord Jesus Christ.

And this is the cause why it is expressly said that he should be the head of his brethren, and that his mother's sons should bow down before him. This was not in respect of Jacob's person. He had but only one brother, who bowed not himself before him, but rather made him afraid, as we shall see after.

But we see the accomplishment of all in our Lord Jesus Christ. And this was not for himself, but it was for our good and for our salvation. That he received all power from God his Father to the end that every knee should bow down before him.

In him also it is said all together that we are a priestly kingdom, so that we acknowledge him as our king and our head to worship him. But now let us cast down ourselves before the majesty of our good God in acknowledging of our faults and praying him that he will make us in such way to feel them, that it may be to humble us before him and for to make us to ask pardon of him and also for to hate ourselves and to be displeased with ourselves in our own vices. And pray him that it would please him in such manner to reform us that we may grow up more and more in all holiness and obedience of his righteousness.

And that he would support us in our weaknesses in such way that he cease not to accomplish the promises that he has made unto us. Although that on our part we do not only slack them but seem also utterly to thrust them from us. That in spite of this he will not cease to stretch out unto us a strong hand until that we become unto the mark which he has set before us.

That is till we be partakers of that glory which he has purchased unto us through our Lord Jesus Christ. And that he will not only show this grace unto us but unto all peoples and nations of the earth. Please stand with me and we'll pray together.

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