

# Election and Reprobation #13 Concerning Jacob and Esau

by John Calvin

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*John Calvin's sermon examines the biblical narrative of Jacob and Esau to illustrate God's sovereign choice and the implications for His people.*

**Duration:** 1:05:15

**Scripture:** Genesis 27:31, Isaiah 55:6, Matthew 6:33, Romans 9:5, 2 Corinthians 6:2, Galatians 1:8

**Topics:** "Election Doctrine", "Gods Sovereignty"

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## Description

In this sermon, John Calvin focuses on the story of Isaac and his submission to the will of God. He emphasizes the importance of maintaining a good reputation and not being ashamed to change one's ways when necessary. Calvin warns against hardening oneself in obstinacy and urges listeners to abstain from doing any harm to those whom God has chosen. He also encourages believers to help and support the children of God, even if there is no worldly reward, as their ultimate reward is in heaven.

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## Transcript

The sermon we'll hear today is the Thirteenth Sermon of Jacob and Esau by the minister John Calvin from the book, Sermons on Election and Reprobation. The minister uses for his texts the book of Genesis chapter 27. Genesis chapter 27 beginning in verse 31, reading from the translation as provided by Mr. Calvin from the French into the English, we begin, Isaac said, Accursed be every one that shall curse thee, and blessed be he that shall bless thee.

Now as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, it came to pass, I say, that Jacob, being scarce gone forth from the presence of his father Isaac, that Esau returned from his hunting. Therefore he also brought unto his father delicacies prepared. And he said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of the venison of his son, that thy soul may bless me.

Now Isaac said unto him, Who art thou? He said, I am thy first begotten son Esau. Then Isaac trembled with a wonderful fear and said, Who is that which brought unto me venison even now? And I have eaten of all before thou camest, and whom have I blessed? Also he shall be blessed. Now Esau, hearing the words of his father, cried out with a wonderful, great and bitter cry.

And he said unto his father, Bless me, my father, bless me also. Who said, Thy brother came through craft, and hath taken away thy blessing. And he said, How rightly is his name called Jacob, for he hath supplanted me now the second time.

He hath taken my birthright. And lo now, he hath taken my blessing also. Yesterday, we stated this word concerning the blessing which Isaac gave unto his son Jacob.

Namely, that whosoever should bless him, should be blessed. And whosoever should curse him, should be accursed. But it is very certain that this was not in the hand of any mortal man.

For it belongs unto God to punish those which do any wrong to his children. And besides that, it is forbidden us to seek revenge. It is not in our power to bring to pass that our enemies have their reward.

Now therefore, it is very certain that Isaac pronounced here the sentence of God. And that he spake not in his own name. But was authorized as a prophet.

And indeed, we have seen that this was pronounced from the mouth of God to Abraham, in the twelfth chapter of Genesis, verses two and three. Where we read, I will bless all those which shall bless thee, and I will curse all those which shall curse thee. God reserved this unto himself.

But now how is it that Isaac presumes to speak after the manner of God, unless because he knew that this inheritance was left unto him. And so he resigns it unto his son, to the end that after his departure, he might be the possessor of it. We see then briefly, that Isaac does not speak in this point rashly, that although he had many foul faults, yet despite this, he was grounded upon that which God had promised him.

And he knew that this office was committed unto him. And thus, he doubted not to curse all those which should curse his stock. Now seeing it is so, that this was not man's word, but a sentence given by the power of the Holy Ghost.

We have then first of all to learn, that if we be knit together with Jacob by faith, that God takes us into his custody upon such condition, that all they which shall hurt us, and shall do us any harm, they shall fight against him. For he defends us as the apple of his eye, as he has also spoken of it. And what a benefit is this, that God takes all our quarrels, and becomes the enemy of our enemies, that none can lift up so much as a hand against us, to do us wrong or violence.

But that he by and by, sets himself against him, as if that were to violate his own majesty. Where therefore, God comes so low, that he declares that we must address ourselves to him, and stay upon him, as often as any wrong is done unto us. What better thing can we desire? Thus therefore, let us learn to be patient in all our afflictions, and if we be unjustly persecuted in this world, let us know that nothing shall escape unpunished, but that all our adversaries must come to an account.

They may imagine for a time that they have gotten all, but as sure as God dwells in heaven, their reward shall light upon their own heads. And they shall know that in imagining to trouble and torment us, they have violated the protections of God, and his safeguard. Thus much then for one point.

And further, let us learn also by this place, to do good to all the children of God. It is true that it is not lawful, especially for us, to do any wrong to our enemies, although they were the most wicked men in the world. But yet we do see that God has his faithful ones in his tuition, and they cannot be touched the

breadth of a finger.

But God sets himself before us to be our buckler, and declares that he will curse all those that shall curse us. We have therefore the more occasion to abstain from doing all injury, and to take good heed that they whom he has so received to himself be not violated nor offended by us. And to the contrary, when we see the children of God to have need of our aid and help, although we look for no recompense for them after the manner of the world, and that they have no means to show any or be unknown unto us, when it is said that God will bless us, let us learn to employ ourselves in that, seeing that our reward is prepared for us in heaven, and that we cannot be frustrated of that.

This therefore is the sum of that which we have to learn out of this place, namely that we take good heed that we do no wrong to those whom God will maintain. For, seeing that they are in his keeping, it is certain that we must come to a reckoning when we shall do them any wrong. And with all this, let us endeavor always to do good unto those whom God offers unto us, and seeing he declares unto us that he will accept all as if it were done to his own person, let us not think that we have lost anything, although the men to whom we do good be not able to repay it.

For if they be poor and destitute of all ability, or rather have no occasion to show that they are not unthankful, nevertheless, let us know that God does receive with his own hand all that which we have done in supporting those which were destitute and have need. When we have this, I say, we shall have enough to content us. But, if we desire that God bless us in such manner, let us first take heed, as I have already touched, already touched, that we be the true children of Jacob, not of the carnal race, but by faith, and that we be regenerate by the same spirit, that we may have the testimony of our adoption imprinted in our hearts, and as it were, sealed.

To the end we may have full assurance from it, and that in this trust we may cry out unto God. Now, to the end we may do this, we may, we have to praise the head of all, that is to say, our Lord Jesus Christ, who, as Saint Paul says in Romans chapter 9, verse 5, is blessed forever, when he spoke of his human nature, and that he was descended of the stock of Abraham. And yet, he says nevertheless, that he, Jesus Christ, is God blessed forever.

Now, we have to bless or praise him, not after the manner of men, but to glorify him as he deserves. And moreover, when we pray unto God for the advancement of his kingdom, we say as that prayer is suggested unto us by the Holy Ghost, in Mark 11, verses 9 and 10, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of God. O Lord, make thy kingdom to prosper.

O Lord, increase the kingdom of David. So then, this is the way to make us partakers of that which is here recited by Moses, namely, that God bears such special favor and singular love towards us, that he not only blesses us, but if any do us good or evil, he accepts this as done to his own person, and will recompense them that have pity upon us, and shall help us in our necessity. And again, he will revenge our cause.

And although we be patient in all the wrongs and outrages that men do against us, yet nevertheless, he will keep us and stretch out his arm to chastise all those who shall unjustly oppress us. Behold then the sum of the matter concerning that word that was left for us. Now it is said that Jacob was even hardly gone forth from his father, and that scarcely he had obtained that he went about.

But lo Esau, returning from hunting, and brought meat to his father, he brought it unto him being upon his bed. If we shall consider that which is here rehearsed by Moses, according to the outward appearance, it is certain that Esau was worthy to have been blessed. For he diligently performed that which was directed and commanded him by his father, and discharged himself of his duty.

For what reason then was he deprived of his birthright? But see wherein we are often deceived. That is, because we regard that which we see with the eye. But God regards the right and truth, as Jeremiah says.

So then, let us not think that God occupies himself in the outward appearance, which indeed is nothing. And yet despite this, we are inclined to be seized with it, in that we are sensual men. To be short, that which has the goodliest glister and appearance before men, shall oftentimes be rejected before God, as the pagans and heathen.

They set great price upon their virtues in the outward appearance which they had. But we must come further. That is to say, we must know that God sounds the hearts and secret thoughts.

So, an act may be highly and greatly praised and esteemed, and yet nevertheless shall displease God. For if the affection shall not be right, there is nothing but hypocrisy and a double courage in it. For else, the end shall not be well ordered.

For let us put the case, that a man gives himself to virtue, and yet has this foolish arrogance in himself, to get reputation. And that men should clap their hands at him in the judgment of the world. He has now already received his reward.

And because he is led with ambition, it must necessarily be that all that he does and takes in hand must be rejected of God. And why? Humility is the foundation and root of all virtues. As long, therefore, as men do seek to merit by their own virtue, it is certain that if they were angels in outward appearance, yet all that proceeds from them is nothing else but baggage and very filth.

So let us learn that when we see how Esau behaved himself so to the eye, and that he failed in nothing, and yet despite this that he was cast underfoot, and that God made no reckoning of him, let us learn, I say, not to give ourselves to foolish ambition, to be seen of men and to be well thought of, but let us walk in simplicity and uprightness before God. Let us know that if the heart go not before, that all the service that we can do unto Him shall be justly rejected. Mark shortly that which we have to hold concerning that which Moses has rehearsed here, touching the obedience which Esau rendered unto his father.

Now, there is also to be noted further when we shall make comparison of him with Jacob, we shall find that which was showed before, namely, that Jacob was not preferred but by the goodness of God, of which thing there appears no reason unto us. For behold, Esau, who went to hunt, who did not lie, who did not deceive his father, and did not thrust himself in craftily, neither by any deceit or indirectly. He had none of all this.

But what does Jacob? He deceives, he lies, and deals in disguise, and prevents, rather, and presents himself as if he were his brother Esau. There was nothing in him but craft and theft concerning this matter. And further, he does greatly dishonor his father to make him believe one thing for another.

We might well say then that Jacob deserved to be rejected and cut off. But nevertheless, God would that he should have the birthright. And on what is this founded unless it be upon his everlasting counsel, which we cannot comprehend.

And so let us learn to humble ourselves, despite that the reason is not declared unto us why God should rather accept Jacob than Esau, and take the birthright from the greater to give it to the lesser, even though then that we know not what moved and induced God to this. Yet regardless, let us hold for most certain that he does nothing but most justly, because his will is the rule of all righteousness. He is subject to no law, and much less to our fantasy to do those things that seem good unto us.

But so far off is it that though we were able to dispute and to allege all the reasons that possibly we could conceive, yet the only will of God shall overcome all the reasons in the world. And all that which shall enter into our brain must of necessity be overthrown, as it is said, that he shall always be justified. Yes, even though men condemn him, for they rather have this devilish pride to murmur against that which he does, and to find something to say against it, and to bring forth their reasons.

But when they shall have babbled a huckster's strong language as long as they can, yet shall the justice of God remain untouched. And they which have dared rather to slander it, and bark against it, they shall remain ashamed and confounded. Behold therefore yet another principle point that we have to hold in this place.

Now it is said that Isaac first asked, Who art thou? And hearing that it is Esau, he was astonished. Yes, furthermore Moses adds, with a wonderful fear, if Isaac had not known how much that blessing had been worth, and that it should be confirmed by God, if he had not known that he, being called to the dignity and office of a patriarch, must be a witness of the inheritance of salvation, even if he had known these, he had not been so astonished. For he would have done as other men used to do.

I have been deceived by my son. He would have stormed and chafed against Jacob. Yes, and he would have cursed him.

And he would yet have concluded, Oh, I will keep my right in whatever manner it be. This shall not one bit prejudice me in that. And I have my authority.

Free, undisguised, and free. Behold then, how Isaac might have handled himself in this, after the common manner, but he knew that God had ordained him the minister to cause that the inheritance of salvation should rest in his house. And he knew that he was but an instrument in that.

And that this was not because God had resigned his office to him, even though he had communicated it unto him. For if God communicate his authority to those whom he has established in the ministry of his word, he is not therefore, this is not therefore meant that he deprives himself of it, neither that he gives over his right in it in any way whatsoever. Isaac knew then that for as much as he was but an instrument of the Holy Ghost, that that which he had pronounced must stand.

And there is no doubt also but that it was revealed unto him. For before he was as it were restrained. The love which he bare to his eldest son had so stupefied him that he had quite lost the remembrance of that which we have seen before.

For he was not ignorant of that which God had determined that the greater should serve the lesser. And yet nevertheless, he is a man as it were altogether senseless and devoid of reason, always addicted to his son Esau and thought not to yield himself to be governed by God. Now this was not of any deliberate and set rebellion as we have declared before, but it was love that blinded him and that he marked not that he should simply have rested in the will of God.

Behold how he hastily forgot himself. So then, let us note that this great fear whereof Moses speaks was as if a man should suddenly come to awaken another man making some alarm about him. And as if that man had been seized with some astonishment and thought this had been some message of death and that his enemies had even come to his bed.

Behold in what case Isaac was. But here we have to note in the first place that it is good that God awaken us very roughly when we shall be so sluggish and that he come unto us every day. It is true that we will think ourselves watchful enough when we shall hear the word of God and will be zealous and it will seem that we are very wary in that.

But all that we have heard is quickly fled from us and specially when we have contrary things before us. If we have been exhorted to patience and it seem that we have being in this so well appointed that there lack nothing. Let one come to trouble us.

Let us receive some little blow. Uncontrollably we will be so inflamed with wrath and displeasure that we forget that which was spoken unto us. Again, when we are exhorted to despise the riches and honors of this world.

If we be allured to them by our adversary the devil we will be as it were asleep in them and all our senses will be wholly occupied with them. Now if our Lord used any simple admonition it is certain that it is as if it were spoken to a man that were asleep. And what shall man profit by that? It is necessary therefore that God awaken us often by force.

So, as often as God shall scourge us and that some shall be chastised after one man or some after another let us examine that which was in us. And so we shall know that we were for a time dull and senseless. That we have known nothing of that which we ought or else that we were not so attentive in it.

And let us learn by the example of our father Isaac that seeing our Lord does stir us up and would that we should deeply and in good earnest think upon Him. And that we should gather up all our senses which before were wandering. Let us learn I say to make our profit of this behold this for one lesson but let us mark how Isaac willingly submits himself to the will of God.

I have already said that they that will maintain their reputation will be willful. Although they had done the greatest evil in the world yet they will always maintain it. And behold this is the cause that so many people plunge themselves so deeply even unto the depth of the bottomless pits.

That is they are ashamed to be reclaimed. They would have the renown of constancy and they think that if they should change that it should be cast in their teeth as a great likeness and lack of control. Behold the cause why men harden themselves in obstinacy with boldness and presumption to follow a thing whatever it be and take the bit in their teeth and will in no case bow neither to the one side nor to the other.

Now this is a vice very common and so much the rather we shall be subject unto it unless we come to that which is rehearsed here. Behold Isaac who might have been greatly ashamed for that he was so deceived and abused. A man might say look upon this drunkard when he is worn out with fretting and that he has eaten and drunk he takes one for another.

And farther one might have said this was a glutton when he could not discern between a kid and venison. And again it might have been said what? When he blessed his youngest son instead of his eldest being so deceived and because he did this through error and theft does he think that this shall be available before

God? Isaac therefore might have had many details to look at. To have continued obstinate in his action but he forgets all and knows that for as much as it was so ordained of God that Jacob should be blessed.

That it must remain and no change must be made in this. We are then briefly taught that as often as we shall do any act unadvisedly which does not please God or else if we shall exceed our bounds and go beyond our calling to whatever degree it be that we must always turn the bridle as soon as we shall be warned and that we follow not the matter because to continue to follow the matter is to manifestly despise God. But especially we have to consider although Isaac was carried with an evil affection and although he forgot that which had been pronounced by God that faith was not utterly quenched in him though it was choked.

This argument was handled yesterday more at large yet it ought to be along the way further thought upon. For what moved Isaac to say I have blessed your brother even though he obtained it by deceit yet he shall remain blessed. What lesson does he learn? It must necessarily be that he knew this before.

Now he knew it but as I have said already the light of his faith was as a coal of fire that had been raked under the ashes. One should have seen nothing of it but let them remove a few of the ashes and then behold the sparks appear by and by and afterwards the fire shows itself. Even so was it in Isaac and this is not written only for his person but to the end we should gather a general doctrine of it.

For often times the same shall fall out and come to pass with us. Namely that when we shall much loose the bridle to our vanities that one shall be infatuated with ambition. Another shall be kindled to covetousness to heap up goods.

Another shall have some foolish appetite. To be short another shall be drawn away and estranged from God by some manner of means. Then behold our faith which is as it were dead.

Now God suffers it not to be abolished altogether. For when the word takes lively root in us it is an incorruptible seed. It cannot then be completely rooted out.

But to whatever degree it be it cannot be said that there was not one spark of faith a drop of faith in such way that we be so cold that we think no more of God that the world has completely overcome us. When therefore any do so wonder that they think only but on their lusts a man would say that faith were quite dead. Now this may well be in appearance but despite this God yet reserves some hidden seed.

As we have said that the fire may well be choked and yet not altogether quenched when it shall be raked up under the ashes. For all our affections the riches, honors and pleasure of the world are as ashes to choke up this light of God which ought to guide and lead us. But our Lord having pity upon us brings to pass that a little after we acknowledge our faults.

And whereas we were so cold yes as it were altogether frozen we begin to wax warm in a good zeal and to return unto him. Behold then how God accomplishes that in his faithful which we read here of our father Isaac. But this is not spoken to the end and we should therefore tempt God as though it were permitted unto us to suffer ourselves in such a way to be carried astray by the devil that our faith might be as it were asleep in our hearts and souls.

For it will not always fall out that God will awake those which are asleep and call them again which are estranged from him. Let us learn therefore to walk in fear and carefulness and especially when we shall find men so dull that they shall be as it were altogether block headed and that their faith shall be as it were

dead in them let us learn to fear so much the more. What holiness was there in David and yet nevertheless we see that he was for a time as a man quite desperate afterwards having committed such an abominable fault to have ravished the wife of another and to have caused her husband wickedly to be slain with such villainous treachery that he deserved to be thrown out from amongst men.

After all this we may see whatsoever manner of profit he had been whatever fear of God had been in him before to be short albeit he had been a mirror of angelical perfection. We see that he was as an ox or an hog. He knew nothing.

He had no remorse. It seems that God had given him up into a reprobate sense and had stricken him with a spirit of stupidity and dullness.

Yes, and when the prophet comes unto him alleging this comparison and speaking unto him of a neighbor that through violence had oppressed a poor man oh, he knew well to condemn others and in the meanwhile thought nothing of himself till that the prophet in 2 Samuel chapter 12 verse 7 till that the prophet said unto him it is of thee it is of thee that I do speak until that the prophet said unto him it is thou murderer that has done such a deed until that he came to give him a blow with a club as it were a chafed bull he continues stupidly in it and for as much as the devil had won him so far that he was as it were drunken yes, altogether bewitched it must necessarily be that God even thundered against him when therefore we see such like examples as this which is here rehearsed unto us by

Moses, that Isaac the chief of the church is as it were blind in this until that God had revealed it by force so much the more as I have said it is advantageous for us to take good heed to walk in fear and carefulness and in the meanwhile let us learn when God gives us such pushes and spurs to make us return unto him where as we were before as it were insensible and have gotten through long habits such a strong smell when God gives us the grace I say to call ourselves back unto him that we be moved as becomes us and that it be not to wipe our mouth after we have said in one word that we have faulted as there are many but that we follow that which is here taught us by Moses that Isaac was afraid and how? very greatly yes, wonderfully for it is impossible that we should come to repentance

unless we have a heaviness that must torment us and we be as it were in hell to feel our wretchedness and be therein confounded until so much be wrought in us that we become to that place it is certain that there shall be no repentance in us this teaches how we must practice this doctrine namely that when our Lord shall have touched us that on our parts we be as it were wounded to the bottom of our heart and that we be so astonished that we return no more to our slothfulness and negligence with which we were for a time overwhelmed now Isaac yet shows his faith better in saying he shall be blessed for he knew that God had ordained him to this office and that he spoke not in his own name for the sentence of God cannot be called back it is necessary therefore that he kept himself there so we

have farther to gather of this place that which we have already touched that Isaac here passed not his boundary although he had failed through ignorance and being deceived in the person yet he always kept a good principle namely that he had executed that which God had committed to his charge and that therefore this must remain concluded and have his effect now this is said for our instruction for we know that at this day our Lord would have the remission of our sins to be showed forth by the mouth of men he would assure us of the inheritance of everlasting salvation and also would have his adoption to be declared unto us now we must necessarily have on which to resolve ourselves for if we have not full assurance of our salvation and if we cannot call upon God it is as much as to shut the

gate of paradise against us but in the meanwhile behold the man which speaks and says that he will pardon our sins and yet he is a sinner himself again he promises us of the heavenly life and this is so poor a creature so brittle as anything that is nothing but smoke and yet will he open heaven unto us and is not worthy to dwell on the earth for who is he amongst us that is worthy to be nourished here below at God's charges so then when we shall cast our eyes upon them that preach unto us the word of God by which they protest unto us that God holds and abounds us for his children that he forgives our sins that he receives us in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ as righteous and innocent it necessitates us indeed to look more high for if we stay ourselves upon the men it is certain that we

shall always go out too far and besides we see that there are faults mingled in them and this shall be to shake us and to lessen the authority of God and in the end quite to overthrow our faith so much the more therefore must we take heed unto this place the which is written for us that is that when we shall be blessed it is necessary that this hold and be made assured as we have before alleged the promise of our Lord Jesus Christ from the gospel of Matthew 18 verse 18 that which ye loose in earth shall be loosed in heaven and that which you bind in earth shall be bound in heaven the Pope to ratify his tyranny has falsely corrupted this place for he will have a man to be bound to him and to all that he has invented and further to believe that he can do all although he quite overthrow the

authority of God he would be feared and obeyed and no man must contradict or oppose him in anything no matter what it is now this is too extremely detestable a blasphemy but we know that our Lord Jesus Christ would not advance men's persons so far as to make idols of them what then he would give that certainty unto his word which it deserves for without this what would it be as I have said we should always be in doubt of it and never in quiet but when we know that by hearing the promises of the forgiveness of our sins and of the free adoption of God we hear that he invites us to him that he opens the door unto us to the end we might have familiar access to call upon him although it be a mortal man that speaks unto us yet in that we doubt not it is it as much as if angels came down from

heaven yes and even more for Saint Paul in Galatians 1 verse 8 dares well to say that if an angel come down from heaven and preached any other doctrine than that which he had preached that they should hold him for a devil for he knew of whom he held his doctrine namely that it was of God so then let us learn to magnify that reverence which we owe unto the word of God when it is preached unto us and highly to esteem that inestimable treasure albeit it be in earthen vessels for who are we that we should preach the word of God if a man would regard what is our condition it is certain that all that we shall preach shall come to nothing but the treasure as I have already said ought always to be esteemed according to the dignity of it although God hath put it in us and we be but as broken pots

that have nothing but brittleness behold then that which we have to learn upon these words he that hath been blessed shall be blessed and how so had Isaac that privilege in this to say that that which he had pronounced should stand after he had eaten and drunk and further being a poor blind man being so dull that he knew not what he did being so dull that hearing the voice of his son Jacob he suffers himself to be led as a poor beast and yet nevertheless says it shall stand yes but acknowledging his fault he is confounded and nevertheless he continues for he knew to what end God had established him and on that matter he gives glory to God and quite cast himself down from his own understanding knowing well that he had nothing of his own and so let us learn that Isaac so ordered himself and

in such manner rested upon the word of God that he altogether renounced his affections with which he was formerly carried away in the low and humble season we have here a good rule concerning ourselves

whereby we are warned that when we shall be taught although this be done by the means of mortal men who are sent us that God does accept us and account us for his own that this ought to suffice us and that we may despise Satan and all temptations and all things that may come in our brain to shake our faith and on that matter it is said that Esau cried out yea by yelling and roaring and that he howled as it were a wild beast and that he desired despite this to be blessed and that his father said unto him lo it must needs be that the first blessing hold and that then he despised his brother

Jacob and said it was right that he was so named for we have declared before that Jacob's name was drawn from a heel as if a man should have called him heel holder and this was for as much as he held the heel of his brother when he should come forth of the womb now he says he has given me a blow with his heel as if a man should say when a beast rushes upon him that the beast has stricken him with his heel now Esau applies this to his brother he hath supplanted me twice now he says and this word also comes of tripping when a man secretly gives one a blow with his foot and makes one to fall he says then that Jacob has already tripped him twice with his heel the first time when he took away his birthright and now when he took away his blessing now here we have to note in the first place that

which the apostle shows us in Hebrews chapter 12 verse 17 namely that all be yet Esau wept and mourned despite this he obtained no place of repentance for he came to that too late and this is according to the exhortation which we have made up to this time it is said that we must not be profane as Esau was that we must not be given to the earth nor to all that which concerns our bodies and this transitory life in such way that we should forget the heavenly life and why so for he says they which profane themselves and defile themselves in their filthy desires they may cry but they shall find no place of repentance for as much as the gate shall be shut against them now it is true that this is this as at the first appearance might be thought strange for it is said as often and at whatever

time a sinner shall mourn and ask pardon that God will be ready always to receive him to mercy which return unto him behold the promise is general so then how is it that that apostle says that we shall not find place of repentance if we come too late for their needs nothing but to mourn but this shall be easily understood when we shall have distinguished between the cries of the faithful and of the unbelievers both the one and the other shall indeed cry unto God but in diverse ways for the faithful shall be touched with true repentance when they cry and when they mourn it is said likewise that David roared and that his throat was as it were hoarse behold then the cries which the children of God throw forth as it is said that he himself brayed forth like a lion and a little after we hear

what Ezekiel says that his speech failed him and that he groaned in himself as swallows and that he could speak no more that he was so hoarse that he knew not how to speak one word distinctly pronounced that he was as it were altogether thrown down we see then that the faithful have had this affection but in the meantime they have repentance which touched them to the clip for their faults as it must necessarily be that they displease themselves in that respect and humble themselves before God and after this they conceived some hope to obtain pardon now the unbelievers they were brave enough but in the meanwhile they will not quit to have their hearts hardened tears trickle down from their eyes but in the meanwhile they will not quit to be proud and rebellious against God they have indeed

some horror of his judgments but this is but to set themselves in despite against him for they never go so far as to hate their offenses and to be displeased with them observe how it is with Esau and therefore we have to gather that without repentance these cries shall be rejected of God and shall never come unto him and when the apostle speaks of repentance it is not that he means that Esau had repentance but he

means that he obtained not mercy and that God was not merciful to him and so let us take good heed unto ourselves and let us detest this blasphemy which the devil sows in the world that there needs no more but one good sigh for behold those merry Greeks when they shall be exhorted to return from their wickedness oh I must yet a good while use it and God is a good fellow behold

yet another blasphemy as detestable at which even the very stones should cleave and split and further God is merciful it seems to them that under the name of mercy they should hold God bound unto them but it shall be sold them dearly yes behold they come so far that they say oh there needs nothing in the end but one good bulk and one good sigh yes but who is that which shall give it do we have it in our fist must not God work in it when a man shall fall albeit he has hurt himself he may well recover himself but if he have broken his neck can he afterward recover himself now before God all our faults are deadly and what is more it is to put us into and deliver us into the hands of Satan and as I have already asked can a man rise up when his neck shall be broken now it is certain that as

often as we offend God it is as if we break our neck as much as lies in us and so can we restore life to ourselves after we have lost it behold then what art to stir us up to walk in carefulness and not to tarry till the gate be shut against us but let us hearken to all the warning that have been given us and when God shall knock let us open unto him and moreover we have to hold that which is spoken unto us by the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 55 verse 6 seek the Lord whilst he may be found call upon him when he is ready to hear it is true that the time makes no great matter that we should take any great advantage of it but yet we must understand for conclusion that this place of Isaiah was fulfilled when the gospel was preached as Saint Paul declares in the second epistle to the Corinthians

chapter 6 verse 2 lo the acceptable days lo the time of salvation and likewise we must mark the similitude which is alleged unto us by our Lord Jesus Christ that we let not the occasion slip but when God bids us that we come unto him let us come unto him yes hastening ourselves and let us not drag our legs to come slowly let our unthankfulness in the end separate us and that the gate be shut against us let us take good heed I say to all these exhortations and so let us make our profit of them that having found place of repentance before God we may after we have bewailed our faults have our mouths open to rejoice in him and to praise his holy name for that he shall have been merciful unto us but now let us throw down ourselves before the majesty of our good God in acknowledging our faults

praying him that he will in such way make us to feel them that it be not to keep us long in them nor to slug or flatter ourselves in them but in such way to return unto our judge that asking mercy in him we may there find it in him and that it be not only to the end that he enter not into account with us to impute unto us our iniquities and offenses but that by his holy spirit he will purge us and that we may be more and more reformed and that he awaken us that we be not obstinate in our faults but that we think upon all the corrections whereby he would draw us away from the evil way wherein we have strayed and that we make such profit of all the declarations and proclamations which he gives us that we be not ashamed to be condemned of him to the end to obtain mercy that not only will he

show this favor unto us but to all peoples and nations of the earth let's stand together and bow our hearts in prayer This recording is copyright and was made with the permission of Old Paths Publications and may not be duplicated without their written permission.

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