



[Genesis 25:29-34](#)

(29) And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: (30) And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. (31) And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. (32) And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? (33) And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. (34) Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.

King James Version

Perhaps never in all man's history has something so valuable been purchased for so little! The major flaw in Esau's character reveals itself in his careless disregard of the high value of his birthright in favor of an immediate, sensual satisfaction. Unfortunately, far too many of us are like him. Esau was a man, so to speak, who could not see two blocks down a straight road on a crystal-clear day. Because immediate concerns dominated his life, living by [faith](#) was extremely difficult for him.

Either he had no vision, or his personality demanded instant gratification. The things that he valued were those he could have right away. Notice verses 32 and 34. To paraphrase he says, "What good is the birthright if I have to wait for it?" Apparently, he either did not consider making a sacrifice to retain it at all or quickly passed over the thought. Therefore, he hungrily gratified his appetite and went his way, much like the harlot who, after plying her trade, unconcernedly says, "I have done no harm."

However, [Moses](#) writes, "Esau despised his birthright"! *Despise* is a strong word, meaning "to be scornful" or "to treat with contempt." Notice Paul's remarks about this in [Hebrews 12:16](#): ". . . lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright." Paul judges him as "profane," which marks a person as irreverent toward what is sacred. The Greek word literally describes one standing in front of a temple (where [God](#) dwells) rather than within it, suggesting one not

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Genesis 25:29-34 (<http://www.theberean.org>) admitted into the body of true knowledge. Esau displays his profanity by treating something hallowed—his birthright—as if it were common.

Esau further demonstrates this perversity in his thinking in his choice of wives ([Genesis 26:34-35](#)). He is unconcerned about God, the things of God, and the future. His mind is elsewhere; he is worldly. The Christian must live in the present dealing with life's problems as they come to him, but always with the future, the [Kingdom of God](#), in mind.

God's Word depicts Esau's worldliness through the medium of eating. Eating something he desired at the moment meant more to him than a tremendously valuable gift of God. Though he became very wealthy, the Bible ignores his death, which oftentimes indicates something ominous. It is worth meditating upon how much satisfying immediate cravings and yearnings, perhaps even for food, presents a stumblingblock to our pleasing God.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Eating: How Good It Is! \(Part Two\)](#)

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