



Team Parish of Christ the King St Aidan's, Brunton Park

Sunday 16th July 2023
Trinity 6

Over the weeks since Ordinary Time began the lectionary has followed the story of Abraham, then his son Isaac, and today we hear of the birth of his sons Jacob and Esau. As we read this story today, there are two questions I think it asks us: do we give away our birthright for a bowl of stew? And do we see God's blessing weaving through our tangled lives?

So first Esau gives away his birthright, and with it the promises of God, for the sake of his hunger and a bowl of stew. How often are we willing to make the same trade? How often do we allow our needs and desires to put the promises of God on the back burner? How often does our faith and trust in God's goodness, take second place to the hunger that's right in front of us, whatever those hungers may be? Whether for food, or wealth, or sex, or affirmation, or power, or comfort. Our hungers, whatever they are, can be powerful urges, but how often do we give away our birthright for what looks like it will meet that need? How often do we forget that the promises of God, and the goodness of his gifts, are greater than even our deepest needs? In God alone, do we find true peace, fulfilment and satisfaction. Of course we eat when we're hungry, but perhaps we're asked to pay attention to our hungers and ask if we're giving away our birthright for the sake of a pot of stew.

Secondly though, I want to notice that God's blessings come in the most unexpected of places. Esau, the elder it is predicted will serve Jacob, the younger, upending the natural order of things. And as the story reaches the end of its arc, Esau finds God's blessing when he receives his estranged brother with love and forgiveness. But on the way this blessing works its way through some deeply questionable actions of Jacob's part. He deceives his father, he runs from a brother who wants to kill him, he wrestles with an angel. He is far from blameless, and the story is by no means a neat moral tale. But perhaps we're asked to see God at work in all the tangles of our failings, our flaws and our unworthiness. Through the mess of Jacob's life, God continues to be faithful to his promise, and to work his blessing. For us, however often we might fall and fail, God continues to weave his blessings into the tangle of our lives.

Genesis 25.19-34

These are the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, sister of Laban the Aramean. Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived. The children struggled together within her; and she said, 'If it is to be this way, why do I live?' So she went to inquire of the LORD. And the LORD said to her,

'Two nations are in your womb,
and two peoples born of you shall be divided;
the one shall be stronger than the other,
the elder shall serve the younger.'

When her time to give birth was at hand, there were twins in her womb. The first came out red, all his body like a hairy mantle; so they named him Esau. Afterwards his brother came out, with his hand gripping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them. When the boys grew up, Esau was a skilful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents. Isaac loved Esau, because he was fond of game; but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was famished. Esau said to Jacob, 'Let me eat some of that red stuff, for I am famished!' (Therefore he was called Edom.) Jacob said, 'First sell me your birthright.' Esau said, 'I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?' Jacob said, 'Swear to me first.' So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank, and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

Matthew 13.1-9,18-23

Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!

Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for

what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.'

TODAY

9:30am: **Trinity 6:** Mr Ken Newitt leads and Rev'd Gerard Rundell preaches

THE WEEK AHEAD

Wed 10.00am, Church: **BCP Midweek Eucharist**

7:30pm, Church: **DCC Meeting**

Sat 10am-12pm, Community Room – **Saturday Café**

11:15am, Church: **NERCO concert:** Church

Sun 23rd 9:30am: **Trinity 7 - Safeguarding Sunday** Rev'd Gerard Rundell leads our service as Dr Sarah Troughton talks to us about her safeguarding work. Readings: TBC

3:30pm: Great Park Community Centre: **Messy Church**

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Thurs 27th Jul 2:00pm **Chat and Craft:** Community Room

Wed 2nd Aug 12:00pm **Lunch Group:** Rugby Club

NOTICES

SUNDAY SERVICE – today's live link: <https://bit.ly/6Trinity23>

ALAN PHILLIPS – please continue to pray for Debs and Vicky as they mourn the loss of their Dad. His funeral will be held on **Tuesday 18th July**, with a private committal at the crematorium followed by a service at St Aidan's church at 3:15pm, where everyone is welcome.

MESSY CHURCH – join us for our final Messy Church of the summer on Sunday 23rd July at 3:30pm at Great Park Community Centre. The theme is End of Term/Year, Looking Back and Forward.

NERCO CONCERT – the North East Recorder Orchestra are entertaining us with a free concert in church at 11:15am on the morning of Saturday 22nd July. Please come along to this event if you can.

SOFIIA - who is from Ukraine and part of our congregation, is hoping to continue her studies in the UK. She recently, at very short notice, found out that her Student Loan will not be available to cover the cost of the foundation year she needs to complete in order to continue her studies. She is hoping to work as much as possible to cover living expenses as well as fees, but has set up a crowd-funding campaign to be able to afford to continue her studies. Anything you can give would be hugely appreciated! https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/FoundationYear?utm_term=9yMbQwnMK

LUNCH GROUP - will meet on Wednesday 2nd Aug at the Rugby Club at 12:00pm for a 12:30pm meal. Please contact Pat or Pauline if you wish to join us.

SUMMER FAYRE – thank you to everyone who supported our fayre last week which raised £1040.

ZOOM CODES – all our Zoom sessions will use only the following details:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7573778713?pwd=NGVjcTRLQjBEaStqYjFDSm1KOURtQT09M>
Meeting ID: 757 377 8713 Passcode: StAidan

FOOD BANK – any items placed in the box at the back of church will be donated to Kenton Foodbank.

DONATIONS - to make a donation to St Aidan's, please use the following link
<https://givealittle.co/campaigns/8a599239-a9bd-4136-8b4b-1dcabb0a2c65>

For Our Prayers: St Aidan's Cycle of Prayer

For the church – Churches in our Deanery: Gosforth Parishes. DCC members and officers

For the community – Snakes & Ladders Playgroup, Brunton Babies, Nursery & Toddler Groups

For the world – for Turkey, Syria, Ukraine and all countries facing hardship and conflict. For our own national and political life

For those in need - Gladys Johnston, Esther Wooler, Alan Gregg, Martin Seaton, Sofiia Karnaukh, Susan Armstrong

For those who have died – Alan Phillips and on their anniversaries: Billy Cullen, Kenneth Forrester, Margaret Purcell, David Henderson, Ethel Todd

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