

Hebrews 12, verses 16 and 17, where Esau is rebuked as a profane person who for one mess of meat, sold his birthright. Here is a terrible lesson. It is pointed out here that though Esau sought bitterly with tears a chance of repentance, found no place for a change of mind afterward. God's mercy is always ready and always open yet there are opportunities which He gives to men which, if passed by, never return. Esau was a profane person who did not realize the value of the spiritual blessings. Jacob saw them as something to be desired, <sup>and</sup> to be sought after, even though with imperfect realization and with wrong methods. Up to this extent he deserves commendation, even though his methods deserve nothing but condemnation.

The second important place in the spiritual life of Jacob is his experience at Bethel which is described in Genesis 28, verses 10 to 22. Here we find God making use of material means in order to put a man in the right frame of mind for receiving a blessing. We remember that even Elisha did not hesitate in a time of difficulty to ask that a minstrel play in order that his mind be calmed and put in the proper state for receiving a revelation from God. Here we find Jacob going alone from his father's house on his way toward a distant land. He has walked north a long distance. He had no place to stay for the night and simply sleeps out on the ground, using a stone for a pillow. He probably had been thinking over his experiences during the course of the day and realizing that nothing tangible had come from all his scheming. Though Esau had given him the birthright, here he was out of his father's house. Although Isaac had given him the blessing, he was going off all alone with nothing, off to distant Haran. He was going off with his brother so angry at him that there was danger of his brother's killing him. Years later when he returned from Haran, we find him filled with fear when he finds that Esau is coming. He knows he has wronged Esau and fears what Esau may do to him. He feels probably at this time like somewhat of an outcast, going off to his mother's relatives in an idolatrous land. Feeling himself utterly alone, he lies down to sleep and in His sleep, God gives him a vision ~~that he is not alone~~ which shows him that he is not alone. He sees a ladder set up upon the earth, with the top of it reaching Heaven, and angels of God, as-