

## Sermon Title: Does God Play Favorites?

### Sermon Text: Genesis 25:19-34

Is there a favorite child in your home? If so, what is that choice based upon?

In the text, we see that both Isaac & Rebekah had their favorite! When it came to their children, **"Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob" – vs. 28.** And that seems to make sense...

Esau was a **man's man**... **"a skilled hunter, a man of the field."**

Jacob was a **momma's boy**... **"a quiet man, dwelling in tents."**

One could also argue that their favoritism may have been based upon - Esau being the firstborn (for Isaac), the words spoken by God in **vs. 23** (for Rebekah).

It's true, we earthly parents sometimes play favorites, but what about God? **Does our heavenly Father play favorites?** Does He show favoritism/partiality?

Scripture tells us "no" – **Deut. 10:17; Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11; James 2:9**

But does that align with what we've seen so far, as Scripture has unfolded?

- God's acceptance of Abel's offering over Cain's?

- **The choosing of Abraham, and his seed?**

- The selection of Isaac over Ismael?

- The declaration of Jacob (the younger) over Esau (**the one with birthright**)?

God said to pregnant Rebekah, **Vs. 23 – "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger (Esau) than the other (Jacob), the older shall serve the younger."**

If this isn't favoritism, then **what is it?** Let's turn to **Romans 9:4-13**. Paul gives a commentary to Gen. 25 as to how God interacts/chooses His people.

**Vs. 11-12 - "though they were not yet born & had done nothing either good or bad – in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls... the older will serve the younger."**

This is not favoritism as we understand it! **Isaac & Rebekah showed favoritism by looking at external traits!** God's sovereign choice does not!

God's criteria of choice is always based upon the eternal council of His will! God's not bound by human traits, works, traditions... He is free – He is God!

God, & His ways, cannot be fully understood by our human/finite minds! & what can be understood, b/c it has been revealed, can be misunderstood!

The "Church" has been arguing about "election/predestination" since these words showed up in Scripture! **We are responsible to rightly handle the Word of Truth, but some Words can't be fully understood from a human perspective!**

- God chose Abraham... We don't know why except that he was God's choice!  
- God chose Israel... We don't know why except that He wanted to display His power & glory through them!

**- God chose Isaac... We don't know why except that He made a promise!**

- God chose Jacob... We don't know why except that God wanted to reveal His purpose, and authority, in election!

- If we are **"in Christ"**, then God chose us too... Why? I have no idea, except that **it has nothing to do with how great/deserving we are – it's simply His choice!**

**If God plays favorites, then He favors Himself**, and He chooses based upon His own sovereign purpose & will! The question is, will we trust Him in this?

Some will say that it's not fair... or that there is "injustice" in God... No one receives "injustice" from God & **I don't think any of us truly want what's fair!** That any one of us receives mercy from God is a miracle in and of itself!

**Others will say that this makes us all puppets, that God simply has us all on strings!** Our text this morning gives evidence as to how that is not the case!

God declared in advance what would happen... **"The older will serve the younger"** but we see how it gets played out - Esau made his own choices!

**Genesis 25:29-34 – "Esau despised his birthright."** Why? **Hebrews 12:16** Esau was **unholy/godless!** God's sovereignty is always the primary cause of things, but He always works through secondary causes - the free choices of man

But why choose Jacob? His very name implies deception, "he cheats", & it was fitting! The choice was not about Jacob, it was about God & His plan!

No one will fully understand God's electing/predestining ways, and that's the point – **It's God's way, not our way!** Some may call it favoritism, but it's not, it is simply the unmerited favor of God (grace) at work in this world!

The choice we have control over is when "Truth" is revealed, will we pursue it? Esau did not! Jacob did! **God's favor has been revealed, what will we do?**

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