

TWO MEN AND TWO TREES

Part 2

JACOB I HAVE LOVED

2 “I have loved you,” says the LORD.

“Yet you say, ‘In what way have You loved us?’
Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?”
Says the LORD.

“Yet Jacob I have loved;
3 But Esau I have hated,
And laid waste his mountains and his heritage
For the jackals of the wilderness.” (Malachi 1:2-3)

The next great illustration of the flesh and the Spirit comes to us in the lives of Jacob and Esau, those twins that were so strangely different one from another. As with Abel, we see the younger son preferred by God, even from the womb, and the symbol of the new man, whom the old man shall serve, is again displayed:

21 Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she *was* barren; and the LORD granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived. 22 But the children struggled together within her; and she said, “If all is well, why am I like this?” So she went to inquire of the LORD. 23 And the LORD said to her:

“Two nations *are* in your womb,
Two peoples shall be separated from your body;
One people shall be stronger than the other,
And the older shall serve the younger.”

24 So when her days were fulfilled for her to give birth, indeed there were twins in her womb. 25 And the first came out red. He was like a hairy garment all over; so they called his name Esau.^[b] 26 Afterward his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau’s heel; so his name was called Jacob. (Genesis 25:21-26)

Here we see with all clarity the sovereign election of God – Him having declared His intentions for Jacob and Esau before they had yet come forth from the womb. The Spirit, through Paul, expands upon this in the epistle to the church at Rome:

6 But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who *are* of Israel, 7 nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, “*In Isaac your seed shall be called.*”^[b] 8 That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed. 9 For this *is* the word of promise: “*At this time I will come and*

Sarah shall have a son. ^[c]

10 And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac 11 (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), 12 it was said to her, “The older shall serve the younger.”^[d] 13 As it is written, “Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.” (Romans 9:6-13)

These twin brothers were to be an intense illustration of the carnal and the spiritual, of the old man and the new. While still dwelling together in the womb (even as the carnal and spiritual must dwell in the same womb – these earthly vessels), God declares that the older (carnal) shall serve the younger (spiritual), even as the first Adam shall be fully subject to the last Adam, Jesus Christ.

As with Cain and Abel, we see another reflection of the earthly and the heavenly in their occupations:

So the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents. (Genesis 25:27)

Esau, like Cain, was a man of the earth (carnal, fleshly), always hunting and seeking flesh, while Jacob was ‘a mild man, dwelling in tents’ (the peace of the Spirit in the tabernacle of God).

RECEIVING THE BLESSING OF THE FATHER

The first major interaction between the brothers that is described in scripture, comes in the twenty-fifth chapter of Genesis, when Esau, in the hunger of his flesh, sells his birthright to Jacob, who has obviously already been desirous of the blessing:

29 Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. 30 And Esau said to Jacob, “Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary.” Therefore his name was called Edom. ^[d]

31 But Jacob said, “Sell me your birthright as of this day.”

32 And Esau said, “Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to me?”

33 Then Jacob said, “Swear to me as of this day.”

So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. 34 And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright. (Genesis 25:29-34)

Here we see the carnality and lack of faith in Esau, who, by declaring that he is about to die, displays his doubt in the word of God towards his father and grandfather. For in the same measure that Abraham believed the impossible because of the word of God, Esau disbelieved - despising his own birthright, as the scripture says. The Amplified Version interprets the last sentence as follows:

Thus Esau scorned his birthright as beneath his notice. (Genesis 25:34 Amplified)

The promises of God do not resonate with the carnal mind – unless the carnal mind can reduce them to the lusts of the world, such as the ‘health and wealth’ abominations that we see and hear all throughout the religious realm. We see two completely different mindsets in Esau and Jacob – Jacob believes the promises enough to desire the birthright, while Esau, by his words and actions, doesn’t even believe that God can sustain him, let alone bless him and his seed.

These two diverse perspectives bear their fruit once more, and the issue of God’s blessing and promises to Jacob in lieu of Esau is brought to a climactic and dramatic conclusion two chapters later, when Isaac, blind and nearing death, summons Esau and tells him to kill and prepare some game, that the old man might eat of it and impart his blessing to Esau as the firstborn. Rebekah, who always loved Jacob more, sees an opportunity, and bids Jacob disguise as Esau to receive the blessing:

15 Then Rebekah took the choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. 16 And she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. 17 Then she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

18 So he went to his father and said, “My father.”

And he said, “Here I am. Who are you, my son?”

19 Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau your firstborn; I have done just as you told me; please arise, sit and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me.”

20 But Isaac said to his son, “How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?” And he said, “Because the LORD your God brought it to me.”

21 Isaac said to Jacob, “Please come near, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not.” 22 So Jacob went near to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, “The voice is Jacob’s voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.” 23 And he did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau’s hands; so he blessed him. (Genesis 27:15-23)

Here we see a beautiful picture of the believer in Christ, as Jacob *approaches his father, clothed in his older brother*. For truly, when we come before the throne of the Most High God and Heavenly Father, we come before Him in Christ – clothed in Jesus our Lord, that we might receive the blessings of the firstborn. This interplay between Isaac and Jacob is a wonderful foreshadowing of that blessedness in Christ, and again, it is also a symbol of the new man supplanting the old man, as the last Adam receives the blessings of the Father instead of the first Adam, who must surely be burned up.

As with Cain, the reaction of Esau is that of a murderer, as he intends to kill his brother in retaliation for the supplanting:

41 So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, “The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob.” (Genesis 27:41)

Nevertheless, unlike Abel, Jacob is not delivered into his brother’s hand, but instead flees to His uncle Laban and lives in exile for many years.

THE BIRTH OF ISRAEL

After Jacob had worked for Laban fourteen years and married both Leah and Rachel, he returned in the fullness of time to the land of his forefathers. On the way he had the famous encounter with the angel of God, which took the form of a wrestling match:

24 Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. 25 Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. 26 And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!" 27 So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." 28 And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel;^[b] for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed." (Genesis 32:24-28)

Again we see Jacob's earnest desire to be blessed, and the blessing coming this time in the form of a change of name, which signifies a change of nature. *Israel* means, among other possibilities, 'Prince with God'. So this man is no longer a 'supplanter', but a prince!

It is also pertinent that, after Jacob had struggled so mightily in the strength of his flesh, he only received the change of name after his flesh was weakened by his hip being put out of joint, and he afterwards walked with a limp. This symbolizes walking not in the might of the flesh, but in the power of the Spirit, for the new man is the latter. Listen to Paul's word's in the second epistle to the church at Corinth, concerning the Christ:

4 For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you. (2 Corinthians 13:4)

And again, in the famous 'armor of God' passage of Ephesians:

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age,^[c] against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. (Ephesians 6:10-13)

Truly our strength is in Christ, in the Spirit – not in the arm of flesh, nor the power of our carnal minds. The religious realm is forever engaged in flexing it's muscles, with its mighty buildings, and resources, and finances, and so forth – yea, even the leaders are trained by that which is carnal, in that they teach and receive the printed word, without

seeking the Spirit of revelation. And so, the carnal man takes his seat in the temple of God, even our hearts, and claims to be God.

EPHRAIM AND MANASSEH

After the trials and tribulations of Joseph, when the Lord has delivered both he and all of Egypt, Joseph brought his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, to be blessed by Israel (formerly Jacob). Yet again, the first and last Adam are shown forth by the reaction of Israel, who, instead of blessing Manasseh as the firstborn, crosses his hands over and places his right hand on the head of the younger:

8 Then Israel saw Joseph's sons, and said, "Who are these?"

9 Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me in this place."

And he said, "Please bring them to me, and I will bless them." 10 Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see. Then Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them. 11 And Israel said to Joseph, "I had not thought to see your face; but in fact, God has also shown me your offspring!"

12 So Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth. 13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near him. 14 Then Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, guiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh was the firstborn. 15 And he blessed Joseph, and said:

**"God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,
The God who has fed me all my life long to this day,**

16 The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil,

Bless the lads;

Let my name be named upon them,

And the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac;

And let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."

17 Now when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took hold of his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. 18 And Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head."

19 But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations."

20 So he blessed them that day, saying, "By you Israel will bless, saying, 'May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!'" And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh. (Genesis 48:8-20)

So God again sets the symbol of Christ in the midst of history, as Ephraim, the younger brother, received the greater blessing than his older sibling, even as Christ, as the last Adam, receives the blessing of the Father, and as the new man is blessed before the old. And so it is throughout the Bible – think of Abel, of Isaac, of Jacob, of Judah, of Ephraim, of Moses, of David, among others. In the same way that an inheritance is always supposed to pass to the oldest, we see the youngest receiving the blessing in God’s divine plan, again and again and again.

MOSES AND JOSHUA – LAW AND GRACE

Moving on from Jacob, Esau, Ephraim and Manasseh, the story of Israel expands as the family becomes a nation. The story of Israel is rife with pictures of the old and new man, for indeed, Israel corporately is a great sign and symbol of God’s dealings with man, and how He surely makes all things new. There is much to say on this subject of Israel, but for the present study I wish to focus on a certain point in the nation’s wanderings, at the time Moses was prevented from entering the promised land, but allowed to view it from a mountain before he died:

1 Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is across from Jericho. And the LORD showed him all the land of Gilead as far as Dan, 2 all Naphtali and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea,^[a] 3 the South, and the plain of the Valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. 4 Then the LORD said to him, “This is the land of which I swore to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘I will give it to your descendants.’ I have caused you to see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there.”

5 So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. (Deuteronomy 34:1-5)

After Moses died, Joshua the son of Nun was ordained by the Lord to go forth into the promised land, leading the people of Israel:

1 After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ assistant, saying: 2 “Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel. 3 Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. 4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. 5 No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. 6 Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. (Joshua 1:1-6)

This episode, though apparently a consequence of Moses’ ‘bad choice’, when he and Aaron rebelled at Meribah Kadesh, is in fact a beautiful picture of law and grace, and the

power of Christ as the new man. Understand that Moses, among other things, stands as a great symbol for the Law. Joshua, having exactly the same name as Jesus (Yahshua), was a symbol of the Christ, and of Grace. When we see these symbols, a striking reality becomes evident. For even as Moses was unable to lead the children of Israel into the promised land, but could only view it from afar, before perishing and leaving it to Joshua to lead Israel to fulfillment, so also the Law could not bring us into the promises of God, but could only act as a schoolmaster, bringing us within sight of the promised land, but not able to cross over. Instead, the Law was fulfilled by Christ Jesus, who is the One ordained to lead Israel into the great promises of God!

Now these things also pertain to our main theme of the first and last Adam, because the Law was for the restraint of the old man. It is the Grace of God that makes us new – that gives us a new heart and a new nature and enables us to follow Christ into the promised land, into the place prepared for us in the bosom of the Father:

“Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah— 32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them,^[a] says the LORD. 33 But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.” (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

We see here that the *new* covenant belongs to the *new* man, because the law of God is now written in his heart. The Lord testifies that it is not the same as the covenant he made with the forefathers. This ties in to Paul’s letter to the church at Galatia, which we examined in the previous chapter:

For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. 23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, 24 which things are symbolic. For these are the^[d] two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar— 25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children— 26 but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. (Galatians 4:22-26)

The man of flesh cannot inherit the things of the Spirit, which are reserved for the man of promise – the new man:

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. (1 Corinthians 15:50)

Thus, we see ever more clearly how God's dealings with Israel after the flesh, with the covenant He made with them, were such great foreshadowings of the spiritual covenant He would accomplish in Christ, who indeed *is* the New Man! It is Christ, as that promised seed of Abraham, whom is the 'blessing to all nations'.

16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed,"^[i] who is Christ. 17 And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ,^[i] that it should make the promise of no effect. 18 For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

19 What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one.

21 Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. 22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (Galatians 3:16-27)

Amen!