

Old Testament Saints Born Again

JACOB, ISRAEL, AND ESAU

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"And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, by our father Isaac; (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated"
Romans 9:10-13.

The travels of Jacob are well known by the household of faith. His name in the Hebrew language means "supplanter" and his actions fulfilled his name in supplanting his elder twin brother, Esau. Esau means in the Hebrew: "rough". The brothers were unlike in almost every way: Esau was hairy, while Jacob had smooth skin; Esau was a hunter, while Jacob was a shepherd; Esau was a fornicator and profane person, while Jacob was a child of electing love; Esau was rejected of God, while Jacob was called of God; Esau was hated of God, while Jacob was loved of God; Esau was a reprobate, and Jacob an elect. It is never recorded that Esau ever called upon God; and Jacob walked before the Lord.

The Biblical biography of Jacob reveals many things which are characteristic of children of grace. For the first years of the lives of the twins, they both manifested that they were, as all men are, "vessels of wrath even as others." Indeed, the first record reveals Jacob as a deceiver, liar, and cowardly individual. Yet, before the twins were born, God said to their mother Rebecca, "The elder shall serve the younger" — and Esau was the elder firstborn of the two.

Prior to their birth, it is recorded: "And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, TWO nations are in thy womb, and TWO MANNER OF PEOPLE shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger" (Genesis 25:22-23). Thus from the beginning Jacob typified the election of God as a separated people from the reprobates.

We wish the reader will keep constantly in mind throughout this article the following point: The Holy Spirit has given the interpretation of the meaning of this analogy, as recorded by Paul, in Romans 9:10-13. The reason given for this analogy is "that the purpose of God according to ELECTION might stand, not of WORKS, but of HIM THAT CALLETH". No other reason is given. It is contrasted by such a glaring contrast: "Jacob have I LOVED, but Esau have I HATED". Thus, it demonstrates: (1) the ELECTION OF GRACE. Jacob is loved, chosen, selected, picked, and called; and represents one of the "two manner of peoples". (2) Esau is not chosen, selected, picked, or called but rather rejected. He represents the other people. This, I believe, is the ONLY lesson given by the Holy Spirit of these "two manner of people". We hope the reader will keep this in mind, for all we write must be consistent therewith, or we shall be in error ... and our purpose in writing it is to expose a subtle error which has attacked the above foundation of election and reprobation.

Most are familiar with the story: how Isaac loved Esau and Rebecca, Jacob; and how Jacob deceitfully purchased the birthright from Esau while Esau "despised his birthright" and sold it for a "mess of pottage". For many years they dwelled with Abraham and Isaac (Heb. 11:9). And during those years there is no record of either twin calling upon God, referring to God, or God to either of them. Then, following Isaac's blessing of Jacob and his flight into the wilderness from his brother Esau, we read of Jacob's first heavenly experience. On his journey to Padanaram, "He lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the

stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. . ." (Gen. 28:11-15). In the morning, Jacob took the stone from his pillows and set up a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. "And he called the name of that place Bethel" (which means: the House of God). But ah, how feeble is his religion as a lamb, for we read his conditional words "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, IF God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I GO, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; THEN shall the Lord be my God' (Gen. 28:19-21). This, my brethren, is the word and voice of Jacob! It is NOT the language of Spiritual Israel!

The silence of God followed him for years thereafter. Years passed away with no evidence of any Spiritual change in Jacob. He went on to Haran to Laban's house, married Leah after seven years of labor for Rachael, and then labored seven more years for Rachael; and his children were born. Twenty years later, he leaves Laban's house, leading his wives and children ... sneaking away like a thief in the night!

On the way again, he meets the angels of God at Mahanaim, and as he faces his brother Esau we first find him calling upon God for help. . see how shamefully he behaved himself in his brother's presence: hiding behind all his wives and children out of fear, and then lying to Esau about meeting him at the house of Isaac their father! But it was there in that desert that "the Lord found Jacob in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness" (Deut. 32:10). "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the break of day" (Gen. 32:24). It is THEN that we read these precious words of comfort, and promise: "Thy name SHALL BE CALLED NO MORE

JACOB, but ISRAEL: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed" (Gen. 32:28).

Henceforth Jacob, now Israel, will walk by faith. And when in life was this? It is said of Esau his twin brother, that "Esau was forty years old when he married" (Gen. 26:34). And this was before Isaac blessed Jacob and sent him away from Esau. Thus, the forty years, plus fourteen years of labor for Rachael and six years for the cattle, Jacob is at least SIXTY YEARS OLD, or more at this time. The point is made to show that Jacob was as other unregenerate children of God prior to their calling until God quickens them by His Holy Spirit and calls them to grace and glory.

The angel (if he were an angel — as many suppose) committed the promise to Jacob that his name should be ISRAEL. God then confirmed it in Padanaram (Gen. 35:9-10), "And God appeared to JACOB again. . . and blessed him. And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but ISRAEL shall be thy name: and He called his name ISRAEL".

There is little doubt that Jacob in his early years was very carnally minded (as are all the saints of God prior to the call of the Spirit to life and immortality). It was JACOB who was called of God to salvation, and it is noteworthy that God FOUND HIM in a desert land and waste howling wilderness while in trouble and in natural fear of his elder brother. But it is also pleasant to see how the Supplanter was subdued by sovereign grace, and was re-named ISRAEL — a PRINCE with God. All through the New Testament, this same typology is used for the children of God, whether Jew or Gentile.

The Jews of Christ's day said: "We have Abraham to our father", only to hear the Lord's correction: "Ye are of your father the devil" (John 8:44). But to Nathanael we hear Him say: "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile" (John 1:47). Again, Paul wrote: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly (as Jacob); neither is that circumcision which is outward IN

THE FLESH (as was Jacob's). But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly (as Israel). And circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Rom. 2:28-29), as was Jacob's after God changed his name to Israel. As Paul wrote in Romans 11:26, "And so all Israel shall be saved". "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3).

For one to become a spiritual Israelite — prince with God — he must be circumcised in the heart by the Spirit of God. For the child of grace has the old outward man, as Jacob, which shall return to the dust to await the resurrection—the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body; yet, being born again from above, he has an inner man which makes him a prince of God. Yea, we are made more than this, for we are "made kings and priests unto God".

It was God's electing love for Jacob that moved Him to call him and make him Israel. It is also true that this same everlasting love is the moving cause for God to call us in Christ to make us to be a part of spiritual Israel.

Not once do we find such favor shown to Esau. "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" is God's word concerning the "two nations". Two other sons share in this distinction: "In Isaac shall thy seed be called", and Ishmael, Abraham's son by the bondwoman, was cast off. Esau married Ishmael's daughter. Both Ishmael and Esau were the first born of Abraham and Isaac; but the blessing of God to us was confirmed in Isaac and Jacob . . . the elect of God. The laws of men confirm the inheritance through the firstborn as a "natural right" whereas our inheritance is supernatural in God's firstborn, the promised Seed.

What shall we say of Esau? Even as the Scripture speaks: "lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was REJECTED: for he found no place of

repentance (in Isaac), though he sought it carefully with tears (Heb. 12:16-17 and derived from Gen. 27:34).

APPLICATION

It has often been said that Jacob represents the "inner man", or Spiritual man of the heart; whereas Esau represents the "outward man", or carnal flesh. We see no Scriptural justification for such an analogy. Jacob, as "Jacob" represents the elect before regeneration, and Israel represents THE SAME after they are made to be Spiritual Israelites. According to Paul, Esau represented, by analogy, the ungodly, non-elect, reprobates. Paul expressed this clearly in Romans 9:11 "(for the children [Jacob and Esau], being not yet born, neither having done either good or evil, that the purpose of God ACCORDING TO ELECTION [to chose one and reject another] might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth)". Can it not be seen that just as Cain offered an unacceptable sacrifice, so too Esau, the hunter, was as much in error; and that both Abel and Jacob were of kindred spirits?

There are very serious threats to the Truth of election and reprobation in this false analogy of Jacob and Esau being the SAME PERSON, and the argument defies all logical and Biblical reasoning. It is unbelievable that one could honestly believe that Jacob was the inner man of Esau, rather than his brother! Some of the errors being proclaimed on the basis of the false analogy is as follows: Firstly, this theory can easily lead to the heresy of non-resurrection of the body, and it has already been so reasoned: if Esau represents Jacob's flesh, and God hates the flesh of His elect, He will not favor it with a translation from the corruptible to the incorruptible; from mortality to immortality. But Paul writes: "...and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and BODY be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thess. 5:23). Secondly, If this theory is held to consistently, it denies the Eternal Son-ship of Christ Jesus, and He has been so denied already by some holding the view under discussion. It has been argued that Christ did not die for sinners, but it was Jesus the son of Mary who died for

our sins ... as if Jesus is not the Christ, the Son of the Living God! Yet the testimony of EVERY Scripture relative to Christ's death is that "Christ died for our sins". And the BODY of Christ Jesus did NOT SEE CORRUPTION, although in the tomb for seventy-two hours, or three days AND three nights, according to the "sign of Jonas". "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, NEITHER wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. This was before spoken of the resurrection OF CHRIST, that His soul was not left in hell, neither HIS FLESH did see corruption" (Acts 2:25-31). Thirdly, This heresy denies the sanctification of God's people, and it tends to encourage corruption in daily deportment; for it contends that there is no union between the spirit, soul, and body; and that the inner man is separate and apart from the individual. Too often, those who advocate it live accordingly, saying "I have the hands of Esau and the voice of Jacob". Neither is very commendable, seeing the hands of Esau are reprobate, and the voice of Jacob was deceit and hypocrisy.

Is there no union between the Spiritual man and the body? When one is rejoicing in the spirit, from whence do the tears flow? The body. Is it not true that often we hear the gospel of free grace, yet not being Spiritually uplifted feel dry and lifeless? Where is that feeling if not in both spirit and body? And when we are chastened for sins, do we not also feel it in both spirit and body? When our mourning turns to joy and gladness, is it not written upon the very expressions of the face, and our frame? In fact, can one rejoice in the spirit and not have any manifestations of it in the body?

CONCLUSION

Let us briefly notice some details of the man "Israel-Jacob's" life. When JACOB could not believe that Joseph was alive, "JACOB'S heart fainted," then "the SPIRIT of Jacob revived: and ISRAEL said, it is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive" (Gen. 45:27-28). It is Jacob's spirit that fainted and revived over a NATURAL UNBELIEF; but, it was ISRAEL which believed!

“And JACOB rose up from Beersheba: and the sons of ISRAEL carried JACOB their father. . .into Egypt” (Gen. 46:5-7 and context). It was JACOB that went down into Egypt, carried by ISRAEL’S sons! Have you ever been in symbolic “Egypt”? In Genesis 47, Joseph ALWAYS referred to his father as JACOB to the Egyptians; and it was JACOB (not Israel) who blessed Pharaoh (Gen. 47:7). Yet it was ISRAEL who blessed the twelve tribes! (Gen. 48:8-21).

But at his death, what excellent beauty shone forth to the heirs of God and joint heirs of Christ Jesus! “And the time drew nigh that ISRAEL must die” (Gen. 47:29). After blessing his sons, it then reads: “And when JACOB had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people” (Gen. 49:33). Ah, what a confirmation of our blessed hope in Christ Jesus. Though ISRAEL may bless, it is JACOB that dies! Oh, Glorious hope in the resurrection!

Dear reader, sometimes men get too carried away in “spiritualizing” Scripture and thus “opinionize” them instead. Care must always be taken to make sure that such an opinion is consistent with sound doctrine, and thus our views must be weighed carefully in the light of the doctrines of free grace. An opinion may not necessarily be bad, but if others build upon it, they are building on sand, or worse, a figment of the imagination. Images are hard to destroy once bowed before. We ought always be mindful that the “carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be...” The Scriptures are a “thorough furnisher” unto all good works, and there is sufficient there to occupy one’s time without vain speculation.