

THE BIRTHRIGHT OR A BOWL OF POTTAGE?

Genesis records the history of two brothers, two types of individuals: Jacob and Esau; Genesis 25:21-26: “The children struggled together within her (Rebekah)...And the Lord said to her: TWO NATIONS (flesh and spirit) are in your womb; and TWO PEOPLES shall be separated from your body”; Genesis 25:22-23; Romans 9:10-13; 2 Corinthians 6:17
FLESH and SPIRIT represent two types of people who have to be SEPARATED; the man of the spirit is stronger; it rules over the man of the flesh; Gen. 21:10; Rom. 8:6-8; Gal. 5:17
God said: Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I “hated” (God held him in relative disregard in comparison with Jacob); Romans 9:13

ESAU

1. Isaac’s son, whose name meant “rough, hairy” (like a beast); Gen. 25:25; Rom. 9:11-13
2. Esau was a cunning hunter, a “man of the field” (world); Gen. 25:27; Matthew 13:38; HE WAS GIVEN OVER TO THIS LIFE, and was a man of wild and unrestrained habits
3. He was “faint” as he came from “the field” (the world cannot satisfy); Gen. 25:29, craving Jacob’s red “pottage” (lentil stew)
4. Esau’s desire for the “red stew” led to him being called “Edom” (meaning reddish, ruddy); he was the ancestor of the Edomites (enemies of Israel); Ezek. 35:5-6, who were idolatrous, proud, superstitious and cruel; Jeremiah 49:7-8, 16-18
5. Esau was led by his natural appetites; the weakness of his flesh caused him to lose his birthright; THE BIRTHRIGHT WAS A TRIVIAL THING TO HIM
6. His craving for “pottage” caused him to sell his birthright to Jacob; Gen. 25:31-34
7. Esau did not realize what God had offered him; this inheritance was far in the future, and not present at the moment; HE WANTED IMMEDIATE GRATIFICATION
8. Esau’s “live in the now” lifestyle would cost him and his descendants dearly; he was deprived of his father’s blessing; Gen. 27:1-40, and did not consider the potential of a great spiritual inheritance that accompanied the birthright
9. He went to “Ishmael” and married his daughter; Gen. 28:6-9 (birds of a feather flock together)
10. Esau hated his brother, Jacob; Gen. 27:41-45, but was later reconciled to him; Gen. 33:1-17
11. Esau wanted the blessing; Gen. 27:34-42, but despised the responsibility of the birthright
12. HE WAS REJECTED; he could not change the choice he had made; Hebrews 12:16-17

JACOB

1. He was a son of Isaac, the twin brother of Esau, born in answer to prayer; Gen. 25:20-26
2. Jacob’s name means “heelcatcher; supplanter”; he was a schemer and a deceiver (before his encounter with the Lord)
3. Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents; he was Rebekah’s favorite son; Gen. 25:27-28
4. Jacob greatly desired the birthright of the “firstborn son” and obtained Esau’s birthright through his father, Isaac, through manipulation and trickery; Genesis 27:1-38
5. JACOB BECAME A “MAN ON THE RUN”, fleeing from the anger of his brother, Esau, and from Laban, his father-in-law; Genesis 27:42-45; 31:4-5, 20-21
6. Jacob was in fear of Esau when he saw a HEAVENLY “LADDER”; Gen. 28:10-19; the LADDER points to CHRIST (both Head and Body); Gen. 28:1-22; John 1:51
7. His vision of the ladder was the revelation of the GRACE of God to a man in a helpless state
8. Genesis 32: 24-32 records Jacob’s transformation, and what happened to him when he was LEFT ALONE with a “Man” until the dawn, THE BREAKING OF THE DAY; 2 Peter 1:19

9. During Jacob's "wrestling with the Man", he was smitten in his thigh (the strongest part of a man's body); it was dislocated (became out of joint); Gen. 32:25, 31. From that day on he walked with a limp; after Jacob was touched by God, HIS WALK WAS DIFFERENT. We are made weak and God becomes our "strength"; 2 Corinthians 12:9
10. This was a turning point for a man who learned that it "hurts to run"; Heb. 12:1; 1 Cor. 9:24-26. Jacob called the name of that place "Peniel" (the face of God); he had a "face to face" encounter with the Lord, his life was preserved and he received the blessing he longed for
11. Jacob was given a new name; HIS NAME WAS CHANGED from JACOB (the schemer) to ISRAEL (a prince who prevails); Gen. 32:28; Revelation 2:17; 3:12
12. JACOB WAS TRANSFORMED, his scheming nature was dealt with, and in his old age, he became fruitful; Genesis 35:22-26

The Birthright Is A Once-In-A-Lifetime Opportunity

1. Jesus told us the Kingdom of Heaven is like a man searching for fine pearls; he would give up everything else (sell all) to obtain A PEARL of "great price"; Matthew 13:45-46
2. Many are running a race, but many are not doing what it takes to win: keeping their passions under control, so that they do not become another "castaway" and lose out; 1 Cor. 9:24-27
3. God told Abraham that he would have many descendants through his "seed"; Gen. 15:4-5; Gal. 3:29. The seed of Abraham is CHRIST; Gal. 3:16; this inheritance is in three dimensions:
 - a. DUST – Genesis 13:16
 - b. SAND – Genesis 22:17
 - c. STARS – Genesis 15:5; 22:17
4. There is a "gift" to be received; Rom. 5:15-18, but also a "prize" to be won; 1 Cor. 9:24-25
5. The Lord Jesus Christ was appointed HEIR of all things; Heb. 1:1-3 and we are "joint-heirs" with Him; Romans 8:17; Hebrews 12:23
6. The meek shall inherit the Earth; Ps. 37:11; Matt. 5:5, but the OVERCOMER shall inherit ALL THINGS; Revelation 21:7
7. The biblical birthright consisted of seniority; Gen. 43:33, a double portion of the "father's goods"; Deut. 21:15-17, and royal succession; 2 Chron. 21:3

What Is Being Served At Your Table?

1. OUR "BOWL OF POTTAGE" = anything, any behavior, any pursuit, any pleasures of this life, any self-gratification we put ahead of God and His promises
2. The "substance" of Egypt (worldly lifestyle), the "flesh pots" of Egypt; Exodus 16:3
3. Watch out for "poisonous pots of stew"; 2 Kings 4:38-41
4. Hophni and Phinehas, sons of Eli the priest, used a "fleshhook" to take the "fat" (the Lord's portion) out of the pot; 1 Samuel 2:12-17
5. Jesus desires to wean us from the "milk" to give us "meat" (solid food); 1 Cor. 3:1-2
6. Are you careful to examine yourself when partaking of the bread and wine at the Lord's Supper? 1 Corinthians 11:26-30
7. The Lord sees what is being served at "OTHER TABLES": Jezebel's table; 1 Kings 18:19; tables full of vomit; Isaiah 28:8; the table of demons; 1 Cor. 10:21
8. The Lord's Table is a banquet with "Kingdom food"; Song of Sol. 2:4; John 4:32, 34; Ps. 23:5
9. The overcomer partakes of the Tree of Life; Rev. 2:7 and Hidden Manna; Rev. 2:17
10. Jesus is knocking; He desires to "come in" and dine (sup) with us; Revelation 3:20

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