

Birthright, the rite of passage

And God said to Abraham:

Gen 17:7 And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your seed after you in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and to your seed after you.

Gen 17:8 And I will give the land to you in which you are a stranger, and to your seed after you, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession. And I will be their God.

And God gave the law to Moses, at Mt. Sinai, after the escape from Egypt:

Exo 22:28 You shall not revile God, nor curse the ruler of your people.

Exo 22:29 You shall not delay *giving* the fullness of *your crops* and *juices of your vintage*. You shall give the first-born of your sons to Me.

Num 3:13 Because all the first-born are Mine. On the day that I struck all the first-born in the land of Egypt I set apart to Myself all the first-born in Israel, both man and animal. They shall be Mine. I *am* Jehovah.

Num 8:16 For they are wholly given to Me from among the sons of Israel, instead of those that open every womb. The first-born of all the sons of Israel, I have taken them to Me.

Num 8:17 For all the first-born of the sons of Israel are Mine, both man and animal. On the day that I struck every first-born in the land of Egypt I set them apart for Myself.

According to Unger's bible dictionary: The first born male became the priest representative for the family. They were given respect and honor. They were given a double portion of the land in comparison to the other brothers and sisters. In return, they were responsible to care for their mother and any unmarried sisters until their deaths. God given land possession and responsibility before God and mankind has always been important to God. The blessing of the elder son became representative of the passing of the torch from father to son to establish a continuous link to God and the land. Abraham and his sons must have reasoned what the original birthright should entail to be acceptable to God.

Gen 17:5 Neither shall your name any more be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham. For I have made you a father of many nations.

Gen 17:7 And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your seed after you in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and to your seed after you.

Gen 17:21 But I will establish My covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time in the next year.

Gen 27:28 And may God give you of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine.

Gen 27:29 Let people serve you, and let nations bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed *be* everyone that curses you, and blessed *be* he that blesses you.

(Gen 25:20) And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian.

(Gen 25:21) And Isaac prayed to Jehovah for his wife, because she was barren. And Jehovah heard him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

Gen 25:22 And the sons struggled together within her. And she said, *If it is so, why am I this way?* And she went to inquire of Jehovah.

Gen 25:23 And Jehovah said to her, Two nations are in your womb, and two kinds of people shall be separated from your bowels. And the one people shall be stronger than the other people, the older shall serve the younger.

Gen 25:25 And the first came out red, all over like a hairy garment. And they called his name Esau.

Gen 25:26 And after that his brother came out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel. And his name was called Jacob. And Isaac *was* sixty years old when she bore them.

Gen 25:27 And the boys grew. And Esau was a man knowing hunting, and Jacob was a simple man, living in tents.

Gen 25:28 And Isaac loved Esau, for game was in *his* mouth. But Rebekah loved Jacob.

Gen 25:29 And Jacob boiled soup. And Esau came from the field, and he was faint.

Gen 25:30 And Esau said to Jacob, I beg you, Let me eat of the red, this red *soup*, for I am faint. Therefore his name was called Edom.

Gen 25:31 And Jacob said, Sell me your birthright today.

Gen 25:32 And Esau said, Behold, I *am* at the point of dying, and what *profit shall* this birthright be to me?

Gen 25:33 And Jacob said, Swear to me this day. And he swore to him, and he sold his birthright to Jacob.

Gen 25:34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and soup of lentils. And he ate and drank, and rose up and went his way. And Esau despised *his* birthright.

And Jacob and Rebekah tricked Issac into giving him Esau's blessing.

Gen 27:30 And it happened, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was scarcely gone from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

Gen 27:35 And he said, Your brother came with deceit, and has taken away your blessing.

Gen 28:1 And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and commanded him. And he said to him, You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

Gen 28:2 Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father. And take a wife from there of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother.

Gen 28:3 And may God Almighty bless you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, so that you may be a multitude of peoples.

Gen 28:4 And may He give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your seed with you, so that you may inherit the land in which you are a stranger, which God gave to Abraham.

Gen 29:25 And it happened in the morning, behold, it *was* Leah! And he said to

Laban, *What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you tricked me?*

Gen 29:26 And Laban said, It must not be done so in our country, to give the younger before the first-born.

Gen 29:29 And Laban gave Bilhah his slave woman to his daughter Rachel, to be her handmaid.

And Leah bore Jacob a son:

Gen 29:32 And Leah conceived and bore a son. And she called his name Reuben, for she said, Surely Jehovah has looked upon my afflictions. Now therefore my husband will love me.

Gen 30:14 And Reuben went out in the days of the wheat harvest, and found love-apples in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. And Rachel said to Leah, please give me some of your son's love-apples.

Love apples or Mandrakes were a narcotic aphrodisiac.

Gen 30:15 And she said to her, Is it a small matter that you have taken my husband? And would you also take my son's love-apples? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with you tonight for your son's love-apples.

Gen 30:16 And Jacob came out of the field in the evening. And Leah went out to meet him, and said, You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son's love-apples. And he lay with her that night.

Gen 49:3 Reuben, you are my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power.

Gen 49:4 Unstable as water, you shall not excel, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it. He went up to my couch.

1Ch 5:1 And the sons of Reuben, the first-born of Israel (for he was the first-born; but since he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel, and the genealogy is not to be counted according to the birthright;

1Ch 5:2 For Judah prevailed among his brothers, and from him came the chief ruler, but the birthright was Joseph's);

Jacob wrestled with an angel and became Israel from a blessing:

Gen 32:26 And He said, Let Me go, for the day breaks. And he said, I will not let You go except You bless me.

Gen 32:27 And He said to him, What is your name? And he said, Jacob.

Gen 32:28 And He said, Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for like a prince you have power with God and with men, and have prevailed.

Gen 35:9 And God appeared to Jacob again when he came out of Padan-aram and blessed him.

Gen 35:10 And God said to him, Your name is Jacob. Your name shall not be called Jacob any more, but Israel shall be your name. And He called his name Israel.

Gen 35:12 And the land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give to you, and to your seed after you I will give the land.

Jacob (Israel) could not have children for many years through Rachel. Rachel, therefore, sent in two of her hand maidens, Bilhah and Zilpah, who did produce children. The children, however, were not counted to receive the blessing. Finally, Rachel did bear Joseph and then died giving birth to Benjamin. Gen. 35:18

Gen 37:3 And Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the son of his old age. And he made him a tunic *reaching to the soles of his feet*.

Gen 49:26 The blessings of your father are above the blessings of my ancestors, to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him, the ruler, the leader of his brothers.

Gen 41:50 And two sons were born to Joseph before the years of famine came, whom Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bore to him.

Gen 41:51 And Joseph called the name of the first-born Manasseh, saying, For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house.

Gen 41:52 And the name of the second he called Ephraim, saying, For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.

Gen 48:3 And Jacob said to Joseph, God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me.

Gen 48:4 And He said to me, Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you. And I will make of you a multitude of people, and will give this land to your seed after you *for an everlasting possession*.

Gen 48:5 And now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who are born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you into Egypt, are mine; like Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.

Gen 48:8 And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who are these?

Jacob likely did not want to be tricked as he had done to his father.

Gen 48:9 And 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.

Gen 48:10 And the eyes of Israel were dim for age; he could not see. And he brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them.

Gen 48:14 And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it on Ephraim's head, who *was* the younger, and his left on Manasseh's head, crossing his hands. For Manasseh *was* the first-born.

Gen 48:15 And he blessed Joseph and said, May God, *before whom* my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who fed me all my life to this day,

Gen 48:17 And Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, and it was evil in his eyes. And he held up his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head.

Gen 48:18 And Joseph said to his father, Not so, my father. For this *is* the first-born. Put your right hand on his head.

Gen 48:19 And 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 is, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.

Gen 48:20 And he blessed them that day, saying, In you shall Israel bless, saying, God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh. And he put Ephraim before

Manasseh.

Since Joseph saw his father's action as sin, it did become sin as far as Ephraim and Manasseh knew. Joseph represented a godly man to the boys. He had sought God all his life and had even married a priest's daughter. Issac, on the other hand, had gotten his birthright by trickery and wrestled with God's angel. He represented the "do it your way" attitude of the world. Ephraim likely felt great gratitude for his grandfather and less of a need to listen to God as a result of the blessing.