

BY FAITH ISAAC AND JACOB

Sunday Morning: February 24, 2002

Text: Hebrews 11:20-21 "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

21. By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, *leaning* upon the top of his staff."

We are continuing our studies in Hebrews chapter eleven. We are studying the cloud of witnesses that encourage us to run our race faithfully to the end. This cloud of witnesses encourages us to lay aside weights, things in our lives that would hinder us in the race. I know that if we have weights upon us and we run it will be easier for us to become weary and fatigued. When we are weary and fatigued we have a tendency to faint. God does not want us to faint but to reap life for the coming age which is the millennial kingdom of our Lord.

This morning I would like for us to look at Hebrews 11:20 and 21.

We have already looked at the lives of Esau and Jacob and Ephraim and Manasseh when we were looking at Cain and Abel. Here we find we the reason for blessing of Jacob and Esau and Ephraim and Manasseh I believe that would encourage us and give us a prospective of things to come. What does the blessing of Jacob and Esau mean concerning things to come.

First of all we need to appreciate that the Old Testament was written for those of us who are alive at the end of the ages. We see this thought affirmed in the following verse.

IT HAPPENED TO ISRAEL

1 Corinthians 10:11 "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples [types]: and they are written for our admonition [warning, rebuke], upon whom the ends of the world [age] are come."

The word *them* is a reference to the nation of Israel. The word *ensamples* can be translated type which are illustrations of the consequences of not only sin but also being faithful. The word *admonition* carries the meaning of warning or rebuke which in the context of this verse is a warning against rebellion and other sins.

We are living at the end of the ages. The Lord Jesus Christ will be returning soon and we need to be encouraged to be faithful or we will suffer the judgment of God.

BIRTHRIGHT

Deuteronomy 21:17 "But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his."

I want to review the benefits of being the first born. Isaac gave the blessing of the first born to Jacob over Esau. Even though Jacob deceived his father, Isaac knew that the birthright and blessing belonged to Jacob and not Esau. Isaac would not change his mind.

The first born was to receive a double portion of the family's wealth. Receiving a double portion mean that the other sons of the family would receive only a single portion of the family's wealth.

BIRTHRIGHT AND BLESSING

Genesis 27:36 "And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?"

Not only was the firstborn to get a double portion of the family's wealth he also got the blessing. Esau is complaining about Jacob taking away his blessing. What was the blessing?

BLESSING

Genesis 27:29 "Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed *be* every one that curseth thee, and blessed *be* he that blesseth thee."

This was the blessing that Esau would have received if Isaac had carried out the blessing he had planned for Esau.

Esau is not a picture or type of the lost but a son in the family that was denied the inheritance and the blessing of the firstborn.

Jacob did not deserve the blessing or the birthright inheritance. He and his mother were sneaky and they deceived Isaac. Isaac new better because he did not take back the blessing he gave to Jacob. It seems to me that Rebekah would have communicated God's plan for the boys to her husband Isaac. Rebecca knew that Esau would serve Jacob because of what the Lord told her in Genesis 25:23 "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."

BY FAITH ISAAC

Hebrews 11:20 "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning **things to come**."

The blessing of Jacob over Esau concerned things that were coming as far as the family of God was concerned. The things that are coming are beyond this present age. The reason we can say this is because Jesus Christ is our high priest today so that the things to come deal with the millennium and not the church age.

THINGS TO COME

Hebrews 9:11 "But Christ being **come** an **high priest** of **good things to come**, . . ."

We find in this verse that the things that are coming are good things. As a high priest he is representing us before the Father concerning these blessings. Verse 15 will give us some insight into what these good things are.

INHERITANCE IN THE COMING AGE

Hebrews 9:15 "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, . . . (that) . . . they which are called **might receive** the promise of eternal [agelasting] **inheritance**."

The word *eternal* is from the noun *age* and could be translated *agelasting*. Jesus Christ is the high priest of those who are called that they might receive their heavenly inheritance in the coming kingdom age. Isaac blessed Jacob concerning things to come and therefore his blessing is a picture of the blessing of the called and their inheritance. Notice the word *might*. This word implies there is a possibility they might not get the agelasting inheritance. Losing our inheritance is not losing our salvation. To lose ones inheritance is to be disinherited. Esau was disinherited. He was still in the family, he just did not get the double portion nor the blessing. The reason for that is because Esau despised his birthright.

Keep in mind that Esau did get a portion of his father's wealth, but Jacob got twice as much.

BIRTHRIGHT DESPISED

Genesis 25:31-34 "And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy **birthright**. 32. And Esau said, Behold, I *am* at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? 33. And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and **he sold his birthright** unto Jacob. 34. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus **Esau despised his birthright**."

In verse 32 we see that Esau was faint and exaggerated his condition saying, "I am at the point to die." Jacob had what he needed to sustain himself and because Jacob negotiated for Esau's birthright, Jacob esteemed the birthright. There are those in the family of God that esteem the birthright and others are not interested.

We should have the same values as that of Jacob and esteem the birthright. To receive the double portion and blessing means that we will be ruling and reigning with Christ in His coming kingdom over others in the family. Having a heavenly inheritance is a better inheritance when compared to an inheritance here on the earth.

INHERITANCE

Hebrews 12:16-17 "Lest there *be* any fornicator, or **profane** (godless) person, as **Esau**, who for one morsel of meat **sold his birthright**. 17. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have **inherited the blessing**, he was **rejected**: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

There may come a day when we stand before the Lord having despised our birthright seeking the blessing of the Lord. That blessing will not be given even though we seek it with weeping and gnashing of our teeth.

LAST SHALL BE FIRST

Matthew 20:16 "So the **last** shall be **first**, and the **first last**: for many be called, but few chosen."

We know that Jacob was chosen by God to receive the birthright and blessing. Jacob was not in line to be first in the family but being second born Jacob was last. Matthew 20:16 shows us that God delights in promoting those who do not deserve to be promoted. Jacob was last and God made him first in the family.

As we have studied the brothers in the Old Testament it has been the second born son that has been chosen over the firstborn son. This was done so that the purpose of God might stand. The placing of Jacob over Esau and Ephraim over Manasseh was done by God so that we could understand the doctrine of election, God choosing the least to be the greater.

THE ELECT

Romans 9:11-12 "(For *the children* (Esau and Jacob) 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;) 12. It was said unto her (Rebekah) , The **elder** shall **serve** the **younger**."

The elder was Esau and the younger was Jacob. Esau would serve Jacob when according to Jewish custom Esau was to rule over Jacob. Election is a family matter where God chooses the last to rule over those who have been first. The time when the elect will rule will be in the millennium when Christ reigns.

We have set the stage, so to speak, to show how God chooses the least to be first and yet the birthright can be despised and lost because of one act or deed when we have become faint in walking with the Lord. Galatians 6:8-9 "For he that soweth to his flesh (one morsel of mean) shall of the flesh **reap** corruption (loss of the reward of the inheritance); but he that soweth to the Spirit (of Christ to do the will of the Father) shall of the Spirit **reap life everlasting** [agelasting]. 9. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall **reap** [agelasting life], if we faint not."

BY FAITH JACOB

Hebrews 11:21 "By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and

worshipped, *leaning* upon the top of his staff."

Jacob was doing what his father did when he was blessed over Esau. Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph and the names of those sons are not given so that there would be no order of the names as in the case of Jacob and Esau. Word order is significant. By placing Jacob's name first that gave Jacob priority over Esau. In the case of Joseph's sons their names are not given though we know that Ephraim, the second born, was blessed over Manasseh.

EPHRAIM OVER MANASSEH

Genesis 48:20 "And he blessed **them** that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as **Ephraim** and as **Manasseh**: and **he set Ephraim before Manasseh**."

Here we see Isaac blessing the sons of Joseph. Ephraim was second born and Manasseh was the first born sons of Joseph, but when Isaac blessed the two boys he set Ephraim before Manasseh. This upset Joseph. Joseph had lined up Manasseh and Ephraim so that his fathers right hand would be on the firstborn and his left hand would be on the second born. Isaac's blessing placed Ephraim over Manasseh giving Ephraim the privilege of the first born and in type he was the elect over Manasseh.

EPHRAIM MISSING

Revelation 7:4-8 ". . . and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. 5. Of the tribe of **Juda** . . . Of the tribe of **Reuben** . . . Of the tribe of **Gad** . . . 6. Of the tribe of **Aser** . . . Of the tribe of **Nephthalim** . . . Of the tribe of **Manasses** . . . 7. Of the tribe of **Simeon** . . . Of the tribe of **Levi** . . . Of the tribe of **Issachar** . . . 8. Of the tribe of **Zabulon** . . . Of the tribe of **Joseph** . . . Of the tribe of **Benjamin** . . ."

Here is a list of the names of the tribes of the children of Israel that will be preaching the kingdom message during the tribulation period. The tribe of Dan is missing and Joseph's name has replaced the name of Ephraim.

Dan was the first born son of Bilhah. A reason for his name not being in the list is not clear. He did introduce, formally, idolatry into the nation of Israel in Judges 18:30. Another interesting fact is that Dan's inheritance was divided. Dan was given land in the southern part Canaan and Dan wanted more and took more land in the northern part of Canaan. Dan's house was divided and we know that house that is divided can not stand. Anyway, the focus of the message is not on Dan but on Ephraim.

I believe that it is significant that the tribe of Ephraim is missing. The whole tribe of Ephraim was given an inheritance in the land flowing with milk and honey which is a type of the firstborn receiving a double portion inheritance while Manasseh received the other portion of Joseph's inheritance in the land. It is not an accident that Joseph's name replaces Ephraim's name.

I want to acknowledge that the name Ephraim often referred to all of the Northern ten tribes of Israel. Having Ephraim's name associated with the Northern ten tribes is to be associated with those who rebelled against God and the worship of God in Jerusalem.

What I see, and hope you will see, is that Ephraim was chosen to received the inheritance and blessing of the firstborn but forfeited those blessings because of sin and rebellion. The illustration and type of Ephraim was given to encourage us to make our calling and election sure.

Ephraim and Manasseh were known as the Samaritans and were hated by the orthodox Jews.

The Northern ten tribes did not have one good king and they seemed to be always at odds with

Judah and Benjamin who maintained the Temple worship of the Lord.

The following verses are given to show the rebellion and sin of Ephraim.

NOT JUST

Psalms 78:9-11 "The children of **Ephraim**, *being* armed, *and* carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle. **10.** They **kept not the covenant** of God, and **refused to walk in his law**; **11.** And **forgot his works**, and **his wonders** that he had showed them."

Verses 9-11 give us some insight into the attitude and behavior of the children of Ephraim. By turning back in the day of battle they would not encourage their brethren against their enemies. They were not loyal to God and the covenant they made with God. They refused to walk in his law which was willing disobedience and lawlessness.

They forgot His works and wonders having other things on their mind. They were not a very good role model for the rest of the nation of Israel.

NOT CHOSEN

Psalms 78:67-68 "Moreover he **refused** [cast away] the tabernacle of Joseph, and **chose not** the tribe of **Ephraim**: **68.** But **chose** the tribe of **Judah**, the mount Zion which he loved."

Here we see the Lord casting away the house of Joseph as far as the blessing of the first born. Jacob had blessed Ephraim as the first born, but did not chose the tribe of Ephraim as the blessing of being over the whole nation of Israel. In the following passage we see that Judah prevailed above his brethren and received the blessing, but not the birthright.

JUDAH PREVAILED

1 Chronicles 5:1-2 "Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, (for he was the firstborn; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. **2.** For **Judah prevailed** above his brethren, and **of him came** the **chief ruler**; but the **birthright was Joseph's**.)"

By Joseph receiving the birthright he received a double portion inheritance in the land flowing with milk and honey. The blessing that should have been given to Joseph's sons was taken away by Judah in that he prevailed over his brethren.

HATED HIS BROTHER

Isaiah 7:5-6 "Because Syria, **Ephraim**, and the son of Remaliah, have **taken evil counsel against** thee, saying, **6.** Let us go up **against Judah**, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, *even* the son of Tabeal:"

Ephraim listened to evil counsel and joined forces with the enemies of the nation of Israel against Judah. This behavior is not the kind of behavior that would indicate love and respect for a brother but hatred. Ephraim became like Cain not willing to be his brother's keeper but to vex his brother and create a breach or division between them. **1 John 3:15** "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

CORRUPT

Hosea 7:1-2 "When I would have healed Israel, then the **iniquity** of Ephraim was discovered, and the **wickedness** of Samaria: for they commit **falsehood**; and the **thief** cometh in, *and* the troop of **robbers** spoileth without. **2.** And they consider not **in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness**: now their own doings have beset them about; they are before my face."

These verse really shows the depths to which Ephraim had sunk. God would have healed Israel, but the iniquity and wickedness of Ephraim was discovered and that hindered the Lord from blessing Israel. Ephraim was a liar, thief, and a band of robbers. There was no fear of God in their heart because they did not think that the Lord would remember their wickedness. Not only did the Lord remember their wickedness, it was in his face.

Be assured that lawlessness will not go unnoticed. That sin flies in the face of God. God will remember the iniquity of lawlessness and we will have to give an account for that sin. In fact there is no sacrifice for the sin of lawlessness therefore we will have to bear that sin. We have to repent of the sin of lawlessness and confess it to the Lord, then we will receive forgiveness. The lawless sin is a sin that we will not confess as sin.

BONDAGE AGAIN

Hosea 9:3 "They shall **not dwell** in the LORD'S land; but Ephraim shall **return to Egypt**, and they shall eat **unclean things**. . . ."

What a judgment. Here is the land flowing with milk and honey and God says that Ephraim will not dwell in that land. Instead of honey, milk, butter they will eat leeks and garlic. Another thing that is associated with Egypt is bondage. They will be forced to eat what which is unclean so that they will not be considered holy.

LOST GLORY

Hosea 9:11 "As for **Ephraim**, their **glory shall fly away** . . . "

Milk and honey is the glory of any land and any glory of Ephraim will fly away. There will be no glory and honor for the tribe of Ephraim.

CAST AWAY

Hosea 9:16-17 "**Ephraim** is smitten, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit: yea, though they bring forth, yet will I slay *even* the beloved *fruit* of their womb. 17. My God will **cast them away**, because **they did not hearken unto him**: and they shall be **wanderers** among the nations."

Ephraim's root will be dry. They will not be able to produce the fruit required to enter into the land as the nation of Israel in the Lord's day would not produce the fruit needed to enter into the kingdom of the heavens. Being a cast away is to suffer rejection being a reprobate. They were rejected because they would not listen to the Lord. The fear of the Lord had departed from before their eyes.

SHAME

Hosea 10:6 "It shall be also carried unto Assyria for a present to king Jareb: **Ephraim** shall receive **shame**, and Israel shall be **ashamed** of his own counsel."

Because of Ephraim's sin they will receive shame. 1 John 2:28 "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." Ephraim will suffer shame.

EPHRAIM DIED

Hosea 13:1-2 "When Ephraim spake trembling, he **exalted himself** in Israel; but when he **offended** in **Baal**, he **died**. 2. And now they **sin more** and **more**, and have made them molten images of their silver, *and idols* according to their own understanding,"

What an awful testimony Ephraim had. He exalted himself and you know what happens when one exalt themselves. They are brought down. Luke 18:14 "I tell you, . . . every one that **exalteth** himself shall be **abased**; and he that **humbleth** himself shall be **exalted**."

They offended in Baal. They put Baal before God and that requires death. Notice that it says that they sin more and more. That is the problem with sin and living in sin. Allowing sin into your life will allow more and more sin to come into your life. Once you get started it is easier to sin and then you seem to add sin unto sin. Ephraim was operating according to their own understanding and not the counsel of the Lord.

ENEMIES NOT DEFEATED

Judges 1:29 "Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them."

Ephraim could not defeat their enemies. If you have to live with your enemies because you can't defeat them, they will cause you to fall. They will be thorns in your side. Thorns in your side and stickers in your feet will distract you from what you are trying to accomplish for the Lord. You will get your thoughts off of the Lord and on your problems.

SIN MORE AND MORE

Galatians 5:19-21 "Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20. idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21. envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which **I forewarn** you just as **I have forewarned you** that those who **practice** such things shall **not inherit the kingdom of God.**" (NASB)

The lesson of Ephraim is telling us that even though you have been given the blessing of the first born, you can fail to enjoy that blessing. Ephraim sin more and more and they were cast away to eat unclean things in Egypt. If you practice these sins mentioned above you will not inherit the kingdom of God. You will seek with tears to enter into the kingdom of the heavens but will be denied because of sin. We need to repent of these sins of the flesh and confess them to God for what they are and focus on seeking first the kingdom of God. Matthew 6:33.

MAKE YOUR ELECTION SURE

2 Peter 1:10-11 "Wherefore the rather, **brethren**, give diligence to make your **calling and election sure**: for if ye do these things, ye shall **never fall**: 11. For so an **entrance** shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the **everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.**"

This verse makes it very clear to me that if we are not careful with our lives we will be denied an abundant entrance into the coming kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. It takes diligence on our part to make sure that we are doing the will of the Father. Making sure that we are walking Colossians 1:10 ". . . worthy of the Lord unto **all pleasing**, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;" If we are not making our calling and election sure we will be weeping over what we have lost by living like Esau and failing because we have become weary in well doing.

WILL WE BE A CASTAWAY?

1 Corinthians 9:26-27 "I therefore so **run**, not as **uncertainly**; so **fight** I, not as one that beateth the air: 27. But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, **I myself should be a castaway.**"

I believe that Ephraim is a type of one who was called and chosen that became a castaway. Paul said that he was not running his race with uncertainty. We all need to know what we need to do to gain the prize. One thing we know for sure and that is we should not be practicing the sins of the flesh. What we should be doing is found in Philippians 3:14 "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

I think the lesson of Ephraim and Manasseh is simply this. Ephraim was placed over Manasseh, he got the blessing of the firstborn and yet he lost that blessing. We need to give diligence to make our calling and election sure.

Paul was concerned about being a castaway. He knew that after he had helped many to be faithful that he could allow himself to fall into sin and become a castaway.

May the Lord help us to get serious about our walk with the Lord that give diligence in making our calling and election sure. We have been warned by the life and consequences of Ephraim. We know that just being called and chosen does not guarantee us an entrance in the coming kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us not be weary in well doing but let us reap kingdom life in the coming age.