



BIRTHRIGHT: The Legacy of the Patriarchs

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Lord, open our lips.
And our mouths shall proclaim your praise.
O God, make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us.

Almighty God, you have made yourself,
and our hearts are restless until they find
their rest in you. May we find peace in your
service, and in the world to come, see you
face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

O God whose desire is that all the peoples
of the world should be one human family,
living together in harmony, grant that our
families, by worship and witness, may help
to hasten the day when your will is
done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.



These are the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, sister of Laban the Aramean.

Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived.

The children struggled together within her; and she said, "If it is to be this way, why do I live?" So she went to inquire of the LORD. And the LORD said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples born of you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the elder shall serve the younger." When her time to give birth was at hand, there were twins in her womb. The first came out red, all his body like a hairy mantle; so they named him Esau.

Afterward his brother came out, with his hand gripping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob.

When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents.

Isaac loved Esau, because he was fond of game; but Rebekah loved Jacob. Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was famished. Esau said to Jacob, "Let me eat some of that red stuff, for I am famished!" (Therefore he was called Edom.)

Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright."

Esau said, "I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?"

Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank, and rose and went his way. Thus Esau disrespected his birthright. The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Genesis 25:19-34



Psalm 65

Happy are those whom you choose and bring near to live in your courts. By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance.

O God of our salvation; you are the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas. By your strength you established the mountains; you are girded with might. You silence the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, the tumult of the peoples.

You visit the earth and water it, you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water; you provide the people with grain, for so you prepared it. You water its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges, and blessing its growth.

You crown the year with your bounty; your wagon tracks overflow with richness. The pastures of the wilderness overflow, the hills gird themselves with joy, the meadows clothe themselves with flocks, the valleys deck themselves with grain, they shout and sing together for joy.



Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach.

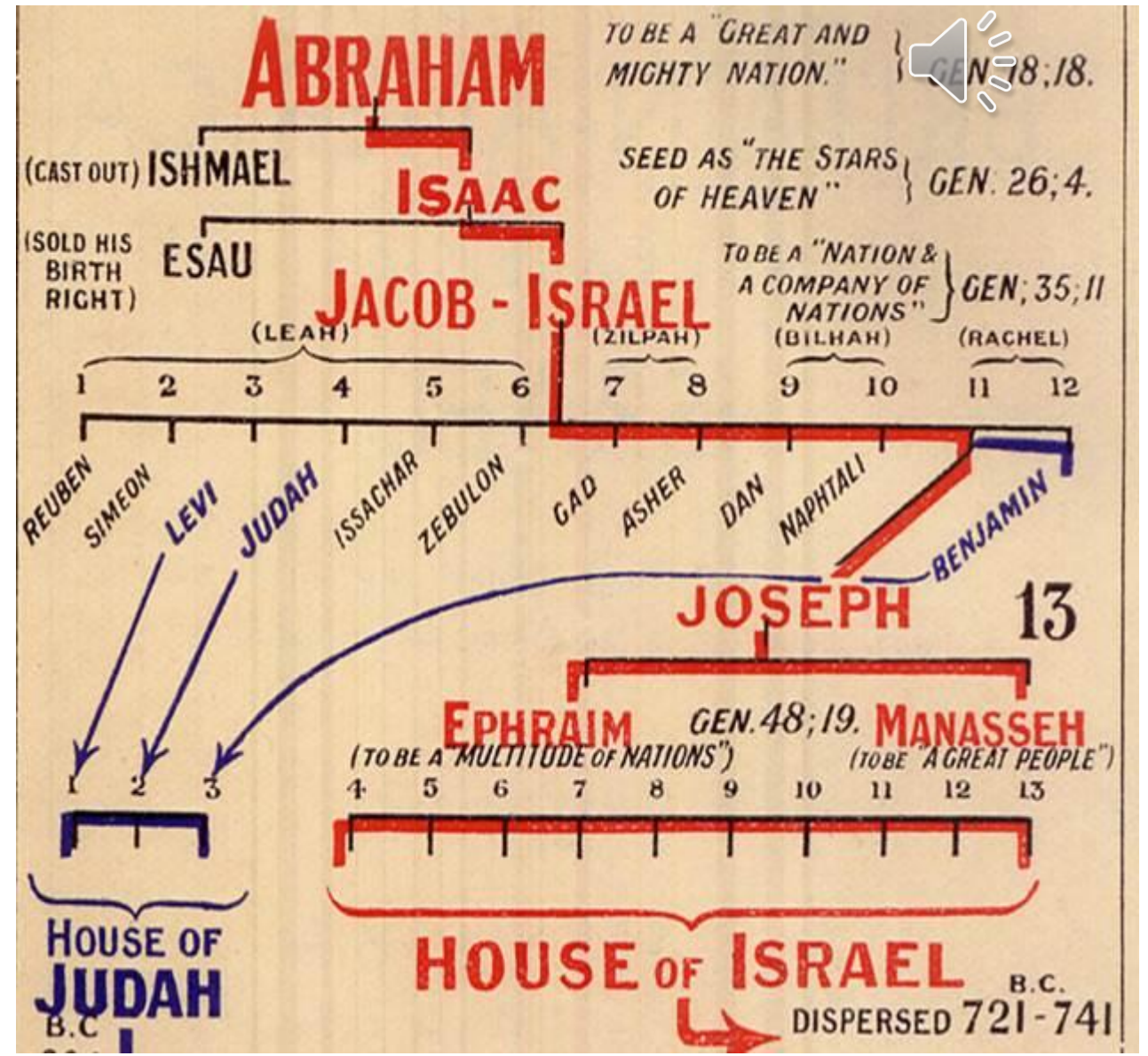
And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!"



"Hear then the parable. When anyone hears the Word of God and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path.

As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. As for what was sown on good soil, this is one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

From Generation to Generation





Loving God, we thank you for your many gifts to us, for the love which brings us together, for the earth which provides for our needs, for the new life you have given us in Jesus Christ, (for . . .). We pray to you for our Christian family (especially for . . .) and for grace to grow in your love. We pray to you for our world, for all its cares and needs, and for all who lead us and care for us, (especially . . .) We pray to you for those in need, for the sick and the lonely, for the hurt and the frightened, and for those who live without hope (especially . . .). We pray for the dysfunction in our families, for the wisdom to perceive unhealthy patterns, and strength to turn them toward health. We pray for one another, asking you to bless us, our friends, and relatives. Bless the places where we work and bless our home and our life together. Lord, hear our prayer. Amen.

Let us ask God for his healing peace. God of peace, forgive us as we forgive each other for all the hurt we have brought into our lives. Let your healing love rest upon the wounds we have caused by our anger. Deepen our love in a new understanding for each other and for you. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ who carried on his cross our discord and our grief.

As our Saviour taught us, let us pray, All Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Let us bless the Lord. Thanks be to God.

