

14293

GLENLOCK BIBLE CAMP

PREVAILING WITH GOD - A STUDY OF JACOB

Speaker: Bro. John Martin

Study #1

Esau and Jacob - Two Manner of People

Reading: Genesis 25:19-34

(This tape was extremely difficult to decipher, so if any words or phrases are misconstrued, I apologize to the speaker.)

My beloved brethren and sisters and young people.

It is a great pleasure, b&s, to gather together as we do this afternoon and for the rest of this week-end, and to be in the mercy of our Heavenly Father, to consider together the Words of scripture which we believe, as we sang at the opening of this session, to be the inspired and infallible Word of God. And we're going to consider, b&s, the life of Jacob; and you know, it's going to be our desire to impregnate your minds with that life, that you may carry away with you, those impressions which will help us together, to walk in the pathway to the kingdom. To consider Israel, b&s, in the days of the prophets, or in the days of the Psalmist, or in the days of Moses, you won't be permitted to forget the lessons of Jacob. You couldn't possibly forget them, because in the songs of Zion, b&s, in poetic language, there is echoed and re-echoed the experiences of Jacob. The psalms are full of it, and in the prophets, b&s, as the prophets drew upon the experiences of this man of God, and they projected his life forward to the coming of God's Son, and the setting up of the kingdom, you couldn't possibly forget him! And there's a long prophecy for example, in the book of Jeremiah that we're going to have a look at, a long prophecy which is almost word for word for word of that man's life; you can't forget him! Israel couldn't forget him, he was there before them in psalm and prophecy; and if that wasn't enough, b&s, to impress upon them the lesson of that man's life, every third year Israel had to come and confess that they remembered his life. They couldn't escape it, and I want you to turn with me to 26th chapter of the book of Deuteronomy and have a look at what it says, they couldn't possibly forget this man's life.

And they had to be reminded of it every third year, as they came up before God, these are the words they had to say; in Deuteronomy 26 we learn for example in verse 12, 'When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year, which is the year of tithing', here they had to gather together the increase which they had got out of the fruits of the land, and at the end of three years this particular tithe had

to be paid to God in His temple. And we read from verse 1, 'And it shall be, when thou art come in unto the land which Yahweh thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein; That thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that Yahweh thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shall go unto the place which the Yahweh thy God shall choose to place His name there. And thou shalt go unto the priest that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto Yahweh thy God, that I am come unto the country which Yahweh sware unto our fathers for to give us. And the priest shall take the basket out of thine hand, and set it down before the altar of Yahweh thy God. And thou shalt speak and say before Yahweh thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous'. Now those were the words, b&s, that a man had to repeat as he brought that basket of fruit, and I can well and truly imagine, the impression made upon him as he brought that basket; and where did he put it? He put it at the foot of the altar, and then he walked up and professed his profession, 'a Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he was few and Yahweh increased him, and made him great, mighty, and populous'. And there in a nutshell is the lesson of the life of Jacob; and when that man came back, b&s, to Beth-el for the second time, he made this statement, 'with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and behold, I have become two bands', alone b&s, he passed through Jordan, on his own, his God with him, and he came back with a host of people with him, and hovering around and over above him, were the angels of heaven; with my staff only, he says, did I pass this Jordan, and I'm become two bands. A Syrian ready to perish was my father, Israel was to say, and they couldn't possibly forget him, for the Syrians over them, b&s, wasn't Abraham nor wasn't Isaac, it was Jacob. It was Jacob that was called a Syrian, because it was Jacob and Jacob only of all the patriarchs that travelled out beyond the Land, 600 miles from his hometown in Beer-sheba, 600 miles he travelled, b&s, with nothing but a staff in his hand. And he learnt by experience that one has to trust in the providence of God in their life. And when that man put the basket of fruit on the ground in the house of God, and made that profession, he was reiterating to that priest, the grand and the majestic lessons of the life of a single individual upon this earth, who was a grand and glorious man, b&s, but who was thoroughly tried in all that he went through and triumphed by the power of faith; you couldn't possibly forget him! You weren't allowed to forget him, a Syrian ready to perish was my father!

Not only that b&s, it wasn't only the words that was impressing that upon them, Jacob started that tradition! These are not simply words to remind them of Jacob, that tradition started with Jacob! you come back to the 28th chapter of Genesis, for this tithe here that's being paid to God, was nothing more or less than what Jacob himself had initiated as the father of this race, at a time when he was going into Syria. And so we read in Genesis chapter 28 and verse 20, '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 Yahweh be my God: And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee', now there, b&s, was the foundation of that tithe; that God had given him bread to eat and raiment to put on, and

as if to impress the lesson of Jacob upon them, God didn't call for that particular tithe every year, He called for it every three years. And that was the lesson that Jacob had to learn, b&s, that was the lesson that Jacob had to learn, that God doesn't give you your bread today or tomorrow and the week after or the month after (that is, the bread that normally comes) surely He provides for our body, but God's blessings do not come immediately; and Israel had to come every 3 years, every 3 years to confess that confession. But Jacob came back to that place at the end of 40 years, to underline that principle, that God is my God because He's with me all the way that I'm going and He will be with me, and of all the things that He has given me, I'll give a 1/10th unto Him; a Syrian ready to perish is my father they say, and where do they say it? 'In the place where I put My Name', says Deuteronomy 26, in which case it was Jerusalem!

But Jacob didn't know anything about Jerusalem; he only understood the great historical centres of the patriarchs, Hebron, Beer-sheba and this one, Beth-el, the house of God, and it mattered not, b&s, whether it be Hebron, Beer-sheba or Beth-el, they had to come to the house of God, and make that confession. And I hope and pray, b&s, that when we go away from this place, in this grand and glorious land that we live in, in all the luxury in comparison, I would say, with which other people live, that we can go before Almighty God and say in all honesty, 'a Syrian ready to perish was my father'. And those brethren and sisters who labour in Christ's service, and who undergo trial and temptations as undoubtedly they will if they remain in His service, will oft times fall upon their knees with that confession, 'a Syrian ready to perish was my father'. But God was with him, and although he was a few He made him great and mighty and populous; and so He did! And so you see, b&s, they weren't just words that Israel was repeating, they were carrying out the tradition of their father; he commenced that tradition and they had to repeat it, and they were never allowed to forget the lesson of his life.

And what is the lesson of his life? One lesson only, you know, you can take the life of any man in the Word of God, there are many lessons that they all teach, but there is always one that is uppermost, b&s. Remember Elijah? what was the great lesson of his life? Who will ever forget it, the still small voice, 'what are you doing here, Elijah?' There was the lesson, b&s, picked up quite easily when the record is properly understood, and it's the same with Jacob. What was the lesson of Jacob's life? It was the lesson of a man searching for God, b&s, searching for God's providence in his life. It wasn't the lesson of a man performing miracles, he didn't perform miracles, it was a lesson of a man groping in his life to find God! A man who had wonderful promises made to him, but he was human and was thrust into dreadful circumstances, distressing circumstances both in his own domestic circle that we'll come to see, so distressing that I'm sure you've never appreciated how distressing it must have been to him, both in his domestic circle and outside of his domestic circle; a man thrust into those circumstances and wondering, b&s, how was God going to fulfill that promise, 'I will be with thee in all places whither thou goest'? And the lesson Jacob had to learn was that God meant what He said; it didn't matter what the external circumstances were, when flesh might cry out and say, 'if it be thus, why am I in this situation?' And Jacob, b&s, had trouble with that problem, and struggle he did, a truth that it was, there were many failings. He groped in darkness, 'I knew it not', he said on one occasion, but he finally

triumphed and Jacob's life was a pilgrimage from Beth-el to Beth-el. Wonderful you know, how the record of God does that, it shows him at Beth-el on his own, and he finally goes back to Beth-el; not this time of his own volition but by commandment. And from Beth-el to Beth-el it was a pilgrimage, b&s, from the house of God to the house of God, and he came to it first as a man groping in the dark and he arrived back there as a mighty and populous people, absolutely enlightened in the purpose of God. It was from the house of God to the house of God; and it is the same with us, b&s, this is the house of God, there's no doubt about that! it doesn't matter where we meet, it is the house of God. There's coming an age, b&s, when we will meet in Jerusalem in the literal house of God, and our pilgrimage is from one house to another. And in this house, b&s, we grope in the dark; let not any brother or sister say they don't do that, because they do; and as the vicissitudes of life come upon us, particularly in these last few years, look further, it's not groping in the dark as to try and find God, where is God? where is He taking us? what does He want us to do? Is He with us or is He not? are the circumstances in our life overridden by divine providence, or has God abandoned us? That's the problem, isn't it? b&s, talk how you like, expressions of faith, high sounding words, b&s, but what about when we're alone and we grapple in our minds with these problems? These are the questions that entreat upon my mind and if that's a weakness in the faith, then I've got to keep it bent right in this book before me! A man that I've come to understand and know, and to understand him because I know the weaknesses; I don't understand his strength, because that is something beyond me, but I understand his weaknesses. And he was a man that was groping and looking for God; he found Him!

You take Jacob's assessment of his own life in Genesis chapter 47, look at the assessment of this man's life, b&s, that he makes himself. Here was the lesson of his life, and Jacob's words to Pharaoh not many years before he was deceased, and in verse 9 of chapter 47, 'And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, the days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years; few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage', that was his assessment, b&s. Few and evil, Abraham lived to 175, Isaac to 180, Jacob only lived for 147 years and he saw in that even, that his stature was not as great as the other two, as he saw it. And he saw those 130 years as being 'few and evil', that's how he saw them, few and evil, and so they were. Sore evil, some of the evils that would be suffered would be brought upon his own head; and others he was called upon to suffer for the sake of God, and he did this. He suffered them and he learnt the lesson; and what was the lesson we said? Wasn't it the fact that God through all those few and evil years had followed him!

Well, look at the next chapter, chapter 48 verses 15 and 16, and here again the words of Jacob in his old age; and 'he blessed Joseph and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God who fed me all my life long unto this day, The angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth'. And there, b&s, was a confession of his faith; the angel which redeemed me from all evil. The angel didn't take him out of the evil, b&s, he didn't take him out of the evil, it left him for example, in his own home with 4 wives, all at

each others throats, in a most reprehensible manner, absolutely reprehensible their behaviour was, particularly Rachel's. Particularly that woman that he put his love upon, b&s, that for all the years that he knew that woman, as a young girl through to womanhood, he bestowed his love unstintingly upon that woman. He discriminated between her and Leah all the days of their married life, and she was not worth one bit of it! She was a reprehensible creature who showed no understanding of Jacob nor the presence of God in his life, who was none of this woman's doings and Jacob pleaded that the angel redeem him from all that evil ; not that he took him out of it, he left him with that problem, and he left him to work that problem out, with his God, with faith and understanding and the reason it was there. And Jacob was a man, b&s, who in his own domestic circle had some justification for thinking, at least according to the flesh, that God had forsaken him. And where was the promise of Beth-el? 'I will be with thee in all places whither thou goest', and that's the test which comes upon many brethren and sisters, and sometimes it comes upon them in the very way it came upon Jacob. And there are some brethren and sisters who suffer in their domestic circles, and we know how blessed it is, not to suffer in that way, b&s, to have a happy home, a happy family circle; blessed indeed, is the man who lives in that circle, and I'm one of those, but Jacob wasn't!

And He had severe trials, (you know, b&s, I'm trying to set before you the essence of the life of Jacob, first of all, then we're going to pick up all the details to prove that this is the case). But look, the proof of it really, is in just a few verses in Hosea, come with me, and here's one of those prophetic echoes that I mentioned before, of the life of Jacob. Have a look at the way in which Hosea speaks of him and perhaps while you're turning to Hosea the prophet, you might always remember to mark the record in Genesis because we're going to go back to it all the time (I've lost it!), and Hosea crystallizes for us this man's life. Listen to these words, b&s, Hosea 12 and verses 2, 3 and 4, just listen to this, 'Yahweh hath also a controversy with Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his doings will He recompense him. He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God'. Now, b&s, that's the whole life of Jacob in that one statement, 'he took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God'. And there's a record of the two fights that Jacob had in his life, because the very words 'took his brother by the heel' or 'took him by the heel' in the Hebrew, right there in Hosea, the word is 'Yaaqob' because that's what his name means, 'one who takes by the heel', that's exactly what his name means and there it is in Hosea. So when he was Yaacob or Jacob, he took his brother by the heel, where did he take him by the heel? In the womb; why does Hosea say that for, b&s? because he wants to tell you and I that Jacob was in absolute immaturity when he did that. He was absolutely immature and how do we know that Hosea is trying to tell us that? because when he uses the word 'strength' the word in the Hebrew literally is 'manhood'. When he grew to be a man, he found he had power with God, and when was that? When he wrestled with that angel, b&s. So Jacob the great 'heel catcher' was a 'heel catcher' as long as he was an infant and less than an infant in the sight of God, in his mother's womb. In that state he was a 'heel catcher', forever trying to scheme his way out of things; 'I've got an idea' and 'if I do this' and 'if I do that I can get out of this problem' until the day came, b&s, when he grew up to be a man, as we shall

see when he wrestled with that angel, in his manhood he found, that he had no power at all! Strangely enough, he had no power whatever, but he had every power that was available to man, with God! And where is the lesson? Verse 4 says, 'Yea, he had power over the angels'; how did he have power over the angels? Well, people say of course, that he showed super human power, that he wasn't the milk sop that people think he was, he was able to wrestle with the angels. That's not what Hosea said; he had power over the angel and he prevailed: 'he wept', that was his power, b&s, he cried and in that was power! because that's what turned God on his side. He wept and made supplication unto Him: He found him in Beth-el, the house of God, and there he spake with us'.

Now listen to that! not with Jacob, with us! That was the message of the prophecy of Hosea, in his immaturity Jacob was a heel-catcher, when he grew to manhood, b&s, he learned that the only power he ever had was with God, and he found it out at Beth-el, not the first time, the second time; and Hosea says, 'in that incident, God spoke with us!' A Syrian ready to perish was my father!' that was the message, that every man had to repeat every three years, so they understood the voice of God to them, in the life of Jacob, there He spake with us. Just come briefly to Genesis 35, to the second incident of Beth-el and see the lesson, b&s, and note the way that Jacob got this lesson. The record of God is a marvellous record and it's done an injustice sometimes by reading it too loosely; listen to this as the lesson of Hosea was taken out of this incident, and so Genesis 35, 'God said unto Jacob, arise, go up to Beth-el and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God (the word there is El, power) make an altar unto the great power that appeared unto thee, when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother'. And if ever there was a contrast, b&s, between the mighty power of God and the insignificance of Jacob, there it is! Make an altar unto the power, remember the time you fled from your brother. What did Jacob do? Look at the way he carried this down in verse 7, 'And he built there an altar, and called the place El-Beth-el because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother'. And there's the lesson of Hosea, in the womb he was a heel-catcher and when he grew up he learned to have power with God. For God's message was, you go to Beth-el the house of God, you make an altar unto El, and remember that you fled from the face of your brother. Jacob goes up and builds El-beth-el because he remembered that he fled from the face of his brother. That's the lesson of Hosea, He found him in Beth-el and there He spake with us'. That's not the first time that we're going to refer to Hosea I can tell you that, through this study, we're going to go back to that passage, again and again, for there's the key to the life of Jacob. There's much more in that than I've just told you, but that is sufficient for the time.

So you see, b&s, there's your problem and there's your answer to the problem! It's your problem and my problem and there's our answer; and I don't doubt that in this hall, there are dozens of heel-catchers even now. I don't doubt that at times we're all heel-catchers. I don't doubt, b&s, that in the day of our distress, as Jacob called his day a day of distress, that when we come to Almighty God with insurmountable problems and we approach the throne of grace, we do so to get a plan authorized that we've already worked out! Make no mistake about it, what brother or sister hasn't knelt down

at his bedside, or wherever he may occupy himself in prayer, what brother or sister has not at some time in his life, knelt down before Almighty God to pray earnestly unto the great power in the heavens, to solve a problem which he can't solve, with a plan already in his head? Don't tell me you've never done it because you wouldn't be human if you didn't! And there was Jacob's problem, and it wasn't until the day, b&s, that God put forth His hand through the medium of the angel, and struck him in a vital spot, which rendered it impossible for him to carry out his plan, that he learnt he had the greatest power available to any man, because he could do absolutely nothing! Hosea said, 'at that time he was a man!

Now that's the lesson of the life of Jacob. It's a personal lesson, b&s, in the songs of Zion, Psalm 146, it was impregnated throughout the psalms, this was the lesson of Jacob's life, we're going to refer many times to the psalms, but as an opening comment to the psalms, what about this one? And the Psalmist said this, and you'll find this context over and over again in the psalms concerning Jacob, verse 3 to 5 of Psalm 146, 'Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. Happy is he that hath the El of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in Yahweh his God'. Very important sometimes as it comes, to discriminate in the names and title of Deity, the God of Jacob, the El of Jacob; put not your trust in princes, and David wasn't telling you not to put your trust in me or some other brother, he's telling you to watch yourself; have no confidence in yourself, because Jacob had no prince, remember? only because he had power with God. Happy is the man that hath the power of Jacob for his help. That's just one of the psalms that takes that context and brings it into the life of Jacob, we're going to see many, many more; it's a thrilling subject is the life of Jacob, b&s, it's intensely interesting from the personal viewpoint, as with connecting up with a degree of enthusiasm and a representation because we've got family problems, we've got problems with husband and wife, (one of his mother's names meant 'to put your head in a noose') the whole of the setup of the life of Jacob has a lesson for every man and woman of God, who struggle with their problems to find God and to find God in their life. And we all are trying to leave the problems to God are we not, b&s? Of course we are, and we want to do so, we're told to do that, 'acknowledge God in all your ways', how do you do that? Well, you've got to read into your life divine providence; but you've got to be careful with it! You can go mad and read the providence of God into everything, and involve yourself in all sorts of human pleasures and passions and say, 'what with the providence of God I should do so! It's not that, b&s, at all, but in all our ways which we walk in the truth, we're told to read into the pattern of our lives, the divine providence and to acknowledge God in all our ways, and this is the great feature in the life of Jacob. And whilst we may have stood here a few years ago and saw fire brought down from heaven, and heard the booming thunder and the fire and the earthquake and... in the life of Elijah, b&s, none of those naked manifestations of power are going to appear here; the power we're going to see in the life of Jacob is a man crying and those tears subdued that angel, and he had power with God because he cried, cried the extremity of his own weakness and found in his life a power that he never realized that he could have. That's what Israel had to learn, b&s, when they had to say, 'A Syrian ready to perish was my father'. A marvellous lesson indeed!

Now just before we get on to the narrative itself, you take the way in which God honoured these men, remarkable how He honoured these men! In Hebrews chapter 11, and I hope the whole camp will be permeated with the spirit of our pioneers, and we use that word 'pioneers' in its truest sense, the pioneers of all Christadelphians, the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And look how God honoured these men, b&s, in Hebrews 11 and verse 16, speaking of his family of faith who sojourned in a strange land as pilgrims, Paul says in Hebrews, 'But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city'. God is not ashamed to be called their God, now that's not just a loose comment, you see, you can read in the Word of God of the God of David, the God of Moses and the God of many of the worthies of old, of Joshua and you can add quite a list, all the ones of Hebrews 11 could justly claim God to be their God, and there's a sense in which God would not be ashamed to be called their God, in any of them. But there was a very special way, b&s, in which He called Himself, 'I am the God of Abraham, I am the God of Isaac and I am the God of Jacob'. And the very word that Paul uses, the word 'called' means surnamed, you see, it's extremely important what Paul's saying; what he's saying is this, here are three mortal men, who manifested weaknesses, out of the three of them, two of them were prepared to go their own way in given circumstances, to save their necks. The thing of it is, they were prepared to do that because that is the weakness they were reduced to, b&s, but here's God saying, 'Ok, there's Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and God as it were (and we don't want to be irreverent about this, but it's for the sake of a figure of speech) God as it were takes the pen and He writes alongside their names, His own, as if to say, Abraham God, Isaac God, Jacob God! He's surnaming upon them! Incredible words that Paul uses, now what has God done?

He's immortalized those men, He's absolutely immortalized them, because when they came to the Lord Jesus Christ and said, 'you prove the resurrection from the first five books of the bible'. And He said, 'I'll prove it; I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob; He's not a God of the dead, He's a God of the living'. And so the Lord Jesus Christ took Exodus chapter 3 and verse 6, and said that proves the resurrection of the dead, because those men in God's sight are already alive! why? because He had already wrote His name against them. Now you might ask the question, b&s, not the question why would God do that? because we know they were faithful men, but why didn't He say 'I'm the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and Joshua and Moses and David', and put a list of other names, why didn't He do that? That's a thing that's often puzzled me, but I think we've got the answer, (on a chart) when we consider these three men and their lives. You take what they were, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, now God writes His name across the top of those three men; and in those three men not only are their characters immortalized in God's sight, (don't forget they could be living at the moment by the way), we know they're dead, but in God's sight they're alive! Their characters are immortalized, but you see, you take those three men, what was the main feature of each life? and then you'll see why God's name is over those three and no other, I believe you will!

Who was Abraham? Paul calls him 'the father of the faithful', who Paul says in this chapter, in Hebrews 11 and verse 17, ' By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten', language full of meaning, b&s, because there was another one who offered up His only begotten too; and Isaac wasn't the only begotten of Abraham in literal fact. So here is the father of the faithful offering up his only begotten son.

Well, who's Isaac? Well, you don't find him called the father, you find him called the son. He's the son of the promises, Paul said, born of the spirit, Paul says, not in the sense that the Lord Jesus Christ was but in the sense that if God hadn't operated upon Sarah, he would never had been born, and upon Abraham, for that matter. So he became the son of the spirit; 'In Isaac shall thy seed by called', so we've got father and son!

What do we have with Jacob then? You come to the 28th chapter of Genesis and I believe, this is why Jacob's name is appended. Beautiful, beautiful how the Word of God brings this out, b&s, this I believe, is a wonderful verse of scripture which gives us the reason why Jacob's name is appended to the other two. Genesis 28 and verse 3, Isaac says to him, 'And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people'. So Jacob is promised to be a multitude of people, ah! but you might say to me, yes, but that promise was made to Abraham and Isaac'; so it was, b&s, but that's the first time in the bible that that word 'multitude' is used, this particular word. And whereas Abraham was to be the father of a multitude of nations, that is people from all nations, that's not what this word means! The word used in Genesis 28 and verse 3 for Jacob, is a Hebrew word which is the exact equivalent of the Greek word 'ecclesia'. It means exactly that, it means a congregation of people called out; so I am the God of Abraham, I'm the God of Isaac and I'm the God of Jacob (He writes His name across the top of the three patriarchs, memorialized and immortalized their characters by so doing, and sets before all men, His purpose with the earth, the Father who offered His only begotten Son to create for Himself an ecclesia of people! Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and whenever you hear those three names linked together, there we have the plan and purpose set before us, b&s, which God has memorialized in the lives of three men. Wonderful, absolutely wonderful!

And so God surnamed Himself upon those three men, you come to Isaiah 44 and have a look at this. If God surnamed Himself upon those three men, b&s, what does it mean? Well, it means this, that if God surnamed Himself by those three men, if we become identified with those three men, we become identified with Almighty God, that's what it means! Or vice versa, if we become identified with Almighty God, we are automatically identified with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, you can't escape it because they're one; and so what do you find Isaiah saying in chapter 44 verse 1, 'Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen. Thus saith Yahweh that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant, and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen, For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am Yahweh's: and another shall call himself by the name of

Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto Yahweh, and surname himself by the name of Israel'. See what they're doing? People are finding out that God has surnamed Himself, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, now they're all rushing in to be identified with Jacob, surnamed Israel. I want to be known as Jacob, I want to be surnamed Israel, look I've got Yahweh written on my hand, see it? I belong to Yahweh. It's all one and the same scene, they're all saying, 'I'm Yahweh's, another is saying, I'm Jacob's, another saying, look at my hand, I'm Yahweh's, and another, my surname is Israel'. And who are they that are saying this? The people who are called dry and thirsty ground; they're people that don't belong to Israel, b&s, they are the seed of Jacob spiritually. The people that are springing up like those reeds over there in the water courses, rapidly, wherefore? nobody knows, but they're all rushing in and saying, I want to be known as Jacob's or I want to be known as Yahweh's; same thing! because His surname is upon those men, and every brother or sister or young person that comes through the waters of baptism knows that. 'Ye are Abraham's seed', or rather, 'if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed'. Got to be, it's inevitable because if Christ is God's and if He is identified with God and we know that He was, then if Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are God's; if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed (got to be) and heirs according to the promise, and so we all rush in because we all want to be surnamed, don't we, by the name of Jacob? And isn't it remarkable that the prophet uses the word 'Jacob' even? because that was the name of the man, of course, when he was the 'supplanter or heel-catcher' and by which he was held in contempt, but the day is coming and has come, b&s, when the gospel message has gone onto dry and thirsty ground, and people have sprung up like reeds on the water course and are rushing in to be surnamed 'Israel', because they know that God's surname is upon them! Such is the wonderful privilege we have in Christ Jesus, such is the heritage, b&s, we carry upon our shoulders as Christadelphians, such are our pioneers! These are truly the pioneer brethren of our faith, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Now then, it's time to get on with the record, isn't it? Genesis 25, we can go on at length, b&s, to talk about the character of Jacob in the general sense; I would recommend to every brother and sister that want some idea of what Jacob meant to his family, I would recommend to every brother and sister, that they read and read carefully the impassioned appeal of Judah, the son of Jacob, to his brother Joseph, and to underline every reference to my father, and get some of the feeling that was generated in that family for their dad. Go on and read at length through chapter 44 of Genesis which we're not going to deal with in our sessions, and to underline every reference to 'the father', Jacob, and to see the depths, b&s, of the reverence, the fear and the love that those fellows had for their dad. Judah, mind you, who sold his brother, but like his brother he learnt a lesson; who read that if you can't read that without being rude, and you watch the emphasis that is put and the whole emphasis of Judah upon Joseph, 'if you don't do this you'll kill my father'. My father will be upset, my father will die, my father will go to the grave with a hoary head, etc. and the impassioned appeal of Judah to save his aged father from harm! There's the impression left upon that family by a great man, b&s. The man said out of his own mouth, 'few and evil have been the days of the years of my pilgrimage', it's not only how some saw him, they saw him as a truly great man.

Now in Genesis chapter 25, we commence from verse 19, and we'll go through this record, we won't, of course, extend every particular point with detail, what we want to do, b&s, is to move through the record of Genesis. I believe one of the most thrilling ways of bible study is to, (rather than pile up references after references in the course of what you're saying, and lose the train of the thinking), let's try if we can, to live together this record, let's see if we can get back to the patriarchal age and get into the spirit when it got intense. Shouldn't be difficult while we're up here at least! So we read in Genesis 25 and verse 19, 'These are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac', what's hard about that verse of scripture? This is what you have to ask yourself everytime you read the bible, and do you know, I believe the greatest exponent of the bible, is the bible; and if you read the record carefully (and I'm going to prove this, I believe, to everybody's satisfaction I hope, through this weekend together) that reading the bible carefully can be the most thrilling exercise. You know, b&s, I must digress to tell you this, when you get down to this record and you've got your concordance here, and you've got your versions (you may have 10 of them, different versions) and you've got the works of the pioneers opened before you, and you've got works that are specifically for themes written by our brethren and so on, you get all these books around you, and you start off on a mechanical study. What's this word mean and that word mean? and you go on for a while and then suddenly you wake up about 4 or 5 hours later, and all those books are on the page that you opened them to when you started, when you were 10 chapters ahead in the bible, because you're living it, you're attention is rivetted on that book and you're reading and looking for every hint and every word that's there, and you read 'these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son', why does it say that? because he was the son of Abraham, this one, but he wasn't the only son of Abraham; there were others, and Genesis is now going to telling us about Jacob and that's where the life stemmed from. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, he was in the line of Isaac, he was in the line of Abraham and so were others.

Ishmael was Abraham's son, but he wasn't; Abraham's son was Isaac 'in Isaac shall thy seed be called' says the scripture, and so here is how the record is trying to tell us these things, b&s. And what do we find? 'That Isaac was 40 years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister to Laban the Syrian'. So alright, the story commences then with Isaac at the age of 40, he gets a wife, b&s, from Padan-aram; as I say, 500 or 600 miles north of the Land, through mountainous territory, some very dry and arid land; Haran means 'dry and arid' doesn't mean 'crossroads' it means 'dry and arid' and that's what the Land was like. Padan-aram was a tract that was dry and arid, why were they sent up there? to get a wife for Isaac. You know why because he had to marry in the truth; yet they were not in the truth, not entirely. Not entirely, b&s, make no mistake about that, Laban was not entirely in the truth, they were the closest possible; when Jacob parted from Laban, Laban swore by the God of Abraham and by the God of Nahor' and Jacob swore by the fear of Isaac, and they were two different gods. But that was the closest they could come, the absolute closest and so all that distance they had to send to get a woman; they would not marry out of the truth. (Tape turns, and connecting words are lost).

We're going to come to a remarkable passage of scripture where the last relative of Rebekah dies, not herself but the last relative that she brought out of Syria with her will die, and in that case we will see the difference between her as Laban's sister, and her as Isaac's wife. And in that son there was reproduced, as if out of a die, the character of his mother and right through this record you have Esau described as his father's son, and Jacob described as his mother's son. And it was like a stamp out of a die, the way that Jacob's character was so like Rebekah's. And of course, he being a heel-catcher a rope with a noose was very handy, and that's how she bore him in her immaturity, and for all that I can tell you, and God forgive me if I should say anything else, she was a very faithful woman. She was enfolded in Machpelah, and I used that word 'enfolded' because that's what the word 'Machpelah' means; and when God buried her in Machpelah, I believe, it was the field of her character. She was enfolded in Machpelah.

The problem, of course, was that Rebekah was barren; that was a problem, b&s, not a problem to our generation, to our generation and their perverse ways. It is sickening you know people reckoned that for I surely hope not Christadelphians but it wasn't reckoned to be a blessing here. No greater reproach, b&s, could a woman have than part with She became the object of ridicule and the scorn, the cruel torments; women were driven to madness, they tell us, for being barren. They were provoked by those who were not, and as a matter of fact, barrenness in this case, in that society, was looked upon as nothing else but the hand of God against that woman! It was seen in that way, Jacob saw it that way, when he went and said to Rachel, 'Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?' Remember Hannah, b&s, who was barren and what she suffered from Peninnah, the other wife of Elkanah, remember the scorn and the ridicule and how she wilted under it? Cruelty to this woman and you'll remember that, and you'll remember what it means to be barren!

Why was Rebekah barren? because God was driving home to the patriarchs the lesson of Genesis 3 verse 15, 'the seed of the woman'. I will be His Father, a virgin shall conceive, and that was the lesson all the way through the life of the patriarchs; Sarah was barren too, Rebekah was barren, Rachel was barren for a long period of time, even Leah had a period of barrenness, b&s, to drive home to the patriarchs that lesson that if God does not intervene there will be no seed to the promise, and in their lives they had to see in their children, the intervention of Almighty God.

What do the prophets say? 'Sing, O barren, that barest not; break forth into joy, he says, for the woman that had no children. For, he says, the children of the barren will be greater than those of the married woman'. Your seed will be a numerous offspring, how could Isaiah say such things, b&s? except it be that God operates in the crowd. And so there was the problem. And so they entreated Yahweh, it was to the credit of Isaac, b&s, that he never nor Rebekah for that matter, never revealed the of Abraham and Sarah. When Sarah was in that condition, clearly her condition lasted longer, but Rebekah was barren for 20 years, that's a long time, especially when you're called that mother and father from whom that boy's going to come; 20 years is an awful

long time and after those 20 years, b&s, Isaac went, we're told, and entreated Yahweh for Rebekah his wife. And of all the three patriarchs, Isaac was the only one who remained with one wife; and that's interesting when you consider him from the point of view of being the son of the father, He only had one wife too, b&s. The Lord Jesus Christ either, and whilst Abraham, of course, in the extremity of his position, accepted Hagar and later Katurah; and Jacob, I believe, would have done the same as Isaac, not a shadow of a doubt about that, but the circumstances and his own weaknesses, landed him with four women. But Isaac, b&s, was the only one of patriarchs that never moved outside of the Land and only claimed one wife, and in that he was a superlative type of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And then we read in verse 22, 'and the children struggled together within her; and she said, 'if it be so, why am I thus', the children struggled together within her, now without losing your place, b&s, turn to Romans chapter 9, for a lesson that Paul extracts from that particular verse, here in Romans 9, we read in verse 6, 'Not as though the Word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel. Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. (Remember Genesis, Isaac, Abraham's son, he had other sons too. The record didn't recognize the other sons) 'that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. And this is the word of promise, AT THIS TIME WILL I COME, AND SARAH SHALL HAVE A SON'. Now you imagine, b&s, the power behind them that caused them to be born; Abraham had other sons, but in that son was the seed to come forth, so it wasn't only Jews that could say, 'Look, I've got Abraham to my father, therefore, I must be in the kingdom; I'm branded with the brand of Abraham'. NO, says the apostle, 'in Isaac shall thy seed be called', and he said that on a spiritual principle because the promise was, 'AT THIS TIME WILL I COME', now note that! at this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. In other words, b&s, to have to enter into the household of Abraham, in order for that woman to bear, God entered that household, I will come, and Sarah will have a son; in other words, had He not operated upon Sarah and upon Abraham by His almighty power, two people beyond their prime of life, then that boy would not have been born.

Some of the Jews would say, 'well, I agree with the apostle Paul, he's quite right, 'In Isaac shall thy seed be called'; he's right, I am a Jew, I'm not an Edomite, I'm not from Ishmael, I didn't come from that line; I come from the line of Isaac, so he can still, b&s, feel that he's going to be in the kingdom, Paul says so! But listen to this, 'and not only this, says the apostle, but Rebekah when she had conceived by one, even 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'. Now you imagine how this brought the Jew crashing to the ground, so he says, 'look I'm in Isaac, I was from Sarah; I'm not through Ishmael through Hagar, he's an Egyptian. So I must be in the kingdom. Wait, says the apostle, wait! in the next generation the two boys come from one mother. Work that out! and they're different, two manner of people! from one woman, and God is underlining the lesson, they can prove they descend from

Isaac, so be it! that means they're going to prove their defence from Jacob too, because he was Isaac's son, that means they have to prove and from one body came two distinct, utterly different characters. One loved the God the other hated. Now says God, 'work that out in your life, and see to which one you belong to', and therefore, they could not rest upon the flesh, b&s. Paul's point is awfully powerful, she conceived by one and there were two boys in the one woman.

When we come back to Genesis, we find that what came from that woman was two distinct creatures; they were as distinct as heaven is from the earth. And you know, Rebekah, in verse 22, says something very characteristic of her and of her son, in verse 22 of Genesis 25, 'And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of Yahweh'. Notice that, b&s, never read the record loosely, just note everything, and you see, the record tells us that not only was Rebekah afraid and she went and enquired of Yahweh, she went to enquire of Him. She moved, she didn't stay stuck where she was, evidently there was some place where God had memorialized His name perhaps near Beer-sheba where they dwelt; she might have even gone to the well of Beer-sheba (we don't know where she went) but God had somewhere memorialized His name and she moved to enquire of Yahweh; she was a faithful woman, by the way, every wife of the patriarchs had their own tent! Rebekah lived in solitude because she was truly a daughter of Sarah, though she herself was a Syrian! Yet she had to be adopted of that family to be extended to abide in Sarah's tent, although she was in the words of Peter 'a daughter of that woman' because she proved so by her attitude of mind.

And she went to enquire of Yahweh! The woman was in trouble; we read that the 'children struggled within her'; women know that sort of thing, b&s, they know the experiences of that woman! She was in difficulty, the very expression that she uses, 'if it be so, why am I thus?' which in the Hebrew is better understood, 'if the blessing of God is to come this way, why did I ask this thing?' And in that, in that very expression, b&s, even that very expression there is the whole weakness of Jacob summed up, if the person of God is to come this way, why does it have to', as if the blessing of God comes in any other way! but in pain and anguish and suffering. And there was Jacob struggling in his mother's womb against odds, his twin brother, and his mother complaining that if the blessing of God comes that way, why did I ask this thing! And the fact of the matter is, if the blessing of God is going to come any other way, it is not a blessing of God! That's the whole lesson of life expressed in that statement.

And God told her, 'the elder shall serve the younger', and that's a problem, because it's not done that way! and there's got to be a struggle for that to happen; so there's the answer! If this is a blessing, then of course, it's a blessing that's got to come with pain and anguish. Jacob had to learn that, just as his mother suffered carrying the boys, he suffered like his mother.

As I said, b&s, if you took these two characters, if we had the time to expand these two characters, it's just like out of the sky, Jacob coming out like that, as if his mom in all the experiences of life, that expression there is a characteristic of the whole boy's life, a

struggle within himself to find the answer to that problem, that if the blessing of God comes this way, then why is it?' And there's the core of the problem is it not? she's told, 'two nations are in thy womb'. And so there was because from Jacob came the Jewish people, from Esau, of course, came the Edomites but two manner of people are to be separated from thy bowels. That's a different thing, b&s, from them came two distinct nations, but the progeny of those two distinct nations were only the progeny of nations, they were in themselves utterly indistinct. They were like chalk and cheese! and when it says, 'shall be separated from thy bowels', it's not just an expression to say, two different people shall be born of thee as the Jews would use the expression; it's not a loose expression. The expression in the Hebrew means this, 'there's two manner of people in you, Rebekah, and from the very time they see daylight, you'll see the difference! And when they came out of that body, b&s, the very manner of their birth was so remarkable, that it brought forth their names.

And they were named at their birth; and they went through life like that! because their characteristics were utterly different! Absolutely utterly different, and yet you know, these are remarkable things, there was a divine prophecy, 'the elder shall serve the younger'. I believe that was the power in Rebekah's mind; you talk about Isaac being a man of faith, so he was! incredible but there's a reason why he was, b&s. these people were not perfect people and I suppose we can thank God for that, because no man but the Lord Jesus Christ has been perfect; and thank God He's record these things, not that we can stand up and condemn Isaac, God forbid, b&s, but that we might take courage from it and we ourselves have got a long way to go, but we never need to despair!

And so two manner of people were separated from her womb. I want to show you one of those prophetic echoes, for when they say two-manner of people; what happened was Esau and Jacob like that, the characteristics as they grew up we're told, and the supplanter revealed himself, but even the look of them was different. Twins they said they were, twins, you would never understand them to be twins. They didn't look like twins, they never grew up like twins, they never had an affinity like twins generally have, and yet, b&s, strange it may seem, there was in Jacob a measure of Esau! Until he got his name changed to Israel; now I want you to come to the 49th chapter of Isaiah and have a look at this! You take the prophetic echoes that come out of this Genesis record, out of the Genesis record comes the basis for the prophecies of the prophets of God. Absolutely remarkable and the echoes are here; Isaiah 49 and verse 1, 'Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken, ye people from far; Yahweh hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother, hath He made mention of my name', so here is one, before he ever was born, he was called by God, as he was named by God. And He gave him a name, and in verse 3, 'And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified', and this, of course, is a prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great prince with God! So God called Jacob from the womb, b&s, right from his mother's womb He called him; and what was the name He gave him from the womb, Israel, but Jacob wasn't called that from the womb!

But look at verse 5, 'And now, saith Yahweh that formed me from the womb to be His

servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of Yahweh, and My God shall be My strength', and there was a grand prophecy, truly he was the servant of the younger. Jacob was in the line of Messiah but he was a weak man, b&s, and he was Jacob the heel catcher; it wasn't until, of course, until later on, until he was 97 years of age, 97 years of age that God said unto him, 'thine name shall be Israel', and God called his name Israel personally! God was there, I believe, in His angels, in a great manifestation, and no greater manifestation than this, and He called him personally you see; He called him Israel when he was 97 years of age. But here in Isaiah 41, is one from His mother's womb who is already Israel, and His purpose, to bring Jacob to Him. And what does the chapter finish with?

'And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine: and all flesh shall know that I, Yahweh, am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob'. And if ever there's a word attached to Jacob, it's the word 'redeemer', because God redeemed him from Jacob to Israel. And if you go through the prophecy of Isaiah again and again and again, 'and the Redeemer shall come to Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob'. The Redeemer, Jacob, the redeemer does it, so here is one from his mother's womb, called Jacob the heel catcher, and it took him 97 years to recognize Israel but here in Isaiah 49 he was called Israel before he was ever born, and his job was to bring Jacob to Israel. Remarkable isn't it!

Now back to Genesis 25 again, b&s, I find that record in the prophets tremendously fascinating because it just shows you how the Word of God itself is such a confident hope and is wonderfully inspired! We read in Genesis 25 and verse 25, 'and the first came out red, all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them'. Those boys were born when he was 60 years old so she was 20 years barren, and now here they are, two boys. One receives the promise and the other one not; the first came out 'red' and 'hairy' all over, it says, and his name was called Esau which means 'rough or hairy' and we're going to have a look at him in a moment. The second one came out and they called his name Jacob which means 'the heel catcher or grabbed by the heel' that's why he was called Jacob, because he grabbed his brother by the heel as he came out of the womb. But, b&s, the name 'supplanter' which of course, 'the heel catcher' implies, was not given to him by his mother or his father. Do you know who gave him that name? Do you know who was the one that coined that name for him? None other than his own self; clearly his name is Jacob, he said, for he has supplanted me these two times; he was the one that gave that to him. The boy was called 'the heel catcher' because of the circumstances of his birth, it was Esau himself that planted the name of 'supplanter' upon him, and Jacob proven nonetheless, that what he had done, had made him, of course, a supplanter.

And we read, 'the boys grew' and as they grew, b&s, so their characters became manifest the one from the other. Now we're going to dwell upon Esau; Esau, you know

I've even read commentaries, b&s, of outside writers, Dr. Adam Clark among them who justify the character of Esau and see him as a rough boy with a big heart, soft-hearted and wonderful and who was ill-treated, upset, and a great injustice done to him, and he actually had good cause to say what he did, but in the finality of things, he grew up, of course, to accept his brother and to deal with him gently. And Paul calls him a profane man and a fornicator, and that's exactly what he was! If ever there was a bundle of flesh, there it was! and you know, the Word of God, b&s, it really picks up the character of people and plasters it in front of you and you never forget it. The Word of God says, 'he came out like a hairy garment'; he was born with red downy hair all over his body, because in the Hebrew that word 'all over' means just exactly that, it means his whole body was covered with this red downy fluff. He was an ugly, rough-looking child; his name implies that, rough and hairy. His name implies something else too, it comes from the root word 'Esau' which means ' to make in the feat of being fully made' and that's why they called him Esau because, namely he was rough and hairy and being, of course, covered with hair as a symbol of maturity, he came out of his mother fully made, in other words, b&s, he was of the flesh from the total be-all and end-all, there he was, fully made! And how was he made? with red hair all over; he was as it were, the incarnation of the devil! You might laugh, but listen to this, 'the root word for the word 'spear' which is used of this man, is rendered in the bible as 'devil'; now we don't believe in the personal devil but this one almost makes you believe there was one! But the very word is used in the bible for 'a wild goat', a sa'ir', it's rendered, a dragon. He was b&s, an ugly child, he came out of his mother's womb fully made. Fully made with Jacob Look at the difference, Jacob came out of Jacob 97 years later, God made him! 97 years later God made that boy and that one (Esau) was made from the day he took his first breath, because he never altered, he was flesh when he started, he was flesh during his life, he was flesh when anything was to be done, he died flesh, he knew nothing else but flesh! He was fully made as he was! And Jacob was exactly the opposite; he had to be made by 97 years of experience!

We call Esau the cunning hunter; there are only two men in the bible ever called a 'hunter', do you know that? This is interesting, oh, you read about hunters all over the bible; there are only two men we know that are hunters, who are they? Nimrod and Esau! isn't that incredible! but you know they're not alike, because Nimrod was religious, that's a fact! Look, we can have a look at the record, Paul calls him a profane person; Esau was utterly irreligious, he had not a vestige of religion in him and furthermore, and this, of course, is the tragedy, and this is a real tragedy, his father knew it, and I'll show you in the record of Genesis 27, how he knew it. His father knew that and never used any words in a religious nature with him, because he simply would not understand it! He was utterly devoid of religion. So first of all, he was a cunning hunter, he knew nothing else, b&s, but a wild, coarse and a cruel life and as I say, along with Nimrod, he's the only other hunter named in the bible, and Nimrod was the founder of Babylon, and Esau was the founder of Edom. What about that! And one was a hunter of men's souls through spiritual apostacy and the other one was just flesh hunting men in that way! That's all he was, nothing else but flesh.

Esau was called a 'man of the field' (Gen.25:27) the word in the Hebrew means 'the

uncultivated field' of course, he never knew, b&s, the hardships of the farmer, nor would he ever touch the pastures of sheep. He never experienced it, and Jacob his brother told Laban, 'these 20 years have I been with thee, thy flocks by day, cold by night; sleep departing from mine eyes. That which was torn by beasts, he said, you charged me for it, and he gave him a very moving speech to Laban of the experiences of his life which had torn him, b&s, the hardship and the rigours of the life of a lower man, as well as a deep seated compassion that had developed these animals. He was a man of the uncultivated field, Esau knew nothing of those feelings whatever; nothing entered into his life, b&s, that was the man Esau. He knew nothing of the hardships of the shepherd.

In Hebrews chapter 12, I want you to turn to this, and Paul described him in this way. This is Paul's description of him, despite some Gentile commentators (you'd think they never had a bible), he says in verse 16, 'Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright' (or as the Greek has it, 'one morsel of meat' in the Greek is one word which means 'a single meal') For one single meal he sold the most precious thing on the earth, why? because, 1. he was a fornicator (and we'll see how he is a fornicator in a minute) and 2. because he was profane. The word 'profane' means 'devoid of religion', he had no religious feeling whatever, they never entered into his mind. We're going to see later on, b&s, we're going to look right into the carnal mind in a most interesting section, look into Esau's mind to see how he thinks. It's incredible how he thinks, it's unbelievable how man could think how he did when he saw Jacob go off to Padan-aram (we're going to read that later carefully) and you're going to see how the carnal mind thinks. One thing never comes into it and that's religion. He was profane and he was a fornicator; why was he a fornicator?

Well, you see, we're not told in the record, are we? and people are puzzled why Paul should call him a fornicator; there's nothing in the record that proves that Esau was a fornicator but you see I believe he was a fornicator; we learn for example that he married the daughters of the Hittites, we know that from the record, which was grief of mind for his mother and father, a grief of mind. He married outside the truth, worse than that, he married the worst possible people, and out of that incident is recorded that we have him as a fornicator. But listen to this, these are the names of his wives, which they originally had, and these are the names. He married a woman called Adah, sorry about this, this name 'Adah' means 'decorated' what about that? but he changed her name from a Hittite name to a Hebrew name which means 'fragrance'; he tried to cut her up later on for her good smell! He had another one called 'Aholibamah' an Hittite name which means 'the tent of a harlot'; he was a fornicator, and he called her name in the Hebrew 'Judith' which means 'a Jewess' trying to make out she was part of Israel. And when he saw that his father didn't like them, he couldn't work it out; I'll show you later, he didn't understand why his father didn't want him marrying Canaanite women, but he saw by circumstances that surrounded his father, that he was displeased, so what did he do? he went and married into the family of Abraham. He married Ishmael's daughter, Bashemath, the first one of Ishmael, and renamed her Mahalath which means 'sickness'; and he changed her name again to the same name as one of his other wives which means 'fragrance', so he in the end was called a 'fornicator'. He married three women, one who is painted and decorated up, another

belonged to the tent of a harlot, the other one was full of sickness; and that was the character of that man, and that was the sort of women, I believe, their names, of course, were ideally suited to them, that's the sort of women to whom that name would be attractive! for in every sense of the word, as Paul said, a fornicator.

Back in Genesis 25, we must move on now, b&s, I want you to notice what kind of an attitude he had; here's the story, he comes in, in verse 30, and he was tired from the fields, he was faint from hunting, and Esau said to Jacob, 'Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage': you'll notice in the text you have the word 'pottage' in italics and you have a marginal rendition there, in actual fact the Hebrew here is rather peculiar, and it's as if a man comes running panting for breath, and he says, 'huff, huff, huff feed me with that red, red, red pottage' and it's the word 'red' which becomes repeated, and so they called his name 'Edom' which means 'red'; that's where he got his name; here was a glutton, b&s, and he came charging over the fields. Imagine what he looked like? a great hairy oaf and if you don't think he was hairy, when his mother saw fit to deceive her husband, he may have been ill, he was far from old, he lived 64 years after this before he died although the record said Isaac was old, so he wasn't an old man in that sense, but his eyes were dimming and Isaac couldn't see; but if you don't think Esau was a rough, hairy creature, the thing that made his father believe it was Esau, was the skin of a goat. Yes, a skin of a goat, and of course, the goat's hair is very coarse; that's the sort of character he was, a rough, uncouth and I believe, and I'll show this to you later, a very dull intellect. He was a great big lump of flesh with hair all over him that when his family touched him they thought he felt like a goat! He was a fornicator, he was utterly irreligious and he came charging in, puffing and panting, 'give me that red, red, red, red pottage! and that was all he could think about so they called his name 'red', Edom.

And, of course, Jacob saw his opportunity, 'the elder shall serve the younger' and said 'sell me thy birthright'. Look at Esau's answer in verse 32, 'Behold, I was at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me". Now some people imagine that he was dying; he wasn't dying, look, the very fact that after the meal he just gets up and walks out; he wasn't dying, this fellow you couldn't kill him with an axe. He's as hard as a nail, and he probably could go without food for long periods of time; the expression 'at the point to die' that's not the Hebrew expression at all, what he was saying was this, 'I'm going to die anyway, what's the good of the birthright!' that's what he was saying, and Esau had one main speech. He was a very dull, brute of a man; 'I'm gonna die, what's the good of the birthright' but he saw something that made it wrong, b&s, when his father blessed Jacob thinking it was Esau, and blessed him with everything else but spiritual blessings, oh, my word, he saw the value of it then! That's the carnal mind, b&s, it's remarkably quick when it comes to material things, and when he saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob thinking it was him, with the products of the earth and political supremacy, ah, that registered! Like people that work with me, 'I don't understand English', except on payday! then they make sure they've got every red cent! And Esau didn't consider, b&s, for one minute, the future they'd got! What he's saying is this, after death what? Useless, and so he sold his birthright for one single meal, and to emphasize the profanity of this boy, it says in verse 34, 'Then Jacob gave Esau bread

and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright'. Rose up and went his way and it indicates to us how utterly indifferent he was to that blessing!

The truth is handed to him, and he just absolutely got up and left it cold, as cold as that, for a mess of pottage! What an incredible character, b&s, two-manner of people! TWO MANNER OF PEOPLE, and Paul warned the Hebrews as well as you and I, 'lest there be any profane person like Esau, or a fornicator like Esau, who for one single meal sold his birthright'. And I've seen and you've seen, brethren and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ, walk out of our meeting, back to the beggerly elements of the world, for one single session of pleasure, b&s, walk away utterly indifferent to the tremendous heritage that we have as brethren and sisters of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the special seed of Jacob. Can you understand it? and yet people do it. And when we say people do it, beware, b&s, because some very great people in the past have done that! because our flesh, we're all flesh, and all of us have within us, in our very makeup, Esau; we're not fully made at birth, God makes and shapes us through experiences in life, but there are some people outside, who are fully made at birth! and they never do anything else but what is produced from the body of flesh; that which is born of flesh is flesh says Jesus, and that was Esau. And that's exactly what he was, nothing but flesh.

And I want to conclude this session, b&s, with a note of prejudice! A note of tragedy, that in that household, in that very family, there was Isaac a great man married to a great woman Rebekah; and those twin boys came into that household by the providence of God; and mom and dad were divided. And it's an incredible thing to believe, but Isaac loved Esau; when the prophet had said, in speaking the mind of God, Malachi said, 'Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated'. And Isaac and God, b&s, were at odds on the question! Can you understand Isaac's frame of mind, can you understand why he did it? There's a reason why he did it, look at the reason in verse 28, and here's a warning, b&s, here's a warning; in verse 28 we read, 'and Isaac loved Esau' what for? 'because he did eat of his venison'. Look at the margin, 'because of the venison that was in his mouth'; now isn't that incredible! a man of Isaac's stature could be moved emotionally by (not exactly because of the meat that he ate because the word 'venison' b&s, and the word 'hunting' in the Hebrew is the same. He loved his hunting, and every time he ate the animals, it wasn't that Isaac just liked venison above any other meal, it was that venison was hunting; it was hunting, b&s, and do you know what I believe, Isaac loved that boy in that way because Esau was everything that Isaac was not! Isaac was a mild man, he was a meek man, he moved away from problems; he never made the decisions that other men had made, even like his father, Abraham. He lived in the land in a sense as children existed; he grew up with a mild character and he was absolutely fascinated by this brute of a fellow, who captured his father's mind in such a way, that when he ate that meal, he ate the hunting! and had the audacity to say when he smelt the fume of the field upon him, 'ah, the smell of the field which Yahweh has blest', and outside there, b&s, in many parts of the field, there are scorched deserts! but God blessed his labour in his servant; He blesses the fruit of the field. And Isaac was prepared to bless Esau with the fruits of heaven, when the man had no intentions whatever of working with God, to produce them. He said, 'God bless thee with the dew

of heaven and with plenty of corn and wine', and Esau couldn't care less about growing corn and wine! And Isaac knew it, he knew every jot and tittle of it, b&s, until God caught him out! and God brought him to a halt in a most remarkable and moving and dramatic section of this story.

God be praised for the triumph, b&s, over that brute of a man! that had captivated his father and divided mom and dad between the two of them, that brought bitter unhappiness to them. What an incredible thing 'the venison that was in his mouth'; and you think it doesn't apply to us? not much it doesn't apply to us! We have children, b&s, we've all got families and we watch them grow, in the words of Genesis, 'our children grow', and we see developing in them these characteristics. What are we looking for? a plain man dwelling in tents? or someone like Esau, perhaps not rough and hairy all over, but perhaps a boy or a girl with scholarships in this world learning, with a career ahead of them, which will take them further and further and further away from the truth. Ourselves sitting in the audience on the night they receive their diplomas, with their square hats on, and cheering and clapping because they've attained of this world's goods. And our affections stemming up and the tears brimming in our eyes for sheer pride in our child's achievements, because our taste is in our mouth! and we can't see what Rebekah could see, a plain man dwelling in tents, 'the elder shall serve the younger'.

And how many times has our pride welled up within us, b&s, because our children are, according to this world, good! It's not good that we do so; and there lies the difference between Isaac and Rebekah, a difference that had caused disharmony between two lovely people, and caused Isaac to bless his son in secret, because he knew that mom wouldn't agree! And the providence of God hovering over them all, in that family the providence of God, even then, in the womb Jacob took his brother by the heel, when he grew up he learned he had power with God, and he learnt that God had followed him through all the vicissitudes of life, even in his birth.

And as we move into the story, b&s, as we will the next session of the blessing that Isaac was to put upon his son, Esau, and the way that Jacob supplanted him. Of course, the world condemns Jacob for what he did, but let's have hearts, b&s, and let's see the motives that moved these two to do what they did; as wrong as it was, and as lacking in confidence in God as it was, let's see why the sons, in the majestic situation in which they were driven, not because of the fault which was only on their side, b&s, but the one greater at fault was the father of the household. There was the problem and that had to be overcome, and as we move into that session, let us enter into the spirit of that household and to see the triumph of God, in a house, of course, now divided by the question of rulership through the younger!