

Come to Understanding

They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24

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The Controversy of Zion

It is difficult for us to comprehend that much of the controversy that we are witnessing in the world today began in the womb of a woman named Rebekah. She was the wife of Isaac, the son of Abraham and Sarah. The controversy revealed itself in the struggle between twin brothers:

- 21 And Isaac prayed to Yahweh for his wife, because she was barren: and Yahweh was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.
- 22 And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If *it is* so, why *am I* thus? And she went to inquire of Yahweh.
- 23 And Yahweh said to her, Two nations *are* in your womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from your womb; and *the one* people shall be stronger than *the other* people; and the elder shall serve the younger. -Genesis 25

The first-born of the two brothers was a hairy-like and red-colored child named Esau (meaning hairy). During his birth, his brother Jacob (meaning heel catcher) clung unto him by the heel:

- 24 And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, *there were* twins in her womb.
- 25 And the first came out red, all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau.
- 26 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 bore them. -Genesis 25

As the older son, Esau was the natural heir of Isaac. However, in a moment of fleshly weakness, Esau was overtaken with hunger and he sold his birthright to Jacob for a mere bowl of pottage (soup) (see Genesis 25:29-34). Furthermore, Jacob deceived his father, Isaac, into giving him a blessing that was intended for Esau. The blessing upon Jacob was ominous, cursing those that curse him and blessing those that bless him:

- 29 Let people serve you, and nations bow down to you: be lord over your brethren, and let your mother's sons bow down to you: cursed *be* every one that curses you, and blessed *be* he that blesses you. -Genesis 27

Later, Jacob wrestled with an unknown Man throughout the night. Even though he was wounded as they wrestled, Jacob refused to let Him go until he received His blessing:

- 24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.
- 25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.
- 26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaks. And he said, I will not let you go, unless you bless me. -Genesis 32

In spite of his injury, Jacob believed that he would receive the blessing if he continued to hold onto the Man. The blessing that Jacob finally received was that he was given a new name, "Israel," which means power with God:

- 28 And he said, Your name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince have you power with God and with men, and have prevailed. -Genesis 32

Even though the Man with whom Jacob had wrestled did not reveal his name to him, Jacob was convinced that the Man to whom he had clung was indeed God!

- 30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. -Genesis 32

Thus, Jacob received the name "Israel" through his unrelenting faith that he would be blessed if he continued to hold onto the Man whom he believed to be God. It was the blessing he received based on his relationship with God. Esau, on the other hand, received the name "Edom," meaning red, because he satisfied his fleshly hunger by eating a bowl of red pottage (soup) (see Genesis 25:30). His name revealed his focus on his flesh, rather than upon God.

Paul explains that being born in the flesh as a descendant of Jacob is not sufficient to be called "Israel." That name is reserved for those who by faith receive the blessing that God promised and passed on through Isaac and Jacob. These, rather than those that trust in their fleshly pedigree, are counted as the children of God:

- 6 Not as though the word of God has taken no effect. For they *are* not all Israel, which are of Israel:
- 7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In Isaac shall your seed be called.
- 8 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 as the seed.
- 9 For this *is* the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.
- 10 And not only *this*; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac;

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8

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- 11 (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 calls;)
- 12 It was said to her, The elder shall serve the younger.
- 13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. -Romans 9

It was Jacob, rather than Esau, that received the promise that was given to Abraham. It was passed on by faith through Isaac (and Rebecca) and then through Jacob by faith. The children of God are the children of the promise, which is the Messiah (Christ):

- 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to your seed, which is the Messiah.
- 17 And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in the Messiah, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot annul, that it should make the promise of no effect.
- 18 For if the inheritance *is* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise. -Galatians 3

Those that reject the promise are the children of the flesh, which are typified by Esau, who was named Edom as he chose the desires of the flesh over the promise of God. The land of Edom, when translated through the Greek language, is also called "Idumea." It represents the land of the children of the flesh, rather than the land of the children of God.

Isaiah offered a compelling prophecy concerning Yahweh's judgment upon the land of Idumea. However, when we carefully study this prophecy, it seems clear that it is not just about the physical nation of Idumea (Edom), but that this prophecy concerns all of the nations of the world that have placed the desires of the flesh over the desire for the promise of God, which is Yahshua the Messiah:

- 1 Come near, you nations, to hear; and listen, you people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth from it.
- 2 For the indignation of Yahweh *is* upon all nations, and *his* fury upon all their armies: he has utterly destroyed them, he has delivered them to the slaughter.
- 3 Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.

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- 4 And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falls off from the vine, and as a falling *fig* from the fig tree.
- 5 For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. -Isaiah 34

This prophetic judgment is upon the people that are still under the curse of Yahweh, which are all those that refuse to give glory unto His name. These include the deceiving priests, as well as those that have been deceived by them (their seed). Even their blessings are cursed:

- 1 And now, O you priests, this commandment *is* for you.
- 2 If you will not hear, and if you will not lay *it* to heart, to give glory unto my name, says Yahweh of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yes, I have cursed them already, because you do not lay *it* to heart.
- 3 Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, *even* the dung of your solemn feasts; and *one* shall take you away with it. -Malachi 3

Yahweh's judgment is brought upon the people of the curse, called Idumea, in the form of His vengeance over the "controversy of Zion:"

- 8 For *it is* the day of Yahweh's vengeance, *and* the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion. -Isaiah 34

The controversy of Zion, which is another name for Jerusalem, is a continuation of the struggle between Esau, who typifies the children of the flesh as Edom (Idumea), and Jacob, who typifies the children of the promise as Israel.

The people of Edom (Idumea), by whatever name they now call themselves, believe that the blessing is physically attained through the flesh by keeping the law. However, since no one can perfectly keep the law, the curse remains upon them. On the other hand, the people of Israel, by whatever name they are now called, believe that the blessing is spiritually received by clinging unto God in faith. They believe that they are redeemed from the curse of the law by Yahshua the Messiah and that He has blessed them with His promised Spirit:

- 10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.
- 11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The just shall live by faith.
- 12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that does them shall live in them.
- 13 The Messiah has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangs on a tree:
- 14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Yahshua the Messiah; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. -Galatians 3

Are we still embroiled in the "controversy of Zion," claiming our righteousness by doing the works of the law, or have we received the promise of the Spirit through faith?