

THE GOD OF SECOND SONS

¹³ And Joseph took both of them, Ephraim on his right toward Israel's left hand and Manasseh on his left toward Israel's right hand, and brought them close to him. ¹⁴ But Israel reached out his right hand and put it on Ephraim's head, though he was the younger, and crossing his arms, he put his left hand on Manasseh's head, even though Manasseh was the firstborn. ... ¹⁷ When Joseph saw his father placing his right hand on Ephraim's head he was displeased; so he took hold of his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. ¹⁸ Joseph said to him, "No, my father, this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head." ¹⁹ But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He too will become a people, and he too will become great. Nevertheless, his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will become a group of nations." ²⁰ He blessed them that day and said, "In your name will Israel pronounce this blessing: 'May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.' " So he put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh.

Genesis 48:13,14,17-20

²¹ By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff.

Hebrews 11:21

- I. We are witnessing the cross-armed blessing. / Jacob/Israel's faith is superior to the will of man.
 - A. God chooses the last act of Jacob's life to show the perfection of his faith.

- B. By the name Jacob, he was a supplanter, a contender, a bargain maker. He contended with Esau in the womb and for the birthright. He contended with Laban for his daughters and cattle. But by his name, Israel, God is now the controller of his life.
- C. Joseph's desire was that the older son, Manasseh, should receive the blessing of the firstborn. This was conventional, biblical, logical, but not the will of God.
(Deuteronomy 21:15-17)
- ¹⁵ If a man has two wives, and he loves one but not the other, and both bear him sons but the firstborn is the son of the wife he does not love, ¹⁶ when he wills his property to his sons, he must not give the rights of the firstborn to the son of the wife he loves in preference to his actual firstborn, the son of the wife he does not love. ¹⁷ He must acknowledge the son of his unloved wife as the firstborn by giving him a double share of all he has. That son is the first sign of his father's strength. The right of the firstborn belongs to him.*
- D. God was going to bless the improbable, contrary to Joseph's plans.
- E. God put the lesser endowment on what Joseph cherished the most. This simple act altered destiny from the expected to the unexpected.
- F. The rule of Primogeniture is voided again.
- * God chose Abel over Cain. (Genesis 4)
 - * God chose Shem over Japheth. (Genesis 10)
 - * God chose Moses over Aaron. (Exodus 7)

- * God chose Abraham over Haran. (Genesis 11, Acts 7)
 - * God chose Gideon over his brothers. (Judges 6)
 - * God chose Shimri over his older brother.
(I Chronicles 26)
 - * God chose Isaac over Ishmael. (Genesis 17)
 - * God chose Jacob over Esau. (Genesis 25)
 - * God chose Perez over Zerah. (Genesis 38)
 - * God chose Joseph over Reuben. (Genesis 49)
 - * God chose Ephraim over Manasseh. (Genesis 48)
 - * God chose the prodigal son over his stay-home brother.
 - * God is choosing second sons and exercising his
sovereignty according to his own will.
- G. When God puts his right hand on what you despise, the remaining anger/hatred in your life is revealed and brought to the surface for deliverance.
- H. Jacob was confronted with the greatest boundary in his life - Joseph, the son he loved the most and whose position he feared the most.
- I. Who is the most difficult person in your life to draw a boundary with?
- J. Do you think that God is putting his right hand on the wrong thing in your life?
- K. God is currently blessing the unlikely and the unseemly, whether we like it or not.

L. Witchcraft, in the form of illegitimate authority expressed through manipulation, domination, and intimidation, is being surfaced in the church.

M. Even Joseph said, “My kingdom come; my will be done.” Only Israel said to God, “Thy kingdom come; thy will be done.”

N. It is by exalting the overlooked that God does his greatest work.

II. God is visibly addressing the enemies of God’s people.
(Judges 1:4-7)

⁴ When Judah attacked, the LORD gave the Canaanites and Perizzites into their hands, and they struck down ten thousand men at Bezek. ⁵ It was there that they found Adoni-Bezek and fought against him, putting to rout the Canaanites and Perizzites. ⁶ Adoni-Bezek fled, but they chased him and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and big toes. ⁷ Then Adoni-Bezek said, “Seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off have picked up scraps under my table. Now God has paid me back for what I did to them.” They brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

III. God is calling his people forward to read the writing on the wall. (Daniel 5:25-30)

²⁵ “This is the inscription that was written: mene, mene, tekel, parsin ²⁶ “Here is what these words mean: Mene: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end. ²⁷ Tekel: You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting. ²⁸ Peres: Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.” ²⁹ Then at Belshazzar’s command,

Daniel was clothed in purple, a gold chain was placed around his neck, and he was proclaimed the third highest ruler in the kingdom.³⁰ That very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain,

PRIMOGENITURE FORFEITED AT KEY POINTS OF REDEMPTIVE HISTORY:

GOD CHOOSES

ABEL OVER CAIN (GENESIS 4)

ISAAC OVER ISHMAEL (GENESIS 21)

JACOB OVER ESAU (GENESIS 25)

PHAREZ OVER ZERAH (GENESIS 38)

JOSEPH OVER REUBEN (GENESIS 49)

EPHRAIM OVER MANASSEH (GENESIS 48)



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Jacob Blessing the Sons of Joseph
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