

either 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 mother): The elder shall serve the younger: Rom. 9: 11, 12. Could language more strongly express the doctrine of Israel's God, the doctrine which Baptists contend for to-day? Before the children were born, (*twins too*) or had done anything either good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works (not for anything foreseen that they would do) but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder (contrary to nature) shall serve the younger; even when Isaac the father loved Esau the elder. This is election in the plain Bible statement of it. Nobody though but Jacob loves it. If therefore you love it, and it suits your helpless case, that is a good sign for you, for somebody hath obtained it; if you love it it is yours.

This occurred though long years ago: Yes, it occurred in days when woman thought it a disgrace to be barren, and an honor to bear children. It occurred too in a day when the purpose of God seemed to be accomplished very slowly. God had given promise to Abraham that his seed should possess the Gentiles. But Sarah is barren a long time. Finally *one child* Isaac is born. The promise is renewed to him as the heir. He takes a wife of his own kindred, but she too is barren. It seems to be long before the fulfillment of the promise. Finally the Lord grants favor and she that was barren is about to be fruitful. But here there is a difficulty. There is a struggle in the womb—an opposition. To solve this mystery she does right for she enquires of the Lord, who tells her that two nations of different manners are in her womb. They are born; one—the first—is red all over like a hairy garment. Here is a fleshly child they call Esau, which means flesh. The second one takes hold on Esau's heel to supplant him, and he is called Jacob, which means a supplanter.

The history of the two men, Esau and Jacob, is traced in the Bible.—Jacob and his children are the family of God, the central characters of the book. They are the children of promise, the chosen nation, the peculiar people for whose sake the nations of the earth serve, and for whose good the very sun and moon stand still, and the stars fight.

The greatest men, in the true sense of greatness, have been of the seed of Jacob, such men as Moses and Joshua, David and Solomon, Daniel and Isaiah, and the twelve Apostles. The very earth has served for them. What law of nature has not obeyed for them and served them whether in operation or suspension? If needful iron swims, the meal and oil multiply and waste not, wild ravens feed them; the flinty rock opens and gives them water, the fish furnishes them with money. They are served too of the nations of the earth. Egypt gives them great presents. Canaanites build, plant, and cultivate for them. Gibeonites hew and draw for them. Esau is impoverished for them.

But what great service has finally come through them to all men? Of that seed, according to the flesh, came Jesus the corner, the nail, &c., who is made higher than the kings of the earth, and for whom, and to whom, and of whom are all things, and for whose glory all of them are and were created.

What is the application of our text at this day though, is a main question? For some say, that all this refers to the past and is gone forever.

Well, is not every christian a child of promise? God, who cannot lie, promised salvation to the heirs of promise before the *world* began. But is not Esau also a child of promise? No, he is flesh and of the flesh. He is called Edom which is flesh, and they who are of the flesh are not the children of promise.

But the barren mothers as Sarai and Rebekah wait long to bring forth, for they are unable of nature. Are not we too? What sinner is able of himself to become a christian, even though he is a vessel of mercy? Every woman too that brings forth children must endure pain of travail before delivery; even the queen as much as a poor beggar. Even so every sinner must feel the sorrow in travail of a quickened soul, and feel it himself and for himself before deliverance; or every one must be born again.

In the travail of the soul there is a struggling too. For two opposite principles, or two manner of people, are found in one man; one of the flesh, and the other of the Spirit; one evil, and the other good; one Esau, and one Jacob. It is this which makes the warfare. It is this which when I would do good opposes, or when evil is present forbids my pleasure in sin. For Jacob objects as much in his way to Esau's sports as Esau does to Jacob's honesty. But the flesh is first. Yes, Adam the earthy is first, the covenant of works is first in development—sin is first in appearance and action. So the soul realizes sin before it does salvation. In this great distress one goes to the Lord to enquire, If I am a christian why am I so vile, why cannot I do better and be better? Surely a christian cannot have, in the same person, in the same heart, so much confusion and opposition as I have, and if I am so why am I thus? Why, that is one of the best evidences you are a christian. The two principles, twins in one sense, that are in you and that you cannot know one except by the other, are always in the same person, and every christian has, and nobody else ever does have.

But the Elder or Esau shall serve the younger. Did Esau ever serve Jacob? Not willingly much of his time, nor did Jacob much fancy the service, yet he did. Esau the cunning, deceitful, harry hunter did not mean to serve Jacob when he went to kill venison and procure his father's blessing. Yet it was Jacob's opportunity for getting the blessing.—Esau's sinful love of flesh or venison becomes a snare to him, and in his faintness he sells his birthright for a mess of pottage and serves Jacob.—Esau's anger, which provokes him to

threaten the life of Jacob, is not pleasant to that plain man dwelling in tents, it compels him to flee for his life, yet is the means of his finding the dear Rachel whom he loves, nor when Esau with four hundred men goes to meet Jacob, perhaps to kill him, is it pleasant to Jacob, yet it serves him a good turn, for one wrestles with him all night and Jacob obtains the victory over Esau, and all else that would oppose, and has power with God and men, and receives the name of *prevailer*. Esau soon meets him as a dear brother, and the elder serves the younger. As Jacob, a sinner or supplanter, he who is loved of God, even while dead in sins, so the elect are loved of God and when God reveals himself and gives them a new name everything is right and well with them.

But Esau prospers much sooner than Jacob, does he not? Soon he has a large family, and flourishes and builds a kingdom; while Jacob waits long in affliction and trial. Well, is not the kingdom of the world first, and do not the wicked have their portion in this life and prosper, while the kingdom of grace is small and weak seemingly?

To be plain: the flesh or the corrupt, sinful nature of man, which is not manifested or made known to the soul until quickened, may illustrate Esau, and the new man Jacob. The flesh serves unwillingly in its place. Where sin abounded grace much more abounds. Jacob cannot make Esau serve though. It requires a higher power to do this. Nor can we control sin or command it to make it a servant. *Had Israel known they were making a covenant with Gibeonites it would have been sin to them.* But the Gibeonites were useful as servants while kept under. We cannot make a covenant with sin knowing it to be sin. It is unwillingly a servant, and the christian is suffering while he is served by it, as Paul was suffering by the thorn in the flesh, even when it served him. It is by denying the old man or elder that the new man is served. When we resent him, and flee from him, and suffer for righteousness' sake, and call on the Lord we overcome. In time the old man seems to have his heart's content—while the new man is poor; yet the elder or sinful corrupt nature is servant, and all things work together for good to the new man. The old man shall never be saved. For though they be so close together yet they are separated from the womb and never walk together again, and all that would or could by priority of birth have been the old man's is given to the new man who comes in the first-born's right to the inheritance, and is saved in righteousness and every thing serves him.

But there is a fuller sense in which this text is true. It is in the separation between the righteous and the wicked. Men by nature are all alike in origin and birth—sons of Adam and hence as twins. But there is an ungodly generation, a seed of evil doers. These have the priority in this world—are prosperous and thus the first-born. They have blessings of nature, and they prosper.

They are deceitful and mighty hunters too. They can conquer much with their bow, thinking even to win heaven by their works, and they hate the righteous too.

But the children of grace do not work for their salvation. As Rebekah the mother of Jacob furnished him with the kid by which he got the blessing, so grace, the mother of all christians, has provided a lamb without spot as an offering to God. The world hates Israel for contending for this.

Each class goes the way his principles lead him. Esau or the ungodly flourish in time—Israel is afflicted and oppressed, but in trouble he calls on the name of the Lord. The world too, serves him, but not willingly, nor does Israel like the persecutions the world oppresses him with, yet they are for his good.

The elder loves wickedness because he is of the corrupt earth. Israel loves righteousness, but is not saved for his righteousness, but saved by grace. Each in the end goes to his own place, for there is and will be an eternal separation between the righteous and the wicked—between Jacob and Esau.

GEORGIA MISSIONARIES.

The *Daily Constitution* (of Atlanta, Ga.) in its issue of Nov. 5, 1875, contains a report of the doings of a Convention of Missionary Baptists, of Georgia, held in Atlanta.

One leading question was, "How can we excite greater interest in Missions?" It seems that they have to keep whip and spur over their members to keep them moving.—Agents must keep going and begging for money, money. Sunday Schools must train children to give. Pastors must teach it month after month, and then they get in debt and keep in debt in their operations.

Question: If this were of the Lord would they always be so much behind with their contracts?

One said they must change their plans. Their old plan was bad.

Question: If the plan were of the Lord would there be any need of another or better one?

One said the people of Georgia (meaning the Missionaries we suppose) had no conception of what God is doing in the world. Perhaps that is true. He said, "Did you ever think of the evaporation in prayer?"

Another said, "Some say we lack the ability," and then said "Do not the Baptists of Georgia possess more ability than the twelve Apostles?"

Yes, they have more of some things than the twelve Apostles. They have more money. Peter said silver and gold have I none—no money at all.

They have more worldly learning and honor and its friendship. They are far greater in numbers and make far greater pretensions.

But the twelve Apostles could speak with tongues, cast out devils, handle serpents and not be hurt, endure the loss of all things for the elects' sake, and did preach the gospel in all the world, and never begged any money to do it with either. Yet with all these miraculous gifts, and all this self-denial they could do nothing of themselves. For Christ had, and now has, all power in heaven and earth. The disciples never sent others to preach, but they went themselves. Jesus does not say, send ye, but, go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature: and they went forth, taking nothing of the gentiles.