

## THE SPIRITUAL HISTORY OF JACOB

There are three important points in the spiritual history of Jacob. Of course, in his life there are many incidents where God dealt with him in particular ways. from which we can draw spiritual blessing. But there are these three outstanding features and we shall look at these three now.

The first of these occurs even before the birth of Jacob. It is the divine selection of Jacob which is described in Genesis 25, verse 23. Here God declares His selection of one of two children to occupy a more important place than the other one. The divine election is at work even before the birth of the children. God had selected the younger one for his work.

Right here the question is raised by some whether it is clear from the Hebrew that the younger rather than the elder has been selected. The last phrase of the prediction "<sup>the elder shall serve the younger</sup>~~and the elder shall serve him, the younger~~" is not exactly clear as expressed in the original. However, it seems to me that there is little question that this is the correct interpretation. If it had meant the younger shall serve the elder and the elder were expressed first it seems to me that it would be more usual in Hebrew then to say "and the elder, shall serve him, the younger", instead of, as we have it, "the elder, he shall serve the younger."

It hardly seems correct to gather from this passage that God ordains one to destruction despite one's good deserts. The fact of the matter is that none of us deserve anything good at the hand of God. We all sinned in our first parent Adam and fell short and deserve only destruction from His hand. This sin which is in our character represents itself and works itself out repeatedly in our lives and we continue to sin and to deserve destruction at the hand of God. It is only God's Grace that saved any of us. He chooses to save all those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Consequently, no one of us has a right to say that God is partial. If He selects certain ones for certain purposes and if He, of His own election, designates certain ones, as to be saved, all have sinned and all deserve destruction and it is only God's wonderful grace that saves anyone. Paul stresses the teaching of this