

~BIRTHRIGHT (186)

[Hebrew, *bekho-rah'*, Greek *pro-to-to'ki-a*, **firstborn**]

- The right that naturally belonged to the fathers firstborn son. Both the Hebrew and Greek terms for birthright Hebrew *bekho-rah'*, *pro-to-to'ki-a*, come from roots having the basic idea of firstborn.
- Under the patriarchal system, upon the death of the father the oldest son became the head of the family, with authority over the others as long as they were in the household. He was responsible to care for the members of his father's household. He also succeeded to the **fathers position in representing the family before Yehowah**. The firstborn generally received the fathers special blessing.
- Then make me a tasty dish such as I am fond of and bring it to me and, ah, let me eat, in order, that my soul **may bless you before I die**. (Genesis 27:4)
- At this he said; Is that not why his name is called Jacob, in that he should supplant me these two times? My **birthright** he has already taken, and here at this time he has taken my blessing! Then he added; Have you not reserved a blessing for me? (Genesis 27:36)
- So Joseph said to his father; They are my sons whom God has given me in this place. At this he said; Bring them, please, to me that **I may bless them**. (Genesis 48:9)
- When Joseph saw that his father kept his right hand placed on Ephraim's head, it was displeasing to him, and he tried to take hold of his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. (Genesis 48:17)
- Hence Joseph said to his father; Not so, my father, **because this is the firstborn**. Put your right hand on his head. (Genesis 48:18)
- Moreover, he was entitled to two parts of the fathers estate, that is, he received **twice as much as each of his brothers**. Under the Mosaic Law a man with more than one wife could not take the **birthright** from the oldest son and give it to the son of a specially loved wife.
- In case a man comes to have two wives, the one loved and the

other hated, and they, the loved one and the hated one, have borne sons to him, and the **firstborn son has come to be of the hated one.** (Deuteronomy 21:15)

- It must also occur that in the day that he gives as an inheritance to his sons what he happens to have, he will not be allowed to constitute the son of the loved one his **firstborn** at the expense of the hated one's son, the **firstborn.** (Deuteronomy 21:16)
- For he should recognize as the **firstborn** the hated one's son by giving him two parts in everything he is found to have, because that one is the beginning of his generative power. The right of the **firstborns** position belongs to him. (Deuteronomy 21:17)
- In patriarchal times the **birthright** could be **transferred** by the father to another son for a **cause**, as in the case of Reuben, who lost his right as **firstborn** because of **fornication with his father's concubine.**
- And the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, for he was the firstborn, but for his profaning the lounge of his father his right as firstborn was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel, so that he was not to be **enrolled genealogically for the right of the firstborn.** (1 Chronicles 5:1)
- For Judah himself proved to be superior among his brothers, and the **one for leader was from him**, but the right as **firstborn** was **Joseph's.** (1 Chronicles 5:2)
- The firstborn could sell his **birthright** to one of his brothers, as did Esau, who **despised his birthright** and **sold** it to his brother Jacob in exchange for one meal.
- So Esau said to Jacob; Quick, please, **give me a swallow of the red, the red there, for I am tired!** That is why his name was called Edom. (Genesis 25:30)
- To this Jacob said; Sell me, first of all, your right as firstborn! (Genesis 25:31)
- And Esau continued; Here I am simply going to die, and **of what benefit to me is a birthright?** (Genesis 25:32)
- And Jacob added; Swear to me first of all! And he proceeded to **swear to him and to sell his right as firstborn** to Jacob. (Genesis

25:33)

- **And Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he went to eating and drinking. Then he got up and went his way. So Esau despised the birthright. (Genesis 25:34)**
- **At this he said; Is that not why his name is called Jacob, in that he should supplant me these two times? My birthright he has already taken, and here at this time he has taken my blessing! Then he added; Have you not reserved a blessing for me? (Genesis 27:36)**
- **That there may be no fornicator nor anyone not appreciating sacred things, like Esau, who in exchange for one meal gave away his rights as firstborn. (Hebrews 12:16)**
- **There is no record that Jacob asserted his purchased birthright in order to get a double share of Isaac's property, which was movable or personal property, for Isaac owned no land, except the field of Machpelah, in which was a cave for a burial place. Jacob was interested in passing on spiritual things to his family, that is, the promise given to Abraham concerning the seed.**
- **And God Almighty will bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, and you will certainly become a congregation of peoples. (Genesis 28:3)**
- **And he will give to you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your seed with you, that you may take possession of the land of your alien residences, which God has given to Abraham. (Genesis 28:4)**
- **And he began to dream, and, look! There was a ladder stationed upon the earth and its top reaching up to the heavens, and, look! There were God's angels ascending and descending on it. (Genesis 28:12)**
- **And, look! There was Yehowah stationed above it, and he proceeded to say; I am Yehowah the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land upon which you are lying, to you I am going to give it and to your seed. (Genesis 28:13)**
- **And your seed will certainly become like the dust particles of the earth, and you will certainly spread abroad to the west and to the**

east and to the north and to the south, and by means of you and by means of your seed all the families of the ground will certainly bless themselves. (**Genesis 28:14**)

- And here I am with you and I will keep you in all the way you are going and I will return you to this ground, because I am not going to leave you until I have actually done what I have spoken to you. (**Genesis 28:15**)
- With respect to the kings of Israel, the **birthright** seems to have carried with it **the right of succession to the throne**.
- Finally Jehoshaphat lay down with his forefathers and was buried with his forefathers in the City of David, and Jehoram his son **began to reign in place of him**. (**2 Chronicles 21:1**)
- And he had brothers, Jehoshaphat's sons, Azariah and Jehiel and Zechariah and Azariah and Michael and Shephatiah, all these being the sons of Jehoshaphat the king of Israel. (**2 Chronicles 21:2**)
- Consequently their father gave them many gifts in silver and in gold and in choice things along with fortified cities in Judah, but the **kingdom he gave to Jehoram**, for he was the **firstborn**. (**2 Chronicles 21:3**)
- However, Yehowah, as Israel's real King and their God, set aside such right when it suited his purposes, as in the case of Solomon.
- And out of all my sons, for many are the sons whom Yehowah has given me, **he then chose Solomon** my son to sit upon the throne of the kingship of Yehowah over Israel. (**1 Chronicles 28:5**)
- Jesus Christ, as **the firstborn of all creation**, always faithful to his Father Yehowah God, has the **birthright** through which he has been appointed **heir of all things**.
- He is the image of the invisible God, the **firstborn of all creation**. (**Colossians 1:15**)
- Has at the end of these days spoken to us by means of a Son, whom he **appointed heir of all things**, and through whom he made the systems of things. (**Hebrews 1:2**)

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