

# The Story of Joseph

## Selecting Simeon

Part 40 – February 17, 2013



When we left off, young (Jesus) Yeshua bar Yosef<sup>1</sup> asked: “Rabi! Who’d they select to stay?!” “Simeon, of course.” “Why Simeon?” “Oh, little Yeshua bar Yosef, God Himself needed Simeon to stay!”

It’s fun to picture young Jesus learning this story, and *growing in wisdom and stature and favor with God*. (Luke 2:52) “But, rabbi, why did God need Simeon to stay?” “Listen closely Yeshua. It’s because Simeon is Jacob’s second-born son!”

Last week, Jacob’s *firstborn*, Reuben, unknowingly altered *everything!*



Joseph had surrendered his might, his power, and his harsh plan to God’s gentle Spirit, and called on his ten *half*-brothers to choose just *one* from among them to remain in custody until they return with Joseph’s younger, and only *full* brother, Benjamin.<sup>2</sup> As they discuss which one is most responsible, in God’s eyes, for what they’d done to Joseph, Joseph is astonished to learn that Reuben *hadn’t* deserted him, and his father *hadn’t* forsaken him.

He [Joseph/Yosef] turned away from them and began to weep, but then turned back and spoke to them again. – Genesis 42:24a NIV



When Reuben, #1 and most accountable son, had successfully argued that he had *warned* them against what they had done, all eyes turned, and all fingers pointed, to Israel’s #2 son.

He had Simeon [Jacob’s second son] taken from them<sup>3</sup> and bound before their eyes. [It seems that Simeon didn’t take too well to being taken] – Genesis 42:24b NIV

And I’m guessing Joseph had him bound before their eyes in the exact manner that *he’d* been bound before their eyes by the Ishmaelites. Simeon is the son of might and power, refusing to submit his strength to God’s Spirit, even using the symbol of God’s covenant in a scheme to slaughter the men of Shechem.<sup>4</sup> (34:15)

And Simeon is the son *cursed* on his father’s deathbed. (49:5-7)

<sup>1</sup> Yeshua Bar Yousef (i.e. “Jesus, son of Joseph”) is the name, and pronunciation, young Jesus was known by.

<sup>2</sup> The brothers wouldn’t have talked together, in Hebrew, in Joseph’s presence, unless he’d directed them to do so.

<sup>3</sup> The fact that Simeon was taken *from* the incarcerated brothers, to a different prison, is more evidence that the brothers were being temporarily held in the royal prison, under Potiphar’s, where Joseph had lived and worked.

<sup>4</sup> We covered this in the sermon, “Settled in Shechem” (2/5/12)

Since ancient times, the rabbis have taught that Simeon was the brother who had said, "Here comes that dreamer (Joseph) ... let's kill him!" (37:19-20) and that Simeon is the one who threw Joseph into the pit.



"Rabi, is *that* why God selected Simeon?" "God was teaching him what He taught so many *after* him, that the *only way* to peace and joy and life is **'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord Almighty.'**" (Zech 4:6) "But, *all* the brothers *except* Reuben had betrayed Joseph. And *Reuben* had tried to take his father's authority. And their *father*, Jacob, had deceived *his* brother, Esau, out of his birthright and blessing. They *all* needed this lesson!" "Yes. But, Simeon was the *second* son, like Isaac and Jacob and Perez, and Ephraim. God uses the *second sons* to teach His sovereignly chosen, that it's not because of their *strength*, but their *submission ... to what?*"

"His Love." (Deut 7:6-8) "Why didn't you say, *His law?*" "But I did."

Through Joseph's *entire* family, throughout *all* of Genesis, God was indescribably, inconceivably teaching someone else: *Himself!* When He emptied himself, (Phil 2:7) became flesh, and dwelt among us. (John 1:14) Jesus saw things in these stories that no one had ever seen; because, they were put there *by* Him, *for* Him, (Col 1:16) and now, *because* of Him, we get to see some of them!

Christ came to reveal an invisible, horrible truth: that, **we are slaves, born into bondage, born into a prison that we cannot smell or taste or touch, and there is only One Way out.**



**And, there are only two choices: my strength or God's Spirit.** The religious leaders rejected Him because they expected him to come as a mighty, military Messiah. Satan assumed the same, and strongly tempted Him with earthly power (if He'd bow). (Mat 4:8-11) But He stood strong, because He'd found in God's Word what He himself had hidden there: **the two choices are actually death and life!** It's not by *strength* that the meek shall inherit the earth. (Mat 5:5)

However, **true meekness is best displayed in the strongest.**



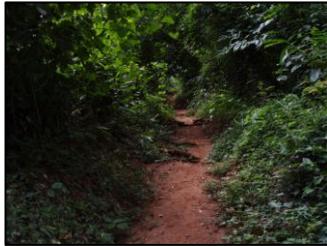
**Meekness isn't weakness; it's strength under control.** Under *who's* control? Self-control? Nope! That's just *my strength* again. When *my strength* and God's Spirit disagree, I must surrender to His *love* and look to His cross. **The cross is the ultimate demonstration of ultimate strength under ultimate control of Ultimate Love.** That's how we allow *His Spirit* to reset and recalibrate our self-glorifying, self-empowering schemes.

And we must see the meaning of God choosing the second-born sons over the firstborns in Joseph's family: Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, Perez over Zerah, and Ephraim over Manasseh. What did Yeshua bar Yosef see that no one else did? To use a Matrix metaphor, are you ready to take the 'red pill' and see how deep the rabbit hole goes?

*Jesus was God's second-born Son!* There was a *firstborn*, also called the son of God, miraculously born, perfect, without sin, and he's listed in Luke's genealogy.

... the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God. – Luke 3:38b NIV

Only two men have ever lived on earth without having an earthly father. Both were miraculously created in the image of God, both sinless to begin with. But, Adam, the firstborn, was *only human*.



So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. – 1 Corinthians 15:45-47 NIV

God's dust-baby trusted in his own strength, and so, bowed to the tempter, enslaving all born after, in an invisible prison of sin.

For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. – 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 NIV

Though the firstborn was given life, he brought forth death. And though the Second-Born was given death, He brought forth life. And *this* is what's revealed through the second-born sons!

Adam, like **Ishmael**, symbolized man's effort, was kicked out of the Father's camp, and left a hostile legacy.<sup>5</sup> The second-born, **Isaac** was the son of promise, who was offered on an altar.<sup>6</sup> Adam, like **Esau**, traded his birthright and the Father's blessing for a bite to eat, offered by a deceiver.<sup>7</sup> The second-born, **Jacob**, knew their value, and took them from the one who didn't care.

Adam, like Judah and Tamar's son, **Zerah**, who put his hand out at birth and pulled it back, withdrew and hid where he was created. His second-born, twin was named **Perez**, which means “Breaking Through”, because he broke through the womb to enter this world.<sup>8</sup>

Adam is like Joseph's son, **Manasseh**, whose name means: “I have forgotten my father's household”. The second-born, **Ephraim's** name means “God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering.”<sup>9</sup> Adam, like **Reuben**, usurped his Father's authority, and so sinned against Him, that he lost his birthright.<sup>10</sup> And the second-born, **Simeon**, was chosen by his own, to be abandoned in the pit.

Not to mention Adam's firstborn, **Cain**, who killed his righteous, second-born brother, **Abel**; or the firstborn, **Aaron**, who made a golden calf, vs. his second-born brother, **Moses**, God's spokesman. Or the **Angel of Death** who killed *only* the firstborns of Egypt; or the first king of Israel, **Saul**, a spiritual failure, vs. **David**, the second king, and namesake of the Messiah as the Son of David.

<sup>5</sup> We covered this in the sermons, “Trading the Promise” (2/19/12), and “Cut Off” (3/4/12)

<sup>6</sup> We covered this in the sermons, “Ramifications” (4/8/12), and “The Last Laugh” (11/11/12)

<sup>7</sup> We covered this in the sermon, “Deceiving Jacob” (3/11/12)

<sup>8</sup> We covered this in the sermon, “The Lion's Tale” (5/20/12)

<sup>9</sup> We covered this in the sermons, “The Harvest Years” (12/2/12), and “The Black Space” (1/27/13)

<sup>10</sup> We covered this in the sermon, “Robe of Wrath” (1/22/12)

Then he [Christ] said, “Here I am, I have come to do your will.” He sets aside the first to establish the second. And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. – Hebrews 10:9-10 NIV

Like the second-born Simeon, Jesus was bound and taken, the worst of sinners in God’s eyes, on the cross, One Man to pay for all, so the *first covenant*, which leads to death, could be replaced with the second covenant, which leads to life. And it was *only* possible because Jesus is *only* the Second-Born, from *our perspective*, as God personified, in human form. He’s the *only* eternal, begotten-not-made, Son of God. And *He* created *Adam!*

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created ... – Colossians 1:15-16a NIV

And so, the first Adam was created by, and in the image of, the last Adam. The “Last Adam” was always, in reality, the *first*.

[At the beginning of Revelation, Jesus declares this strange truth] “I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.” – Revelation 1:17b-18 NIV

As Firstborn over creation, He became what only God can provide: a perfect, sinless offering. And as the Second-Born, Son of Man, He could present, on our behalf, what all mankind must pay. Adam is the firstborn of death; Jesus the firstborn of life. So technically, as the *last* Adam, Jesus is the *Second Firstborn!*

But, what about *Joseph*? He’s #11. Isn’t he supposed to be the great foreshadow of Christ?! Well, Jacob married Hebrew sisters, Leah and Rachel. *Each* had *firstborn* sons. Rachel had Joseph. That makes Joseph, uniquely, the *second firstborn!* His father was a second-born, his mother, second-born, and his only brother, Benjamin, second-born, in the very place Jesus was second-born!<sup>11</sup>

And as Rachel dies giving birth, she names Benjamin, “Son of my pain”, reflecting God’s curse on Adam. (Gen 3:16) But, Jacob *renames* him, “Son of my right hand”, representing his father’s power. (Gen 35:18) Hebrews (7:22) describes Jesus as the *guarantee* of a better covenant. And now, Simeon, the second-born of Leah, is selected as the guarantee for Benjamin, *the father’s power!*

As was the earthly man, [the first Adam] so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, [the Last Adam] so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven. – 1 Corinthians 15:48-49 NIV

Each one of us is first born of a woman, into sin and rebellion, a prison we cannot smell or taste or touch, a life that leads toward death the moment that life begins. There are only two choices, and only One Way out. It’s not by might, nor by power. **We must submit our strength to His Spirit. We must become *second-born***, born-again, saved from ourselves, *and* from the Old Covenant of works, that leads to death, to the New Covenant of God’s grace through Christ our Lord.

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<sup>11</sup> We covered this in the Christmas sermon, “Keeping Watch: The Rabbinical Shepherds of Bethlehem” (12/23/12)