

BECOMING ISRAEL

He was angry and shook his fist as he entered the long corridor. Suddenly he felt young again. The power had returned to his arms and legs. With each stride his limbs gained strength. His breath which had been laborious was easy and confident. He touched the top of his head. Yes...Hair!

He laughed aloud. He could hear it clearly. He could hear his steps. He could hear himself breathing. He heard wind and bird song. He felt the sun on his back. He was outside now. Under a blue sky dotted by clouds. He could smell the grass as he stepped through it. He passed a tree and pulled down an apple. He bit. They were his teeth. He bit hard and chewed. It was sweet... delightful.

He moved forward. He started running. It felt like flight. Where was he going? It almost didn't matter. Old friends appeared near by. It didn't matter. "Later," he said. "We will have time." He saw them smiling and nodding. He ran on. Would he ever grow tired?

Then at the end of the field he saw Him. The smile was gone now. The rage returned. He ran forward with his fists in the air. A war cry came from his heart to his lips. It echoed as they met.

They struggled... wrestling and crying they rolled together. They fought as tears rolled from their eyes.

"Why?" he screamed.

"What was I to do?", He replied.

"You promised. You let them die. Why?", he cried.

"I promised and my promise is real.", He cried in return.

"Where were you?", he asked.

"Beside you suffering too."

The fighting stopped.

"You were supposed to be all powerful. You were supposed to be strong and just. You were a lie my father believed. You were a myth that they cried out to as they shook and prayed. Facing East... looking for you. Did you even look back? Did you even care?"

"I am more like you than you would have me be. You cried as I did. You rose up and started again. You spit on my face to give me tears and I beheld your beauty. I am not perfect. There is no perfection yet. No absolute peace. I can't give you back what you have lost. But see what you have made. See how you could love despite the pain. You are my image. You have wrestled and won. You are my promise." He stopped then and wept.

The man's soul wrapped itself around God and rocked him in his arms. His anger was replaced by the compassion and strength that had never left him. "Let me comfort you then.", he said. "Let me comfort you."