



4-1-1984

Benjamin

John Sterling Harris

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Recommended Citation

Harris, John Sterling (1984) "Benjamin," *BYU Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 24 : Iss. 2 , Article 7.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol24/iss2/7>

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Benjamin

What is it that a father finds in one
to favor over others?

Did Isaac know what grace was his
in primogeniture,
while Ishmael wandered?

Did Esau find
his father's way not right
And think the issue
of the pottage just
a specious way
to further
predestination—

To choose my father—

He passed along that
odd selection too,
So Joseph was his pet—

I heard him say that Rachel
was his love,
and saw her eyes
in Joseph's face,

I know such ancient tales
of brothers—
one chosen,
the other not,
inexplicably,

And like Abel's brother
wish I knew
why God must choose.

—John Sterling Harris

John Sterling Harris is a professor of English at Brigham Young University.