

Genesis

Chapter 49:1- 50:26

In last week's study, we read of Jacob blessing Joseph's sons Ephraim and as Manasseh. This week we will read of Jacobs's blessings for his twelve sons. This will also be our last week in Genesis, as we will go through chapters 49 & 50. As sad as I am to leave this book and all we learned, I am excited for the next studies that the Lord will have us do and what the Lord will teach us. So let's get started, or finished?

✧ **Gen 49:1-2** ¹ *And Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days: ² "Gather together and hear, you sons of Jacob, and listen to Israel your father.*

Imagine the scene here, Israel (Jacob) is now 147 years old, and he is lying on his deathbed, and as we read last week, he strengthens himself for his son Joseph so that he may bless his two grandsons. Now Israel calls for his 12 sons so that he may bless them as well.

Jacob was around 85 when his first son was born and 90 when Joseph was born. So he was around for at least 65 years of his son's lives. For these 65 or so years, Israel was able to observe his sons, and through the Holy Spirit, tell what the outcome of their life and their family would be.

✧ **Gen 49:3-4** ³ *Reuben, you are my firstborn,
My might and the beginning of my strength,
The excellency of dignity and the excellency of power.
⁴ *Unstable as water, you shall not excel,
Because you went up to your father's bed;
Then you defiled it--
He went up to my couch.**

Reuben, Israel's first born, but not really by Israel's choice. You will remember that he was the son of Leah, Rachel's older sister, and I think Israel would have rather had his first son be from Rachel instead of Leah. We see this as we read of how much Jacob loved Joseph who was the first-born of Rachel.

But still Reuben was Israel's first born and the beginning of his strength. But Reuben broke his trust to his father because he slept with one of Israel's concubines, even though this happened 40 years ago, he was now paying for his sin. From the line of Reuben came no judge, prophet, nor ruler, which is the fulfillment of "*you shall not excel*".

✧ **Gen 49:5-7** ⁵ *Simeon and Levi are brothers;
Instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place.
⁶ *Let not my soul enter their council;
Let not my honor be united to their assembly;**

*For in their anger they slew a man,
And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox.
7 Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce;
And their wrath, for it is cruel!
I will divide them in Jacob
And scatter them in Israel.*

Simeon and Levi were also born from Leah and were the second and third sons of Jacob. But even though it seems they were close as brothers, Israel said that God would divide them. We see this come to pass as we read ahead in the bible in Exodus 32 in their zeal against the worshippers of the golden calf. The Levites were then set apart to God as priests, they were in that character scattered through the nation of Israel. The tribe of Simeon, which was guilty of the grossest idolatry and the vices inseparable from it, were ignominiously "scattered."

✧ **Gen 49:8-12** *8 Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's children shall bow down before you. 9 Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him? 10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people. 11 Binding his donkey to the vine, and his donkey's colt to the choice vine, He washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes. 12 His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.*

Judah's name signifies praise. God was praised for the gift of Judah.

† **Gen 29:35** *And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now I will praise the LORD. ' Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she stopped bearing."*

And praised in Judah; therefore his brethren shall praise him. Judah is compared, not to a lion raging, but to a lion enjoying the satisfaction of his power and success, without creating vexation to others; this is to be truly great. Judah was the tribe from which Jesus Christ the Messiah would come.

Even when Jacob was dying, Jacob saw Christ's day, and it was his comfort and support on his deathbed. Much that is here and said concerning Judah is to be applied to our Lord Jesus. He is the true Vine; wine is the appointed symbol of his blood, which is drink indeed, as shed for sinners, and applied in faith; and all the blessings of his gospel are wine and milk, without money and without price, to which every thirsty soul is welcome.

✧ **Gen 49:13** *Zebulun shall dwell by the haven of the sea; He shall become a haven for ships, and his border shall adjoin Sidon.*

Zebulun was the fourth son of Leah but the sixth son of Jacob, remember in between there were the sons from Leah and Rebekah's handmaids.

This is interesting because the blessings are not according to the birth of the sons, but rather the birth of the sons to each woman.

Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea- This was fulfilled, when 200 or 300 years after, the land of Canaan was divided by lot, and the border of Zebulun went up towards the sea,

† **Josh 19:10-11** ¹⁰ *The third lot came out for the children of Zebulun according to their families, and the border of their inheritance was as far as Sarid.* ¹¹ *Their border went toward the west and to Maralah, went to Dabbasheth, and extended along the brook that is east of Jokneam.*

✧ **Gen 49:14-15** ¹⁴ *Issachar is a strong donkey, lying down between two burdens;* ¹⁵ *He saw that rest was good, and that the land was pleasant; He bowed his shoulder to bear a burden, and became a band of slaves.*

Issachar is a strong donkey, couching down between two burdens - The men of that tribe shall be strong and industrious, fit for and inclined to labor, particularly the toil of husbandry, like the donkey that patiently carries his burden. Issachar submitted to two burdens, tillage and tribute.

✧ **Gen 49:16-18** ¹⁶ *Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel.* ¹⁷ *Dan shall be a serpent by the way, a viper by the path, that bites the horse's heels So that its rider shall fall backward.* ¹⁸ *I have waited for your salvation, O LORD*

Though Dan was one of the sons of the concubines, yet he shall be a tribe governed by judges of his own as well as other tribes; and shall by art and policy, and surprise, gain advantages against his enemies, like a serpent suddenly biting the heel of the traveler.

✧ **Gen 49:19-20** ¹⁹ *Gad, a troop shall tramp upon him, but he shall triumph at last.* ²⁰ *"Bread from Asher shall be rich, and he shall yield royal dainties.*

Concerning Gad, Jacob alludes to his name, which signifies a troop, and foresees the character of that tribe. The cause of God and his people, though for a time it may seem to be baffled and run down, will be victorious at last. His inheritance bordered upon Carmel, which was fruitful to a proverb.

✧ **Gen 49:21** *Naphtali is a deer let loose; He uses beautiful words.*

Naphtali is a deer let loose. We may consider it as a description of the character of this tribe. Unlike the laborious ox and donkey; desirous of ease and liberty; active, but more noted for quick dispatch than steady labor and perseverance.

✧ **Gen 49:22-26** *22 Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well; His branches run over the wall. 23 The archers have bitterly grieved him, Shot at him and hated him. 24 But his bow remained in strength, And the arms of his hands were made strong By the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), 25 By the God of your father who will help you, And by the Almighty who will bless you With blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that lies beneath, Blessings of the breasts and of the womb. 26 The blessings of your father have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head*

The blessing of Joseph is very full. What Jacob says of him, is history as well as prophecy. Jacob reminds him of the difficulties and fiery darts of temptations he had formerly struggled through. His faith did not fail, but through his trials he bore all his burdens with firmness, and did not do anything unbecoming. Joseph became the shepherd of Israel, to take care of his father and family; also the stone of Israel, their foundation and strong support. In this, as in many other things, Joseph was a remarkable type of the Good Shepherd, and a tried Corner Stone of the whole church of God. Blessings are promised to Joseph's posterity, typical of the vast and everlasting blessings, which come upon the spiritual seed of Christ. Jacob blessed all his sons, but especially Joseph, "who was separated from his brethren." Not only separated in Egypt, but, possessing eminent dignity, and more devoted to God.

✧ **Gen 49:27** *Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; In the morning he shall devour the prey, And at night he shall divide the spoil.*

Paul was of this tribe,

✧ **Romans 11:1** *I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.*

✧ **Phil 3:5** *circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee;*

Paul shared the blessings of Judah's Lion (Jesus Christ), and assisted in his victories. Of Benjamin it is said, He shall raven as a wolf. Jacob was guided in what he said by the Spirit of prophecy, and not by natural affection; else he would have spoken with more tenderness of his beloved son Benjamin. Concerning him he only foresees and foretells, that his posterity should be a warlike tribe, strong and daring, and that they should enrich themselves with the spoils of their enemies; that they should be active.

✧ **Gen 49:28** *All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father spoke to them. And he blessed them; he blessed each one according to his own blessing.*

Jacob speaks words of prophecy about his sons, and as you read throughout the bible we see all these things come to pass.

During this whole time, remember that Jacob was on his deathbed and was ready to die at any moment. But God sustained his life to reveal His will for Israel's sons in the years to come. Even at the age of 147 God still uses Israel, and regardless of your age God will use you.

✧ **Gen 49:29-33** ²⁹ *Then he charged them and said to them: "I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, ³⁰ "in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite as a possession for a burial place. ³¹ "There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah. ³² "The field and the cave that is there were purchased from the sons of Heth." ³³ And when Jacob had finished commanding his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.*

Israel gives a final command to his sons before he dies, and that is to take his dead body and bury it in the same place as Abraham and Isaac. After that His work was completed and God took him home to be with Abraham and Isaac as well as with Adam and Noah and all the others who believed in the word of God and His promise of a savior.

✧ **Gen 50:1-6** ¹ *Then Joseph fell on his father's face, and wept over him, and kissed him. ² And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. ³ Forty days were required for him, for such are the days required for those who are embalmed; and the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days. ⁴ And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak in the hearing of Pharaoh, saying, ⁵ 'My father made me swear, saying, "Behold, I am dying; in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me." Now therefore, please let me go up and bury my father, and I will come back.' " ⁶ And Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear."*

Jacob died and Joseph was heartbroken because he lost his father who he had not seen for a long time. Even though Joseph knew that his father was with the Lord and he knew he would see him again, he still missed him.

So to cry over someone's death who is a believer is not wrong, it's a human emotion that God gave us. Even as men we are not to be ashamed to cry. Throughout the bible we read of great men like Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, king David and even Jesus crying. I wouldn't call any of them sissies for crying.

Joseph also asked Pharaohs permission to take his father back and bury him. By this time the famine was over and all was good in Egypt. Pharaoh could have said no because he feared that Joseph wouldn't come back. But through the years we read of Joseph being a man that could be trusted, and if he said he would return, then Pharaoh had no reason not to believe him.

✚ **Gen 50:7-11** ⁷ *So Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, ⁸ as well as all the house of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's house. Only their little ones, their flocks, and their herds they left in the land of Goshen. ⁹ And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen, and it was a very great gathering. ¹⁰ Then they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, and they mourned there with a great and very solemn lamentation. He observed seven days of mourning for his father. ¹¹ And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "This is a deep mourning of the Egyptians." Therefore its name was called Abel Mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan.*

Jacob became even a great man in the eyes of the Egyptians as well. Through the years we have seen some pretty big funerals on TV, like for the presidents and Prince Diana, but this funeral procession was greater than any one seen today. That is how much Israel was loved by the people. It's a shame that today the nations are against Israel, but then they must be to fulfill prophecy.

✚ **Gen 50:12-14** ¹² *So his sons did for him just as he had commanded them. ¹³ For his sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite as property for a burial place. ¹⁴ And after he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers and all who went up with him to bury his father.*

Joseph and his brothers were obedient to their father even unto death. After wards they kept their promise to return to Egypt as they said they would.

✚ **Gen 50:15-21** ¹⁵ *When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him." ¹⁶ So they sent messengers to Joseph, saying, "Before your father died he commanded, saying, ¹⁷ 'Thus you shall say to Joseph: "I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; for they did evil to you." ' Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, "Behold, we are your servants." ¹⁹ Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰ "But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. ²¹ "Now*

therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

Now Joseph's brothers were afraid. They figured that the only reason Joseph didn't have them thrown in jail or killed was because of their father Israel. But Joseph reassures them that it wasn't because of Israel that he forgave them but because of the Lord. Joseph was also broken hearted over what his brothers said, because if you will remember we never read of Joseph telling Israel what his brothers did to him, so he knew his father wouldn't have said this. He was also sad because after all of this time, they didn't see the Lord in his life and didn't understand that the Lord was the reason for his forgiveness.

Joseph still gives his brothers words of comfort ***"Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones."***

✧ ***Gen 50:22-26*** ²² *So Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his father's household. And Joseph lived one hundred and ten years.* ²³ *Joseph saw Ephraim's children to the third generation. The children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were also brought up on Joseph's knees.* ²⁴ *And Joseph said to his brethren, "I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."* ²⁵ *Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here."* ²⁶ *So Joseph died, being one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.*

Finally we read of Joseph's death and before he dies, and he gives the same oath to his brothers to bring his bones out of Egypt and bury him where his fathers are buried, which they eventually did.

† ***Josh 24:32*** ³² *The bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel had brought up out of Egypt, they buried at Shechem, in the plot of ground which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for one hundred pieces of silver, and which had become an inheritance of the children of Joseph.*

Joseph had been in Egypt for over 80 years, and for these 80+ years Joseph had been a witness to the Egyptians and his family about God. But as you start to read in the book of Exodus, the Egyptians no longer believe in God but turn to their own gods.

Egypt is a type of the world and Joseph is a type of, or an example of Jesus Christ. Even though Jesus is taught and spoken of throughout the world, people still choose not to believe in Him. Joseph is still dead and in his grave, but Jesus is alive and in heaven. The world believes and trusts in false gods like Buddha or Mohammad but refuse to believe and put their faith in Jesus Christ. This is all part of God's plan because He knows who will, and who won't believe. I pray that through these studies you have come to know Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Or maybe you have been a believer; my prayer for you has been to draw closer to the Lord through these studies and most important through His word.

I pray you have all grown closer to the Lord through the first book of the Bible, Genesis!

May you all stay in God's word, following the path that the Lord has laid before your feet and always walk in God's love with the light of Jesus Christ shining brightly in you!

✠ **Numbers 6:24-26** *"The LORD bless you and keep you;
The LORD make His face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
The LORD lift up His countenance upon you,
And give you peace."*