



# The Blessings of Jacob

Genesis  
48-49

What was the significance of the blessing?

# Blessing

- Blessings and curses had the power to produce the intended results
- Oldest son normally received the major blessing
- Could not be withdrawn or given they could not be given to another
- Prophetic in nature and came from God
- The blessing made the birthright binding. Before the blessing the birthright could be taken away and given to another.

# Birthright

- Was the leader (patriarch) of the entire family including spiritual and worldly matters
- Double portion of the inheritance: 2 sons would divide the inheritance in 3 parts with 1<sup>st</sup> born receiving 2 of the 3

## Genesis 48:1-4

Some time later Joseph was told, “Your father is ill.” So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim along with him. <sup>2</sup> When Jacob was told, “Your son Joseph has come to you,” Israel rallied his strength and sat up on the bed. <sup>3</sup> Jacob said to Joseph, “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and there he blessed me <sup>4</sup> and said to me, ‘I am going to make you fruitful and will increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you

## Genesis 48:5-9

“Now then, your two sons born to you in Egypt before I came to you here will be reckoned as mine; Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon are mine. <sup>6</sup> Any children born to you after them will be yours; in the territory they inherit they will be reckoned under the names of their brothers. <sup>7</sup> As I was returning from Paddan, to my sorrow Rachel died in the land of Canaan while we were still on the way, a little distance from Ephrath. So I buried her there beside the road to Ephrath” (that is, Bethlehem).<sup>8</sup> When Israel saw the sons of Joseph, he asked, “Who are these?”<sup>9</sup> “They are the sons God has given me here,” Joseph said to his father. Then Israel said, “Bring them to me so I may bless them.”

## Genesis 48:10-12

Now Israel's eyes were failing because of old age, and he could hardly see. So Joseph brought his sons close to him, and his father kissed them and embraced them.<sup>11</sup> Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face again, and now God has allowed me to see your children too."<sup>12</sup> Then Joseph removed them from Israel's knees and bowed down with his face to the ground.

## Genesis 48:13-14

And Joseph took both of them, Ephraim on his right toward Israel's left hand and Manasseh on his left toward Israel's right hand, and brought them close to him. <sup>14</sup> But Israel reached out his right hand and put it on Ephraim's head, though he was the younger, and crossing his arms, he put his left hand on Manasseh's head, even though Manasseh was the firstborn.



## Genesis 48:15-16

Then he blessed Joseph and said,  
“May the God before whom my fathers  
Abraham and Isaac walked faithfully,  
the God who has been my shepherd  
all my life to this day,<sup>16</sup> the Angel who has  
delivered me from all harm—may he bless  
these boys. May they be called by my name  
and the names of my fathers Abraham and  
Isaac, and may they increase  
Greatly on the earth.”

## Genesis 48:17-18

When Joseph saw his father placing his right hand on Ephraim's head he was displeased; so he took hold of his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. <sup>18</sup> Joseph said to him, "No, my father, this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head."

## Genesis 48:19

But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He too will become a people, and he too will become great. Nevertheless, his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will become a group of nations.

## Genesis 48:20

He blessed them that day and said,  
“In your name will Israel pronounce this  
blessing: ‘May God make you like  
Ephraim and Manasseh.’”

So he put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh.

# Genesis 48:21

Then Israel said to Joseph, “I am about to die, but God will be with you and take you back to the land of your fathers.

A Promise to Joseph that his body would return home.

## Genesis 48:22

“And to you, as one who is over your brothers, I give the ridge of land I took from the Amorites with my sword and my bow.”

*“And He (Jesus) came to a town of Samaria called Sychar near the property that Jacob had given his son Joseph”*

*John 4:5*

# Ephraim and Manasseh

- Become Jacob's "natural" sons as Reuben and Simeon and brothers are sons
- Each receive a portion of the land thus giving Joseph a double portion
- Given by Jacob land occupied by Philistines and Canaanites
- Later took possession and occupied the east and west sides of the Jordan River (Joshua 16)

# Genesis 49:1-2

Then Jacob called for his sons and said: “Gather around so I can tell you what will happen to you in days to come.

“Assemble and listen, sons of Jacob;  
listen to your father Israel.”

Jacob recognizes he is both Jacob and Israel

His sons are sons of each

God made him Israel (spiritual maturity)

Jacob (physical nature)



# Genesis 49:1-2

- Jacob as patriarch and heir to Isaac and Abraham pronounce a blessing on each son
- Prophecies of what will happen in years to come
- Prophecies based on the characteristics of each son
- The first “*knowing*” prophecy of the Bible

# Jacob's prediction of the future

- Reuben.....you shall not excel
- Simeon.....will be scattered in Israel
- Levi..... will be scattered in Israel
- Judah.....scepter will not depart from Judah
- Dan.....A serpent by the way
- Naphtali...he gives goodly words
- Gad.....he shall triumph at last

# Predictions of Jacob

- Asher.....he shall yield royal dainties
- Issachar.....A strong donkey
- Zebulun.....A haven of ships
- Joseph.....a fruitful bough
- Benjamin.....a ravenous wolf

# Notable Descendants

- Reuben.....none
- Simeon.....none
- Levi.....Aaron, Moses, Eli, John the Baptist
- Judah.....David, Jesus
- Dan.....Samson
- Naphtali...Barak, Elijah (?)
- Gad.....Japhthah (?)

# Notable Descendants

- Asher.....none
- Issachar.....none
- Zebulun.....none
- Joseph.....Joshua, Deborah, Gideon,  
Samuel
- Benjamin.....Saul, Esther, Paul

# The Sons of Israel

## Genesis 49:3-4

**Reuben**, you are my firstborn, my might, the first sign of my strength, excelling in honor, excelling in power.<sup>4</sup> Turbulent as the waters, you will no longer excel, for you went up onto your father's bed, onto my couch and defiled it.

# Reuben

- Defiled his father's bed-slept with Bilhah mother of his 2 brothers Dan and Naphtali
- Lost his birthright to Joseph
- Lost the priesthood to Levi
- Lost the position as ruling authority to Judah



# Reuben

Lost his legal status as the first born:

*1 Chronicles 5:1-2* The sons of **Reuben** the firstborn of Israel (he was the firstborn, but when he defiled his father's marriage bed, his rights as firstborn were given to the sons of Joseph son of Israel; so he could not be listed in the genealogical record in accordance with his birthright, <sup>2</sup> and though Judah was the strongest of his brothers and a ruler came from him, the rights of the firstborn belonged to Joseph)—

# Reubenites

- never furnished a leader of any kind,
- first to ask for a place to settle, not waiting to cross the Jordan,
- later failed to answer the call to arms and follow Deborah
- tribe greatly reduced from 46,500 in Numbers 1:21 to 43,740 in Numbers 32:1-5
- One of first tribes to be exiled 1 Chronicles 5:26

## Genesis 49:5-7

**Simeon** and **Levi** are brothers—their swords are weapons of violence.<sup>6</sup> Let me not enter their council, let me not join their assembly, for they have killed men in their anger and hamstringed oxen as they pleased.<sup>7</sup> Cursed be their anger, so fierce, and their fury, so cruel! I will scatter them in Jacob and disperse them in Israel.

# Simeon

- Received the same “blessing” for the same evil deed because of his cruelty as Levi
- Had a problem with ungodly anger and murdered and all the men in an entire town Shechem
- *Gen 49:7* “I will scatter them in Jacob and disperse them in Israel”
- Shared an allotment of land with Judah-*Joshua 19:1* “The second lot came out for the tribe of Simeon according to its clans. Their inheritance lay within the territory of Judah.”

# Simeonites

- dispersed into Judah's tribe
- Became the smallest tribe: in Egypt they were the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest
- 35 years later-63% of the tribe had perished in the wilderness
- Numbers 26:14-"These were the clans of Simeon; those numbered were 22,200."

# Levi

- *Gen 49:7* “I will scatter them in Jacob and disperse them in Israel”
- Received the same “blessing” for the same evil deed because of his cruelty as Simeon
- Had a problem with ungodly anger and murdered an entire town
- The Lord became his inheritance instead of land

# Levities

- Never had inheritance of their own, no large tract of land
- Redeemed themselves against idolatry in days of Moses
  - *Exodus 32:26* “So he stood at the entrance to the camp and said, “Whoever is for the LORD, come to me.” And all the Levites rallied to him.
- Became a Priestly tribe

## Genesis 49:8-9

**Judah**, your brothers will praise you;  
your hand will be on the neck of your enemies;  
your father's sons will bow down to you.

You are a lion's cub, Judah;  
you return from the prey, my son.  
Like a lion he crouches and lies down,  
like a lioness—who dares to rouse him?

**A picture of strength, health and power**



# Genesis 49:10

The scepter will not depart from Judah,  
nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,  
until he to whom it belongs (Shiloh)  
shall come and the obedience of the  
nations shall be his.

**A promise of a dynasty of kings**

## Genesis 49:11-12

He will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch; he will wash his garments in wine, his robes in the blood of grapes.

<sup>12</sup> His eyes will be darker than wine, his teeth whiter than milk.

**A description of the material abundance of Judah. Choice land for vineyards.**

# Judah

- Judah would have the ruling power and leadership of the 1st born birthright
- Received the patriarchal dominion and responsibility of the firstborn as head of the family
- An example of God's grace

# Judah-Ruling Position

## Genesis 49:8-9

- Judah would have the ruling power and leadership of the 1st born birthright
- Given the scepter (a symbol of royal command) the ruling position
- Praise, lion, scepter, lawgiver, obedience of the people a reference to ruling position
- The other tribes would bow down to Judah's descendants

# Judah-Ruling Position

## Genesis 49:8-9

- Dynasty of Kings
- The scepter will not depart from Judah until “He whom it belongs has come” He (Shiloh)
- Judah dynasty of kings will reign until the Messiah comes
- Tribe of Judah 640 years later would produce the dynasty of kings-David

# Judah-Ruling Position

- A Prince of Judah was on the throne from David until Herod
- “The scepter would not depart from Judah until Shiloh comes”
- Rabbis in Jesus day considered the absence of Judah scepter an unfilled scripture
- Jesus Christ the Messiah was living on earth at this time thus fulfilling this prophecy

# Jews

Binding Judah's donkey to the vine:

- Judah's rich land grew abundant vineyards
- Judah remained the central branch of Israel
- Became known as Jews-a name derived from Judah

# Genesis 49:13

**Zebulun** will live by the seashore  
and become a haven for ships;  
his border will extend toward Sidon.



# Zebulun

- The 10<sup>th</sup> son of Jacob
- Zebulun's land is where Jesus grew up (Nazareth)
- 11 of the 12 apostles came from Galilee
- Much of Jesus greatest ministry was in Galilee

# Zebulites

- A quiet tribe
- Enjoyed the abundance of the seas
- Bordered Zidon
- Noted faithfulness to David and had the largest number of soldiers to David's army
  - 1 Chron 12:33 of Zebulun there were 50,000 who went out to battle, expert in war with all weapons of war, stouthearted men who could keep ranks.

## Genesis 49:14-15

“**Issachar** is a rawboned donkey lying down among the sheep pens.<sup>15</sup> When he sees how good is his resting place and how pleasant is his land, he will bend his shoulder to the burden and submit to forced labor. “

# Issachar

- His strength-a strong donkey
  - In war-64,300 men-Numbers 26:25 and 87,000 men in 1 Chronicles 7:5
- In wisdom-1 Chronicles 12:32 – “men that had an understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do”
- In work “he will bend his shoulder to the burden”
- His satisfaction-Genesis 49:15a “he sees how good is his resting place and how pleasant is his land
- His servitude-Genesis 49:15b “and submit to forced labor. “

# Issachar

- Strong but docile and lazy
- Will enjoy his new land to the point he would live there as a slave rather than fight
- The land was rich and produced abundant crops but also invited thieves and captors

## Genesis 49:16-17

**Dan** will provide justice for his people as one of the tribes of Israel.<sup>17</sup> Dan will be a snake by the roadside, a viper along the path, that bites the horse's heels so that its rider tumbles backward.

# Danites

- A troublesome tribe-“A serpent by the way”
- “Serpent” may refer symbolically to idolatry
- Introduced idolatry into Israel- Judges 18:30
- Occupied smallest area of any of the tribes along northern seacoast

# Dan

- The last mentioned in Numbers 10:25; 1 Chronicles 27:16-22
- The last inheritance in Joshua 19:48-49
- No genealogy mentioned in 1 Chronicles 2-10
- His position: judge his people-Samson was the most prominent judge



# Genesis 49:19

**Gad** will be attacked by a band of raiders,  
but he will attack them at their heels.

# Genesis 49:18

“I look for your deliverance, O LORD.

# Gadities

- Chose not to cross the Jordan and be with other tribes in the promised land
- supplied many troops for David-1 Chronicles 12:14
- Battled the Ammonites and other desert peoples thus repelling them
- Jeremiah 49:1 were opposed by foreign armies

# Genesis 49:20

**Asher's** food will be rich,  
he will provide delicacies fit for a king.

# Asherites

- Enjoyed rich food and delicacies:
- His land was an area that prospered in wheat, olive oil, milk and butter-all delicacies at the time
- Carried on an export trade
- Possessed the rich northern seacoast north of Mount Carmel but did not take possession of Tyre and Zidon

# Genesis 49:21

**Naphtali** is a doe set free  
that bears beautiful fawns.

# Naphtali

- “a deer let loose” -as a deer let released; energetic, wild
- The swiftness of warriors feet
- A key land portion near the Sea of Galilee
- “Bears beautiful fawns” -composers of eloquent speech and beautiful literature-fulfilled by the song of Deborah, Barak in Judges 5:1-21

# Jacob's Blessing to Joseph



## Genesis 49:22-24

**Joseph** is a fruitful vine, a fruitful vine near a spring, whose branches climb over a wall.

<sup>23</sup> With bitterness archers attacked him; they shot at him with hostility <sup>24</sup> But his bow remained steady, his strong arms stayed limber, because of the hand of the Mighty One of Jacob, because of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,

## Genesis 49:25-26

because of your father's God, who helps you, because of the Almighty, who blesses you with blessings of the skies above, blessings of the deep springs below, blessings of the breast and womb. <sup>26</sup> Your father's blessings are greater than the blessings of the ancient mountains, than the bounty of the age-old hills. Let all these rest on the head of Joseph, on the brow of the prince among his brothers.

# Jacob Speaks of 5 Titles of God

- Mighty One of Jacob
- The Shepherd
- The Rock of Israel
- Your father's God
- The Almighty

Jacob knows God and it is the Almighty who has brought blessings to the family.

# Joseph

- Joseph's tribe had already been blessed when his sons received the blessing-Genesis 48
- God's hands were on Joseph's hands giving him strength-God was there
- His tribes were some of the most populous
- Received the double portion of the rights of the firstborn-Ezekiel 47:13

# Genesis 49:27

**Benjamin** is a ravenous wolf;  
in the morning he devours the prey,  
in the evening he divides the plunder

# Benjamin

- A ravenous wolf-a tribe with a reputation for fierceness, courage and cruelty-Judges 19 -20
- The warrior tribe
- Descendents include King Saul, Esther, and Paul

# Jacob's Wishes Concerning His Burial

## Genesis 47:29

When the time drew near for Israel to die, he called for **his son Joseph** and said to him, “If I have found favor in your eyes, put your hand under my thigh and promise that you will show me kindness and faithfulness. Do not bury me in Egypt,<sup>30</sup> but when I rest with my fathers, carry me out of Egypt and bury me where they are buried.” “I will do as you say,” he said.<sup>31</sup> “Swear to me,” he said. Then Joseph swore to him, and Israel worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff.



# Genesis 49:28

All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them, giving each the blessing appropriate to him.

## Genesis 49:29-33

Then he gave **them** these instructions: “I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite,<sup>30</sup> the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre in Canaan, which Abraham bought as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite, along with the field.<sup>31</sup> There Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried, there Isaac and his wife Rebekah were buried, and there I buried Leah.<sup>32</sup> The field and the cave in it were bought from the Hittites.”<sup>33</sup> When Jacob had finished giving instructions to his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed, breathed his last and was gathered to his people.

# GOD

Because of SIN

Adam and Eve

Promises

Abraham

Promises

Isaac

Promises

Jacob

Promises

Judah

Promises

Nation of Israel

Promises, Law and Sacrifices

Jesus Messiah

# Messiah's Coming

- During the time when membership in tribe of Judah could be confidently traced
- Previous to the demolition of the Second Temple (Daniel 9:24-27)
- Before the scepter had departed from Judah (Genesis 49:10)
- At the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> millennium after creation (Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 96-99)

## John 5:39-40

You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me,  
<sup>40</sup> yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

## Revelation 6:5-8

Then one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.”<sup>6</sup> Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne...<sup>7</sup> He went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. <sup>8</sup> And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God’s people

# Revelation 6:9-11

**And they sang a new song, saying:**

**“You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals,  
because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.<sup>10</sup> You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”<sup>11</sup> Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders.**

## Revelation 6:12-13

**In a loud voice they were saying: “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!”<sup>13</sup> Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!”**



## Revelation 11:15

**The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever.”**

## Revelation 22:12,13,20

**“Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. <sup>13</sup> I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End... <sup>20</sup> He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

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Do You Know Jesus  
As Your Savior?



# Become a Christian



**A**-Admit that you are a sinner and need a Savior

**B**-*Believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and He died for your sins and rose again.*

**C**-*Confess that He is Lord and Savior of your life.*

Accept Jesus as your  
Savior now