

Genesis - Lesson 48

Genesis Chapter 48

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Memory verses for this week: *1Ti 4:6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.*

Introduction: We continue our study on the book of Genesis this week. This week the aged Jacob adopts the two sons of Joseph and blesses both Ephraim and Manasseh.

I. Jacob Adopts the Two Sons of Joseph

Gen 48:1 And it came to pass after these things, that one told Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick: and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

Gen 48:2 And one told Jacob, and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee: and Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed.

We open chapter with Jacob on his sick-bed. Some one came and told Joseph about his father's sickness. Joseph takes Manasseh and Ephraim to his father. This was providential, regardless of whether Joseph had any prior knowledge of what was about to take place.

Hearing that Joseph and his sons are coming, it encourages him. As Jacob received the news of Joseph's coming, it says in verse 2 that Israel strengthened himself.

Note that it is Jacob, the father, the fleshly man that receives the message; but it is Israel the theocratic and divinely appointed head of the nation, the spiritual man who "strengthened himself."

Gen 48:3 And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me,

Gen 48:4 And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession.

As he nears the end of his life here on earth, Jacob recalls the promise of God. God had appeared unto him in Luz and blessed him. It is good when we can look back over our lives and see the hand of the Lord in our lives. Every saved person can certainly do that as God is good to us all far more than we deserve.

Gen 28:10 And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran.
Gen 28:11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.
Gen 28:12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.
Gen 28:13 And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;
Gen 28:14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.
Gen 28:15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.
Gen 28:16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not.
Gen 28:17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.
Gen 28:18 And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.
Gen 28:19 And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.

Gen 35:6 So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Bethel, he and all the people that were with him.
Gen 35:7 And he built there an altar, and called the place Elbethel: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.
Gen 35:8 But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak: and the name of it was called Allonbachuth.
Gen 35:9 And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him.
Gen 35:10 And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel.
Gen 35:11 And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;
Gen 35:12 And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.
Gen 35:13 And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him.

It was El Shaddai "God Almighty" that appeared unto him. How we need to see God as God Almighty, the all-powerful, all sufficient one. Modern theology attempts to make man all-mighty, instead of Almighty God!

Gen 48:4 And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I

will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession.

In verse 4, there was a promise from concerning both his seed and the land which was to be for he and his seed as an everlasting possession.

Albert Barnes made some good comments in regards to the two grandsons of Israel.

After these things. After referring to the promise of a numerous offspring, and of a territory which they are to inherit, he assigns to each of the two sons of Joseph, who were born in Egypt, a place among his own sons, and a separate share in the promised land. In this way two shares fall to Joseph. "And thy issue." We are not informed whether Joseph had any other sons. But all such are to be reckoned in the two tribes of which Ephraim and Menasseh are the heads. These young men are now at least twenty and nineteen years of age, as they were born before the famine commenced. Any subsequent issue that Joseph might have, would be counted among the generations of their children. "Rachel died upon me" - as a heavy affliction falling upon me. The presence of Joseph naturally leads the father's thoughts to Rachel, the beloved mother of his beloved son, whose memory he honors in giving a double portion to her oldest son.

He now observes and proceeds to bless the two sons of Joseph. "Who are these?" The sight and the observant faculties of the patriarch were now failing. "Bring them now unto me, and I will bless them." Jacob is seated on the couch, and the young men approach him. He kisses and folds his arms around them. The comforts of his old age come up before his mind. He had not expected to see Joseph again in the flesh, and now God had showed him his seed. After these expressions of parental fondness, Joseph drew them back from between his knees, that he might present them in the way that was distinctive of their age. He then bowed with his face to the earth, in reverential acknowledgment of the act of worship about to be performed. Joseph expected the blessing to be regulated by the age of his sons, and is therefore, careful to present them so that the right hand of his dim-sighted parent may, without any effort, rest on the head of his first-born. But the venerable patriarch, guided by the Spirit of him who doth according to his own will, designedly lays his right hand on the head of the younger, and thereby attributes to him the greater blessing.

Gen 48:5 And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.

Gen 48:6 And thy issue, which thou begettest after them, shall be thine, and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance.

Gen 48:7 And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same is Bethlehem.

Jacob adopts Ephraim and Manasseh as his own sons. Because of this, they received the birthright.

1Ch 5:1 Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, (for he was the firstborn; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. 1Ch 5:2 For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's:)

Ephraim and Manasseh received tribal rights on a par with Reuben and Simeon. Any further children of Joseph would be under Ephraim and Manasseh. Thank God that when Jesus died on Calvary, we as Gentiles can become the sons of God just as much as a Jew. We effectively have been grafted into the true branch.

In verse 7. Jacob has the remembrance of Joseph's mother. This was the natural thing since these were her grandchildren.

II. Jacob Blesses the Two Sons of Joseph

Gen 48:8 And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who are these?

Gen 48:9 And Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them.

Gen 48:10 Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, so that he could not see. And he brought them near unto him; and he kissed them, and embraced them.

Gen 48:11 And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face: and, lo, God hath shewed me also thy seed.

Gen 48:12 And Joseph brought them out from between his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth.

Ephraim and Manasseh are presented to their grandfather. Israel must ask who they are because of poor sight. Notice that the blessing is pronounced by Israel and not Jacob. As Jacob (the supplanter), he had no power to bless, but as Israel (Prince with God), he did have the right to bless. Israel kisses and embraces his two grandchildren. Looking back, he realizes how blessed of God he had been.

Not only did he think that Joseph was dead, but not only had they been reunited, but also his seed were now with Israel. Joseph bows in respect before his father. Nothing is greater here on earth when our families are all together and in harmony. Serving God makes this happen.

Pro 17:6 Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.

Gen 48:13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left

hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him.

Gen 48:14 And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn.

Gen 48:15 And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day,

Gen 48:16 The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

The blessing is pronounced by Israel. There was the human order of blessing as explained in verse 13. But the divine and spiritual order of blessing in verse 14. God planned it this way. The younger was to have the greater blessing.

This is ever so. Isaac was preferred above Ishmael, and Jacob before Esau. It was so of Cain that Abel, the second born, was the accepted one. It was also true of the first Adam and the Last Adam. It is so of redeemed men that the flesh is born first but the second born (spiritual man) has first place.

These boys were blessed in Joseph. The blessing was an act of faith according to Hebrews Chapter 11.

Heb 11:20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

Heb 11:21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.

Heb 11:22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

Just as Ephraim and Manasseh were blessed to be the sons of Joseph, how much more are we blessed to be the sons of God because of our relationship to Jesus Christ.

Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Rom 8:15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

Rom 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

Rom 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

In verses 15 and 16, it is clear that the Trinity of God was involved in the blessing. It was God before whom my fathers walked. This speaks of the Father and Fatherhood.

He then mentions the God which fed me. This was the Holy Spirit providing sanctification. And the Angel which redeemed me of course was Christ. All Redemption comes from Jesus Christ. Here is introduced for the first time, the Hebrew word "gaal" which is translated redeemer. It carries the idea of a kinsman redeemer.

Isa 43:1 But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

Isa 49:26 And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine: and all flesh shall know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

Isa 59:20 And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.

Scofield notes on verse 20 say:

Redeemer

Redemption: Kinsman type, summary. The goel, or Kinsman-Redeemer, is a beautiful type of Christ.

(1) The kinsman redemption was of persons, and an inheritance (Lev 25:48); (Lev 25:25); (Gal 4:5); (Eph 1:7); (Eph 1:11); (Eph 1:14).

(2) The Redeemer must be a kinsman (Lev 25:48); (Lev 25:49); (Rth 3:12); (Rth 3:13); (Gal 4:4); (Heb 2:14); (Heb 2:15).

(3) The Redeemer must be able to redeem (Rth 4:4-6); (Jer 50:34); (Joh 10:11); (Joh 10:18).

(4) Redemption is effected by the goel paying the just demand in full (Lev 25:27); (1Pe 1:18); (1Pe 1:19); (Gal 3:13).

Hos 13:14 I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.

See also Ex. 6:6; Psa. 103:4; 50:34; Job 19:25.

In verse 16, Israel mentions the blessings to be received. They were to perpetuate the names of their forefathers and bring a great number after them. (A multitude in the midst of the earth.)

Adam Clarke made a comment on the great blessings Jacob had received in his life.

The God which fed me all my life long - Jacob is now standing on the verge of eternity, with his faith strong in God. He sees his life to be a series of mercies; and as he had been affectionately attentive, provident, and kind to his most helpless child, so has God been unto him; he has fed him all his life long; he plainly perceives that he owes every morsel of food which he has received to the mere mercy and kindness of God.

Gen 48:17 And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head.

Gen 48:18 And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head.

Gen 48:19 And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.

Gen 48:20 And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

Joseph sees the error on how Israel has placed his hands, but the preference cannot be renounced. At first, Joseph attempts to change his father's will. But Israel knew exactly what he was doing, and there was nothing that can be done to change that which is the sovereign will of God.

The older would be great, but the younger would be even greater. Ephraim was placed before Manasseh. This was wonderfully fulfilled in the history of the tribes. Ephraim was not only more numerous, but was more powerful and influential.

Gen 48:21 And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers.

Gen 48:22 Moreover I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.

Time had drawn near the end, and Israel gave his parting words to Joseph. He says in verse 21 " Behold, I die, but God . . . " Isn't that so good and true. I die, but God will remain. I die, and can no longer be with you, but God will never leave you. I die, and cannot bring you into the land, but God can, because He lives.

Think of what this means to you and I. If we raise up our children in the fear and admonition of the Lord, when we depart this life, we have nothing to fear. They will simply look to God for guidance and He never fails or ends. God is eternal.

Joseph received a double blessing. He would be the father of two tribes of Israel rather

than just one.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Who are the two sons of Joseph?

Manasseh and Ephraim.

2. When Jacob heard that Joseph was coming what did he do?

He strengthened himself. (spiritually he was strengthened.)

3. Why did Jacob have to ask who the two sons of Joseph were?

His eye sight had become very dim in his advanced years.

4. In what order did Joseph present his sons before his father?

Gen 48:13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him.

Gen 48:14 And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn.

5. Which of the sons was the firstborn?

Manasseh

6. Which of the sons received the blessing of Jacob's right hand?

Ephraim who was the younger.

7. State other instances where the younger was blessed above the elder.

Isaac was preferred above Ishmael, and Jacob before Esau. It was so of Cain that Abel, the second born, was the accepted one. And most of all, it was also true of the first Adam and the Last Adam. None greater than Jesus Christ.

8. What did Jacob mean when he said, "Moreover I have given thee one portion above thy brethren?"

Two tribes effectively would come from Joseph's bloodline.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.