

Genesis 49

Jacob's Prophecy concerning His Sons

Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, "Assemble yourselves, so that I may tell you what will happen to you in the days to come. ² Gather together and listen, sons of Jacob; Yes, listen to Israel your father. ³ "Reuben, you are my firstborn, My might and the beginning of my strength, Pre-eminent in dignity and preeminent in power. ⁴ Uncontrollable as water, you shall not have pre-eminence, Because you went up to your father's bed; Then you defiled *it* he went up to my couch.

⁵ "Simeon and Levi are brothers; Their swords are implements of violence. ⁶ May my soul not enter into their council; May my glory not be united with their assembly; For in their anger they killed men, And in their self-will they lamed oxen. ⁷ Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel. I will scatter them in Jacob, And disperse them among Israel.

⁸ "As for you, Judah, your brothers shall praise you; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's sons shall bow down to you. ⁹ Judah is a lion's cub; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He crouches, he lies down as a lion, And as a lion, who dares to stir him up?

¹⁰ The scepter will not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him *shall be* the obedience of the peoples. ¹¹ He ties *his* foal to the vine, And his donkey's colt to the choice vine; He washes his garments in wine, And his robes in the blood of grapes.

¹² His eyes are dull from wine, And his teeth ^[k]white from milk. ¹³ "Zebulun will reside at the seashore; And he *shall be* a harbor for ships, And his flank *shall be* toward Sidon. ¹⁴ "Issachar is a strong donkey, Lying down between the sheepfolds. ¹⁵ When he saw that a resting place was good And that the land was pleasant, He bowed his shoulder to carry *burdens*, And became a slave at forced labor.

¹⁶ "Dan shall judge his people, As one of the tribes of Israel. ¹⁷ Dan shall be a serpent in the way,

A horned viper in the path, That bites the horse's heels, So that its rider falls backward.

¹⁸ For Your salvation I wait, Lord. ¹⁹ "As for Gad, a band of raiders shall attack him, But he will attack *at* their heels.

²⁰ "As for Asher, his food shall be rich, And he will yield royal delicacies. ²¹ "Naphtali is a doe let loose; He utters beautiful words. ²² "Joseph is a fruitful branch, A fruitful branch by a spring;

Its branches hang over a wall. ²³ The archers provoked him, And shot *at him* and were hostile toward him; ²⁴ But his bow remained firm, And his arms were agile, From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel),

²⁵ From the God of your father who helps you, And by the Almighty who blesses 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 surpassed the blessings of my

ancestors

Up to the furthest boundary of the everlasting hills; May they be on the head of Joseph, And on the top of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers.

²⁷ "Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; In the morning he devours the prey, And in the evening he divides the spoils." ²⁸ All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them. He blessed them, everyone with the blessing appropriate to him.

Jacob Dies

²⁹ Then he commanded them and said to them, "I am about 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 opposite Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought along with the field from Ephron the Hittite as a burial site.

³¹ There they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah, there they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah, and there I buried Leah ³² the field and the cave that is in it, purchased from the sons of Heth. ³³ When Jacob finished commanding his sons, he drew his feet into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

What questions were provoked within you?

Did anything confuse you?

Did anything move you emotionally?

Did God instruct you to do something?

Did you gain any insight into God's character?

Paul's helpful insights

1. At the end of his life Israel prophesies over his sons. The prophesies reflect each individual sons character and the life choices they have made. These prophesies affected the tribes future existence
2. Reuben, he left his birth right privilege because he slept with his father's wife. 'You shall not have pre-eminence'.
3. Was this why Jacob chose Joseph as his favourite son?
4. Simeon and Levi are lumped together – why?
5. What does it mean for Jacob's soul to not be part of these two sons counsel?
6. Why does he not want to part of who they are?
7. Their anger controlled them and made them cruel.
8. What happens when you curse anger?
9. These two sons were to be scattered.
10. Judah – Judah gets a positive blessing, his sons will take charge of his brothers, he is seen by Jacob as a lion or like a King.
11. Shiloh becomes a key destination for Judah.

12. Zebulun's future will be connected to the sea and boats. He is also associated with drink and unawareness.
13. Hezekiah, he is like a donkey, strong, he will give himself to endless burdens and tasks like a slave driven by the demands of others.
14. Dan will be appointed judge amongst his people, he will be slippery like a snake, attacking on the path with words. Dan will wait for God's salvation from his slavery.
15. Gad will raid and be raided, he will attack his enemy at the point of his strength.
16. Asher will eat rich food and live amongst royalty.
17. Naphtali will be a doe let loose, bringing beautiful words, a smooth talker.
18. Joseph will be faithful, but not take the lead of the nation, he will bring refreshment to his people and connect Israel to other nations amidst contention. He will be focussed and steadfast, he will be blessed and fruitful. The future looks good for Joseph!
19. Benjamin will be a ravenous wolf who prowls.
20. Jacob's blessing was his insight poured out into the future of his twelve sons.
21. Jacob commissions them to bring his bones out of Egypt when the nation leaves and goes back to Canaan.
22. Jacob instructs his sons to receive the blessings he gave.
23. He instructs them to bring his ashes into the land of his fathers and bury him in the piece of land that Abraham bought in Canaan.
24. Jacob wants to join his wife in death.
25. He got into bed breaths his last and went to his Father.