

The Blessing

GENESIS 49–50

FIRST DAY: Introduction

There is nothing as wonderful as God's blessing on our lives! The book of Genesis begins and ends with God's blessing. In the beginning, God blessed His new creation. However, with the intrusion of sin, mankind and the earth fell under a curse. The last chapter of Genesis reminds us that God is able to overcome what is meant for evil (the curse) and use it for good (a blessing). This is clearly seen in the crucifixion; Jesus took the curse of sin that we might receive the blessing of God. Now we have been blessed *with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places* (Ephesians 1:3).

As a young man, Jacob was desperate for his father's blessing. In order to receive that blessing, Jacob resorted to deceit and trickery. At the end of his life, Jacob, knowing the value of a blessing, blessed his sons before he died. In turn, Joseph, rather than retaliate for the harm his brothers had done to him, chose to bless and be a blessing to his brothers.

First Peter 3:9 reminds us that *not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing*. Our God is a blessing God and has called us to be blessed, be a blessing, and bless others.

*Ask God to make you a blessing
and use you to bring His blessing to others.*

SECOND DAY: Read Genesis 49:1–12

1. As Jacob was dying, he called his sons and said, *Gather together that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days* (Genesis 49:1–2). Jacob’s prophetic words were a synopsis of his sons’ weaknesses and strengths. These men would each become a tribe in Israel with a specific allotment in the Promised Land and specific tribal tendencies. Jacob began his blessing with the first four sons of Leah. Use Genesis 49:3–12 to note and comment on the weaknesses and strengths of:

a. Reuben (verses 3–4)

(1) According to 1 Chronicles 5:1, Reuben’s sin cost him the birthright of the firstborn. What’s more, true to Jacob’s prophecy, the tribe of Reuben never produced any leaders nor excelled in any way. What warning or lesson do you receive from the life and character of Reuben?

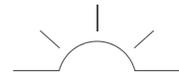
b. Simeon and Levi (verses 5–7)

(1) Review Genesis 34:25–30 and remark on Jacob’s rebuke.

(2) True to what Jacob prophesied, when Israel settled in the land of Canaan, Judah essentially absorbed Simeon’s inheritance, and Levi was scattered among the other tribes. However, God appointed the Levites to be the priestly tribe that represented Him and ministered to the spiritual needs of the people throughout the land. What does this convey to you about God’s mercy?

c. Judah (verses 8–12)

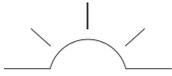
(1) Jacob’s word to Judah was a powerful Messianic prophecy concerning Jesus Christ. Use these verses to fill in the chart:



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Note that even though Jacob cursed Simeon and Levi’s anger (Genesis 49:7), he did not remove these two sons from the covenant blessing.

PROPHECY	CROSS REFERENCE	YOUR INSIGHTS
Verse 8	1 Chronicles 5:2, Philippians 2:10–11	
Verse 9	Revelation 5:5	
Verse 10	Jeremiah 23:5–6, Luke 1:31–33, Hebrews 1:8	
Verses 11–12	Isaiah 63:1–3, Matthew 21:5–9	



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Isaiah 9:6–7 declares that Jesus is our *Prince of Peace and of His government and peace there will be no end.*

(2) The name *Shiloh* refers to peace, but can also be translated *He whose right it is*. How do you see both of these descriptions applying to Jesus?

2. From your study today, what stands out to you from Jacob’s prophecies?

THIRD DAY: Read Genesis 49:13–28

1. After pronouncing a blessing upon the first four sons of Leah, Jacob proceeded to bless the rest of his sons. Choose phrases from Genesis 49:13–27 that describe:

a. Zebulun (verse 13)

b. Issachar (verses 14–15)

c. Dan (verses 16–18)

(1) Jacob’s exclamation in verse 18 contains the first usage in the Bible of the Hebrew word *Yeshua*, which means *salvation*. The names *Joshua* and *Jesus* are derived from this word. What do you find significant about this?

d. Gad (verse 19)

e. Asher (verse 20)

f. Naphtali (verse 21)

g. Joseph (verses 22–26)

(1) Because of Reuben's sin, Jacob blessed Joseph with the birthright (1 Chronicles 5:1). Comment on the extent of this blessing.

(2) In his blessing upon Joseph, Jacob proclaimed five attributes of God. Use verses 24–25 to list and remark on these names:

(a) Verse 24

1.

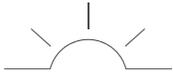
2.

3.

(b) Verse 25

4.

5.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The traits that Jacob prophesied in blessing his sons were reiterated 400 years later by Moses in Deuteronomy 33 when he blessed the tribes of Israel.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Five of Jacob's twelve sons were compared to animals:
 Judah—lion
 Issachar—donkey
 Dan—serpent
 Naphtali—deer
 Benjamin—wolf

(c) Which of these attributes ministers to you presently?

h. Benjamin (verse 27)

2. Jacob conferred the blessing God gave Abraham to all of his sons. The Hebrew word for *bles*s is *barak*, and is the act of bringing God's favor upon someone's life. What does Genesis 49:28 say about the way in which Jacob blessed his sons?

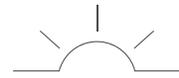
a. Link Jacob's blessing with Galatians 3:14. What do you see?

FOURTH DAY: Read Genesis 49:29–50:14

1. After blessing his sons, Jacob gave them a final charge concerning his burial. Use Genesis 49:29–32 to describe where Jacob wanted to be *buried*.

a. *The cave that is in the field of Machpelah* was the only piece of land Abraham owned in Canaan. Bible scholar Henry Morris said of this, *It was to be a testimony to the generations to come, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had faith in God's promise that He would give the land to their seed.*³⁶ How does this highlight why Jacob wanted to be buried there?

2. From Genesis 49:33, record the death of Jacob.
 - a. How did Joseph react to his father's death? Genesis 50:1
 - b. How is this a fulfillment of God's promise to Jacob in Genesis 46:4?
3. Genesis 50:2–14 records the burial of Jacob. Use these verses to remark on:
 - a. The embalming (verses 2–3)
 - b. The permission (verses 4–6)
 - c. The procession (verses 7–9)
 - d. The mourning (verses 10–11)
 - e. The burial (verses 12–14)



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The Egyptians mourned for Jacob seventy days. The mourning period for a Pharaoh in Egypt was seventy-two days.

4. Take a moment to review Jacob's testimony from the following Scriptures:

a. Genesis 28:16–22

b. Genesis 31:38–42

c. Genesis 32:9–10, 24–30

d. Genesis 35:2–3

e. Genesis 48:15–16a

(1) To sum up this testimony, write an epitaph for Jacob.

FIFTH DAY: Read Genesis 50:15–26

1. After they had buried their father Jacob, *Joseph's brothers* became concerned about their standing with Joseph. Use Genesis 50:15–21 to observe and comment on:
 - a. Their fear (verse 15)
 - (1) By what means did they convey their plea to Joseph?
 - b. Their plea (verses 16–18)
 - (1) Why do you think Joseph *wept* at his brothers' words?
 - c. Joseph's response (verses 17b, 19–21)
 - (2) Use Luke 23:34 and Acts 4:10–12 to underscore Joseph's Christlike example.

- (3) How do you see God overcoming man's *evil* intent with His good purposes?
 - (a) How does the reality of God's overcoming power minister to you?

2. Genesis 50:22–23 records that Joseph had an influence in the lives of his grandchildren and great grandchildren. Considering his life and legacy, what type of influence do you suppose he had on them?

3. Link Joseph's request in Genesis 50:24–25 with Hebrews 11:22. What do you see?

4. According to Genesis 50:26, Joseph died at the age of 110 and was *embalmed* and placed *in a coffin in Egypt*. As discussed previously, Joseph's life is in many ways a picture of Jesus. As you consider the life of Joseph, which aspect of his Christlike example:
 - a. Ministers to you

