

Joseph--Genesis 48

Jacob Blesses Joseph's Sons

I. Additional Scriptures...

1. The Appearance at Luz--Jacob's Ladder (Gen 28:10-19).
2. Eventually God would speak to Moses about hearing the groanings of the children of Israel, that He would take them for His people, and that He would bring them to the promised land (Ex 6:1-8).
3. Circumstances of Rachel's death (Gen 35:16-19).
4. Land was indeed parceled out to Joseph's sons (Josh 16:1--17:1).
5. Ephraim did become the dominant tribe of the northern ten and his name came to be used as representative of the whole of Israel (Isa 7:2,5,9,17; Hos 9:3-16).
6. A New Testament reference to the promise of verse 22 (John 4:5).

II. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: **Patriarchy.**

III. Summary.

Joseph learns that his father is sick and he takes Manasseh and Ephraim to see him. Jacob sat up and begins to speak to Joseph. He repeats to Joseph what the Lord had told him at Luz, which Jacob renamed Bethel. Jacob then elevates Joseph's two sons to the level equal to Joseph and his brothers--they will take the place of Joseph in the inheritance. Any other children ("issue") from Joseph will inherit through Manasseh and Ephraim. He mentions the death of Joseph's mother, Rachel, which took place as she bore Benjamin at Bethlehem.

Jacob asks Joseph to bring Manasseh and Ephraim to him so that he may bless them. Joseph does so; carefully aligning them before his nearly blind father in such a way that he thought would be the order of the blessing (i.e., according to age). Jacob is overjoyed that God has blessed him not only to see his son again, but even also to see these grandsons that are now before him. Rather than blessing Joseph's sons in the order Joseph expected, Jacob crossed his arms to place his right hand on the younger grandson. This displeased Joseph and he tried to make correction, but Jacob had done it intentionally and lets Joseph know that the younger brother will be greater, and he set Ephraim before Manasseh. The faith of Jacob that God will deliver his descendants back into the land of their fathers is stated and he gives to Joseph a portion of land he had taken from the Amorites (v. 22; John 4:5).

IV. Outline.

1. Joseph visits his sick father bringing along his two sons (1).
2. Jacob sits up in bed and begins to tell about an experience at Luz (2-4).
3. Jacob claims Manasseh and Ephraim as his own sons and all of Joseph's descendants will inherit through these two (5-6).
4. Jacob refers to the death of Rachel at Bethlehem (7).
5. Jacob's attention is focused upon Joseph's two sons (8-10).
6. Jacob expresses his joy at being able to see not only Joseph, but also his sons (11).
7. Respectfully, Joseph presents his sons to his father in such a way as to receive a blessing according to their age (12-13).
8. Jacob purposely crossed his arms and placed his right hand upon Ephraim's head as he pronounced the blessing (14-16).

9. Joseph tried to correct what he thought was a mistake by his father, but Jacob told him he knew what he was doing and that the younger brother would be greater than the older (17-19).
10. In pronouncing the blessing, Jacob used the name of Ephraim first, thus setting Ephraim before Manasseh (20).
11. Jacob mentions the return of his family to Canaan (21).
12. He gives to Joseph a certain portion of land he had taken from the Amorites (22).

V. Questions.

True or False

01. _____ Joseph's descendants would have land that Jacob took with the sword.
02. _____ Luz is the place that is also called Bethel.
03. _____ Jacob was unsure about inheriting the promised land.
04. _____ Rachel was buried in Luz.
05. _____ Jacob was so blind he couldn't tell which of Joseph's sons was the firstborn.

Multiple Choice (Select the BEST Answer)

06. _____ Whenever Joseph came to visit his sick father, Jacob did what: (a) wept; (b) slept; (c) strengthened himself.
07. _____ Who set Ephraim before Manasseh: (a) Jacob; (b) Joseph; (c) no one.
08. _____ Does Jacob speak of the reason for Rachel's death as he speaks to Joseph and his sons in this chapter: (a) YES; (b) NO.
09. _____ Jacob's right hand was placed upon whose head: (a) Joseph; (b) Manasseh; (c) Ephraim.
10. _____ When Jacob spoke to Joseph, he used this word to speak about Manasseh and Ephraim: (a) sons; (b) seed; (c) lads; (d) a, b, & c; (e) none of these.

Fill in the Blanks

11. John ____:5 "Then cometh he to a city of _____, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that _____ gave to his son _____."
12. "And Joseph brought them out from between his _____, and he _____ himself with his face to the earth."
13. Exodus 6:4--"And I have also _____ my covenant with them, to give them the _____ of _____, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were _____."
14. Jacob said Manasseh and Ephraim would be LIKE _____ and _____.
15. "...and let them grow into a _____ in the _____ of the earth."

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be given on next week's handout

ANSWERS for 01-11: [01—False, 34; 02—False, 5; 03—True, 66; 04—True, 11; 05—False, 20; 06—a, 1; 07—b, 33; 08—c, 12; 09—a, 23; 10—b, 17; 11—kindred, fifteen; 12—vision, night; 13—27, house, ten; 14—great, nation, 3; 15—ten, 21.

VI. Lessons & Applications.

1. ... *and Israel strengthened himself and sat upon the bed...* (Gen 48:2). Jacob knew he did not have long to live and was able to summon enough strength for this opportunity to pass on a blessing to his son and grandsons. It is obvious from what he says in this chapter that he feels greatly blessed of the Lord to be able to be in the presence of his son and grandsons. He treasures the time and his words should strengthen them also.

2. *God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan...* (Gen 48:3; cf., 28:10-19). The revelation that Jacob had received (via a dream about a ladder reaching to heaven) naturally comes to his mind on this occasion very near to the end of his life. In this dream God had promised to bless him and his seed and that they would be a blessing to all of the families of the earth. Jacob wishes to pass along to those he loves the wonderful message he received on that night. God told him... 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.”* Try to imagine what an impression such a revelation would make upon Manasseh and Ephraim and how encouraging it would have been.
3. *And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, ... are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.* (Gen 48:5). When we look at the map of the Land of Canaan after the conquest, we do not find any land allotted to the tribe of JOSEPH. However, we do find land allotted to his two sons: Manasseh and Ephraim. Here is the explanation for that. Jacob is here “adopting” Joseph’s sons as his own. The end result is special favor to this son whom God used to protect their entire family from death by famine. Joseph’s allotment would be double in that he would be counted twice, whereas the other brothers were only counted once. When we think of the distress and grief Joseph had to endure because of the cruelty of his brothers, it surely seems a just reward. It is quite interesting to observe that there is a listing of the tribes of Israel in the Book of Revelation which is unlike any other (Rev 7:4-8). This text is describing the 144,000 speaks of the tribe of Joseph. The fact that it is very different from the way the twelve tribes existed in the Old Testament and from the way the promised land is divided up ought to teach us that the number, 144,000, is intended to be taken symbolically rather than literally in Revelation. Many who are deceived by false teaching have taken the number as a literal number of the saved.
4. *...I had not thought to see thy face: and, lo, God hath showed me also thy seed.* (Gen 48:11). Here is a wonderful way of thinking about blessings. In Jacob’s mind, the blessings of his life came from God. He surely seems to be grateful for the opportunity of seeing Joseph and his sons. Let us count our blessings and let us likewise realize that they come to us from God and may we express in prayer that we know how much we need God (cf., verse 15; Js 1:17; Mt 6:11).
5. *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.* (Gen 48:20). This was not what Joseph expected. However, this is indeed a prophetic statement that does come to pass (cf., the Additional Scriptures above, I.5.). It is likely that Jacob, at this time, reflects back to the time when he and Rebekah deceived Isaac (cf., Gen 29:1-29). Sometimes that which seems to us to be the right outcome is turned on its head in God’s dealings with man. It is comforting to know that God’s ways are always best. *“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts”* (Isa 55:9).

VII. Crossword Puzzle (Jacob Blesses Joseph's Sons)...

For a Crossword Puzzle covering this lesson, go to...

<http://www.hcis.net/users/dlemmons/bsq01-13-Puzzle.pdf>