

Genesis Chapter Forty Eight

Genesis 48:1-6

Now it came about after these things that Joseph was told, "Behold, your father is sick." So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim with him. When it was told to Jacob, "Behold, your son Joseph has come to you," Israel collected his strength and sat up in bed. Then Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, and He said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and numerous, and I will make you a company of peoples, and will give this land to your descendants after you for an everlasting possession. And now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are. But your offspring that have been born after them shall be yours; they shall be called by the names of their brothers in their inheritance.

- In consequence of Jacob's adoption of Joseph's sons as his own—they acquire the status of inheritance with Jacob's other sons (Reuben, Simeon, etc)
- This declaration of adoption leaves a lasting imprint on the structure of the nation of Israel. Ephraim inherits leadership of the whole—forfeited by Reuben (I Chron 5:1-2). Judah becomes influential—but birthright is entrusted to Joseph.
- Sons born later to Joseph will then have seniority in their own family group
- There is some discrepancy about Jacob's age at death—compared with the age of Joseph's two sons.
- Out of Jacob's long history—Heb 11:21 selects this as his outstanding act of faith. It is a picture of him delivering promise to the generations to come.
- Luz is original name for Bethel.

Genesis 48:7-9

"Now as for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel died, to my sorrow, in the land of Canaan on the journey, when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem)." When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Who

are these?" And Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." So he said, "Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them."

- This detail concerning Rachel has been a defining moment of sorrow and grief in his life.
- His affection for Rachel comes up as he favors Joseph
- Who are these—Joseph responds: my sons (recall Gen 27:18)
- Jacob asks to be buried with forefathers rather than with Rachel

Genesis 48:10-12

Now the eyes of Israel were so dim from age that he could not see. Then Joseph brought them close to him, and he kissed them and embraced them. And Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face, and behold, God has let me see your children as well." Then Joseph took them from his knees, and bowed with his face to the ground.

- Child placed on knees—symbolic of adoption
- Joseph removes them 'from the knees' to receive the blessing—prostrates himself

Genesis 48:13-14

And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right, and brought them close to him. But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the first-born.

- What began with stories of Ishmael/Isaac, Esau and Jacob, and then Joseph and his brothers—continues here when the rights of the first-born are superseded to the later-born.
- Jacob had already named the younger before the elder in vs 5.

Genesis 48:15-19

And he blessed Joseph, and said, "The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, the angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and may my name live on in them, and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth." When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on Ephraim's head, it displeased him; and he grasped his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. And Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this one is the first-born. Place your right hand on his head." But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know; he also shall become a people and he also shall be great. However, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations."

- When Jacob blesses Joseph in vs 15—he is still speaking concerning the sons—it is a collective term for his two sons as in I Chron 5:2.
- Redeemed—expresses protection and reclamation provided in times of trouble.
- Deathbed blessings are irrevocable—as with Jacob and Esau.
- There is a three-fold invocation—designation for God—that recalls God's dealings: the God in covenant with my fathers, the God who led Jacob, and the God he has tangibly encountered at turning points in his life.
- Over the years—following the Exodus—Ephraim becomes influential and his name used for the northern kingdom after the split in the monarchy.
- Until the very end of his life—Jacob insists on showing partiality.

Genesis 48:20-22

And he blessed them that day, saying, "By you Israel shall pronounce blessing, saying, 'May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh!'" Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh. Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am about to die, but God will be with you, and bring you back to the land of your fathers. And I give you one portion more than your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow."

- When we bless—we are calling on God to accomplish this—Num 6:24-27
- Elevation of Joseph—double portion
- Josh 24:32

Genesis Chapter Forty Eight Workbook

Key Words:

Harmonize:

Read Hebrews 11:20-22. Why are these events mentioned for each patriarch?

Dig:

- 1) How is this description different than when Jacob received his father's blessing? How is it the same?
- 2) How is Jacob described in this chapter?
- 3) Who was Abraham's first-born? Who received the blessing? Who was Isaac's first-born? Who received the blessing? Who was Jacob's first-born? Who received the blessing?
- 4) How is God described in chapter 48? What names are used for Him?
- 5) Chapter 48 continues to use both names—Israel and Jacob. Is there any significance to this?

Discuss:

- 1) Heb 11:21 singles out the blessing of Joseph's sons as an example of faith—why would this be the event chosen for an example?
- 2) Of the 4 patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph—which one do you most identify with? Why?

Point of Prayer:

Pray a blessing on your children and grandchildren today.

Integrate:

What other scriptures comes to mind as you read this chapter?

Application:

- 1) Have you experienced a defining moment of sorrow or grief?

- 2) As a parent or grandparent, how do you avoid showing favoritism?

- 3) Did you grow up around your grandparents? What memories do you have about them?

- 4) What event in your own life stands out as evidence of your faith?

- 5) What are you hoping to pass on to your own descendants?

- 6) Have you received any inheritance? What was it? What did you do with it?