

Genesis Ch. 49

Israel knows that he's going to die and he gathers his family around.

V: 1-2 Jacob gathers his sons together that he might share a word of prophesy with them concerning their respective futures.

Amos 3:7 “Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets.”

- 70% of the Bible is prophetic in nature, this will be the 2nd time that we see Israel speak forth a word of prophecy, the 1st was concerning Ephraim & Manasseh in the previous chapter.

Deuteronomy 4:30-31 ³⁰“When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; ³¹(For the Lord thy God is a merciful God;) He will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which He sware unto them.”

- At this point “sons of Jacob” is an identifier; they are in fact “sons of the deceiver” but “Israel” is governed by God.

V: 3-4 **Reuben**: “Behold a son” - seemingly full of potential.

1. Firstborn
 2. The might of Jacob.
 3. The beginning of strength.
 4. The excellency of dignity.
 5. The excellency of power.
- Great potential vs: a sad reality:
 1. Unstable as water
 2. Shall not excel (loser).
 - Why: One immoral / bad decision – going up to father’s bed / Bilhah. (Genesis 35:22)

James 1:8 “A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.”

- This is why he doesn’t receive the birthright – because he went up to his father’s bed and defiled it.
- The tribe of Reuben never did excel, there was not a single leader who came from the tribe of Reuben.
- The tribe of Reuben never did enter into the promise land; settling on the east banks of the Jordan River.

V: 5-7 **Simeon & Levi**: “Hearing” & “Joined to” - Instruments of cruelty.

- They slew Hamor, Shechem, and all the males of Shechem as they were recovering from their circumcision. Took all the women & children as slaves. (Genesis 34:25-29).

Micah 6:8 “He hath shewed thee O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee; but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.”

Amos 3:3 “How can two walk together unless they be agreed?”

- Here Israel is saying that he is not in agreement with them:
- Do not let my soul come into their confidence, or unto their gathering, may my honor not be united with their anger.
- I don't want to be associated with them.

Psalms 1:1 “Blessed is the man who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.”

- Simeon & Levi are always mentioned together, but they will be divided and scattered in Israel.
- The Levites didn't have an inheritance in the land because God Himself was their inheritance, they were given cities throughout Israel to dwell in as priests to God.
- The Levites did produce Moses and Aaron – God was gracious to them in that and in their position as priests, servants of God.
- Simeon had a portion of land south of Judah, near Beersheba, but never produced any leadership. Eventually they are assimilated into Judah.
- *There is very little that is praiseworthy in the first three sons, but that changes with Judah.*

V: 8-9 **Judah**: Praise.

- Your brothers will praise you & bow down to you. (Messianic prophecy).
- You will be victorious over your enemies. (King David)
- Judah was the dominant tribe under David.
- Lion's whelp: the strength of a young, also means the recklessness of youth, impudence; possibly a reference to his youthful indiscretion with Tamar – which he'd grown out of.
- He has the strength of a young lion, and the security of a mature lion resting in it's den.

V: 10 The scepter shall not depart: figurative language to describe the sovereignty of Israel, the power to enforce capital punishment.

- Shiloh – a reference to the Messiah: Shiloh is a derivative of the word “shalom” – peace giver, Prince of Peace, the One to whom all the people shall gather.

“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, until Shiloh come;”

- Right around 6 AD, the Roman government took the power of capital punishment away from the nation of Israel.
- Later the Jews would deliver Jesus to Pilate to have Him crucified because as the Jews would say *“it is not lawful for us to put a man to death.”*
- They did this because they wanted Jesus to die, to be crucified – and the power of capital punishment had been taken from them.
- In 6 AD when that power had been taken from them, many of the Jews publically wept and mourned because they thought that the Word of God had failed.

Isaiah wrote:

Isaiah 40:8 *“The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.”*

- An old saint by the name of Simeon; described as just and devout believed this, he was found waiting for his Lord. He stood against the culture, common belief, and practice.
- He had received a promise from God that he would see his Savior before he died – and he did.

Luke 2:27-32 ²⁷*And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for Him after the custom of the law, ²⁸then took he Him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, ²⁹Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: ³⁰For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, ³¹Which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; ³²A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.”*

- Those Jews that were weeping and mourning because God’s word had failed in their eyes didn’t realize that in Galilee, their Messiah and Redeemer was growing up, waxing strong in the Spirit.

2 Peter 1:19 *“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.”*

“... unto Him shall the gathering of the people be.”

Isaiah 9:6-7 “⁶For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

Ephesians 1:10 “That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him:”

V: 11 Judah’s strength will be like a strong thick vine, so that you could tie your donkey up to it, like a hitching post.

- The Old Testament has two lines of Messianic prophecy, and this verse brings them both out.
- Binding his donkey to the vine, and his donkey’s colt to the choice vine.

John 15:5 “I am the vine, you are the branches...”

- Jesus would later send his disciples to fetch the donkey & its colt for Jesus.

Matthew 21:4-9 “⁴All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, ⁵Tell ye the daughter of Sion, behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. ⁶And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, ⁷and brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set Him thereon. ⁸And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. ⁹And multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.”

- Jesus would come first as a humble servant, to give His life, a ransom for us all.
- Jesus would come a 2nd time, in power and might.

“... He washed His garments in wine, and His clothes in the blood of grapes.”

Isaiah 63:1-4 “¹Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak righteousness, mighty to save. ²Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winevat? ³I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and

trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. ⁴For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.”

V: 12 *“His eyes shall be red with wine...”* – flash, brilliant

Revelation 19:11-16 ¹¹And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. ¹²His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. ¹³And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen white and clean. ¹⁵And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

V: 13 **Zebulun**: “elevated dwelling” – “exalted” (Leah’s 6th son taken out of order).

- He shall dwell near the coast, a haven for the sea, near to or bordering Sidon.

V: 14-15 **Issachar**: “man for hire” – “hireling” – “reward”

- A beast of burden
- Dwelling in a pleasant land.
- He would become lazy.
- Becoming a servant, and paying tribute – living in subjection to others.

V: 16-18 **Dan**: “Justice”, or “Judged”.

- A serpent by the way – causing the riders to fall – Dan introduced idolatry to Israel as the kingdom was divided.
- Dan led Israel astray, which eventually brought judgment upon themselves.

V: 19 **Gad**: “Troop” – “Fortune”

- Gad shall be overcome, then will overcome in the end.
- Gad inherited the land near the East border of Israel and was the most vulnerable to the invaders from the east.

V: 20 **Asher**: “Happy”

- Asher will be fat with plenty of provision.
- They became the bread makers of the land.

V: 21 **Naphtali**: “Wrestling”

- A hind or a deer set free speaking friendly words or wise words.
- They would be swift warriors.
- They also became the poets and philosophers of Israel.

V: 22-26 **Joseph**: “Adding” – “Jehovah has added”

- Given the birthright and blessing.
- Joseph is the fruitful branch, even the fruitful tree by the well.

Psalm 1:1-3 “¹Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of scornful. ²But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. ³And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

- Whose branches run over the wall – or over the border.

V: 23 The archers – those who shoot fiery darts – have grieved him, shot at him, and hated him.

- Acknowledging the trials in Joseph’s life brought to bear from his brothers.
- His brothers probably didn’t appreciate the reminder too much....

V: 24 How God protected and strengthened him; making Joseph a type of the shepherd of Israel, the stone of Israel - Jesus.

- The shepherd who provided for Israel, the stability, the foundation.

Psalm 80:1 “Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth.”

“... the Stone of Israel”

- There was a special symbolism attached to the “rock” or “stone”
- Daniel chapter 2 – Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of progressive kingdoms that would rule over the world. Head of gold, chest and arms of silver, belly and legs of brass, on down to the feet that were iron mixed with clay.

Daniel 2:34 “Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.”

- In Daniel’s interpretation of the dream, that “rock” was the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to establish God’s reign over the earth.
- The “Rock” for the children of Israel was also the split rock of Horeb. They were dying of thirst in the wilderness and blaming Moses.
- God instructed Moses to strike the Rock, and life saving water came out.

Paul explains:

1 Corinthians 10:4 “And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.”

- Jesus was also the chief cornerstone which the builders rejected.

V: 25-26 Blessing! The God of thy father would be your help, the Almighty would bless him.

- The blessings of heaven, the blessing of the deep, the blessing from under the earth, blessing of breasts, and of the womb.
- Both Ephraim and Manasseh would become very large tribes, Ephraim becoming dominant in the Northern kingdom.
- Everything would seemingly work in Joseph’s favor.
- The blessings of Israel have been greater than Isaac in every way – and all of that shall be upon Joseph – separate from his brothers.
 1. Both Judah and Joseph received substantially greater blessings than their brothers.
 2. One distinction between them is that Joseph’s blessing were purely physical; size, strength, fruitfulness.
 3. Judah got all the same things, but also got the spiritual blessing of the Messiah.

V: 27 **Benjamin:** “Son of my right hand.”

- Benjamin shall be a fierce warrior, he shall spoil the prey dividing the spoil.
- The tribe of Benjamin produced fierce warriors.
- Even though Benjamin is a “favorite” son, he doesn’t seem to get much of a blessing.

V: 28 These are the 12 tribes of Israel. (1st)

- These are the “blessings” that Israel pronounced upon his sons.
- Seemingly the “prophecy” to each of them is a “blessing” in reassuring them that they will be returned to the promise land.

V: 29-33 Israel repeats the command / charge to bury him in the cave that was purchased as a burial plot:

- The cave at Machpelah, near Mamre at Hebron.
 - He would be buried with his fathers, in richness and communion.
 - Israel insisted on being buried in Machpelah with Leah, as opposed to Bethlehem with Rachel.
 - Gathered with his people, not just buried in the same place, but gone to be with them.
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- Historically we have covered more than half the time from Adam to Jesus.
 - Israel’s death was about 2,255 years after Adam.
 - There are about 1,600 years or so left until the coming of Jesus Christ.