

CGYG & LIFE Bible Study – Genesis 49:1 – 50:26

Read Gen 49:1-28

Nearing death, Jacob blessed his 12 sons, speaking about the future of the 12 tribes that would descend from them and form the nation of Israel. We will focus this evening on the tribes of Judah and Joseph. Additional thoughts about the remaining tribes may be found on the attached page

1. Why were the first 3 sons of Jacob were disqualified from receiving blessing from their father? (v.3-7)
2. Why did Judah, who sold Joseph into slavery and who impregnated his own daughter-in-law because he thought she was a prostitute, receive a favorable blessing?
3. Look again at the blessing of Judah (v.8-12). What is being referred to in the following parts of the blessing?
 - v.8 – “...your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons will bow down to you.”
 - v.9-10 – “...lion...scepter...ruler's staff...obedience of nations is his.”
 - v.11 – “He will tether his donkey to a choice vine...he will wash his garments in wine...”
4. Examine the prophecy regarding Joseph (v.22-26). How do v. 22-25 recount the story of his life? What does v.26 say about the future of his descendants?
5. What do the names of God that Jacob uses in v.24-25 tell us about God? How were these attributes of God a comfort to Jacob and Joseph, and how can they be a comfort to us today?

Read Genesis 49:29 – 50:26

1. What did Jacob's instruction regarding his burial tell us about his faith? (see also Gen. 47:29-31)

2. Upon Jacob's death, Joseph's brothers sought his assurance of forgiveness. How did Joseph respond? How did he reassure them of his forgiveness? (cf. Romans 12:19-21, 1 Thessalonians 5:15) Why was he able to respond as he did?

3. How did Joseph's instruction regarding his burial differ from his father Jacob's? What does this tell us about his faith? (cf. Hebrews 11:22) How does his example of faith speak to us today?

Aliens and Strangers

As we draw our study of the book of Genesis to a close, we are reminded once again of the life of faith that God commends, as exemplified in the life of Joseph. Though his brothers attacked him and sold him into slavery with bitterness and malice in their hearts, Joseph remained steadfast in faith. While suffering unjustly in Egypt, he entrusted himself to God and continued to do what was good and right. And God was with him to bless him, causing him to prosper in all he did, and making him like "a fruitful vine near a spring, whose branches climb over a wall" (Gen. 50:22). After he rose to power, Joseph continued in faith, choosing names for his sons that were reminders of God's faithfulness to him (Gen. 41:51-52). It was this same faith that enabled him to forgive his brothers for the wrong they had done him, for he saw that though they had intended it for evil, the God whom he trusted intended it for good, for the saving of many lives. By faith, Hebrews 11:22 says, "Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones," so sure was he of God's promise to deliver His people from Egypt (Gen. 15:13-14).

And so, Joseph persevered in faith. In death as in life, he staked everything on the promises of God, and received blessings "greater than the blessings of the ancient mountains, than the bounty of the age-old hills" (Gen. 50:26). Great as his blessings were, however, they only point to the greater blessing that has now come to us who have faith in Jesus Christ, in whom God has blessed us "in the heavenly realms with **every** spiritual blessing". (Eph. 1:3) How much more than Joseph, then, should we stake our all on the One in whom all of God's promises are "Yes" and "Amen" (2 Cor. 1:19). Reflect tonight on what it means to live by faith. Have you trusted Jesus Christ completely with your life? Are there promises that God has made in His Word that you're having a hard time trusting Him for? Spend some time memorizing, meditating on, then living out the words of the apostle Paul in Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."