

Introduction

Throughout this book of beginnings, God revealed His character to Israel in a way that clearly distinguished Him from the false gods worshipped by the surrounding nations.

He also revealed to Israel a worldview that contrasted—at times sharply—with the worldview of their neighbors.

Although Moses never set out to _____ God's existence or to offer a formal systematic theology of His nature and works, the text of Genesis is interwoven with essential theological truths regarding:

God the Father,
God the Son,
God the Holy Spirit,
_____,
marriage & family,
blessing,
Satan & angels,
sin,
judgment,
redemption,
covenants,
and _____.

The opening section of Genesis (chapters 1–11), often called primeval history, discloses the origin of the universe—the very beginning of time, matter, and space.

In those chapters we also find many of the “firsts” in human experience:

the first marriage—Adam & Eve;

the first children born—Cain, Abel, Seth, and their sisters;

the first family _____—jealous Cain rising in anger against righteous Abel;

tragically, the first family murder—Cain killing Abel;

but also the first _____ worship among mankind, as Seth's line “began to call on the name of the Lord.”

As the narrative shifts into the patriarchal period, Israel discovered its own family origins, tracing its ancestry back to Eber (the source of the name “Hebrews”—Gen. 10:24–25) and, even further, to Noah's son Shem (the root of the term “_____”—Gen. 10:21).

But beginning in Genesis 12:1–3, Moses narrows the spotlight to God’s promises given to Abraham.

The wide-angle view of the nations in chapters 1–11 now narrows onto one small people—Israel—the channel through which God would progressively accomplish His purposes of redemption.

This focus underscored Israel’s calling to be “a light to the Gentiles” (Isa. 42:6, NKJV).

God’s promise to Abraham contained three elements:

- a land,
- descendants (“seed”),
- and that through him would come a worldwide _____.

That threefold promise became the foundation of the covenant God made with Abraham (Gen. 15:1–20).

The remainder of Scripture records HOW those promises were fulfilled.

The Patriarchs in a Nutshell

Because we examined the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in considerable depth last week, this evening I will offer only a brief overview of their stories before we continue.

The Biblical patriarchs are the line of men God used to establish the nation of Israel.

_____ stands as the most widely recognized of those figures, since every Israelite can trace their descent from him.

God entered into a covenant with Abraham and declared that he would become “the father of a multitude of nations” (Gen. 17:4).

To mark that promise, God changed his name from Abram to Abraham, meaning “father of a multitude.”

Isaac was the cherished, long-promised son God gave Abraham.

And later, God Himself changed the name of Isaac’s son Jacob to “_____”—the very name the nation still bears.

Abraham

God approached Abraham (then called “Abram”) and pledged to form his offspring into a great nation within the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:1-5).

In obedience, Abram moved his entire household to _____, where they lived as sojourners and tent-dwellers.

However, even after God’s promise of descendants, Sarai remained unable to conceive.

In her distress and frustration she gave her maidservant Hagar to Abram as a secondary wife.

Hagar gave birth to Ishmael, the ancestor of the _____ peoples.

But Ishmael was NOT the child of the promise, and although Sarah's faith had faltered, she later gave birth to _____, just as God had promised (Gen. 17:15-21; 21:2).

Concerned for Isaac's rights of inheritance, Sarah forced Hagar and Ishmael out into the wilderness.

Following Sarah's death, Abraham took Keturah as his wife and fathered six more sons.

When he was old, he gave them all gifts and sent them away, thus preserving the bulk of the inheritance for Isaac; and the patriarchal line also continued through Isaac.

Isaac

Isaac is portrayed as a man of strong _____.

He is remembered especially for submitting to being offered as a sacrifice (Gen. 22) and later entrusting the choice of his bride, Rebekah, to his father's servant (Gen. 24).

Nevertheless, when Rebekah was pregnant with twins and learned that the older (Esau) would serve the younger (Jacob), Isaac pushed back and attempted to favor the _____.

But it was God's plan for Jacob to be next in the line of patriarchs, which is exactly what happened.

Jacob

When Rebekah learned she was carrying twins, the Lord told her that the older would serve the younger (Gen. 25:23).

Jacob emerged right after Esau, his tiny hand clutching his brother's _____.

In the course of time, Esau married women from outside the covenant family, bringing grief to Isaac and Rebekah (Gen. 26:34-35).

He became the forefather of the _____ (Gen. 36:9), a people who would repeatedly harass Israel throughout its history.

Even though Jacob almost certainly knew the prophecy spoken to his mother, he refused to wait for God to fulfill it in His own time.

Prompted by Rebekah, Jacob—whose name means “supplanter”—_____ his father Isaac into giving him the blessing that belonged to the firstborn (Gen. 27).

He then fled from Esau's anger and took refuge with Rebekah's brother Laban in Syria.

While working for his uncle Laban, Jacob fell in love with Laban's younger daughter, Rachel.

Laban agreed to the marriage on one condition—Jacob would work for seven years to earn her hand.

Jacob readily agreed to this condition; but at the end of the seven years, Laban _____ him by substituting his older daughter, Leah, on the wedding night.

Jacob then worked for another seven years for Laban to earn the hand of Rachel.

Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah and made no effort to conceal that fact.

This caused Leah deep sorrow, but the Lord comforted her by giving her four sons in rapid succession, while Rachel remained barren.

Envious of her sister's fruitfulness, Rachel urged Jacob to have children by her servant _____, and she counted those two sons as her own.

Leah responded by giving her servant Zilpah to Jacob too, and two more sons were born.

The competition between the sisters continued.

Leah bore two additional sons and Jacob's only daughter, while Rachel remained barren.

Finally the Lord showed compassion to Rachel and opened her womb.

She gave birth to Joseph and later to Benjamin.

Altogether Jacob fathered twelve sons and one daughter, _____, the youngest of Leah's children.

Jacob's Twelve Sons

Each of Jacob's sons became the founding father of a tribe of Israel.

On his deathbed Jacob pronounced blessings over each of his twelve sons (Gen. 49).

Joseph received a _____ portion: Jacob adopted Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, treating them as his own and thereby giving Joseph a twofold inheritance (Gen. 48:5) because of his faithfulness in saving the family through the famine (Gen. 47:11-12).

In a striking parallel to his own experience, Jacob deliberately gave the greater blessing to Joseph's _____ son Ephraim rather than to the firstborn Manasseh (Gen. 48:14-20).

The sons of Jacob who headed the tribes of Israel were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulon, Issachar, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Benjamin—and Joseph’s sons, Ephraim and Manasseh.

Thus Joseph was honored with TWO tribes instead of one.

Now, THAT was a quick overview of where we’ve been and an even quicker overview of where we’re going.

Jacob Settles in Shechem

(Gen. 33:18—34:31)

After more than twenty years of service to his father-in-law Laban, Jacob returned to his homeland of Canaan, and after making peace with his twin brother Esau, he settled at Shechem.

He stayed there for a number of years and even purchased a parcel of land on which to live—the first recorded _____ land purchase in Canaan by any descendant of Abraham (although Abraham had bought a field with a cave for a family burial spot—Gen. 23:1-20).

The Tragic Story of Dinah

Dinah was Jacob’s _____ daughter, born to his first wife Leah (Gen. 30:21).

By the time the family settled at Shechem she was a young woman.

Genesis 34 tells how she went into the city to visit the local women—a natural desire for a girl who had grown up with twelve brothers.

But that visit had tragic repercussions for Dinah.

When Shechem, the son of the city’s ruler, saw her, he seized her, and violated her.



Gen. 34:3

“he was deeply attracted to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the girl and spoke tenderly to her”

He then asked his father Hamor to arrange a _____.

However, when Dinah’s brothers learned what had been done to their sister, they were filled with rage.

Hamor, the ruler of Shechem, approached Jacob to arrange the marriage of Dinah to his son.

And Shechem himself offered to pay whatever bride-price was demanded.



Genesis 34:11-12

11 Shechem also said to her father and to her brothers, “If I find favor in your sight, then I will give whatever you say to me. 12 Ask me ever so much bridal payment and gift, and I will give according as you say to me; but give me the girl in marriage.”

Scripture does not record Jacob’s response, but instead follows the actions of his sons.

They deliberately _____ Hamor and Shechem while pretending to negotiate in good faith.

Jacob’s sons claimed that their family’s custom forbade them from giving their sister to an uncircumcised man, but that if Shechem and every male in the city would submit to _____, then intermarriage could proceed (Gen. 34:13–17).

Shechem was so smitten with Dinah that he and his father readily agreed.

The men of Shechem, seeing how large and prosperous Jacob’s household was, decided that intermarriage would bring them advantages.

So the men of the city consented to circumcision. But the whole proposal was a calculated _____ designed to leave the men of Shechem vulnerable.

What follows is the brutal act carried out by Dinah’s brothers Simeon and Levi.



Genesis 34:25-26

25 Now it came about on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of Jacob’s sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah’s brothers, each took his sword and came upon the city unawares, and killed every male. 26 They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem’s house, and went forth.

The brothers then plundered the city, taking livestock, goods, women, and children (Gen. 34:27–29).

Jacob was _____ when he learned what his sons had done. He understood that once the neighboring Canaanite peoples heard of the massacre, his family would be in grave danger (Gen. 34:30).

Jacob reproved Levi and Simeon for their brutality, but his sons retorted, “Should he treat our sister as a harlot?” (verse 31).

_____ is never mentioned again in Scripture; we can only hope a suitable marriage was later arranged for her.

But the very next chapter of Genesis records Jacob moving his family, at God's command (Gen. 35:1), to Bethel, the place where Jacob had once had his dream of a ladder to Heaven.

The Twelve Tribes of Israel

The twelve tribes of Israel descended directly from the twelve sons of Israel—the name God had given Jacob (Gen. 32:28).

Those sons were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin (Gen. 35:23-26; Ex. 1:1-4; 1 Chron. 2:1-2).

With the addition of Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, there were actually _____ tribes.

But when the land was later allotted, the tribe of Levi received no territorial inheritance of its own (Josh. 13:14).

The Levites served as priests and lived in designated _____ scattered throughout the other tribes.

The twelve tribes that actually received land were Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh.

Centuries later, after Solomon's death, the nation split in two.

The southern kingdom of Judah was formed primarily from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, while the remaining ten tribes constituted the northern kingdom of Israel; and most of the _____ moved to the southern kingdom where God was worshipped (2 Chron. 11:13-14).

In the years that followed, many northern Israelites migrated south to Judah to escape the apostasy in the northern kingdom (2 Chron. 11:16; 15:9).

Eventually, Assyria destroyed the northern kingdom, and most of its people were either killed or deported; those who remained likely merged with Judah, as many of the God-worshippers had done earlier.

It's interesting to note that in the New Testament, it was known that Jesus came from _____ (Mat. 1:2; Luke 3:33), John the Baptist from Levi, the prophetess Anna from Asher (Luke 2:36), and the Apostle Paul from Benjamin.

Since the Jewish dispersion in A.D. 70, when Rome destroyed Jerusalem and scattered the Jewish people, it has become extremely difficult to identify a modern Jew's _____ lineage.

Yet the tribal distinctions have not become meaningless.

Even though human records have failed, God maintains a perfect accounting and knows to which tribe every Jewish person belongs.

And Revelation 7:5-8 tells us that God will cause the specific tribes to appear again.

That passage details how, during the Tribulation, God will seal 144,000 Jewish witnesses—
_____ from each tribe.

However, this listing of the tribes differs from those which received land under Joshua.

In this list, Ephraim appears under Joseph's name, Manasseh appears under his own name, Levi is included, and _____ is excluded.

No explanation is offered for why God utilized this particular twelve of the thirteen possible tribes.

Now, as we examine the Patriarchs in Genesis 37-50, it is worthwhile to consider each of Jacob's twelve sons individually.

Reuben

Ongoing tension marked the relationship between Leah and Rachel in their marriage to Jacob.

_____ was the wife he loved; Leah was the one who bore him the most children.

Leah's marital life was marked by deep pain as she repeatedly sought her husband's affection.

Still, God honored her by giving her many sons, including Jacob's firstborn, Reuben.

Several meanings have been proposed for the name Reuben, but the most widely accepted is "Behold, a son."

When Leah bore Reuben, she explained her choice of a name:



Genesis 29:32

32 Leah conceived and bore a son and named him Reuben, for she said, "Because the Lord has seen my affliction; surely now my husband will love me."

Reuben began well and displayed moments of _____, and yet he also made seriously sinful choices that harmed the long-term trajectory of his tribe.

As an adult, Reuben ranked among the more honorable of Jacob's sons.

When the other brothers planned to kill Joseph, Reuben convinced them to put him in a pit instead, intending to _____ him later (Gen. 37:21-22).

While he was away with the flock, however, the others sold Joseph.

Years later, when the brothers faced hardship in Egypt, Reuben reminded them of the disaster they had brought on the family.



Genesis 42:22

22 Reuben answered them, saying, “Did I not tell you, ‘Do not sin against the boy’; and you would not listen? Now comes the reckoning for his blood.”

Reuben also showed profound _____ for his aging father, desiring to return Joseph safely to him (Gen. 37:22), and even offering his own two sons as a pledge for Benjamin’s safety (Gen. 42:37).

Although Reuben had good qualities and intentions, he lacked lasting strength of character.

His most serious failure was sleeping with his father’s concubine Bilhah, an act that cost him his _____.

This act, a moral offense later made punishable by death (Lev. 20:11), exposed the loss of Reuben’s earlier integrity.

Why would he do such a thing?

After Rachel’s death, Reuben may have felt anxious because Jacob favored her sons over Leah’s.

He may also have been concerned for his mother.

By sleeping with Bilhah, Reuben was likely challenging his father’s authority and reaching for power.

As Jacob’s oldest son, Reuben should have received the birthright of a _____ portion of the inheritance, but that privilege was withheld because of his grievous sin.

On his deathbed Jacob addressed his eldest son with these sad words:



Genesis 49:3-4

3 “Reuben, you are my firstborn; My might and the beginning of my strength, Preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power. 4 “Uncontrolled as water, you shall not have preeminence, Because you went up to your father’s bed; Then you defiled it—he went up to my couch.”

The tribe of Reuben descended from Reuben’s four sons—Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

When the Israelites began to enter the Promised Land, the tribe of Reuben, together with Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh, requested inheritance east of the Jordan River.

Initially starting out strong, this tribe was always mentioned first—in the place of honor—in lists of the twelve tribes of Israel.

However, because of Reuben's incest with Bilhah, the tribe forfeited its preeminence, exactly as Jacob had foretold.

It's interesting to note that _____ prominent judge, prophet, or ruler ever came from the tribe of Reuben.

Outside of the book of Revelation, the New Testament never mentions the tribe by name again.

Even so, God's grace remains visible, and the tribe of Reuben is listed among the 144,000 in Revelation 7.

Furthermore, in Revelation 21:12 we are told that the twelve _____ of the Heavenly City are named for the twelve tribes of Israel—probably referring to Jacob's twelve sons, though we won't know for sure until we get there.

Simeon

Simeon was Jacob's second-born son, born to Leah.

Simeon was a man of anger and violence.

We already saw, in the account of Dinah's violation, his _____ anger.

It would have been right to bring vengeance upon Shechem himself—but to slaughter an entire city of men who had done nothing to Dinah, leaving all their women and children as defenseless widows and orphans, was completely _____.

Jacob rebuked both Simeon and Levi for their bloodthirsty action.

Genesis 34:30



30 Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought trouble on me by making me odious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and my men being few in number, they will gather together against me and attack me and I will be destroyed, I and my household."

But neither Levi nor Simeon expressed any regret (verse 31).

Years later, as Jacob delivered his deathbed patriarchal blessing, he remembered this sin of Simeon and Levi, saying,

Genesis 49:5-7



5 "Simeon and Levi are brothers; Their swords are implements of violence. 6 "Let my soul not enter into their council; Let not my glory be united with their assembly; Because in their anger they slew men, And in their self-will they lamed oxen. 7 "Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel. I will disperse them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel."

Jacob's words were fulfilled centuries later.

After the conquest of the Promised Land, the tribe of Simeon was small and had to share territory with the larger, stronger tribe of Judah (Josh. 19:1-9).

The curse pronounced on Simeon reminds us that _____ belongs solely to God, and we are forbidden to take it into our own hands (Gen. 4:15; Rom. 12:19; 1 Pet. 3:9).

Scripture also reveals that Simeon harbored envy and hatred.

Together with his other brothers, he resented their father's special love for the much younger brother Joseph; and he was angered by Joseph's dreams, which the brothers interpreted as arrogance.

Consequently, Simeon and the others sold Joseph into slavery (Gen. 37).

Simeon then joined in deceiving their father into believing that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal.

Later, when Joseph served as prime minister of Egypt, he tested his brothers and held _____ in prison until the others returned from Canaan, bringing Benjamin with them (Gen. 42:18-24).

Despite Simeon's wrongdoing, God's love and grace are still evident.

Though justly rebuked and cursed by his father, Simeon was also honored by Jacob on two special occasions.

The first occurs when Jacob, still mourning the supposed death of Joseph, faces the possibility of losing Simeon as well and places him on the same level as his two _____ sons, Joseph and Benjamin:



Genesis 42:36

36 Their father Jacob said to them, "You have bereaved me of my children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and you would take Benjamin; all these things are against me."

We also see Jacob's grace when he elevates Joseph's sons to the same status as Reuben and Simeon, his first and second born.



Genesis 48:5b

5 "...Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are."

In this blessing of his grandchildren, Jacob—despite Simeon's earlier violence, murder, and deception—still acknowledges Simeon's rightful place within the family.

Simeon's tribe was formed by the families of his six sons—Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul.

In Revelation 7:7, the tribe of _____ appears right alongside the other tribes of Israel's 144,000 witnesses, sealed by God's protection during the Tribulation.

Levi

Levi was Jacob's third son by Leah; he became the head of the tribe of Levites (Gen. 29:34).

Levi received his name because Leah mourned the lack of her husband's love.

With the birth of her third son, she hoped her husband would at last become attached to her.

She therefore named him Levi, a name that sounds similar to the Hebrew word for "attached" (Gen. 29:34).

Yet Jacob continued to direct his _____ and attention toward Rachel.

Scripture supplies few details about Levi's personal life; however, in Genesis 34, Levi and his brother Simeon acted to defend their sister Dinah's honor, though the method they chose was entirely wrong.

Levi also participated in selling his brother Joseph to merchants who then sold him as a slave in Egypt.

In spite of Levi's sins, God chose his descendants to be the _____ of Israel.

This was a very great honor.

Levi fathered three sons: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari (Gen. 46:11).

Their descendants became the different branches of the Levites, with the priests coming from the house of _____.

When Jacob pronounced prophecies over Simeon and Levi, he said,

Genesis 49:7

7 "Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel. I will disperse them in Jacob,



This prophecy was fulfilled, yet not entirely as a curse in Levi's case.

Moses explained how the Levites would live scattered throughout the Promised Land.



Deuteronomy 10:8-9

8 At that time Yahweh set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, to stand before Yahweh to minister for Him and to bless in His name to this day. 9 Therefore, Levi does not have a portion or inheritance with his brothers; Yahweh is his inheritance, just as Yahweh your God spoke to him.

Rather than receiving their own territory, the Levites received the tithes of the other tribes' produce (Num. 18:21), and they were assigned cities and pasturelands within the lands of the other tribes (Num. 35:1-8).

In those cities they served as priests mediating between God and each tribe, and as _____ settling disputes (Deut. 21:5).

Thus the Levites were scattered throughout Israel, precisely as Jacob had predicted.

Notable descendants of Levi include Eli, Samuel, Ezra, Zacharias and Elizabeth, John the Baptist, and _____.

And in Revelation 7:7, Levi is listed as supplying 12,000 of the 144,000 witnesses.

Judah

Judah was the fourth son of Jacob by Leah, and his name means “praise” or “celebrated.”



Genesis 29:35

35 And she conceived again and bore a son and said, “This time I will praise Yahweh.” Therefore she named him Judah....

Judah was just as angered and hurt by Jacob's favoritism toward Joseph as were his brothers.

On the day when they threw Joseph into an empty cistern, while the brothers ate and Reuben was absent, a caravan approached.

Judah was the one who suggested _____ Joseph to the merchants as a slave, rather than having the murder of a sibling on their consciences (Gen. 37:25–27).

The brothers agreed, and Joseph was sold and taken to Egypt.

It is possible that Judah felt such guilt and remorse for what he had done that he couldn't face his old father on a daily basis, for Scripture tells us that he then left the family homestead.

*Genesis 38:1**1 And it came about at that time, Judah left his brothers and went down to stay with a man of Adullam named Hirah.*

There Judah married a Canaanite woman who bore him three sons: Er, Onan, and Shelah.

When Er reached adulthood, Judah gave him a wife named _____.

But Er was wicked, so the Lord put him to death
(Gen. 38:7).

According to the custom of the day, Tamar was then given to Onan, who selfishly refused to provide her with children.

And so, the Lord put him also to death (Gen. 38:9-10).

Shelah was still too young to marry, so Judah instructed Tamar to remain a _____ in her father's house until Shelah finished growing up (Gen. 38:11).

After several years, Judah's own wife died, and he mourned.

When he recovered he traveled to Timnah to supervise the shearing of his sheep.

Tamar, still a widow even though Shelah had grown up, learned that her father-in-law was coming, and devised a plan.

She took off her widow's garb, _____ her face, and posed as a prostitute along the road to Timnah (Gen. 38:14).

Shamefully, Judah slept with her.

And Tamar became pregnant, which had been her intention, since she had never been given to Shelah in marriage.

Three months later, when Judah learned that his supposedly chaste daughter-in-law was expecting a child, he was filled with rage. "Bring her out and let her be burned!" he demanded (Gen. 38:24b).

As she was being brought out for punishment as a harlot, Tamar produced Judah's _____ ring, cord, and staff which he had left with "the prostitute" as promise of later payment.

Now, those items served as evidence that her pregnancy had resulted from Judah's own immorality.

Judah recognized his hypocrisy and repented, saying,

*Genesis 38:26*

26 “She is more righteous than I, inasmuch as I did not give her to my son Shelah.”

Judah had no further relations with Tamar.

She gave birth to twin boys, Perez and Zerah (Gen. 38:29–30).

Interestingly, in the Biblical genealogies, _____ is listed as an ancestor of King David, Joseph and Mary, and Jesus Christ Himself (Mat. 1:3; Luke 3:33).

On his deathbed, Jacob prophesied the following about Judah:

*Genesis 49:8-12*

“Judah, your brothers shall praise you; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father’s sons shall bow down to you. 9 “Judah is a lion’s whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He couches, he lies down as a lion, And as a lion, who dares rouse him up? 10 “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. 11 “He ties his foal to the vine, And his donkey’s colt to the choice vine; He washes his garments in wine, And his robes in the blood of grapes. 12 “His eyes are dull from wine, And his teeth white from milk

Each part of Jacob’s prophecy discloses something about the future tribe of Judah.

In verse 8, Jacob prophesies that Judah’s brothers would praise him.

Judah’s name signifies praise and was given him by his mother, her heart being filled with praises to God for him (Gen. 29:35).

The _____ and power of the tribe is also foretold in verse 8.

Verse 9 employs the imagery of both a lion and the lion’s cub to portray the strength, courage, and vitality of the line of Judah which produced many _____, including David, Solomon, Hezekiah, and Josiah.

The statement in verse 10 that the scepter would not depart from Judah until “Shiloh” comes is a Messianic prophecy.

Commentators differ on the precise meaning of this somewhat obscure passage, yet all agree that the One Who receives “the obedience of the peoples” can be none other than _____.

The remaining verses, 11–12, point to the great abundance of riches that would belong to the tribe of Judah.

So prosperous and blessed would they be that they could tether a donkey to the choicest grapevine and allow it to eat freely—an indication of the wealth that would characterize Judah.

In Revelation 7:5, the tribe of Judah is the _____ one mentioned as contributing to the 144,000.

Dan

Dan was the fifth of the twelve sons born to the patriarch Jacob.

His mother was _____, Rachel's maidservant.

Dan's younger brother was Naphtali.

As full brothers, the two are often mentioned together in Scripture (Deut. 27:13; Ex. 1:4).

The account of Dan's birth appears in Genesis 30:1-8.

Rachel, still childless, envied her sister Leah, who had already borne four sons to Jacob.

Barrenness brought great shame to women in ancient cultures, so Rachel, growing increasingly impatient and jealous, presented her maidservant Bilhah to Jacob as a concubine.

When Bilhah bore Dan, Rachel regarded the child as her own.

She named him Dan, meaning "He _____," because she felt that God had judged Leah and vindicated her through the child's birth.

Years later, when Jacob left Laban and journeyed back to the land of his father, he heard that Esau was coming to meet him with 400 men accompanying him, and he assumed that Esau was coming to kill him.

After all, he'd vowed to do so all those years before, when Jacob had stolen Isaac's blessing from Esau.

Then Jacob did something that no father should ever do.

He arranged his children in order of _____, putting in the front, to be the first ones attacked by Esau (were he to attack them) the children he cared the least about—Dan, along with his brother Naphtali, and Gad and Asher (all the concubines' children)—and he put his beloved Joseph at the very back, with Leah's children in the middle.

Think what that did to the hearts of his sons!

They weren't stupid...they could figure out what that order meant.

AND SO, it's no wonder that as full grown men they were still so hurt and angry that they tried to get rid of Joseph.

Dan was one of those _____ valued sons.

And yet, when Jacob blessed him, Dan was promised the role of a judge.



Genesis 49-16-17

“Dan shall judge his people, As one of the tribes of Israel. 17 “Dan shall be a serpent in the way, A horned snake in the path, That bites the horse’s heels, So that his rider falls backward

Scripture does not tell us if Dan himself possessed these traits, but his tribe was small, yet fierce, like the viper in his father’s blessing.

Dan had only one son, Hushim, to continue his line (Gen. 46:23).

He is listed as Shuham (an alternate spelling of Hushim) in Num. 26:42 and identified as the ancestor of the clan of the Shuhamites.

Nothing further is revealed about Dan himself in the Bible, but some of Dan’s descendants appear during the wilderness wanderings.

An unnamed man whose father was Egyptian and whose mother belonged to the tribe of Dan blasphemed the name of the Lord and was stoned to death (Lev. 24:10-16).

But a more noble and notable descendant of Dan was Oholiab, a skilled _____ whom God appointed to work on the tabernacle (Ex. 31:6; 35:34; 38:23).

When Israel entered the Promised Land, the tribe of Dan was allotted a portion of Canaan between Judah and Ephraim along the Mediterranean coast (Josh. 19:40-48).

Except for the valley of Zorah and Eshtaol, however, Dan’s tribe failed to secure control of the territory, especially after the Philistines settled there.

In the book of Judges, _____, who came from the tribe of Dan, was called by God to fight the Philistines (Judges 13-16).

Eventually the tribe of Dan migrated northward, seized the city of Laish, renamed it Dan, and settled in the surrounding region (Judges 18).

After relocating to the north, sadly, the tribe became associated with idolatry (Jud. 18:30-31; 2 Kings 10:29).

In the list of the 144,000 Jewish witnesses, Dan is _____ named.

Presumably his name IS on one of the heavenly gates, but we'll have to wait and see.

Naphtali

Naphtali was Jacob's sixth-born son and the second of the two sons born to Rachel's maidservant _____.

Naphtali's older full brother was Dan.

Rachel was so delighted at the birth of another surrogate son that she named the child Naphtali, meaning "my wrestling."

She chose this name because she felt vindicated after struggling with her older sister Leah to provide Jacob with heirs.



Genesis 30:8

8 So Rachel said, "With mighty wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and I have indeed prevailed." And she named him Naphtali.

Why Rachel felt that two surrogate sons "_____ " over Leah's four biological sons remains a mystery.

Little more is written of Naphtali in the Bible; we know that he had four sons—Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem (Gen. 46:24)—and that he eventually moved his family with Jacob to Egypt to escape the famine.

Jacob's deathbed blessing upon Naphtali was,



Genesis 49:21

21 "Naphtali is a doe let loose, He gives beautiful words."

Scholars offer various interpretations of Jacob's blessing of Naphtali. Some suggest it points to _____ of character; others see an allusion to agility in battle or to hastiness.

When Israel entered the Promised Land, Moses pronounced a blessing on Naphtali's tribe:



Deuteronomy 33:23

23 Of Naphtali he said, "O Naphtali, satisfied with favor, And full of the blessing of the Lord, Take possession of the sea and the south."

As this blessing indicates, Naphtali settled in northern Canaan in the highlands west and northwest of the Sea of Galilee.

In the book of Judges, the tribe of Naphtali helps Barak and Deborah fight against the wicked Sisera (Jud. 5:18).

Many years later, when Solomon was building the temple, it was a man of Naphtali who did the massive, yet intricate _____ work that adorned the temple courtyard.



1 Kings 7:13-14

13 Now King Solomon sent and brought Hiram from Tyre. 14 He was a widow's son from the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in bronze; and he was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill for doing any work in bronze. So he came to King Solomon and performed all his work.

The prophet Isaiah recalled how the Lord had brought the land of Naphtali into contempt (the area around Galilee wasn't considered prime real estate;—see 1 Kings 9:10-13), yet would one day make it glorious (Isa. 9:1).



Isaiah 9:1

1 But there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.

Isaiah's prophecy found fulfillment when Jesus settled in _____, a city "in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali" (Mat. 4:13-15), and brought the Good News to the people living there.

Finally, in the book of Revelation, 12,000 members of the tribe of Naphtali are included among the sealed servants of God (Rev. 7:6).

Gad

Jacob's seventh-born son was named Gad.

After Rachel gave Jacob her maidservant, Bilhah, Leah decided to give Jacob her own maidservant, _____ (Gen. 30:9).

Thus Zilpah bore Jacob a son (Gen. 30:9-11).

When Gad was born, Leah chose his name, which means “good fortune” in Hebrew.



Genesis 30:10-11

10 Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. 11 Then Leah said, "How fortunate!" So she named him Gad.

Little is written about Jacob's son Gad, other than that he fathered seven sons—Zephon, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli (Gen. 46:16).

To the tribe of Gad, Jacob delivered a deathbed prophecy that contained an interesting play on words involving the name Gad.

He praised Gad, predicting that the tribe would produce brave troops that would drive off raiders and victoriously pursue Israel's enemies:



Genesis 49:19

19 "As for Gad, raiders shall raid him, But he will raid at their heels."

In Hebrew the pronunciation of Gad closely resembles the words translated “_____” and “raiders.”

At the close of Israel's forty-year wilderness wandering, as the people prepared to enter the Promised Land, Gad's tribe requested to settle east of the Jordan River, together with Reuben and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Those tribes possessed large _____, and the territory east of the Jordan was well suited for raising livestock.

Occupying a border position east of the Jordan made it especially important for Gad to fulfill Jacob's prophecy by remaining brave and strong; otherwise the three eastern tribes would be vulnerable to sudden enemy attacks.

Before Moses died he also blessed the tribes of Israel.

He compared Gad to a lion and celebrated the Lord's goodness in enlarging Gad's territory.



Deuteronomy 33:20

20 Of Gad he said, "Blessed is the one who enlarges Gad; He lies down as a lion, And tears the arm, also the crown of the head."

Also from the tribe of Gad came some of _____ fiercest warriors.

In 2 Samuel 23:36, we find that one of David's famous "mighty men" was a man named Bani, of the tribe of Gad.



1 Chronicles 12:8:

8 Some Gadites joined David at the stronghold in the wilderness, mighty men of valor, men trained for battle, who could handle shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as gazelles on the mountains....

And in 1 Chronicles 29:29, we read that three different prophets supported King David during his reign, and chronicled his reign for posterity.



1 Chronicles 29:29

29 Now the acts of King David, from first to last, are written in the chronicles of Samuel the seer, in the chronicles of Nathan the prophet and in the chronicles of Gad the seer....

We don't know for sure what tribe this prophet Gad came from, but since he carries that name, he was most likely also from the tribe of _____.

And Revelation 7:5 lists Gad in the third place as a contributor to the 144,000.

Asher

Asher was the eighth son of Jacob, and his name means "blessed" or "_____."

Asher's mother was Leah's servant, Zilpah.

According to the customs of the time regarding children born of servants, Asher would have been seen as Leah's son rather than Zilpah's.

Each of Jacob's sons, including Asher, would become the head of one of the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

Exactly as God had promised Asher's great-grandfather, Abraham, He was forming Abraham's descendants into a great nation (Gen. 12:2).

The Bible says little about Asher as an individual.

It does, however, record the jealousy and anger Asher and his brothers felt toward their brother Joseph because of Jacob's preferential treatment of him (Gen. 37:3-4).

Just before Jacob died, he blessed Asher as follows:

**Genesis 49:20**

20 “As for Asher, his food shall be rich, And he will yield royal dainties.”

In essence, Jacob was blessing Asher and his descendants with the promise that they would enjoy good _____ and material abundance.

Later, Moses also blessed Asher’s descendants with abundance:

**Deuteronomy 33:24-25 (NKJV)**

24 Of Asher he said, “Asher is most blessed of sons; Let him be favored by his brothers, And let him dip his foot in oil. 25 Your sandals shall be iron and bronze; As your days, so shall your strength be.”

Genesis 46:17 notes that Asher had four sons (Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah) and one daughter (Serah).

His tribe eventually grew into six clans and, after the exodus from Egypt, became quite large.

Asher’s tribe inherited land in Canaan along the coast, stretching from the city of Sidon in the north to Mount Carmel in the south.

True to the blessings Asher had received, the tribe possessed territory containing some of the richest _____ in all of Canaan.

Asher produced abundant grain, wine, oil, and minerals.

Asher’s tribe is mentioned frequently throughout the Bible.

Good King Hezekiah of Judah invited the people of the northern kingdom of Israel to join him in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover.

Most of the northerners scoffed at the invitation, but some came.

**2 Chronicles 30:11**

11 Nevertheless some from Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem.

One of Asher’s descendants, a prophetess named _____, was privileged to meet the Infant Jesus only days after His birth (Luke 2:36).

And Revelation 7:6 tells us that 12,000 witnesses were sealed from the tribe of Asher.

Issachar

Issachar was Jacob's ninth son, and his mother was _____.

In Hebrew, Issachar means either "man of reward" or "hired man."

His name is linked to the unusual circumstances of his birth.

After she bore her fourth son, Judah, Leah ceased having children for a while and was thought to be barren (Gen. 29:35; 30:9).

One day her oldest son, Reuben, discovered _____ in the field.

In the folk medicine of that era, those flowering plants were believed to enhance a woman's fertility.

Reuben gathered the mandrakes and brought them to his mother.

Leah and her younger sister Rachel argued over them, but finally reached an agreement.

Leah would give Rachel some of the mandrakes as payment for allowing Leah to sleep with their husband Jacob.

That night Leah conceived and later bore Jacob her fifth (and his ninth) son, Issachar (Gen. 30:14-18).

As a Biblical figure, Issachar plays almost no active role in the family narrative.

We know he fathered four sons—Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron (Gen. 46:13).

Like his brothers, Issachar received a unique blessing from his father before Jacob's death:



Genesis 49:14-15

14 "Issachar is a strong donkey, lying down between the sheepfolds. 15 "When he saw that a resting place was good And that the land was pleasant, He bowed his shoulder to bear burdens, And became a slave at forced labor."

The blessing appears more like a _____, possibly indicating that the tribe of Issachar was compelled to labor for a Canaanite king at some point.

The territory of the tribe of Issachar, described in Joshua 19:17-23, incorporated the fertile eastern section of the valley of the Jezreel River, a western tributary of the Jordan, with Mount Tabor to the north and the Jordan River to the east.

Issachar shared a border and close connection with the tribe of Zebulun.

This link is evident in the common blessing given by Moses before his death:



Deuteronomy 33:18-19

18 Of Zebulun he said, “Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going forth, And, Issachar, in your tents. 19 “They will call peoples to the mountain; There they will offer righteous sacrifices; For they will draw out the abundance of the seas, And the hidden treasures of the sand.”

Issachar was a _____ tribe.

Its battle-ready men numbered 54,400 in the first census Moses took (Num. 1:29).

By the second census 40 years later, the number had risen to 64,300 (Num. 26:25).

During the reign of King David, Issachar’s mighty men numbered 87,000 (1 Chron. 7:5)

In the period of the judges, the tribe of Issachar joined Deborah and Barak in defeating Jabin, king of Hazor (Judges 5:15).

From Issachar’s tribe came a godly _____, Tola (Judges 10:1-2), as well as two ungodly kings of Israel, Baasha and his son Elah (1 Kings 15:27–16:14).

One intriguing passage about David’s supporters says this about some very _____ descendants of Issachar.



1 Chronicles 12:32

32 of the sons of Issachar who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, their chiefs were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their command....

As one of the northern tribes in the divided kingdom, Issachar was eventually carried into captivity when the northern kingdom fell.

Zebulun

Zebulun was _____ sixth son and Jacob’s tenth. His birth occurred amid the continuing rivalry between sisters Rachel and Leah for their husband’s attention.



Genesis 30:20

20 Then Leah said, “God has endowed me with a good gift; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons.” So she named him Zebulun.

Leah employs a play on words here: “God has endowed (zabad) me with a good gift (zebed), and now my husband will dwell (zabal) with me.”

The name Zebulun means “dwell” (also translated “honor”) and sounds much like the Hebrew words for “gift” and “endowed.”

The Scriptures provide few details concerning Zebulun’s personal life.

But in Jacob’s deathbed blessing, to Zebulun he said,



Genesis 49:13

13 “Zebulun will dwell at the seashore; And he shall be a haven for ships, And his flank shall be toward Sidon.”

Zebulun had three sons—Sered, Elon, and Jahleel (Gen. 46:14).

Centuries later, the tribe of Zebulun received an allotment within the Promised Land.

Their eastern border was the _____, and their western border eventually extended to the Mediterranean (Josh. 19:10-16).

Hence, Zebulun was included in Isaiah’s blessing on the land where Christ would one day dwell (Isa. 9:1; Matt. 4:13-15).

Before he died, Moses also blessed the tribe of Zebulun, saying,



Deuteronomy 33:18

18 Of Zebulun he said, “Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going forth, And, Issachar, in your tents.”

Once settled in their territory, the tribe of Zebulun became traders and _____ and prospered greatly from seaborne commerce.

In the book of Judges, the tribe of Zebulun joins with Naphtali in helping Barak and Deborah fight against the wicked King Jabin and his army commander, Sisera.

After the battle, Barak and Deborah sang a song of praise to God for the victory, and one line of the song reads:



Judges 5:18

18 Zebulun is a people who jeopardized their lives to the point of death, Naphtali also, on the heights of the battlefield.

A judge named _____ later came from the tribe of Zebulun (Judges 12:11-12).

David's army included men of Zebulun.



1 Chronicles 12:33

33 of Zebulun there were fifty thousand who went out to battle, expert in war with all weapons of war, stouthearted men who could keep ranks;

Also, in the book of Revelation, Zebulun is listed among the 144,000 (7:8).

Joseph comes next in the lineup, but we will set him aside for the moment, because I want to conclude our evening with him.

Benjamin

Benjamin was the twelfth-born and _____ son in Jacob's family.

He was born to Jacob's beloved wife Rachel, making Benjamin the full brother of Joseph.

When Rachel gave birth to Joseph, she rejoiced that her "reproach" as a childless woman was taken away, and she immediately _____ of God another son.



Genesis 30:22-24

22 Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb. 23 And she conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away my reproach." 24 So she called his name Joseph, and said, "The Lord shall add to me another son."

That second son was Benjamin.

But he would cost his demanding mother her life. Rachel had great difficulty in giving birth to Benjamin.

Her midwife told her that she was having another son—whether that was wishful thinking, or whether the baby had already been born isn't quite clear in the wording.

But as Rachel lay dying, and probably holding her baby close, she named her little son Ben-Oni, which means "Son of My _____."

That would have been an awful name to live with, and after Rachel died, Jacob renamed his newborn son Benjamin, meaning "Son of My _____" (Gen. 35:18), which indicated that he would keep little Benjamin close to him throughout his childhood.

In Genesis 49, when Jacob was on his deathbed, Benjamin, as his youngest son, receives his father's blessing last.



Genesis 49:27

27 "Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; In the morning he devours the prey, And in the evening he divides the spoil."

The warlike nature of the small tribe of Benjamin showed in its _____ and slingers who specialized in ambidexterity.



Judges 20:16

16 Out of all these people 700 choice men were left-handed; each one could sling a stone at a hair and not miss.



1 Chronicles 12:2

2 They were equipped with bows, using both the right hand and the left to sling stones and to shoot arrows from the bow; they were Saul's kinsmen from Benjamin.

Scripture shows that at least four great people came from Benjamin's tribe, even though it was the smallest of the twelve tribes (1 Sam. 9:21).

First, Ehud, a great _____ warrior who delivered Israel from Moab (Judges 3:12-30).

Next, a Benjamite named Saul became the first king of Israel (1 Sam. 9:15-16).

Later in Jewish history, many Jews lived in Persia, and God used Mordecai and _____, both from the tribe of Benjamin, to deliver the Jews from death (Est. 2:5-7).

And finally, in the New Testament, the Apostle Paul affirms he, too, came from Benjamin (Rom. 11:1).

Yet Benjamin's tribe had its dark side.

Their warlike nature came out not only in defense of their country, but also in depravity within their country.

In Judges 19-21, Benjamin took up an offense against the other eleven tribes of Israel, and _____ ensued.

This period had the reputation of "everyone doing what was right in his own eyes" (Jud. 21:25).

What led to the civil war was the horrific abuse and death of an unnamed Levite's concubine, while in Benjamin's territory (Jud. 19:10-28).

The eleven tribes turned against the tribe of Benjamin and nearly annihilated them because of their refusal to give up the perpetrators (Jud. 20:1—21:25).

Eventually, the tribes restored Benjamin's tribe, greatly diminished due to the war, and the country reunited.

In Revelation 7:8, Benjamin is the _____ tribe listed as contributing to the 144,000 witnesses.

Joseph

Joseph was the eleventh son of Jacob, BUT his first son through his favored wife, Rachel.

After the announcement of his birth, we next see Joseph as a _____-year-old returning from shepherding the flock with his half-brothers, and giving Jacob a bad report of them.

Scripture minces no words in telling us that Jacob loved his son Joseph best of all his children.



Genesis 37:3

3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a varicolored tunic.

Joseph's brothers knew their father loved Joseph more than all the rest of them, and that knowledge caused them to hate their younger brother (Gen. 37:4).

To make matters worse, Joseph began relating his dreams to the family—prophetic visions showing Joseph one day _____ over his family (Gen. 37:5-11).

The animosity toward Joseph peaked when his brothers plotted to kill him in the wilderness.

Reuben, the eldest, objected to outright _____ and suggested they throw Joseph into a cistern, for he planned to come back and rescue the boy later.

But in Reuben's absence, and in the providence of God, some merchants passed by, and Judah suggested selling Joseph into slavery; the brothers accomplished the task before Reuben could rescue him.

The brothers then took Joseph's unique robe of many colors and, after dipping it in goat's blood, deceived their father into thinking that his favorite son had been slain by wild beasts (Gen. 37:31-35).

Meanwhile, Joseph was sold by the merchants to a high-ranking Egyptian named _____.

In spite of his youth, and in spite of having to first learn the Egyptian language, in Genesis 39 we read that Joseph excelled at his duties, became one of Potiphar's most trusted servants, and was put in charge of his entire household.

Potiphar could see that whatever Joseph did, God looked favorably on him, and he prospered in all that he did.

Unfortunately, Potiphar's wife also noticed the handsome young steward, and she repeatedly attempted to seduce Joseph.

Joseph consistently refused her advances, showing honor for the master who had entrusted him with so much AND saying that it would be a "great evil and sin against _____" for him to sleep with Potiphar's wife (Gen. 39:9).

One day Potiphar's wife caught Joseph by the cloak and again made sexual advances.

Joseph fled, leaving his cloak in her hand.

Then, no doubt embarrassed and in bitter anger, she falsely accused Joseph of attempted rape, and Potiphar put him in prison (Gen. 39:7-20).

In jail, Joseph was again blessed by God, and the jailer put Joseph in _____ of all the other prisoners (Gen. 39:21-23).

One day, Joseph interpreted the dreams of two of his fellow prisoners.

Both interpretations proved to be true, and one of the men was later released from jail and restored to his position as the king's cupbearer (Gen. 40:1-23).

Joseph asked him to speak to the king on his behalf; but once he got out, the cupbearer _____ about Joseph and failed to speak to Pharaoh about him.

Two years later, the king himself had some troubling dreams, and the cupbearer finally remembered Joseph's gift of interpretation.

The king summoned Joseph and related his dreams.

Based on Pharaoh's dreams, Joseph predicted seven years of bountiful harvests followed by seven years of severe famine in Egypt, and advised the king to begin storing grain in preparation for the coming famine (Gen. 41:1-37).

Because of his wisdom in interpreting the dreams and suggesting the system of food storage, Joseph was made a ruler in Egypt, second only to the king.

The day that began in prison ended in the _____.

Joseph was in charge of storing up food during the years of plenty and selling it to Egyptians and foreigners during the years of famine (Gen. 41:38-57).

During those seven years of plenty, Joseph _____ and had two sons—Manasseh and Ephraim (Gen. 41:50-52).

When the famine struck, even Canaan was affected.

Jacob sent ten of his sons to Egypt to buy grain (Gen. 42:1-3).

He kept Benjamin, his youngest and the only other son of Rachel, home with him (Gen. 42:4).

While in Egypt, the men met their long-lost brother Joseph, whom they did not recognize.

The last time they had seen him, he had been a terrified 17-year-old, crying and begging them not to sell him to the slave traders (Gen. 42:21).

Now, 22 years later, he was a full grown man around _____ years old, dressed like an Egyptian, speaking fluent Egyptian, and ruling the land of Egypt.

No wonder they didn't recognize him!

Joseph, on the other hand, _____ recognize his brothers—they had aged, but they were still perfectly recognizable.

He wanted to know if they were still the same old hateful brothers, or if they had changed in their attitudes.

So he tested them by accusing them of being spies.

He confined them in prison for three days, then released all but Simeon, sending with them grain for their households and requiring them to come back with their youngest brother, Benjamin (Gen. 42:6-20).

Still unaware of Joseph's identity, the brothers were afflicted with guilt for having sold their brother years before, and they told each other in Hebrew that they were being _____ for that long-ago act (Gen. 42:21-22).

Joseph overheard their discussion and turned aside to weep (Gen. 42:23-24).

He retained _____ in prison and sent the others on their way, secretly returning their money to their grain sacks (Gen. 42:25).

When the brothers later realized the money had been returned, they feared even more (Gen. 42:26-28, 35).

Once home, they told their father all that had transpired.

Jacob mourned again the old loss of Joseph and now, the added loss of Simeon.

He refused to send Benjamin, despite Reuben's promise that, if he did not return with Benjamin, Jacob could kill Reuben's two sons (Gen. 42:37)—as though that would comfort their grandfather's heart!

However, the famine became so severe that eventually Jacob acquiesced.

_____ persuaded Jacob to send Benjamin with him, giving his own life as a pledge (Gen. 43:8-9).

Jacob agreed, sending also gifts for Joseph and double the money for the grain (Gen. 43:11-14).

When Joseph saw his brothers back, he instructed his servants to slaughter an animal and prepare a meal for the Hebrews to dine with him (Gen. 43:15-17).

At the invitation to Joseph's house, the brothers were terrified and made apologies to Joseph's steward for the money that had been replaced in their grain sacks.

Joseph's steward reassured them and brought Simeon out.

When Joseph returned home for lunch, the brothers bowed to him, fulfilling his earlier prophecy (Gen. 43:26).

He asked about their family's welfare, specifically their father (and _____!).

And when he saw and was introduced to his younger brother Benjamin, Joseph was again overwhelmed with pent-up emotions, and slipped away to his own chamber for a moment to weep in private.

When the men sat down for the meal they were amazed to be arranged by _____ order (Gen. 43:33); but they still didn't figure out who Joseph was.

And Benjamin, the youngest, was given five times the portion the other brothers received (Gen. 43:34).

Joseph must have watched carefully for signs of _____ or anger on the part of the brothers, but he saw nothing but kindness and care for young Benjamin.

Before sending them back to their father, Joseph again tested his brothers by returning their money to their grain sacks and placing his silver cup in Benjamin's sack. He let the brothers start on their journey and then sent his steward after them, pretending to be furious, and threatening to enslave Benjamin.

The old brothers would have said, "Fine! Keep the little brat," and headed back home.

But those men had _____, and they all packed up and headed back to plead with Joseph for their little brother.

Judah took the lead, and pleaded that, if anything were to happen to Benjamin, their elderly father Jacob would certainly die of sorrow.

Judah told of Jacob's grief over the loss of Joseph and his belief that he could not bear to lose Joseph's younger brother, Benjamin.

Judah also spoke of his pledge to his father, and he offered himself as Joseph's _____ instead of Benjamin (Gen. 44:33).

Upon seeing this proof of his brothers' change of heart, Joseph sent all his servants away and wept openly and loudly enough to be heard by Pharaoh's household.

He then _____ speaking Egyptian, stopped pretending he didn't understand his brothers, and revealed his true identity to them in his own mother tongue (Gen. 45:1-3, 12).

Joseph immediately reassured his brothers, telling them not to be angry with themselves for what they'd done to him, and saying that it was God Who had sent him to Egypt in order to preserve their lives (Gen. 45:4-8).

Joseph sent his brothers back to home to retrieve the remainder of Jacob's household to come live in _____, where they would be near to Joseph and he could provide for them (Gen. 45:9-47:12).

Jacob did come to live in Egypt with all of his family.

And before he died, Jacob blessed Joseph's two sons and gave thanks to God for His goodness:



Genesis 48:11

11 Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face, and behold, God has let me see your children as well."

Jacob gave the greater blessing to the _____ of the two sons (Gen. 48:12–20).

Later in the history of Israel, Ephraim and Manasseh, the tribes of Joseph, were often considered two distinct tribes.

Jacob's descendants lived in Egypt for 400 years, until the time of Moses.

When Moses led the Hebrews out of Egypt, he took the remains of Joseph with him, as Joseph had requested (Gen. 50:24-26; cf. Ex. 13:19).

In asking that he be buried in _____, Joseph showed great faith that God would bring His people back to the Promised Land (Heb. 11:22).

Application

The life of Joseph (Genesis 37–50) provides a blueprint for handling betrayal, navigating unfair suffering, and managing sudden success.

The first lesson we can learn from the story of Joseph is the fact that Integrity requires absolute _____.

Joseph proved that true character is defined by what you do when no one is watching.

As overseer of Potiphar's house, Joseph was young, successful, and repeatedly pursued by Potiphar's wife.

And yet, he never _____ his integrity.

He recognized that giving in to temptation was not just a betrayal of his master, but a "great wickedness and sin against God" (Gen. 39:9).

Friend, true integrity is non-negotiable.

It requires standing firm, even when doing the right thing results in immediate personal loss, as it did when Joseph was unjustly thrown into prison.

The second lesson we can learn from the story of Joseph is the fact that Forgiveness is a practical _____, NOT an emotion.

Joseph's reconciliation with his brothers shows how we need to view forgiveness and emotional healing.

Decades after his brothers threw him in a pit and sold him into slavery, Joseph held total power over their survival during a severe famine.

And instead of using his absolute authority to seek revenge, he openly wept, lovingly provided for their families, and spoke kindly to them to ease their fear and guilt.

Beloved, forgiveness does not minimize past pain or clear others of accountability.

Instead, it releases the offender from your debt so that bitterness does not consume your own future.

The third lesson we can learn from the story of Joseph is the fact that God overrules human _____.

Joseph's ultimate perspective on his suffering is summarized in his famous words to his brothers:

*Genesis 50:20*

20 “As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.”

God did not cause the cruelty of Joseph’s brothers, the false accusations of Potiphar’s wife, or the forgetfulness of the chief cupbearer.

Instead, God seamlessly wove those painful events into a grander plan.

Every detour—the pit, the slave market, and the dungeon—was a necessary stepping stone that positioned Joseph perfectly to save the known world from certain starvation.

Thus, like Joseph, we need to constantly keep in mind that temporary human actions will work together to fulfill God’s permanent ultimate purpose.

Severe hardships are often preparation for future positioning.

The fourth and final lesson we can learn from the story of Joseph is the fact that Excellence is your best _____.

Joseph never allowed a bad environment to reduce the quality of his work or dictate his attitude.

Think about it...

In Potiphar’s house, he was promoted to manager.

In prison, the warden put him in charge of all inmates.

In Pharaoh’s palace, he became prime minister.

No matter where he was, Joseph didn’t wait for a promotion to start working hard.

Instead, he faithfully served pagans, prisoners, and Pharaoh with the exact same standard of excellence, earning trust wherever he went.

Friend, your current situation may be undesirable or even unfair, but your work ethic should remain excellent.

Cultivating skills and a serving heart in a low season prepares you to manage high levels of responsibility later on.

It’s been said that the book of Genesis begins in the Garden of Eden and ends in a _____ in Egypt.

But God has been at work all throughout the book...and God was at work still, even when Joseph lay dead and mummified, waiting to be added to the family tomb back in Canaan.

God faithfully cared for His people through 400 years in Egypt—many of them spent in slavery.

The coffin in Egypt was NOT the end of the story.

In fact, according to the writer of Hebrews, it was a symbol of _____.



Hebrews 11:22

22 By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.

Joseph didn't let his family build him a pyramid or bury him beside Pharaoh—he made them promise to carry him to the Promised Land, because he believed God would keep His Word and bring His people there.

God had been faithful to him throughout all his troubles, and he knew God would remain faithful still.

So the book of Genesis doesn't end with despair or sorrow, but with a confident trust in the living God Who _____ keeps His promises!