

Sermon Notes 9/19/21

“The Children of Israel”

How should we respond to Genesis chapter 49?

1. _____ of immorality and violence.
Genesis 49:3-4
1 Corinthians 6:18-20
Genesis 49:5-7
James 1:19-20
2. _____ Jesus as our Eternal King.
Genesis 49:10
Revelation 19:11-16
3. _____ in Christ to be fruitful.
Genesis 49:22
John 15:4-5
4. _____ God is the source of our blessings.
Genesis 49:24-25
James 1:17-18



“The scepter shall not depart from Judah...
and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.”
(Gen. 49:10)

Jesus is the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Rev. 5:5).

Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 49: September 19-26

Genesis 49

In this lesson, we come to the end of Jacob's life. His children gather around him to hear his final words. Just as previous patriarchs predicted blessings and curses for their children, Jacob would also prophesy on behalf of his children. In these predictions, we see both good news and bad news. Some sins create ongoing consequences that rob future generations of their potential. Jacob was warning his descendants about the direction they were going and the need for them to learn from the mistakes of previous generations. In Jacob's prophecy, we also see our hope of redemption. Jesus is the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev. 5:5). Through Jesus we can have victory over our past.

Read Genesis 49:1-33

1. Why did Jacob gather his sons together before he died? (49:1-2)
2. What did Jacob say about Reuben? (49:3-4)
3. How did Reuben's immorality effect his descendants? (49:4)
4. What did Jacob say about his sons Simeon and Levi? (49:5-7)

Paul Kisling observes,

If Jacob's words are not prophecies but words to ponder and obey, the conditional element in Jacob's statements about each of his sons is seen more clearly. In a sense Jacob is saying, "If nothing changes, this is what I foresee for the future of your descendants." In the case of Simeon nothing much changed, and they ended up being scattered in Israel as Jacob anticipated. In the case of Levi, however, they ended up being scattered for a very different reason. The Levites, from whom the priests were drawn received no tribal allotment. Instead, they were scattered throughout the other tribes in 48 Levitical cities. They were the religious leaders of all the other tribes and had the privileged status of serving as priests.¹

¹ Paul Kisling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 2* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2009), 587.

5. How did the violent actions of Simeon and Levi effect their descendants? (49:4)

At the end of his life, like Jacob, Moses gives blessings and predictions for all the tribes of Israel (Deut. 33). However, Simeon is left out. From Joshua 19:9, it seems that Simeon had dwindled in size and significance until they were absorbed into the tribe of Judah.

6. What did Jacob say concerning Judah? (49:8-12)

7. What kind of animal did Jacob choose to represent Judah in verse 9?

8. How did Jacob describe the leadership of Judah in verse 10?

James Smith writes,

Judah would continue to bear the scepter, i.e., exercise leadership over the other tribes, until Shiloh came. While several interpretations of this term have been proposed, those commentators who see in this Shiloh (“rest bringer”) a reference to the Messiah are probably correct. The prophecy does not directly assert, but does strongly suggest, that Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah. The obedience of nations would be rendered to this Shiloh.²

9. What did Jacob say about Zebulun in verse 13?

10. What did Jacob say about Issachar? (49:14-15)

11. What did Jacob say concerning Dan? (49:16-18)

Notice that while Judah was described as a lion, Dan is described as a snake. In Revelation 7:4-8, when the 144,000 are sealed from the tribes of Israel, the tribe of Dan is left out.

12. What did Jacob say about Gad in verse 19?

13. What did Jacob say about Asher in verse 20?

² James Smith, *The Pentateuch* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1996), 225.

14. What did Jacob say about Naphtali in verse 21?
15. What did Jacob say about Joseph? (49:22-26)
16. What was the secret of Joseph's success? (49:24-25)

Jacob makes it clear that Joseph was blessed because he continued to trust in God through good times and bad times. The implication and prediction for Joseph's descendants (and God's people today) is that they would also be blessed as long as they continued to trust in God. Kent Hughes notes,

So, we see that Jacob invoked a waterfall of divine names over his son: "Mighty One of Jacob"—"Shepherd"—"Stone"—"God of your father"—"El Shaddai." Thus, we cannot miss the point: It was God in the full significance of these names and metaphoric appellations who had delivered Joseph and sustained him—and who would effect further blessing in his life. And for us his children, God has "blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1:3, 4a). The promise of his care for us is equally astonishing. Our awesome God will affect our care and blessing!³

17. What did Jacob say about Benjamin in verse 27?
18. What kind of blessing did Jacob give to each of his sons? (49:28)
19. What instructions did Jacob give concerning his burial? (49:29-32)
20. What happened after Jacob blessed his sons? (49:33)
21. What does this chapter teach us about the consequences of our sins?
22. What does it mean to trust God as our Shepherd?
23. What does it mean to trust God as our Rock?
24. What can you do to develop your natural abilities and potential for God's purposes?

³ R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 560.