

Sermon Notes 9/12/21

## “Believing in God’s Blessing”

### How should we respond to Genesis chapter 48?

1. Be a \_\_\_\_\_ for God’s blessing.  
Genesis 48:3  
Acts 1:8  
Hebrews 11:21
2. \_\_\_\_\_ for God’s unexpected blessing.  
Genesis 48:11  
Ephesians 3:20-21
3. Continue to \_\_\_\_\_ in God’s blessing.  
Genesis 48:15-16  
Ephesians 1:3-8
4. \_\_\_\_\_ children into God’s blessing.  
Genesis 48:20  
Matthew 18:5-6  
Matthew 19:13-14



“Jacob Blessing Ephraim and Manasseh” by Benjamin West 1766

# Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 48: September 12-19

Genesis 48

In Genesis 48 there is a strange ceremony that takes place between Jacob and his two grandsons Ephraim and Manasseh. In this passage we can see how valuable children are in the eyes of God and the importance of our responsibility as parents and grandparents. At this point in the story Jacob is very old and he is coming to the end of his life. He has lived a long and difficult life. But he has maintained his faith in God. He believes in the blessings of God, and he wants to pass those blessings on to the next generation.

## Read Genesis 48:1-22

1. What did Joseph do when he heard that his father was ill in verse 1?

Kent Hughes observes,

Joseph came to his dying father with his two half-Egyptian sons in expectation of obtaining the patriarch's blessing. Tellingly, Joseph's humble presence was itself an act of submissive faith because he had come to personally identify his boys with God's people. Such identification with the shepherd clan (so abominated by the Egyptians) would ultimately shut them off to Egyptian prominence. Joseph's presence with his sons was a by-faith exercise in downward mobility.<sup>1</sup>

2. What did Jacob do when he heard that Joseph had come to him in verse 2?

3. What event was Jacob referring to in verse 3?

God revealed Himself to Jacob at Luz (Bethel) on two different occasions (28:12-14 and 35:11-15). It was the second time that God specifically identified Himself as “God Almighty” *El Shaddai*.

4. What promises from God did Jacob tell Joseph about in verse 4?

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<sup>1</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 542.

5. What did Jacob promise concerning Ephraim and Manasseh in verse 5? What would be the practical results of that promise? (1 Chron. 5:1-2)
6. What did Jacob say about any children Joseph might have after Ephraim and Manasseh? (48:6)
7. What sad event did Jacob tell Joseph about in verse 7?
8. Why didn't Jacob recognize Joseph's sons in verse 8? (48:8-10)
9. Why did Jacob want Joseph to bring his sons to him in verse 9?
10. What did Jacob do when Ephraim and Manasseh came close to him in verse 10?
11. What unexpected blessing did God give to Jacob in verse 11?

Many times, the grace of God takes us by surprise. If we are actively looking, we will see the unexpected blessings of God every day. Paul Kissling notes,

The word order and the vocabulary shows the abiding astonishment that Jacob had experienced at God's grace to him, the one who had struggled with God throughout his life. He had never prayed to see Joseph's face again because he had no expectation that the prayer could ever be answered! The sore that had never healed from his grief over losing Rachel and Joseph, the ones he truly loved, was now marvelously irrelevant.<sup>2</sup>

12. What did Joseph do in verse 12? Why?
13. What did Joseph do in verse 13? Why?
14. What did Jacob do with his hands when he was about to bless Ephraim and Manasseh in verse 14?
15. How did Jacob describe God in verse 15?
16. What blessing did Jacob pronounce on Joseph's sons in verse 16?

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<sup>2</sup> Paul Kissling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 2* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2009), 578.

Kissling writes,

To ask for the God who walks in intimate fellowship with sinful human beings, who protects and guides like a shepherd protects and guides his sheep, and redeems from every form of evil, to bless Ephraim and Manasseh is a great blessing indeed.<sup>3</sup>

17. How and why did Joseph try to correct Jacob? (48:17-18)

Hughes comments,

...we clearly understand at the end of Jacob's life and the book of Genesis that God's grace must never become captive to position or privilege or heredity or expectation or tradition or convention or disposition. God's grace is sovereign. It cannot be tamed. The economy of grace operates on its own principles—humbling human wisdom and exalting the unlikely, so that the last are often the first, and the first last.<sup>4</sup>

18. What did Jacob predict concerning the younger son of Joseph? (48:19)

19. What did Jacob predict concerning the way the Israelites would bless their children? (48:20)

This blessing is still being pronounced upon Jewish boys by their parents every Friday evening at the Sabbath meal.

20. What did Jacob predict for Joseph in verse 21?

21. What did Jacob give to Joseph in verse 22? (compare NIV to NASB)

22. Why did Jacob care where he was buried, and why does it matter?

23. What sort of things become important to a person who knows he or she is going to die soon?

24. How has God been like a shepherd to you?

25. How will you seek God's guidance through the transitions in of life?

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<sup>3</sup> Kissling, 580.

<sup>4</sup> Hughes, *Genesis*, 545.