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## Jacob's Last Words Genesis 48-50 Pastor Kirk Gambrell

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### Using This Study

#### ❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

#### ❷ EXPLORE His Word

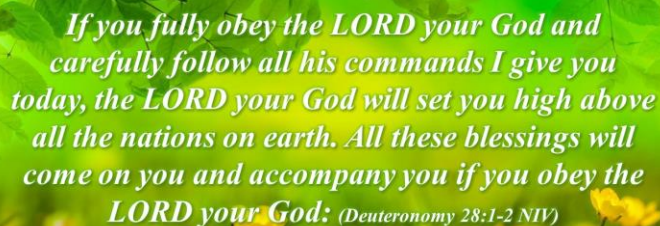
What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

#### ❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.



In this last section of Genesis we see Jacob's last words and the blessing that he passed on to his children and grandchildren. In doing this Jacob remembers the blessings that God has promised him, the land that has been given to Abraham and Isaac and passed on to him. He remembers God's promise to make his family into a great nation and to bless those that bless him. He remembers that God is going to use his family to be a blessing to the world. Jacob also reminds his family that God will be with them in the future and that there will be future blessings to enjoy. Jacob had been blessed and he reminds his family of all of it, past, present, and future. Join us this week as we look to remember the blessings that God has given us and the promises that He has given of blessings to come.



*If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. All these blessings will come on you and accompany you if you obey the LORD your God: (Deuteronomy 28:1-2 NIV)*

## Israel's Last Days

**48** Now it came about after these things that Joseph was told, "Behold, your father is sick." So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim with him. <sup>2</sup> When it was told to Jacob, "Behold, your son Joseph has come to you," Israel collected his strength and sat up in the bed. <sup>3</sup> Then Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, <sup>4</sup> and He said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and numerous, and I will make you a company of peoples, and will give this land to your descendants after you for an everlasting possession.' <sup>5</sup> Now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are. <sup>6</sup> But your offspring that have been born after them shall be yours; they shall be called by the names of their brothers in their inheritance. <sup>7</sup> Now as for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel died, to my sorrow, in the land of Canaan on the journey, when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem)."

<sup>8</sup> When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Who are these?" <sup>9</sup> Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." So he said, "Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them." <sup>10</sup> Now the eyes of Israel were *so* dim from age *that* he could not see. Then Joseph brought them close to him, and he kissed them and embraced them. <sup>11</sup> Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face, and behold, God has let me see your children as well." <sup>12</sup> Then Joseph took them from his knees, and bowed with his face to the ground. <sup>13</sup> Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his

right hand toward Israel's left, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right, and brought them close to him. <sup>14</sup> But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the firstborn. <sup>15</sup> He blessed Joseph, and said,

"The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,  
The God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day,  
<sup>16</sup> The angel who has redeemed me from all evil,  
Bless the lads;  
And may my name live on in them,  
And the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac;  
And may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."

<sup>17</sup> When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on Ephraim's head, it displeased him; and he grasped his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. <sup>18</sup> Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn. Place your right hand on his head." <sup>19</sup> But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know; he also will become a people and he also will be great. However, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations." <sup>20</sup> He blessed them that day, saying,

"By you Israel will pronounce blessing, saying, 'May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh!'"  
Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh. <sup>21</sup> Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am about to die, but God will be with you, and bring you back to the land of your fathers. <sup>22</sup> I give you one portion more than your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow."

## Israel's Prophecy concerning His Sons

**49** Then Jacob summoned his sons and said,  
“Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what will befall you in the days to come.

<sup>2</sup>“Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob;  
And listen to Israel your father.

<sup>3</sup>“Reuben, you are my firstborn;  
My might and the beginning of my strength,  
Preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power.

<sup>4</sup>“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.

<sup>5</sup>“Simeon and Levi are brothers;  
Their swords are implements of violence.

<sup>6</sup>“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.

<sup>7</sup>“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.

<sup>8</sup>“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.

<sup>9</sup>“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?

<sup>10</sup>“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.

<sup>11</sup>“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.

<sup>12</sup>“His eyes are dull from wine,  
And his teeth white from milk.

<sup>13</sup>“Zebulun will dwell at the seashore;  
And he *shall be* a haven for ships,  
And his flank *shall be* toward Sidon.

<sup>14</sup>“Issachar is a strong donkey,  
Lying down between the sheepfolds.

<sup>15</sup>“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.

<sup>16</sup>“Dan shall judge his people,  
As one of the tribes of Israel.

<sup>17</sup>“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.

<sup>18</sup>“For Your salvation I wait, O LORD.

<sup>19</sup>“As for Gad, raiders shall raid him,  
But he will raid *at* their heels.

<sup>20</sup>“As for Asher, his food shall be rich,  
And he will yield royal dainties.

<sup>21</sup>“Naphtali is a doe let loose,  
He gives beautiful words.

<sup>22</sup>“Joseph is a fruitful bough,  
A fruitful bough by a spring;  
*Its* branches run over a wall.

<sup>23</sup>“The archers bitterly attacked him,  
And shot *at him* and harassed him;

<sup>24</sup> But his bow remained firm,  
And his arms were agile,

From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob  
(From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel),

<sup>25</sup> From the God of your father who helps you,  
And by the Almighty who blesses you  
*With* blessings of heaven above,

Blessings of the deep that lies beneath,  
Blessings of the breasts and of the womb.  
<sup>26</sup> “The blessings of your father  
Have surpassed the blessings of my ancestors  
Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills;  
May they be on the head of Joseph,  
And on the crown of the head of the one  
distinguished among his brothers.

<sup>27</sup> “Benjamin is a ravenous wolf;  
In the morning he devours the prey,  
And in the evening he divides the spoil.”

<sup>28</sup> All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them. He blessed them, every one with the blessing appropriate to him. <sup>29</sup> Then he charged them and said to them, “I am about to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, <sup>30</sup> in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought along with the field from Ephron the Hittite for a burial site. <sup>31</sup> There they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah, there they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah, and there I buried Leah— <sup>32</sup> the field and the cave that is in it, purchased from the sons of Heth.” <sup>33</sup> When Jacob finished charging his sons, he drew his feet into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.

## The Death of Israel

**50** Then Joseph fell on his father’s face, and wept over him and kissed him. <sup>2</sup> Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. <sup>3</sup> Now forty days were required for it, for such is the period required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.

<sup>4</sup> When the days of mourning for him were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, “If now I have found favor in your sight, please speak to Pharaoh, saying, <sup>5</sup> ‘My father made me swear, saying, “Behold, I am about to die; in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me.” Now therefore, please let me go up and bury my father; then I will return.’” <sup>6</sup> Pharaoh said, “Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear.”

<sup>7</sup> So Joseph went up to bury his father, and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household and all the elders of the land of Egypt, <sup>8</sup> and all the household of Joseph and his brothers and his father’s household; they left only their little ones and their flocks and their herds in the land of Goshen. <sup>9</sup> There also went up with him both chariots and horsemen; and it was a very great company. <sup>10</sup> When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and sorrowful lamentation; and he observed seven days mourning for his father. <sup>11</sup> Now when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, “This is a grievous mourning for the Egyptians.” Therefore it was named Abel-mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan.

## Burial at Machpelah

<sup>12</sup> Thus his sons did for him as he had charged them; <sup>13</sup> for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre, which Abraham had bought along with the field for a burial site from Ephron the Hittite. <sup>14</sup> After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers, and all who had gone up with him to bury his father.

<sup>15</sup> When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father

was dead, they said, “What if Joseph bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong which we did to him!” <sup>16</sup> So they sent *a message* to Joseph, saying, “Your father charged before he died, saying, <sup>17</sup> ‘Thus you shall say to Joseph, “Please forgive, I beg you, the transgression of your brothers and their sin, for they did you wrong.”’ And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.” And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. <sup>18</sup> Then his brothers also came and fell down before him and said, “Behold, we are your servants.” <sup>19</sup> But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in God’s place? <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> So therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.” So he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

## Death of Joseph

<sup>22</sup> Now Joseph stayed in Egypt, he and his father’s household, and Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. <sup>23</sup> Joseph saw the third generation of Ephraim’s sons; also the sons of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were born on Joseph’s knees. <sup>24</sup> Joseph said to his brothers, “I am about to die, but God will surely take care of you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob.” <sup>25</sup> Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, “God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones up from here.” <sup>26</sup> So Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten years; and he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt.

**o EXAMINE His Word (Observation)** (For personal preparation)

**What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the foregoing passage.**

1. Who is involved in the text? Author, audience, main characters.
2. Where and when is this taking place? Geography and timeline.
3. What actions are carried out or commanded? Look for the verbs.
4. Is there anything repeated?
5. What is emphasized?
6. Is there anything in these passages that is related to other areas of scripture?
7. Are there things to be noted that are alike or unlike such as similes and metaphors?

**2 EXPLORE His Word (Interpretation)** (For Community Group discussion)  
What does God MEAN?

8. How did Joseph receive a double blessing?
9. What is significant about Judah's blessing?
10. Where did Jacob want to be buried? Why?
11. What did Joseph's brothers fear after their father died?
12. How did Joseph treat his brothers after his father died?
13. Why does the blessing of leadership pass to Judah?

**③ EMBRACE His Word (Application)** (For Community Group discussion)

**Why does this MATTER to me?**

14. Jacob and Joseph both recall the blessings that God has given them. How can we make sure to remind ourselves of the blessings of the past?

15. Jacob passes on the blessings he received to his children and his grandchildren. How can we be diligent about passing on the blessings we receive?

16. Jacob and Joseph expected blessings in the future. Should we expect blessings? What should we expect them to look like?

Summarize your thoughts on the passage

**Write about what God wants you to KNOW, to FEEL, and to DO...**

*Sermon Notes*