

Genesis

Memorize the TRUTH!

Lesson 26
Israel Blesses His Children
Genesis 49–50

You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.
Genesis 50:20

The First Ten Blessings – Genesis 49:1-21

Day 1

1. What sin had disqualified Reuben from inheriting the birthright? Genesis 35:22
2. Why had God chosen to disperse the descendants of Simeon and Levi? Genesis 34
3. a. What future did Jacob foresee for the descendants of Judah?

b. Who is the ultimate fulfillment of the prophecy in Genesis 49:10?

c. Read Revelation 5:1-5. What names reveal the ancestry of this eternal ruler?

Learn the TRUTH!



Jacob and Joseph, two patriarchs of a great nation, die in these final two chapters. This week, reflect on the way these ancient accounts still offer wisdom and insight for life in the modern world and how these stories foretell the coming of Jesus, who is “the same yesterday, today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

Blessing Rachel's Sons – Genesis 49:22-28

Day 2

4. a. How did Jacob's blessing reveal his knowledge of Joseph's sufferings?

b. How did the blessing of Joseph acknowledge God's sovereign care and protection?
5. If you are sure of God's loving protection and care for your loved ones, how will this shape your attitude about their journey through life?
6. What must we do in order to be counted among God's children? John 1:12

The Death of Jacob
Genesis 49:29-50:15

Day 3

7. a. Where did Jacob instruct his sons to bury him?

b. How did this remind his sons that Egypt was not their permanent home?

8. How does Revelation 21:1-5 remind us that this earth is not our home?

9. a. Who accompanied Joseph and his brothers as they returned to Canaan to bury their father?

b. What does this reveal about the Egyptians' regard for Joseph?

Fear of Revenge
Genesis 50:15-26

Day 4

10. a. What assumptions did Joseph's brother make after their father died?

b. What does this reveal about their view of Joseph?

11. What assurance does the Bible give us of God's complete forgiveness through Christ? Colossians 2:13-14

1 Timothy 1:15-16

12. What can we learn about Joseph from his response to his brothers in Genesis 50:19-21?

13. As his own death approached, how did Joseph affirm his faith in God's promises?

Lessons from the Patriarchs
Genesis Chapters 12-50

Day 5

14. Share one important spiritual principle you've learned from the life of each of these men:
Genesis 12-24 (Abraham)

Genesis 22-28 (Isaac)

Genesis 25, 27-49 (Jacob)

Genesis 37-50 (Joseph)

15. What effect has the study of the Genesis and the lives of the patriarchs had on your view of God?

Live the TRUTH!

Although each of the four patriarchs of Genesis had flaws and experienced difficulties, God used them to establish His covenant and build a nation of His people. Each of these men experienced a personal encounter with God. He also desires to reveal Himself to us: "You will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Lord" (Jeremiah 29:12-14).

Commentary Genesis Lesson 26

At the age of 147, Jacob calls his sons together to bless them and foretell the course of their lives. He summarizes their character and the effect it will have on future generations. He begins with Reuben, the firstborn. Reuben will not be chosen as patriarch because of his defective character, a direct consequence of his seduction of Bilhah. No prophet, priest, judge, or ruler will ever be born from his tribe. Choices made by parents often have unforeseeable effects — for good or ill — for many generations, and so it will be with Reuben.

Neither Simeon nor Levi, next in birth order, will take Reuben's place as the honored firstborn. Their lives have been marked by violence and cruelty, a reference to the brothers' place in the destruction of Shechem. They will be punished by being scattered throughout the rest of the nation. For the Levites, this dispersion will occur when they are made the priestly tribe and excluded from a single tribal area. The tribe of Simeon will own the southern portion of the Holy Land, but will mingle with the other tribes, and in time lose their distinctiveness. Judah, by contrast, will become a leader among the tribes. His descendants will be powerful military leaders and will have the distinction of being the tribe from whom Messiah comes. This is partially fulfilled in the Davidic monarchy, but, ultimately, the prediction will be realized in the Lord Jesus Christ. Zebulun, Issachar, Gad, and Asher then receive their blessings.

Joseph is distinguished among the final six. He is likened to a fruitful vine. Though he leads an enormous Gentile empire, he is to remember that his father's blessings are far more important. To Joseph belongs the status of firstborn among the 12. Benjamin, though the youngest of the clan, is among the most aggressive. By the time of the book of Judges, the tribe of Benjamin will have gained a considerable reputation for bravery and skill in battle.

Jacob explains that he will die soon, informing his sons that he must not be buried in Egypt. He should be transported to Canaan, to the cave now occupied by his parents, grandparents, and Leah. As he finishes speaking, Jacob breathes his last. The patriarch departs from this world quickly, his struggles over.

Although all the sons were doubtless affected by Jacob's death, the writer of Genesis calls our attention in particular to the depth of Joseph's grief. His sorrow does not stop him from proceeding to honor his father's last request. He orders that his father be embalmed according to Egyptian custom, and the Egyptians mourn for his father for 70 days. At the end of the period, Joseph requests permission to accompany his father's body to Canaan, and the Pharaoh grants his request. The long trek becomes a state occasion, with many of Egypt's high officials accompanying the body. The 11 brothers of Joseph make the trip, leaving their children in charge while they are away. The entourage is a very impressive one. A stop is made at the threshing floor of Atad, some miles northeast of the group's final destination, where they observe a formal weeklong period of mourning. The activity gives the area a new name, *Abel Mizraim: wailing of Egypt*. The group crosses the Jordan into Canaan, deposits Jacob's body in the cave of Machpelah, then returns to Egypt.

Check It Out:

Jacob talked to his sons about the land they would one day possess, but it is clear that his emphasis was not on its material value but on its spiritual value. Addressing each son individually, he got their attention with insights into their character and future. He wanted to remind them of the promises of God (though still unfulfilled) and the faithfulness of God that he had experienced.

Do you ever encourage your family to expect great things from God by telling them about His faithfulness to you? Do you tell them how God has worked in your life? And openly and unashamedly praise Him for His goodness in both your triumphs and your tragedies? Make it personal; that's what your listeners will remember.

Once back in Egypt, Joseph's brothers conclude that their lives are in danger. Now that Jacob is gone, they reason, Joseph will unveil his real attitude. They are reluctant to face him, so they send a messenger with an urgent appeal. They say that Jacob left instructions before his death asking Joseph to forgive his erring brothers. Joseph is crushed when he receives this communication. Do they know his heart so little that they think he is capable of treachery against them? When the brothers appear before him, they insist that they will be his slaves for life. Perhaps, they reason, Joseph will be content to enslave rather than to kill them. But Joseph knows the freedom of forgiveness and has no intention of doing them harm. Indeed, he has only their welfare in mind.

The family remains in Egypt for many generations. At 110, when Joseph is dying, he calls the brothers together and gives orders concerning his burial. He requires an oath from the family that whenever God calls them out of Egypt, they will not leave his bones behind. Four hundred years later, this promise will be honored when Moses brings the body of Joseph out of Egypt during the Exodus (Exodus 13:19).

The story of humanity began in the Garden of Eden with two people in paradise. Their relationship with God and each other was unbroken. On that sad day when the Tempter persuaded them to disobey God's known will, Adam and Eve, no longer innocent, hid in the Garden. God created us for fellowship with Himself, so the divine Trinity took action. The Son came to our world as a man of Jewish descent, of the tribe of Judah, to pay the penalty for the sins of all mankind. As the journey to the Cross approached, He spent a terrible few hours in the Garden of Gethsemane. It was there that He committed to following the divine plan and was able to say to His Father, "not as I will but as You will. ... may Your will be done" (Matthew 26:36-42).

It was in a garden that Adam and Eve first broke fellowship with God, and it was in a garden that Jesus made the difficult commitment to cancel the wrong choice of Adam and Eve. Our God has graciously chosen to make a way for each of us to be forgiven for our sins, and to come into His presence, cleansed and prepared for intimate fellowship with Him. We have a choice; will we continue to be bound by the choice Adam and Eve made in the Garden of Eden and remain separated from God, or will we choose to have a relationship with God, based on what Jesus did on Calvary's hill after praying in the Garden of Gethsemane?

Many of us have already chosen to receive God's gift of salvation. But life still requires choices every day. Will we learn from our study of the Bible? Will we obey God's Word? Will we walk and talk and fellowship with Him, or will we drift away, finding ultimately only emptiness? Remember how the Lord went looking for Adam and Eve, calling to them? He is a loving, seeking God, and He is waiting for you.



Some Christians can actually forgive other people who have sinned against them more easily than they can receive God's forgiveness for themselves. They dwell on their own failures instead of dwelling on God's plan for dealing with those failures. They think of their own self-hate rather than God's incredible love for them: "God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Jesus Christ died 2,000 years ago. How many of our sins did He carry when He died? It has to be either all of them or none of them! We know it is all of them (Hebrews 7:27). Christian, the good news of the gospel is that every sin we have ever committed or ever will commit is forgiven under the blood of Christ!



What blessings does God promise His children?

John 5:24

Romans 8:1

Ephesians 1:7