

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF JOSEPH

STUDY NUMBER TEN – GENESIS 48:1-22

INTRODUCTION:

Paul Powell said

Each time I think about my own death, I ask myself three kinds of questions to help me do that:

Number one “Am I right in my relationship with God?”

Number two “Am I right in my relationship with my family, with my friends, with my co-workers? Are there any relationships I need to reconcile? Are there words I need to say?”

And finally “Am I investing myself in things that will last for eternity?”

The more I look to the life to come, the more nobly it makes me want to live the life I now have.

Judy Viorst in confronting the fact of the critical necessary loss is the loss of physical life says:

“All human relationships must end,” Kernberg reminds us in discussing the characteristics of mature love, “and the threat of loss, abandonment and, in the last resort, of death is greatest where love has most depth.” But awareness of this offers something more than a glimpse into grim reality; “awareness of this,” he writes, “also deepens love.”

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The earliest text on the subject, she tells us, was produced by the Egyptian philosopher-poet Ptahhotep, who voiced back in 2500 B.C. a theme that has resounded through the centuries:

How hard and painful are the last days of an aged man! He grows weaker every day; his eyes become dim, his ears deaf; his strength fades; his heart knows peace no longer; his mouth falls silent and he speaks no word. The power of his mind lessens and today he cannot remember what yesterday was like. All his bones hurt. Those things which not long ago were done with pleasure are painful now; and taste vanishes. Old age is the worst of misfortunes that can afflict a man.

Jacob is there. He is 147 years old. He has lived a difficult life but he has had great joy these last 17 years because he has spent them with all 12 of his sons. And so they have been wonderful years.

In our last study in Genesis 46 we began the study with Jacob making sacrifices to God at Beersheba wanting to be sure that it was God's will to go to Egypt because he emotionally wanted to go but he wanted to be certain that that was God's will.

And then when we ended in chapter 47 Jacob was worshipping God and leaning on the top of his staff.

And he made a request and that request that he made of Joseph was that his body could be taken up out of Egypt and be buried there in Hebron.

Now as the scene of today's study opens Jacob is still lingering to a slender thread of life and Joseph is now 56 years of age. His dad is 147. What is going to take place?

Begin with me in Genesis 48 at verse 1.

v. 1 Some time later Joseph was told, "Your father is ill." So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim along with him.

Now what happens after that close of chapter 47 is what happens with you a lot of times when you have loved ones who are lingering. It seems like the wheels stop and nothing continues to go on while somebody is sick and it looks like they are terminal. It just seems like that time just grinds away slowly. Joseph has administrative responsibilities in the kingdom so he has left his old father and gone down back to Memphis again about 75 to 80 miles to the south. But now he gets word again that his dad is bad. So what he is doing here is taking his two sons to see their granddad for the last time. Jacob as he faces this illness and this sickness is at the point of being ready to die. "Your father is ill."

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Beth Jameson who wrote that little book *Hold Me Tight* talking about to go through the trauma of watching her child die who was only 14 years old of Leukemia she said:

After they leave, the aloneness, stillness, and quietness of the house close in around me. The dust on my dresser across the room looks an inch thick. The dirty clothes hamper is bulging. The carpet needs vacuuming, and here I am in bed just barely able to take care of myself. That old enemy self-pity takes over once more as my concern over trivia looms all out of proportion.

And so I create a monster of sweeping under the rug a delusive habit, but it is the only way I know to keep some semblance of normalcy in our lives for emotions are like mirrors. They reflect and bounce off one another. God, I'm no psychiatrist. Help me! What am I to say? What am I to do? It's like walking on eggshells every day trying to keep everybody reasonably happy and productive. I need more than mere courage, God. I need perseverance and stamina. Help me not to resist these trying demands leukemia is imposing on my life too. It would only increase the pain. As days go by, the need to endure seems to increase my capacity to do so.

Joseph once again gets the word "Your father is ill."

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And now the time for the PATRIARCHAL BLESSING, it is time to say goodbye to a great man and Jacob is indeed that and as we pick up in the study we get the word that he is ill.

v. 2 When Jacob was told, “Your son Joseph has come to you,” Israel rallied his strength and sat up on the bed.

When Jacob heard the name Joseph he “rallied his strength” and he sat up in bed because he has still has some final things that he needs to perform before he dies.

v. 3 Jacob said to Joseph, “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and there he blessed me

Have you ever been near physical death yourself where you ever had an experience where you know you are going to die?

If you have ever had the feeling that you were going to drown your whole life plays before you in just very quick little capsule episodes.

That is what is happening to Jacob. And usually those episodes are the most significant episodes of your life.

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It is an incredible thing when you talk to somebody who has been swept away by the current or they have been caught in a situation where it looks like they are going to drown and their lives begin to come before them just before they lose consciousness or before they are rescued.

In this situation Jacob is going to tell you three things today. They are the three big events that were the most important in his life. And the first one, which is just right here, is “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and there he blessed me.”

Event number one is when he met God at Bethel. Event number one is when he was leaving home and he was heading for Uncle Laban’s house and he met God at the top of the stairs in Genesis 28. It was there at the time the most memorable thing took place. And if you speak of conversion in the Old Testament, that is it for Jacob. Right there when he meets God and meets him face to face. I put Genesis 28:15 right beside that. It helps you understand how it fits.

I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.

Notice he calls God El Shaddai – God Almighty, the God who is faithful to keep His promises.

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And now some years later he speaks of that occasion as he prepares himself for physical death.

v. 4 and said to me, 'I am going to make you fruitful and will increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you.'

Jacob is simply recounting the words of the covenant. You know I read that and it did not strike home with me until I thought about it for a little while. But you know when the covenant is given to Abraham there is nothing said of the fact that the land is going to be an everlasting possession in the covenant. The only way Jacob could have gotten this information is from granddaddy himself. Jacob was about 15-16 years of age when old Abraham died. But evidently during those 15 years it was made clear that the covenant stipulated a seed that is a seed that would come and that is Christ from many nations (Abraham is going to be blessed) but the land also is going to be an everlasting possession. Do you see when you read a statement like that you do not have any choice about the Arab-Israeli conflict. That land, by deed, title deed of the unconditional Abrahamic covenant belongs to them, from Dan to Beersheba. It is by right their land. And as he recounts this now to Joseph he says, "an everlasting possession."

v. 5 “Now then, your two sons born to you in Egypt before I came to you here will be reckoned as mine; Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon are mine.

What has happened here to create this problem? Usually when a daddy got ready to perform his patriarchal responsibilities there was the firstborn son that always got the double portion and then the rest would get a single portion of the inheritance. Well who is the firstborn? Reuben is the firstborn.

Now what is Jacob talking about? You see he says I want to deal with your two sons. I want to deal with Ephraim and Manasseh. I want them to be like my sons. I want to adopt them basically in your place.

But why not Reuben? Listen to 1 Chronicles 5:1, 2.

The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (he was the firstborn, but when he defiled his father's marriage bed, his rights as firstborn were given to the sons of Joseph son of Israel; so he could not be listed in the genealogical record in accordance with his birthright, and though Judah was the strongest of his brothers and a ruler came from him, the rights of the firstborn belonged to Joseph)

You know what happened? Reuben defiled his father by an act of incest by going in unto Bilhah, the handmaid of Rachel.

Would you notice something interesting in verse 5? It will set the stage for something else. What does Jacob say? “Now then, your two sons born to you in Egypt before I came to you here will be reckoned as mine.” Who? “Ephraim and Manasseh.” Is that the right order of things? What did the first verse tell you? Manasseh and Ephraim. Manasseh has the birthright hasn't he? He is number one. Ephraim is number two. But Jacob legitimately calls it Ephraim and Manasseh? Why? Well in just minute you are going to see why. It is the old man just kind of setting his son up for what he is going to do and it is going to be pretty painful for Joseph for what he is going to do in the passage.

Now this is hard for these two boys to come. These boys as nearly as I can tell are either in their late teens or early twenties. Do you think they have any desire to take their daddy's place in the Egyptian government since that is all they know? I really think so. I think they love growing up in the palace being on center stage and watching their dad's heroic antics in taking the nation through 14 years of success and of famine and of difficulty. And these boys have watched their dad be very successful and beloved in the land and they have got designs in following in their father's footsteps.

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But now here he is coming to his father and it is business of the nation Israel. It is becoming a part of that and giving up all of the land of Egypt. These boys have the same choice that Moses had to make. Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. He had the chance to go for it all with Pharaoh in Egypt but he chose rather to identify with the children of God. And that is what these two boys are having to decide too.

v. 6 Any children born to you after them will be yours in the territory they inherit they will be reckoned under the names of their brothers.

v. 7 As I was returning from Paddan, to my sorrow Rachel died in the land of Canaan while we were still on the way, a little distance from Ephrath. So I buried her there beside the road to Ephrath” (that is, Bethlehem).

Okay what was event number one he wants to remember? It is his confrontation with God at the top of the stairs.

What is event number two? It is a great sorrow. It is his sorrow of the death of Rachel. This is the second thing that really, really hurt him and he wants to bring this out. May I make a principle here? A lot of sorrow that is very, very difficult in our lives is explained by the fact that we love the things that we should not.

Rachel was never intended to be the woman that God had for him. Emotionally he got involved with her and it was love at first sight and he entered into a contract to work for her for seven years without ever really talking to God about it whether she was the one.

Leah was the one through whom Judah was born. And you see he let his emotions go through this thing and a lot of the sorrow that he is facing and the hurt that he talks about is the direct result of the fact that he loved something that he should not.

You look at David's life and when he plunges off of the pinnacle of the kingdom in that affair with Bathsheba everything is downhill from then on in. Why does that man hurt all the way to the grave? Because he loved someone that he should not. He let his emotions get away with him and he let that continue to affect until he made a decision by an act of his will that caused him to suffer the rest of the days of his life.

And here old Jacob is talking about something that certainly was not intended for him to have suffered that kind of sorrow. And now he is reverting back to this experience of great sorrow and as he lives in the past he is recalling these things to his son Joseph.

He is recalling the things that were most significant. Event number one -- conversion. Event number two -- the death of Rachel. Those parting words of Rachel probably really, really stuck in his mind.

The last words Ben-Oni “son of my pain” and then she died. And he buried her there on the road while they were on their way up to Bethlehem.

v. 8 When Israel saw the sons of Joseph, he asked, “Who are these?”

Now let me say something here at this point. Jacob has spent a lot of time with Ephraim and Manasseh certainly during these 17 years because they were just little guys when they came down there. But he cannot see very well and he is just revived and set up in the bed and he can only see forms and figures. And he is not aware that there is somebody else in the room. And then all of the sudden he hears movement and so he says, “Who are these?” Now listen to Joseph.

v. 9 “They are the sons God has given me here,” Joseph said to his father. Then Israel said, “Bring them to me so I may bless them.”

I want to land on that statement for just a second with you just to meditate.

All right let me reflect on three verses of Scripture that are very special.

1. Genesis 45:6 – “God sent me ahead of you.” That is the first one.
2. Genesis 45:9 – “God made me lord over all the land of Egypt.”

3. Genesis 48:9 – “They are the sons God has given me here.”

Look at those little statements.

God sent me.

God made me.

God gave me.

Joseph sees God in all of the major events in his life. He is one who sent me, He is the one who made me and put me into this position of leadership, and He is the one who gave me these children, precious gifts from the Lord.

Now why would he come up with a statement like that “These are the sons God has given me here?” Do you know why I think he came up with that? I think as soon as he was born he was the firstborn son to Rachel and you know what I think Rachel told him as she held him in her arms and rocked him to sleep, “You are so special. You are a gift from God. I have never had any babies. I could not have any babies. You are so special. You are a gift from God.” And now as his own children come in the very same way he would speak to his old dad and he would say to him, these are the sons God has given me here.

v. 10 Now Israel's eyes were failing because of old age, and he could hardly see. So Joseph brought his sons close to him, and his father kissed them and embraced them.

v. 11 Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face again, and now God has allowed me to see your children too."

All right let's go back and talk about old Jacob for just a second.

Genesis 42:36

Their father Jacob said to them, "You have deprived me of my children. Joseph is no more and Simeon is no more, and now you want to take Benjamin. Everything is against me."

All right that is number one.

Number two. **Genesis 43:14**

And may God Almighty grant you mercy before the man so that he will let your other brother and Benjamin come back with you. As for me, if I am bereaved, I am bereaved.

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Statement number three. Genesis 45:28

And Israel said, “I am convinced! My son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”

And statement number four. “I never expected to see your face again, and now God has allowed me to see your children too.”

Now tell me God is not good.

Tell me that God cannot take the trauma and the trials and the heartaches you represent and bring you to this room and turn it around and make it something good.

You know the key to it is to surrender. Where is your Benjamin? Are you willing to turn it over to him? Maybe you just feel like Aye! He just keeps pushing me. All these things are against me. Are you there to that moment of surrender? I can tell you when you are at that moment of surrender you are begin to see and become convinced that God really works in people's lives. And as he works in people's lives it is beautiful to watch him. “I never expected to see your face again, and now I even get to see your sons before I die.”

Can I give you a principle?

GOD IS EVER SURPRISING HIS PEOPLE WITH ADDED BLESSINGS BEYOND OUR EXPECTATIONS.

God is ever surprising His people with added blessings beyond our expectations.

God just surprises us all the time with the wonderful little unexpected blessings that are beyond our expectations.

Ephesians 3:20

He is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works within us.

v. 12 Then Joseph removed them from Israel's knees and bowed down with his face to the ground.

Here comes the time now for the blessing to take place.

v. 13 And Joseph took both of them, Ephraim on his right toward Israel's left hand [*You see he is the second born.*] and Manasseh on his left toward Israel's right hand [*Because he is the firstborn.*], and brought them close to him.

Now what are Joseph's intentions? His intentions are perfectly pure. His daddy cannot see too good and all he is trying to do is to help his father get the job done of blessing these two boys and bringing them into his family and making them heirs in the tribes and the inheritance for the land of Israel, that is all. He is just bringing them forth.

And since Manasseh is the firstborn he puts him over him by his right hand. Ephraim is the second born. He puts him over here by his left hand which is protocol. So he is not trying to pull something over his father here in this situation.

Look at verse 14.

v. 14 But Israel reached out his right hand and put it on Ephraim's head, though he was the younger, and crossing his arms, he put his left hand on Manasseh's head, even though Manasseh was the firstborn.

How familiar all of this is. Does Jacob have any memories of tricking his old dad to get a blessing? You see mama says, "Go kill the cow or calf and get it all ready and we will put some skins on you so you will look hairy like Esau since your old daddy Isaac is blind. And we will sneak in there in a hurry and you can feed him some of this good meat and then steal the blessing of the firstborn thinking that he is giving it to Esau." And he pulled it off. He got the blessing. Jacob in his old age is not going to be dumb like his dad or be fooled. So Jacob just reaches out and pulls the cross on Joseph. And all of the sudden Joseph cannot believe what he is seeing. Now this is God's purpose in this situation. The Bible is full of it.

It was:
Seth instead of Cain
Shem instead of Japheth
Abraham instead of Haran
Isaac instead of Ishmael
Jacob instead of Esau
And now Ephraim instead of Manasseh

v. 15 Then he blessed Joseph and said, “May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has been my Shepherd all my life to this day,

This God who has what: shepherded me, He has lead me and guided me, I have gone astray a lot, but He has been my shepherd.

v. 16 The angel who has delivered me from all harm -- may he bless these boys. May they be called by my name and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and may they increase greatly upon the earth.”

The third thing that Jacob mentions of the great events in his life is in verse 16 as he starts to bless him. “The angel who has delivered me from all harm – may he bless these boys.” Do you know who that is? The third event in his life was the angel that he wrestled with all night in Genesis 32.

The first thing was God at the top of the stairs in Genesis 23.

The second was Rachel's death.

And the third was wrestling all night with that angel.

You see all three of those are key times with God and he makes reference to that now as he gets ready to bless them.

“May he bless these boys. May they be called by my name and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and may they increase greatly upon the earth.” Why does he make mention of that experience of wrestling all night? It is because he hung on so hard and resisted so much God had to touch him physically before he could touch him spiritually. And you know God is not beyond that. When He is not getting a response spiritually He can also touch you physically in order to get your attention to bring about His ultimate purpose in getting you to fall into line with His will.

Now he gives us three wishes:

- 1. May he bless these boys.**
- 2. May they be called by the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac.**
- 3. May they increase greatly upon the earth.**

v. 17 When Joseph saw his father placing his right hand on Ephraim's head he was displeased; so he took hold of his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head.

You see Joseph is not willing to accept the fact that his father could be functioning in accordance with the will of God. He believes that his dad has made a mistake because he is blind and he old and he is sick. And he is trying to help his father out. And he is very upset. So he reaches out, his father's hands are crossed, and he grabs the hand that is over here on Ephraim's head and pulls it out and wants to put it on Manasseh's head here at the right and put it back like it belongs.

Now even though Jacob is awfully close to the grave you will notice something begins to happen.

v. 18 Joseph said to him, "No, my father, this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head."

Proverbs 3:5, 6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.

God will bestow His own blessing and not according to our wishes and desire. You know what needs to be said here?

Joseph, the one who sent you into Egypt, the one who made you lord and the one who gave you these two sons is the one who is going to bless these two boys in His own way. And you see sometimes we can go so far with the Lord and there are other times that we can blow it just as miserably.

He sent you, He made you, He gave you, and He is blessing in accordance with His own will and purpose.

v. 19 But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He too will become a people, and he too will become great. Nevertheless, his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will become a group of nations.”

Although he is old and feeble he has still has it straight. And he knows exactly what he is doing. He is sensitive to the Spirit’s leadership and he is saying, “I know, I know, my son, but this is the way it is going to be. It is going to be different than you thought and different than you planned. The younger is going to exceed the older. He is going to be first. The older is going to be second.” May I say to you the happiest people in the world are the people who are letting God have his way in their lives.

There will come so many times in your life when you will face circumstances that you wish would change and you will try to change and they will never change.

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That is Isaiah 55:8,9

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Can you trust God today with that? Can you throw that down at His feet and let Him really have His way in your life?

But you see there come times in our lives when God does things His way and they are different from what we would really like and what we really want. But we can find fulfillment in the higher way if we are simply willing to trust Him and allow Him to work.

Joseph could become terribly unhappy and resentful right here toward the end of his life and toward the end of the biography if he will not accept the fact that his dad has the prerogative of patriarchal blessing and it happens to be different from what he thinks it ought to be. And Joseph accepts it.

v. 20 He blessed them that day and said, “In your name will Israel pronounce this blessing: ‘May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.’” So he put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh.

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Can you trace it through the passage?

You see back at verse 1 in our study it was MANASSEH and EPHRAIM. That is the way they were born.

But when Jacob speaks of them he calls them EPHRAIM and MANASSEH in verse 5.

And now at the time of the blessing “May God make you like EPHRAIM and MANASSEH.” So he put EPHRAIM ahead of MANASSEH.

v. 21 Then Israel said to Joseph, “I am about to die, but God will be with you and take you back to the land of your fathers.

Do you know what I like about that? I am your earthly father and I am getting ready to die but your heavenly father will never leave you. Do you know what else is beautiful about that? There are no “IF’s” in that statement.

When he started in Genesis 28 he said, “If you will be with me and if you will bless me and if and if and if, then I....”

But now it is simply a question of when God is going to do it. It is a declaration of purpose. I am going to die but God will be with you and take you back to the land of your fathers.

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Someone said you exercise faith when your “IF’s” become “WHEN’s.” It is not a matter of “IF.” It is simply a matter of timing when that promise will be fulfilled in life.

v. 22 And to you, as one who is over your brothers, I give the ridge of land I took from the Amorites with my sword and my bow.”

Joseph you are over all the rest of the brothers and I want to give you an extra gift. I want to give you this land that I took from the Amorites.

Here are the lessons from today’s study.

LESSON #1: Joseph displays a CARE and CONCERN for his father in the hour of his death. He is manifesting what you and I have a responsibility to do for our families.

LESSON #2: Jacob has grown spiritually through the many experiences that he has had. What a beautiful passage we have had today seeing him in the final stages of his life so transformed and so changed from what he once was.

LESSON #3: We find him resting in the PRESENCE and PROMISES of God as he recounts the covenant. What a way to get ready to die. Resting in the PRESENCE and PROMISES of God.

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LESSON #4: We find him filled with gratitude over the past as he refers to God as the one who has shepherded him.

LESSON #5: We see love in his heart toward others in his love for Joseph and his two sons.

LESSON #6: Children are a gift from the Lord. Children are a gift from the Lord. “They are the sons God has given me here” he said.

LESSON #7: God is ever surprising His children with added blessings beyond their expectations.

And that is where Joseph says v. 11 “I never expected to see your face, and behold, God has let me see your children as well.”

LESSON #8: God’s will is accomplished even in the crossing of Jacob’s hands to pronounce the blessing.

LESSON #9: We must be careful not to put our will and desires ahead of God’s will for our lives.

LESSON #10: We begin to demonstrate faith when all our IF’S are changed to WHEN.

LESSON #11: Friends and loved ones die and leave us, but God will never leave us nor forsake us. Hebrews 13:5.

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STUDY NUMBER TEN - GENESIS 48:1-22

NOTES

v. 1 Some time later Joseph was told, "Your father is ill." So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim along with him.

v. 2 When Jacob was told, "Your son Joseph has come to you," Israel rallied his strength and sat up on the bed.

v. 3 Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and there he blessed me

v. 4 and said to me, 'I am going to make you fruitful and will increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you.'

v. 5 Now then, your two sons born to you in Egypt before I came to you here will be reckoned as mine; Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon are mine.

v. 6 Any children born to you after them will be yours; in the territory they inherit they will be reckoned under the names of their brothers.

v. 7 As I was returning from Paddan, to my sorrow Rachel died in the land of Canaan while we were still on the way, a little distance from Ephrath. So I buried her there beside the road to Ephrath" (that is, Bethlehem).

v. 8 When Israel saw the sons of Joseph, he asked, "Who are these?"

v. 9 "They are the sons God has given me here," Joseph said to his father. Then Israel said, "Bring them to me so I may bless them."

v.10 Now Israel's eyes were failing because of old age, and he could hardly see. So Joseph brought his sons close to him, and his father kissed them and embraced them.

v.11 Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face again, and now God has allowed me to see your children too."

v.12 Then Joseph removed them from Israel's knees and bowed down with his face to the ground.

v.13 And Joseph took both of them, Ephraim on his right toward Israel's left hand and Manasseh on his left toward Israel's right hand, and brought them close to him.

v.14 But Israel reached out his right hand and put it on Ephraim's head, though he was the younger, and crossing his arms, he put his left hand on Manasseh's head, even though Manasseh was the firstborn.

v.15 Then he blessed Joseph and said, "May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has been my Shepherd all my life to this day,

v.16 the Angel who has delivered me from all harm—may he bless these boys. May they be called by my name and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and may they increase greatly upon the earth."

v.17 When Joseph saw his father placing his right hand on Ephraim's head he was displeased; so he took hold of his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head.

v.18 Joseph said to him, "No, my father, this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head."

v.19 But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He too will become a people, and he too will become great. Nevertheless, his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will become a group of nations."

v.20 He blessed them that day and said, "In your name will Israel pronounce this blessing: 'May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.'" So he put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh.

v.21 Then Israel said to Joseph, "I am about to die, but God will be with you and take you back to the land of your fathers.

v.22 And to you, as one who is over your brothers, I give the ridge of land I took from the Amorites with my sword and my bow."

QUESTIONS:

1. Read Genesis 48:1-22 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. Describe the opening scene in Genesis 48.

3. What does Jacob share with his son Joseph in verses 3 & 4?

4. Describe the scene in verses 8-10.

5. What is Jacob's response in verse 11?

6. What does Jacob do for Joseph in verses 15 & 16?

7. What does Jacob do in verses 17-20?

8. What does Jacob tell Joseph in verse 21?

9. Which verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

LESSON #1: Joseph displays a care and concern for his father in the hour of his death.

LESSON #2: Jacob has grown spiritually through the many experiences that he has had.

LESSON #3: We find Jacob resting in the presence and promises of God as he recounts the covenant.

LESSON #4: We find him filled with gratitude over the past as he refers to God as the one who has shepherded him all his life.

LESSON #5: We see love in his heart toward others in his love for Joseph and his two sons.

LESSON #6: Children are a gift from the Lord. “They are the sons God has given me here.”

LESSON #7: God is ever surprising His children with added blessings beyond their expectations.

LESSON #8: God’s will is accomplished even in the crossing of Jacob’s hands to pronounce the blessing.

LESSON #9: We must be careful not to put our will and desires ahead of God’s will for our lives.

LESSON #10: We begin to demonstrate faith when all our “If’s” are changed to “When.”

LESSON #11: Friends and loved ones die and leave us, but God will never leave us nor forsake us.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:
