

GENESIS 48:17-22 (THE FULLNESS OF THE GENTILES)

Introduction: In the late 1920s Alexander Fleming was investigating the properties of staphylococci. These are various bacterium responsible for many infections, some of which can be lethal.

He was a well-known researcher, but he wasn't noted as a particularly tidy one. On the 3rd of September in 1928 he came back to his laboratory after having spent a month with his family. Before his vacation, and in his usual untidy way, he'd left all of his cultures on a bench.

When he came back, he found one of the cultures contaminated with fungus which had surrounded the staph culture... and destroyed it. All the other cultures that weren't tainted remained unaffected. Something life-changing had occurred.

He grew the mold in a pure culture and realized that through it a substance was produced that killed a number of disease-causing bacteria. Through research, he identified the mold with the *Penicillium* genus. Because of this, he changed the name he had given it from "mold juice" to penicillin.

In what was a misunderstanding of what he originally thought, that of having ruined an experiment, he came later to realize that he had revolutionized all of medicine by producing the world's first antibiotic.

Like Andrew Fleming, Joseph misunderstood what was occurring around him as well. He watched his father place his hands on his own two sons in a seemingly untidy way. But Joseph misunderstood the details because He misunderstood that God was in the details, directing his father Jacob according to an infinitely higher wisdom.

Today we are going on a journey... It is a journey which affects all of us and it is a journey which hinges on an ancient blessing pronounced upon the two sons of Joseph. The order of the blessing upon the boys, from that time on, would affect *all* of redemptive history, for both Jew and Gentile. It shows us the immense care God takes in every detail of His word.

Text Verse: "I taught Ephraim to walk,
Taking them by their arms;
But they did not know that I healed them.
⁴ I drew them with gentle cords,
With bands of love,
And I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck.
I stooped *and* fed them." Hosea 11:3, 4

Ephraim, a name associated with the northern ten tribes of Israel, was cared for by God, but they rejected His care. And so, God rejected them and they were exiled from their homeland. But in their exile, God never forgot them and He did something wonderful for them while the southern tribes later went into their own exile.

The rejection of the tribes, the church age, the calling back of Israel by God - all of it is hinted at in a few short verses which detail a misunderstanding by Joseph of what was occurring. It is all to be found in, and drawn out from, God's superior word. So let's turn there once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. His Younger Brother Shall be Greater Than He (verses 17-19)

In order to understand the context of what occurs in today's verses, we should go back and see what happened to bring us to the point we're at. Here are the verses from last week -

Then Israel saw Joseph's sons, and said, "Who *are* these?"

⁹ And Joseph said to his father, "They *are* my sons, whom God has given me in this *place*."

And he said, "Please bring them to me, and I will bless them."¹⁰ Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, *so that* he could not see. Then Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them.¹¹ And Israel said to Joseph, "I had not thought to see your face; but in fact, God has also shown me your offspring!"

¹² So Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth.¹³ And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right

hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought *them* near him. ¹⁴ Then Israel stretched out his right hand and laid *it* on Ephraim's head, who *was* the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, guiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh *was* the firstborn. ¹⁵ And he blessed Joseph, and said:
"God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,
The God who has fed me all my life long to this day,
¹⁶ The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil,
Bless the lads;
Let my name be named upon them,
And the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac;
And let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."

Jacob guided his hands knowingly, crossing them over so that the pre-eminent blessing would fall upon Ephraim, the younger son, instead of Manasseh, the older brother. As we saw, every detail of what occurred was given to picture the work of Jesus Christ in redemptive history.

Where Adam failed and incurred a debt which could never be satisfied, Jesus Christ prevailed and His work made it possible for all of Adam's sons to share in the grace and mercy of God. It is the same story being re-explained and repeated over and over again in the book of Genesis so that we don't miss what God has done.

At the time however, Joseph didn't understand. He thought his own father Jacob was confused about the placement of the sons and so he attempted to rectify it by intervening in the ritual...

¹⁷ Now when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took hold of his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head.

Joseph is one of the very few people in the Bible who has a substantial amount of detail about his life recorded and yet nothing overtly negative is said about him. Most of the time, when someone is highlighted as much as he is, there are notes of failings as well as notes of favor. In Exodus 33, it says this about Moses -

"So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend."
Exodus 33:11

In Numbers 12:3 it says that "Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth." And yet, despite these and many other accolades, his failings are also recorded. In one instance, he openly disobeyed God's command. When he did, we read the following -

"Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, 'Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.'" Numbers 20:12

The same is true with so many others, David, Solomon, the Apostle Peter, even Jacob, the great patriarch of the twelve tribes and the one who is now pronouncing the blessing had moments of weakness which are recorded for us. But of Joseph, this instance right now is as close to a failure as one could find.

He failed to recognize the hand of God's Spirit upon Jacob as he prophesied and blessed the boys. It further says that he was displeased. These aren't equal to the great transgressions of Moses and David, among so many others.

Instead, he merely misperceived what was occurring and he failed to understand the repetition of the same pattern which had occurred many times already within his own family in the past.

As I noted last week, already in Genesis we've seen Abel placed before Cain, Shem before Japheth, Abraham before Haran, Isaac before Ishmael, Jacob before Esau, Jacob's second wife Rachel before his first wife Leah, and Perez before Zerah.

What Joseph saw as an error, was a repetition of God's continued selection of the second over the first. In this case, it would turn out to be one of the great moments in redemptive history.

This one failure of Joseph, as recorded in God's word, is succinctly stated by the Geneva Bible, "Joseph fails by binding God's grace to the order of nature." In other words, it is the same failure that almost all of us have made, and it is the same failure that many still make in the world we live in. We attempt to shove God into a box of our own choosing. We perceive that the world should work in a particular way and we think that God will act in that way. But this is only the beginning of error. No sooner do we put God into the box, then He surprises us with amazing wisdom - far beyond that which we could ever imagine.

Paul explains it this way in the book of 1 Corinthians -

"Where *is* the wise? Where *is* the scribe? Where *is* the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. ²² For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness.." 1 Corinthians 1:20-23

Jacob had the hand of God upon him for what would become the reality of the supremacy of Ephraim over Manasseh, and he had the hand of God upon him for what would become a picture of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The hidden wisdom of God cannot be limited to a box of our own making.

*Where is the wise? Where is the scribe?
Where is the disputer of this age?
Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?
What says the next philosopher? Please... turn the page!
For since, in God's great wisdom
The world through wisdom did not know God
It pleased Him through the foolishness of the message preached
To save those who believe, while on this earth we trod
For Jews request a sign, and Greeks after wisdom seek
But we preach Christ crucified
To the Jews a stumbling block and foolishness to the Greek*

¹⁸ And Joseph said to his father, “Not so, my father, for this *one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head.*”

When Jacob was a young man, there was a sense of favoritism between his parents and he and his brother. The Bible told us about that in chapter 25 of Genesis -

"So the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents. ²⁸ And Isaac loved Esau because he ate *of his game*, but Rebekah loved Jacob." Genesis 25:27, 28

There is nothing in the Bible, however, to show us any type of favoritism between Jacob and his two grandsons. Instead, we are left with only one impression - that Jacob has been guided solely by the Spirit of prophecy upon him.

And so, even in the participants of this drama we see a picture of man as he wars within himself. In picture, Jacob is the spiritual man, guided by the Spirit and Joseph is the natural man, guided by the flesh. Jacob has leaned on Christ to conduct his affairs in this moment and Joseph has leaned on Adam.

It is the constant struggle that any believer faces, and it is a struggle Paul explains in Romans 7. There he writes -

"I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. ²² For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. ²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!" Romans 7:20-25

It is to the spiritual side of Joseph that Jacob will now petition. He will ask him to put aside his natural thoughts about how things should be and to rely rather on the wisdom of God and the guiding of the Spirit as he conducts his affairs concerning these two boys...

19 But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know.

In an attempt to allay his cherished son's fears that he has erred, Jacob calmly repeats himself, *yadati. beni, yadati* - "I know my son, I know." The repetition is intended to highlight to Joseph that he is fully aware of what he was doing. And so with his hands firmly in the proper place, he continues his explanation...

19 (con't) He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations."

There is literal truth in this statement, and there is spiritual truth as well. For the people of Israel, the literal truth is that when they are to come out of Egypt at the Exodus, there will be 8300 more fighting aged men in Ephraim than there will be in Manasseh.

And, of the hundreds of thousands of people who beheld God's glory at Mount Sinai, only two of accountable age, Joshua and Caleb, will be allowed to enter the Promised Land. Joshua, the successor of Moses is from Ephraim and Caleb is from Judah. And these two tribes will become the two predominate ones mentioned throughout the rest of the Old Testament.

From Ephraim will come Jeroboam who will become the first leader of the Ten Tribes of Israel as they break away from the southern kingdom of Judah. Because of this, the northern tribes are often synonymously called both Israel and Ephraim. The southern tribes will be known as Judah.

It is the ten northern tribes called both Israel and Ephraim that will be exiled by Sennacherib King of Assyria in 722BC. From this exile, they will be dispersed to the ends of the world, losing their identity and mixing in with the gentile peoples. This exile will include both tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh. It doesn't sound like greatness, unless one understands what occurs in their dispersion.

In his words to Joseph, Jacobs says, *v'zarow yihyeh melo hagoyim* - "his seed shall become a multitude of nations." This phrase translated

"multitude of nations" is more completely understood in a literal rendering which says, "a fullness of the gentiles."

The rest of the Bible will continue to explain this phrase which is actually only used here in the Hebrew and one other time in the New Testament. Imagine the impossible nature of Jacob being able to deduce any of this in his words upon the boys. How could he know that Ephraim would excel over Manasseh?

How could he know that Ephraim would become the representative of the northern tribes of Israel, completely separate from the southern kingdom of Judah? And how could he even consider what it means when he spoke the words "the fullness of the gentiles?"

His blessing is one of faith in the hand of God upon Him. Though his natural eyes were dim from age, his vision of the future through spiritual eyes was sharper than a needle. In his weakness, God's hand of grace upon him was made perfect.

*I find then a law, that evil is present with me
The one who wills to do good, O how can this be!*

*For in the law of God I delight
According to the inward man, so kind
But I see another law in my members, one not right
Warring against the law of my mind*

*And bringing me into captivity, like fiery embers
To the law of sin which is in my members*

*O wretched man that I am!
Who will deliver me from this body of death?
I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!
I will praise Him with all my soul and all my breath*

II. Ephraim First! (verse 20)

²⁰ So he blessed them that day, saying, "By you Israel will bless, saying, 'May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!'" And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

The blessing was pronounced upon the two adopted sons and the explanation for it was given to the wary son. But despite the higher blessing granted to Ephraim, both sons are noted as being in Joseph. Jacob says, "By you" or "In you" Israel will bless.

In other words, though the sons are named directly, the blessing is implicitly "in" the name of Joseph. This has to be considered in what is being proclaimed by Jacob. Joseph's life has been an on-going picture of Jesus - from his birth on. So when the blessing is pronounced, it is a blessing directed to the work of Messiah.

And so, to understand this, we have to go back and revisit the term, "the fullness of the gentiles" from verse 19 and see what it is picturing. It is important to know and understand, right now, that although the ten northern tribes of Israel were exiled, **there are no "lost tribes,"** something many cults and sects claim, saying that they are the lost tribes of Israel. This is entirely incorrect.

Israelites from all those northern tribes are noted throughout the rest of the Old Testament after that exile, and they are noted throughout the New Testament as well. Jesus, Paul, and James all mention there being twelve tribes at their time. Implicit references to them are made also. Thus a remnant from each tribe was preserved as God promised - there are no "lost tribes."

However, the majority of the people in the northern tribes, known as Ephraim, went into exile and were scattered among the nations. They have genetically mixed into all nations on earth. This isn't an unreasonable stretch, but it is exactly what occurs in the course of human movement.

Today we know it as the principle of Six Degrees of Separation. There is no person on earth who isn't within the spectrum of this formula. All people on earth are connected to the Jewish blood of the dispersed tribes, collectively known as Ephraim.

In Romans 9-11, Paul writes about the state of Israel, meaning the Jewish people, during the church age. In this discourse, there in chapter 11, he says these words - a mystery revealed to him which had been unknown to the world before the ink left his pen.

"For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:

"The Deliverer will come out of Zion,
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

²⁷ For this *is* My covenant with them,
When I take away their sins." Romans 11:25-27

Despite this being a mystery, unknown before Paul revealed it, this is what Jacob was prophesying of. His words, "a fullness of the Gentiles" is the same phrase which Paul uses in the New Testament there in Romans 11, "a fullness of the Gentiles."

Unfortunately, it is a mystery still not comprehended by the majority of Christianity. Paul is speaking of us. It is the church whom Jacob was referring to in his ancient oracle, as we saw so clearly in last week's sermon.

While the Jewish people, represented by the tribe of Judah is under punishment according to the law, God has directed his attention to the Gentiles, represented by the dispersed of Ephraim. And He is, in them, continuing on with His remarkable plan of salvation.

The Gentile people are brought into the commonwealth of Israel because of the work of Jesus Christ. We become partakers of the Holy Olive Tree, apart from the law, because He fulfilled the law in our stead. Only when the

Jews of Israel receive Him in the same way, will they be returned to favorable status once again.

Paul explains this clearly and succinctly in Ephesians 2:11-13 -

"Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹² that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."

In confirmation of this then, we have to return to the Old Testament book of Hosea. There in Chapter 2, we read this -

"Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth,
And I will have mercy on *her who had* not obtained mercy;
Then I will say to *those who were* not My people,
'You *are* My people!'
And they shall say, '*You are* my God!'" Hosea 2:23

Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, uses this exact verse in Romans 9 to show that God had rejected His people, the Jews, and called another group His people. This is the church; this is the gentiles; this is the seed of Ephraim. Here are his words -

"As He says also in Hosea:
'I will call them My people, who were not My people,
And her beloved, who was not beloved.'
²⁶ And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them,
'You *are* not My people,'
There they shall be called sons of the living God.'" Romans 9:25, 26

In the New Testament, after Paul's letters come the letters to the restored Jews, which happens after the church age. In them, Peter, the Apostle to the Jews, again cites a portion of Hosea's words -

"But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy." 1 Peter 2:9, 10

And if these things aren't clear enough, Ezekiel chapter 37 tells us this explicitly. Using Judah as the representative of the Jewish people from southern Israel and Ephraim as the representative of northern Israel, we read this passage which perfectly confirms Jacob's words upon his grandsons -

"Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ¹⁶ "As for you, son of man, take a stick for yourself and write on it: 'For Judah and for the children of Israel, his companions.' Then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and *for* all the house of Israel, his companions.' ¹⁷ Then join them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will become one in your hand.

¹⁸ "And when the children of your people speak to you, saying, 'Will you not show us what you *mean* by these?'— ¹⁹ say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Surely I will take the stick of Joseph, which *is* in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will join them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.'" ²⁰ And the sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes." Ezekiel 37:15-20

We are awaiting the day when this physical bonding will take place. Israel must first go through terrible times before it occurs. When they are brought through the fire, they will be refined and tested. Those who survive will call on Jesus and together, Jew and Gentile will be united in the commonwealth of Israel in reality. Until then we enjoy the blessings of Messiah by faith.

The reason for the placement of this blessing should be obvious. Israel has been brought to Egypt, they have entered the times which picture the tribulation and they will have to endure the time of plagues upon Egypt, picturing the Great Tribulation to come.

Jacob's words now, show us the miracle of the church age, all pictured by the ancient blessing which elevates the younger over the older. All of the sons of Adam, pictured by Manasseh, will be reconciled to God through Christ, pictured by Ephraim.

To this day, Jewish people still pronounce upon their children the blessing, "May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!" They do this before the beginning of Sabbath and at other times throughout the year. How wonderful it will be when they realize its significance in its fullness. May that day be soon.

As a final note concerning what is being pictured in this beautiful blessing, we need to turn to Hosea one more time and see it actually laid out in a chiasm which shows us what God is doing in redemptive history.

Hosea 1:9-2:23 - "But Me she forgot," says the LORD. (11/23/07)
A Chiasm of Contrasts - Our Unfaithfulness and God's Unlimited Mercy

- a 1:9 You are not my people, I will not be your God.
- b 1:10 Jezreel (God will sow.)
- c 2:3 Dry Land, thirst.
- d 2:5 Wife departs from her husband.
- e 2:7 Wife returns to her husband.
- f 2:9 Take away the new wine.
- g 2:10-12 God punishes Israel.
- h 2:13 God will punish her.
- x 2:13 "But Me she forgot," says the LORD
- h 2:14a God will allure her.
- g 2:14b God comforts Israel.
- f 2:15 Give vineyards.
- e 2:16 LORD says, "That you will call me 'My Husband.'"
- d 2:19 Husband betroths wife.
- c 2:21, 22 Grain, new wine, oil.
- b 2:22 Jezreel (God will sow.)
- a 2:23 You are my people; You are my God.

I found this chiasm on 23 November 2007 and it has proven a great source of comfort to me since then as I've continued to see God's word unfold before my eyes. The middle, or anchor verse, is the woeful cry, "But me she forgot, says the Lord."

All God would ask of us is to remember Him, to love Him, and to honor Him as He unfolds our lives before us. When we do, by calling on Jesus Christ, we enter into the commonwealth of Israel and are entitled to all her wonderful blessings.

*I will call them My people, who were not My people
And her beloved, who was not beloved
I will be praised among the Gentiles under every church steeple
While my disobedient Israel is from place to place shoved*

*And it shall come to pass in the place
Where it was said to them, 'You are not My people
There they shall be called sons of the living God
Righteous Gentiles worshipping under the church steeple*

III. A Portion Above Your Brothers (verses 21 & 22)

²¹ Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am dying,

In completion of his blessing and prophecy, Jacob now returns from what is spiritual, to what is natural for a moment. He utters the words which terrify all except those who live by faith, *hinneh anokhi met*, "Behold, I die."

But in Jacob, there is no sense of anguish or any lack of joy. Instead, it is the inevitable state of every man to which he confirms he is a part. Man lives, and man must die. But as a sign that he is a man of faith and unafraid of the future, he continues his words...

²¹ (con't) **but God will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers.**

From faith to faith. His blessing was one of faith and his words to Joseph now follow that path. Though he had left Canaan about 37 years earlier, having been sold by his brothers, Jacob confirms that Joseph himself will again return to the land of his fathers.

At this point, he is firmly established in the land. He is the second ruler of Egypt. His entire family has moved there and they have resided there already for many years. And yet Jacob, through his spiritual eyes knows fully that Joseph and all of Israel will return someday to Canaan. He is Jacob, the man of flesh; He is Israel who trusts His God.

***²² Moreover I have given to you one portion above your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow."**

The final words of this meeting are uttered and they again are words of faith. Not only will Joseph and his seed after him return to Canaan, but they will receive an inheritance as is now granted to them. It is for one portion above his brothers, meaning that the adopted sons will in fact receive the inheritance they have been promised.

Ephraim and Manasseh, upon whom the prophecies have been pronounced, will accompany Israel's march from Egypt, they will share in the covenant blessings, and they will inherit a specific piece of land named by Jacob.

In this grant, the Hebrew words for "one portion" are *shekhem echad* - "one shoulder." It is also the same word as the name of the city of Shechem, which Jacob obtained many years earlier. There is a lot of debate about his words here because he *bought* some land from the Hivites, and then the sons killed the people of the city, but these people weren't Amorites.

There is no record outside of this verse to support the words of this verse, and so some scholars say that he is stating this prophetically, meaning the land will be taken from the Amorites by Israel in the future. But this isn't

correct either. In Joshua 24, it says exactly the opposite when the Lord speaks to Joshua -

"I sent the hornet before you which drove them out from before you, *also* the two kings of the Amorites, *but not* with your sword or with your bow." Joshua 24:12

Further details of how Jacob obtained the land isn't needed apparently, because the Bible doesn't record them, except in this verse. What is important is that an extra portion is granted and that grant is then recorded in the book of Joshua. And the land they received was in the general area of Shechem.

It is the same piece of land which is noted in John 4 when Jesus spoke to a woman at a well which belonged, as it notes, to Joseph -

"So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph." John 4:5

The history of the Promised Land is recorded because it is God's land and He has given it to His people Israel. But God also has called out another group of people from the world to be His own. They are the unworthy recipients of God's grace which was prophesied by an old man when he blessed his two grandsons.

Surely Jacob couldn't have known the significance of his words and so surely the words were spoken by him as the Spirit of God moved him. What an amazing thing God has shown us and continues to show us as He unfolds His word before our very eyes.

Just so you know, although it can't be identified to the exact number, it is believed that Andrew Fleming's discovery of penicillin has saved 100,000,000 or more lives. Imagine that, a mistake in a laboratory which changed the world as we know it and which saved all those people.

But that is a mere drop in the bucket compared to the billions of eternal souls that have been saved by the plan of God as revealed in the pages of the Bible.

Like Fleming, Joseph thought he was witnessing a mistake, but instead, he was beholding with his own eyes the acknowledgment of a plan which includes each person who has called on Jesus Christ as Lord.

Closing Verse: "How can I give you up, Ephraim?

How can I hand you over, Israel?

How can I make you like Admah?

How can I set you like Zeboiim?

My heart churns within Me;

My sympathy is stirred.

⁹ *I will not execute the fierceness of My anger;*

I will not again destroy Ephraim.

For I am God, and not man,

The Holy One in your midst;

And I will not come with terror." Hosea 11:8, 9

Next Week: Genesis 49:1-7 (The Blessing Upon Reuben, Simeon, and Levi)
(123rd Genesis Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you and He has a good plan and purpose for you. Call on Him and let Him do marvelous things for you and through you.

May God Make You as Ephraim and Manasseh

Now when Joseph saw that his father
Laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim
It displeased him; he found it a bother

So he took hold of his father's hand
To remove it from Ephraim's head
And thus over to Manasseh's head, instead

And Joseph to his father said
“Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn
Put your right hand on his head
Let the blessing, his soul adorn

But his father refused and said
“I know, my son, I know
He also shall become a people
And he shall be great also

But truly his younger brother shall be greater than he in acclamations
And his descendants shall become a multitude of nations

So he blessed them that day, speaking this way
“By you Israel will bless, as they declare
‘May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!’”
By them may they all others so compare

And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh
This is what transpired on that day

Then Israel said to Joseph
“Behold, I am dying, without cares or bothers
But God will be with you and bring you back
There, to the land of your fathers

Moreover I have given to you, and in your sight
Above your brothers one portion
Which I took from the hand of the Amorite
With my sword and my bow, this is my proclamation

Living in the presence of the Lord
Dying as an old man, full of faith and hope
Jacob pronounced his prophetic word
Which is revealed in redemption's scope

God had a plan for his people Israel
But this plan involves all other nations too
And we see it as history does tell
In the salvation of Gentiles like me and you

God's love for His creatures is perfect and pure
And it is demonstrated in the giving of Jesus, His Son
In Him there is a wondrous hope, eternal and sure
And in Him all that was needed has been done

Now by faith we can in the presence of God be made just
And for eternal years praises to Him will flow from us
Because of the work of Another in which we trust
Because of the majestic work of our Lord Jesus

Hallelujah and Amen...