

I. Introduction and review: Jacob ends well. Heb. 11:21

II. Jacob (Israel) blesses Joseph and his sons. 48:1-22

A. Jacob summons Joseph to his deathbed. v. 1-4

1. Joseph rushes to his side, bringing his sons Ephraim and Manasseh. v. 1-2
2. Jacob recalls his personal reception of God's covenant promise. v. 3-4 35:9-13
3. In what sense is the land given to Jacob's descendants as an everlasting possession? v. 4b Gal. 3:28-29 I Pe. 2:9-10 Gen. 12:2-3 Heb. 13:14 11:16
4. How does this scene compare to when Jacob's father Isaac blessed his sons? 27:1f

B. Jacob embraces Ephraim and Manasseh as his own sons. v. 5-12

1. Joseph will be represented by two tribes in Israel. v. 5-7 I Chron. 5:1-2
2. Ephraim and Manasseh are formally adopted by Jacob. v. 8-12

C. Israel blesses Ephraim and Manasseh. v. 13-20

1. Jacob praises God for His faithfulness. v. 15-16
2. Joseph is disturbed because Jacob's right hand, which conveys the greater blessing, is on the younger grandson. v. 13-14, 17-18
3. Again God chooses to go against human convention by giving the greater blessing to the younger son. v. 19 25:23 I Sam. 16:7 Isa. 55:8-9 Ro. 9:10f
4. Both sons are richly blessed. v. 16b, 19-20 Isa. 7:9 Hos. 4:17

D. Joseph is given a special place in the promised land. v. 21-22 Josh 24:32 John 4:5

1. Why didn't they go back when the famine was over? 15:13
2. God had promised that one day Israel's children will possess the entire land.
3. As Jacob dies, he has title to one small portion, which he gives to Joseph.
4. When will Joseph be able to occupy his property?

E. Why is this considered Jacob's great act of faith? v. 13-20 Heb. 11:21,1

1. Jacob's outlook on life has changed. v. 15-16 47:9 42:38 45:8 50:20 Ps. 23:4-5a
2. He confidently confers blessings which are centuries away from fulfillment.
3. Joseph and his sons also express their faith. Heb. 11:24-25
4. Each of God's promises is fulfilled. v. 4, 19 Deut. 33:17 Num. 26:28f Jo. 4:5

III. How does this passage apply to us?

A. The choice of Joseph's sons, and of Ephraim to surpass Manasseh, illustrate God's sovereign election. Romans 9:10-12

1. Neither is selected because he is more worthy. I Cor. 1:27-29
2. We also have nothing about which to boast. I Cor. 1:30-31
3. God sovereignly bestows blessings to His people. v. 19 I Cor. 4:7 Rom. 13:3
4. Sometimes God seems to cross His arms, defying human expectation in how He blesses. I Co. 1:26-27 Prov. 16:9

B. God is our Shepherd. v. 15

1. This is the first time God is referred to by this title. 49:24 Ps. 23 80:1 Is. 40:11 Jo. 10:11 Heb. 13:20 I Pe. 2:25 5:4
2. Jacob implicitly admits he is a sheep. Isa. 53:6 Ps. 119:176
3. God cares for us as a Shepherd. Ps. 23

- C. God is the Angel who redeems His people. v. 16a 31:11,13 32:22f Hos. 12:4
 - 1. Who was the Angel who appeared to Jacob and wrestled him? 31:11-13 32:28
 - 2. This is the first reference to God as Redeemer. Ex. 6:6 Lev. 25:49 Ruth 4:14 Job 19:25 Hos. 13:14
 - 3. The Lord continues to deliver His people from evil. Mt. 6:13b
 - 4. One day you will see God's good hand even in the hardships of your life.

D. We should embrace God's promises.

- 1. We have many great and precious promises. Gal. 3:29 II Co. 1:20 II Pe. 1:4
- 2. We willingly identify with God's people even if it involves renouncing our place in this world. Heb. 11:24-26
- 3. We eagerly await the fulness of covenant kingdom blessings. Heb. 13:14
- 4. God's promises are most valuable when they are least visible. II Cor. 4:16-18 5:7
- 5. In the meantime, we store up treasures in heaven. Mt. 6:29-31

E. We should strive to give our children a legacy of faith.

IV. How does this passage point to Christ?

- A. We are adopted by God in Christ. Jo. 1:11-13 Ro. 8:15,23 Ga. 4:5 Eph. 1:5 2:11f
- B. He is the Angel of the LORD - God appearing in human form. Jo. 1:1-2,14 Col. 2:9
- C. He is the Good Shepherd. John 10:14 17:12 He. 13:20 I Pe. 2:25 5:4 Re. 7:17 Mt. 2:6
- D. He has redeemed us from sin and evil. I Pe. 1:18 Titus 2:14 Job 19:25 Gal. 3:13 Rom. 3:23-24 Luke 1:68 I Co. 1:30 Eph. 1:7,14 Col. 1:14 Heb. 9:12
- E. All the promises to the patriarchs are fulfilled in Him. Rom. 15:8 I Pe. 2:9-10 II Cor. 1:20 Gal. 3:16 Rev. 5:9-10,13 7:9 11:15

V. Concluding applications.

- A. Make it your aim to end well, whenever the end may come. Heb. 9:27 Job. 19:25
- B. Don't wait until you are about to die to speak to your family about the Lord. Dt. 6
- C. Do you have a personal relationship with God as your Shepherd and Redeemer?

Discussion questions

1. Why do some say Jacob's last years were his best years?
2. Why does Jacob summon Joseph and his two sons to his bedside?
3. What is the significance of what Jacob does with Ephraim and Manasseh?
4. Why is this blessing considered a great act of faith? Heb. 11:21
5. What does it mean that God is our Shepherd? Where else in the Bible is this taught?
6. Who is the Angel of the Lord who wrestled with Jacob?
7. What does a Redeemer do?
8. Who now possesses the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?
9. How should your understanding of God and His promises from this passage affect you?
10. How does this passage point to Christ?