

GENESIS 48:8-16 (BY FAITH JACOB...)

Introduction: Take a second and think... what is it that you believe is your greatest achievement that you will be rewarded for by Jesus. Romans 14:10 says that we're all going to stand before Him at the judgment. In 1 Corinthians 3, Paul says that our foundation is Jesus Christ. He then goes on to say this:

"Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³ each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. ¹⁴ If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire." 1 Corinthians 3:12-15

So again, the question is, what do you feel you will be most rewarded for? What is it that pleases God the most? Is it how much money you gave to the church or charities? Is it how many times you read the Bible? Is it whether you kept the speed limit all your life? What thing or things do you think God is most pleased with.

The answer is so basic, so seemingly unimportant in our world, and so simple that we tend to skip right over it. And yet, it is the thing the ancients were most noted for, and it is the thing which allows us access into heaven itself. It is simple faith. Today, we will see Jacob's greatest act of faith, which is recorded in a few short verses which seem to have nothing to do with faith.

It is a beautiful passage which is deep in its theological significance.

Text Verse: ...let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:1, 2

Hebrews chapter 11 details the faithful actions of God's people and it shows us those things with which God is most pleased. Then, at the beginning of the 12th chapter we are asked to follow suit with them, laying aside everything that could weigh us down and to focus our eyes on Jesus.

If we pursue this end with all of our souls, this will be the thing we are most noted for when we stand before Him as we receive our rewards. It is all about Jesus and we are asked to place all of our faith in Him. And He is to be found in His superior word, so let's go to that word now and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Sons Whom God has Given Me (verses 8-11)

⁸Then Israel saw Joseph's sons, and said, "Who *are* these?"

In verse 10, we'll see that Jacob, who is now an old man, has eyes that are so dim that he can't tell who is near him any longer. He has been in a conversation with Joseph while the his two sons stood silently and listened. Now, after having explained to Joseph why he wanted to adopt his sons into the family, he asks about the two who came with him.

Rather than Joseph being the one to introduce them first, he waited for Jacob to ask about them. They could have been friends from the royal court, royal bodyguards, Joseph's chariot men, or anyone else. Israel didn't know, and so he now asks about them.

Not recognizing them is important, because it shows that his desire to adopt Joseph's sons wasn't simply based on sudden affections for them when they came with Joseph. Instead, it is something he had already decided on apart from any impulsive tugging of his heart strings. God has placed this in his heart for His reasons and Jacob was following through with the Spirit's prompting.

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

His response is given as a confirmation of what Israel said earlier in verse 5 -

"And now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, *are* mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine."

The sons born to him in Egypt before the arrival of the family are the sons who are now presented to him. And in credit to Joseph's character, which has been exceptional throughout the narrative of his life, he recognizes that it was God who gave him those sons.

The obvious directed care of his life, from the beginning even to this point shows more than luck or happenstance. Everything that happened to him has been a result of God's attention to him as he has directed him.

If this is true with the many personal details of his rescue from the pit, his being sold to an Egyptian noble, the timing of his stay in prison which led to his being brought before Pharaoh, and everything else that has happened, then it must also be true with the granting of his sons.

In faithful acknowledgment of that, he credits God with their bestowal upon him. And the concept is borne out in the psalms with these words -

Behold, children *are* a heritage from the LORD,
The fruit of the womb *is* a reward.

⁴ Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,
So *are* the children of one's youth.

⁵ Happy *is* the man who has his quiver full of them; Psalm 127:3-5

⁹ (con't) **And he said, "Please bring them to me, and I will bless them."**

Of all of the acts of Jacob's life that are recorded, beginning at his birth in chapter 25 and continuing until his death in chapter 49 - a life which encompasses more detail than any other person in Genesis, this act that he

is about to engage in, in conjunction with something he previously requested, is what he is highlighted for in Hebrews 11.

There in the great hall of faith of the Bible, this is what is remembered of this man of God -

"By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, *leaning* on the top of his staff." Hebrews 11:21

The blessing of his sons and the worshipping on his staff are noted as his greatest moments of faith. And they are reversed in Hebrews. The worshipping was seen at the end of the previous chapter after he had been given the promise by Joseph that he would be buried with his fathers in Canaan.

Now in this chapter, the blessing of the sons is given, but it is highlighted first by the author of Hebrews. One must ask, "What is it that makes this such a momentous event that it is singled out as his greatest act of faith?" Is it that he blessed them? Is it what the blessing said? Is it the unusual manner in which he will bless them?

Why did the author of Hebrews decide on this as his greatest act of faith? To understand, we have to go back to Hebrews 11:1 and read the Bible's definition of faith -

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Hebrews 11:1

The answer isn't found in the act of the blessing. That is present and tangible reality to Jacob. As he blesses, the act is performed. However, the words *of the blessing* and *the way* the blessing is conducted are in anticipation of the future. Combined, they form this great culminating moment in the life of Israel.

This man spoke with God personally several times. He wrestled with Him in the night. He held the covenant blessings and inherited all of the possessions of his fathers before him. He beheld his son Joseph whom he believed to be dead and who had become the savior of the known world.

He had even acknowledged God's blessing upon his life in all ways. But it was the *unknown future* which he spoke of and acted towards that God found pleasing in His sight. This is what we should learn, if nothing else, from what Hebrews 11 says about Jacob.

The greatness of the man wasn't credited by God because of any of the many things which occurred *during* his life, but for his faith in the things coming *after* his life. This is what God was pleased with in Jacob and it shows us what God will be pleased with in us.

The things we do may be right and noble - helping others, donating to support your church, taking care of God's world as you pass through it. These are good and right things to do, but what God is most pleased with are the not the things you *can see and act upon*, they are the things you *cannot see and yet you put your faith in*.

And those things must... must be centered on Jesus Christ for them to be reckoned as worthy of note in God's sight. All of this history of Jacob, all of his acts and blessings, all of his interactions with God, and yet his faith in the future is what he is noted for.

After Jacob's dies, it won't be until the time of Moses that another person receives such remarkable detail concerning his life and his deeds, but it is only his faith that is singled out for note. Don't forget this lesson. Your faith is of great value in the sight of God.

*Without faith it is impossible to please God
And so He seeks those who will simply believe His word
And those who cherish and love Him with each step they tread
Who accept the gift of His Son, Jesus our Lord*

*It is these with whom God is pleased
And upon them His favor will last for all eternity
Through the blood of Christ, God's wrath has been appeased
And with His Spirit we are sealed, our pledge of surety*

¹⁰ Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see.

This is reminiscent of Jacob's own father Isaac. In Genesis 27:1 we read this about him prior to the bestowal of his blessing -

"Now it came to pass, when Isaac was old and his eyes were so dim that he could not see, that he called Esau his older son and said to him, "My son." And he answered him, 'Here I am.'" Genesis 27:1

There is a difference though. In Isaac's case, the word translated as dim is *kahah*, dark. His eyes had lost their light and he was unable to see because of it. In Jacob's case, the word is *kaved*, heavy. His eyes were poor and vision was strained so that it was difficult to see.

As has been the case many such times so far, and as will continue throughout the Bible, when two things which are similar are noted, it is to show us both a contrast between the two, and a confirmation of something. In the case of Isaac's blessing upon his son, the Lord had spoken to Rebekah before their birth with these words -

"Two nations *are* in your womb,
Two peoples shall be separated from your body;
One people shall be stronger than the other,
And the older shall serve the younger." Genesis 25:23

In contrast, God's plans were accomplished *through* Isaac's blindness. It was *because* of his infirmity that the prophecy was fulfilled. In the case of Jacob however, we will see that it is *despite* his infirmity that God's will is accomplished.

In confirmation, these two accounts demonstrate God's sovereignty over time and circumstance, as well as over human choice. This doesn't mean free will is excluded, but that God uses our free-will choices to direct his ultimate purposes.

We can't say that free-will was excluded in Isaac's blessing since he couldn't see, because Jacob and Rebekah exercised free will in order to deceive him.

If free-will were excluded, the fault would have to be credited to God and that is certainly not the case.

Thus as I said, God's sovereignty is the confirmation between these two accounts. One is in Canaan; one is in Egypt - He is sovereign over all the earth. One shows a voluntary blessing over the wrong son which turned out to be the correct one to bless.

One shows a voluntary blessing over the right son; who is perceived to be the wrong son. Despite the contrasts, they confirm God's sovereign hand over every aspect of every situation that arises. In other words, God is in complete control over even the things we think are out of His control.

¹⁰ (con't) Then Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them.

We need to remember that these two sons are around 20 years old. They aren't little children, and yet they allow their father to direct them, and guide them. In this tender moment, Jacob kisses the two boys. In all of the accounts of his life, Jacob is only noted as bestowing kisses three times.

The first time was when he deceived Isaac and kissed his father before receiving his blessing. The second time was when he first met his beloved Rachel and kissed her. And now this time, when he kisses his two grandchildren, descendants of Rachel and those who will be included in the covenant blessing received from Isaac.

It isn't coincidence that only these three instances are recorded. Others are noted as kissing him, like his father in law Laban and his brother Esau, but out of certainly many kisses he bestowed in his long life, only these three accounts are given. They tie the life of Jacob together into a picture of God's sovereignty and His grace.

¹¹ And Israel said to Joseph, "I had not thought to see your face; but in fact, God has also shown me your offspring!"

It was a gap of more than 20 years that Jacob thought his son was dead. Never in his wildest imagination did he expect to see him again. But God

had different plans and they were reunited. And even more, he now beheld the sons of his lost son as well.

However, though being translated as "sons" or "children" by some, the word Israel uses is *zarekha*, "your seed." And there is a reason for this which goes back to the promise to Abraham. He was told he would be the father of many nations and that through his seed, the nations of the earth would be blessed.

Paul builds on this in the New Testament and says that we are sons of Abraham by faith in Jesus Christ. Joseph has pictured Christ married to a gentile bride. Those sons of his are being adopted into the commonwealth of Israel by Jacob, but they are already Abraham's descendents because of Joseph's lineage.

This then is reflected in the letter to the Hebrews. Listen to how closely the words there reflect what we see in Joseph picturing Christ and his sons picturing gentile believers who are the seed of Abraham by faith in Christ. The parallel is exact -

"Here am I and the children whom God has given Me." ⁴ Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. ¹⁶ For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. Hebrews 2:13-14

The author of Hebrews is writing to the Hebrews, but he is including all of Abraham's descendents in his letter. This adoption by Jacob pictures our adoption into the commonwealth of Israel because we are sons of Abraham by faith in Christ.

*Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord
The fruit of the womb is truly a reward*

*Like arrows in the warrior's hand
So are the children of one's youth*

*Happy is the man with a quiver so grand
Children of wisdom, obedience and truth*

*Imagine the multitude of Abraham's seed!
How pleased Father Abraham must be
God has done a most glorious work indeed!
By faith in Christ we are adopted into his family tree*

II. Led By the Spirit (verses 12-14)

¹² So Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth.

After Jacob bestowed his affections on his grandchildren, Joseph conducted them out of the way in order to provide a clear path between himself and his father in order to humble himself before him. This is a demonstration of the immense respect seen often in the father/son relationship found in the Bible.

Joseph surpassed his father in worldly greatness, wealth, and honor, and yet he humbles himself before Israel prior to the bestowal of the blessing. Thus he is acknowledging that inclusion of his sons into the family as equals is greater than any other honor he possessed and it is the highest he could receive.

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.

This is the first time in the Bible the position of the *right hand* is noted as the preeminent position. It will be noted many times after this. Only one blessing is given, but a distinction is made between the right and the left. The one blessing actually becomes two.

If there were only one person, one or both hands would still transfer only one blessing, but when two are present, the right hand is shown to be the

one of greater note. Joseph knows this and so he is purposely placing them in birth order to allow the older to receive the higher conferral.

Because of what happened between Jacob and Esau 70 years earlier when Isaac blessed the wrong son, the Bible is careful to record the measures Joseph took to make sure there would be no error in this blessing. In the case of Isaac and Jacob there was *intentional deceit* to secure the blessing

In the case of Jacob and Joseph's sons, there is *intentional care* to properly secure the blessing. In both cases, there is misunderstanding concerning God's plans. Jacob's father Isaac misunderstood and Jacob's son Joseph now misunderstands. Israel is the link between the two, and the Spirit is the guide for both.

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.

Despite Joseph's care, which the Bible meticulously notes, Israel does the unexpected when he pronounces his blessing. He guides his hands knowingly to cross over to the opposite son. The word translated as "knowingly" is *sikel*. It means "to consider" or "deliberate," however, it may come from an unused root word meaning to "intertwine," hence "to cross."

This is why some translations say it one way and some another. But in the end, the result is the same, he deliberately crossed his hands to pronounce this blessing. Thus, he is placing younger Ephraim above older Manasseh. This is something that has happened repeatedly so far in the Bible and which will continue through the rest of it.

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.

Again and again, God is returning us to this theme and He is doing it for a very important reason - to show us the work of Christ, the second Man,

being accepted over the failings of the first man, Adam. Paul explains this in detail in 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

How though does this specifically prefigure the work of Christ? In order to understand, we have to look again, as we did many sermons ago, at the names of the two sons. Joseph named the first Manasseh who pictures Adam. The name comes from the verb *nasha*, which means "to forget."

In Hebrew, and thus in the Bible, to forget something doesn't mean what we think in English. Something can be forgotten because the memory fades, but the Bible's idea of forgetting is active. It is taking something away.

And so Joseph, was taking away the memory of his past. Joseph named his son Manasseh because he forgot, even though he hadn't really forgotten. The word-play on his name is that he "forgot by taking away - *nasha*."

However, there is more to the name Manasseh. The name is derived from *nasha* which means to forget, but the same word also means "a debt." The Bible's concept of a debt is different than we handle a debt today. In the Bible, when something is lent, it is pushed out of mind. For example, Jesus says this in Luke 6 -

"And if you lend *to those* from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back.
³⁵ But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil." Luke 6:34, 35

The idea is that only a person in need would ask for a loan and so the loan should be forgotten. If the debt is repaid, then it is brought back to mind. If it isn't, it is to be water under the bridge. And so as much as the name Manasseh means "to forget" it also means "from a debt."

The second son is named Ephraim. He pictures Christ. Ephraim comes from the word *apher* which means "fruitful." The IM at the end of the name makes the word plural - double fruitful, or twice fruitful. But *apher* also

means "ashes." Ashes are emblematic of grief or sorrow, especially for *judgment on sin*, such as when Abraham said, "I who am but dust and ashes..."

He meant that he is a man made from the dust and one deserving of the judgment of being reduced to ashes. And so the double play on this name wasn't just that Joseph was doubly fruitful in the land of his affliction, but that he remained filled *with grief* over being separated from his father and his home *in* the land of his affliction.

By knowing this, the naming of the sons, and the wordplay involved in those names will now make all the sense in the world. Manasseh means "to forget" but it also means "from a debt." He pictures Adam, who is the man who owes a debt but whose debt... is forgotten in Christ.

Ephraim means, "twice fruitful", but it also means "ashes." He pictures Jesus. He is twice fruitful in the land of His affliction, prevailing over the law and thus becoming the Savior of Jew and Gentile, but his work also meant that sin was judged in Him, thus the ashes. Hence, "the land of His affliction."

This account of Jacob blessing Ephraim over Manasseh is given to us to specifically show the work of Christ replacing the fallen state of Adam. This is why such minute care was given concerning the placement of the sons by Joseph and then the knowing movement of Jacob's hands to override the decision. It is all about Jesus.

Finally, this verse begins to explain why Jacob is noted for this in Hebrews chapter 11. Despite not being able to see, he allowed the Spirit of God to guide his hands for the blessing upon the boys. In placing Ephraim above Manasseh, he firmly believed it would be fulfilled that the younger would be greater than the older. He was blessing them based on faith; faith in the work of Christ.

*You and I, we owe that which we cannot pay
But God in Christ is willing to forgive and forget
It is His shed blood that washes the debt away*

And through His work, our reconciliation with God is set

*Jesus came to undo what we had done wrong
In His work, He became doubly fruitful, blessing Jew and Gentile
Now, of His time of affliction we sing a joyous song
Because of His work, God can again upon us smile*

III. The Blessing is Pronounced (verses 15 & 16)

¹⁵ And he blessed Joseph, and said:

Anyone? He blessed Joseph... The blessing on the sons is actually a blessing on Joseph. By blessing them, he is elevating Joseph to a double-status among his brothers. Thus, in this blessing, the naming of Joseph so long ago is again fulfilled. Like his two sons, his name is based on two words, *asaph*, meaning to "take away," and *yoseph*, meaning "he shall add."

In this blessing, Jacob has taken away the reproach of his brothers who sold him off, and he has added in not one, but two sons to the covenant people. The work of Christ as pictured by the two sons Manasseh and Ephraim is seen complete in the blessing upon Joseph. A heavenly drama is being pictured in this earthly ritual.

^{15 (con't)} "God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,

It is an unfortunate translation. Both times God is mentioned in verse 15, it says *ha'elohim*, "the God." It is emphatic and it is intended to show us that the God of the covenant, Jehovah, is the one true God. He is El Shaddai. He is Jesus. He is One. It is in the name of this God, before whom Abraham and Isaac walked, that the blessing is being pronounced.

He is the God of the past, belonging to his fathers. He is the God who authored the covenant and who gave the promises. He carried the recipients of the covenant throughout their lives and he continued to do so after they were gone. He.is.Jesus.

15 (con't) The God who has fed me all my life long to this day,

After carrying Abraham and Isaac, he also tended to Jacob. And so Jacob says, *Ha'elohim ha'roeh oti*, "The God who has fed me" is literally translated "the God shepherding me." He is the Shepherd of the 23rd Psalm; He is Jehovah.

He is the Good Shepherd of John 7. He is the One who tends to and cares for His flock, meeting their every need as they anticipate the eternal days ahead in the new heavens and the new earth where there will be One Shepherd and one flock. He.is.Christ.Jesus.

16 The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil,

Still speaking of the same God, he calls him *ha'malakh ha'goel* "the Angel, the Redeemer." The Angel of the Lord is the Lord. He is the visible, tangible manifestation of Jehovah already seen, and who will again be seen many times in the pages of Scripture. He.is.Jesus.

And He is the Redeemer of man. This is the first use of the word *goel* in the Bible. This word will be translated in two main ways - one is "avenger of blood" and the second is "kinsman redeemer." Both of these are ascribed to Jesus in the New Testament. He is the One who avenges the blood of His saints and the One who redeems us from our sin, being our Kinsman of the flesh. He.is.Jesus.

16 (con't) Bless the lads;

The word "bless" is singular, not plural. Thus the names which were invoked are all One. The God of the fathers, the God who watches over us, and the Angel who redeems us are One. To this One - our.Lord.Jesus, Jacob requests a blessing be made upon the two sons of Joseph.

16 (con't) Let my name be named upon them,

Let my name be upon them. He is asking that his name, Israel, be upon them and that they will be accounted as Israel. These sons, born of a

foreign woman in a foreign land are to be reckoned as those who have striven with God and prevailed.

They are you, and they are me. They are the multitudes of gentiles who have been grafted into the commonwealth blessings of Jesus Christ by faith. Paul speaks of this 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."

¹⁶ (con't) **And the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac;**

As Jacob is the son of the promised line and as Isaac was before him, leading back to father Abraham the man of faith, so may these two be reckoned. Isaac was the submissive son who was known above all for his obedience to his father's will. Abraham was the man of faith who received the sign of promise.

Jacob asks that the name of these two great patriarchs rest upon these two foreign-born sons. May these sons be known for their submission and for their faith. May they be reckoned among the redeemed because of this.

***¹⁶ (fin) And let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."**

We finish with this final portion of verse 16 with the words *v'yidgu larov b'qerev ha'eret*. Literally translated, this says "and increase like fish into a multitude in the midst of the earth." It is not coincidence that this concept of multiplication like fish transfers into the symbol of the fish among Christians.

The fish symbol comes from an acrostic of the words Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, Θεοῦ Υἱός, Σωτήρ", (Iēsous Christos, Theou Yios, Sōtēr) - Jesus Christ God Son Savior. The letters of this acrostic are ichthus, Greek for "fish;" hence, the Jesus fish - something prefigured in an ancient blessing by a dying man

upon his two adopted sons, born of a gentile woman, from almost 4000 years ago.

It is vast multitudes of people like you and me in the midst of the earth, all members of the body of Jesus Christ our Lord. This verse then gives the final explanation for why Jacob was noted for this blessing in Hebrews 11.

Not only did he allow the Spirit to guide his hands as he blessed the boys, but he, by faith blessed them concerning their inheritance, firmly believing that it would be fulfilled even though they were in a foreign land. This, combined with his faith in the promise of being buried in Canaan, is what he is most noted for.

"By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff." The reversal of the order, listing his blessing first is because the blessing, like his father Isaac's blessing, speaks of their future and the covenant blessings.

The deathbed charge from the last chapter is listed second because this, like Joseph's deathbed charge which is coming in Genesis 50, both speak of the inheritance of the promised land. The first is an earthly hope for abundance in life; the second is a heavenly hope for eternity in the true Promised Land.

Both look forward in a different way and together they are what Jacob is above-all noted for. He has faith in the promises of God, something we too can be found noted for if we are simply willing to believe... to accept God at His word.

In order to be noted among heaven's roles though, you have to first be a member of God's heavenly family. And the Bible says that this can only happen by belonging to Jesus Christ. He is the only way to be reconciled to God and to have your sins forgiven.

Closing Verse: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance

incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Peter 1:3-5

Next Week: Genesis 48:17-22 (The Fullness of the Gentiles) (122nd 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.

By Faith Jacob...

Then Israel saw Joseph's sons, and said
"Who are these? Are they friends, or family instead?"

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."
And I will petition them for God's grace

Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, heavy and overwrought
So much so that he could not see
Then Joseph near to him them he brought
And he kissed them and embraced them tenderly

And Israel said to Joseph this thing
"I had not thought to see your face
But in fact, God has also shown me your offspring!"
The many years of sadness, in this he did erase

So Joseph brought them from beside his knees
And he bowed down with his face to the earth
In humbled submission, his father to please

And Joseph took them both in a manner forthright
Ephraim with his right hand toward the left of Israel

And Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right
And brought them near to him as well

Then Israel stretched out his right hand
And laid it on Ephraim's head
Who was the younger we understand
And his left hand on Manasseh's head instead

Guiding his hands knowingly although
Manasseh was the firstborn as he surely did know

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,
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.”

In his blessing upon these boys
They were brought into the covenant graces
And God has done the same for the Gentiles
From all nations, from all peoples, from all places

We share in the heavenly promise by simple faith in Jesus
We are the redeemed of the Lord and set on a heavenly course
God alone has done all of these wondrous things for us
Of our faith, of our works, of our lives - He is the Source

Thank You O God for the opportunity to be reconciled to You
Through the shed blood of Christ, who is ever-faithful and true

Hallelujah and Amen...