

Genesis 47-48
"Savior Or Lord?"

We've seen Joseph go from the pit to the palace, from being humbled in radical fashion to being exalted on high sitting at the right hand of power. He's gone from being accused of sin, to becoming the savior of the known world & now because of dry times & difficult days his brothers (the same ones who despised & rejected him) have now come to him, the 1st time they didn't recognize him but the 2nd time he revealed himself to them. He told them to spread the word of his glory, of the good things they'd seen in him, the future & the hope he'd prepared for them. They were to go & get their father & he would then care for them all the days of their lives.

Upon hearing the news of Joseph not only being alive but being the most powerful man on the planet, Jacob didn't believe them. He thought they were up to some sort of scam, but upon hearing *his* (Joseph's) words, seeing his goodness toward them in the way that he'd blessed them, he believed. **Even so we recognize that people will come to believe that *Jesus* is alive, that He's seated in power at the right hand of God & has become the Savior of the world as we give to them *His* word & display for them *His* goodness & mercy toward our lives. It's on us to spread the word of His glory, to tell others of all the good things we've seen *in Him*, the future & the hope that He's prepared for them.**

Jacob heard the testimony, & it fueled his hearts desire to meet w/Joseph personally. Even as when people hear your testimony it fuels their desire to meet w/Jesus personally. So on his way out of Canaan he sought the Lord; & God confirmed to him that he was to go to Egypt, that He would be w/him & there he would multiply into a great nation, that Joseph would take care of him & be w/him & he would be the one to close his eyes when he died.

It had been 22, 23, maybe 24 yrs since he'd seen Joseph, all this time he thought he was dead, but he's alive... As you might imagine it was an emotionally charged reunion as they fell on one another's necks & wept a good long time. The whole family is finally together & now Joseph will present them to the Pharaoh. He won't speak of their faults or flaws or failures, he's there to bless them, to give of the best of the land to them. Listen, one day we'll all be gathered together as a family & there Jesus will be... & He will present us before the throne of God; He won't bring up all our faults, He won't speak of our flaws & our failures (He's washed us clean by His blood). **Jude tells us that He will present us *faultless* before the presence of His glory w/exceeding joy (24); & He will *bless* us & give to us the reward of the inheritance we've obtained *in Him* & *by Him*.**

Vs 1-4

Even though this deal was worked out before they got there, this is the formal request made to Pharaoh for inhabiting the land. Now when they say they've come to "dwell" in the land, a more accurate translation (KJV, ASV) would be that they've come to "sojourn" in the land. **The idea being that they have no intention of being there indefinitely, but they would like to abide there temporarily for awhile. They have no intentions of seeking to stay permanently in the land of Egypt, however for now it's necessary.**

Of course you can see the application in this can't you? We've discussed before that Egypt is a "type" or a "picture" of the world in scripture. As those whom God has called to be His own, this place is not your home. You have no intentions of being here *permanently*, you're not looking to put roots down here *personally*, however *temporarily* it's necessary that you be here. But when the time is right, when God calls you, you'll head out & head home, amen?

& We note again that they were to be very straightforward about who they were. They were shepherds. Joseph told them that shepherds were an abomination to Egyptians. But that's ok it would insulate them from the pagan influence of Egypt. God would use that to keep them set apart being *in* the world but not of the world. You & me, we are to be honest & straightforward about who we are. We are Christians, we believe in the Lord J.C. Now the world doesn't much like that, they may be "standoffish" because of that. That's ok. God will use that to keep you from the influence of this world, once they know you're a Christian they'll quit inviting you to the party, they won't engage you in vulgar ways (there's always an exception or 2 but for the most part your honesty will serve you & help you to grow spiritually). **You try to keep your identity a secret it will only get you into trouble & open for you the door to compromise.**

Be open about who you are. People might shun you initially, but when their life starts falling apart, they'll pull you aside & want to talk to you secretly & God will give to you the opportunity to share the hope that you have in Christ. Shine as lights in the world (Be honest about who your are) & God will be glorified in your life.

Vs 5-10

For those of us who've been here throughout Jacob's journey it's great to see him at a point in his life whereby he's walking by faith, representing the Lord & finishing well.

He's had his ups & downs (as do we all) but now he's leveling out as a man of faith. He enters the presence of Pharaoh & pronounces a blessing upon him. You guys this is a *HUGE* deal. Pharaoh's believed that they were of the stock of gods... & The bible is clear that beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the greater (Heb 7:7). So when Jacob comes in and commences to bless the Pharaoh that's sending a message...

Now I'm not sure that Jacob believes he's greater than Pharaoh personally, (Pharaoh had more than him politically, financially & militarily) but Jacob stands to represent God Almighty & in that *he* has the greater position. He wasn't impressed by his riches, intimidated by his fame... It's easy for us to be impressed w/the things of this world when in reality it's all a façade, there's nothing of substance there, it's empty & vain & *you* have the better part. *You* have something to offer. *You* have this treasure (the gospel) in earthen vessels, the excellence of the power of God.

Jacob brought w/him a blessing into this unbeliever's presence. God desires us to be a blessing to others. It's been said that some people are a blessing *wherever* they go, others are a blessing *whenever* they go 😊. You ever wonder where you fit in on that spectrum?

We've already established the fact that we're just passing through in this world, like Jacob we're just pilgrims & sojourners... That's why you don't get too upset when things are shaken. You lose your job, your home forecloses, you're hit by some medical malady, things that are certainly a tragedy but we're not w/out hope. **This world isn't our home.** Paul likened these bodies to tents... temporary dwelling places. But Jesus said that what awaits us is a mansion, a permanent place in heaven w/no more pain, no more problems, no more heartaches or heartbreaks... no more tears. Don't get bogged down w/the things of this world, you won't be here long enough, you're just passing through. You're looking for a city which has foundations whose builder & maker is God.

But God would have us to be a blessing along the way. Peter put it like this, **"Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles,"**¹ Bearing witness to the True & Living God.

Pharaoh says, "How old *are* you?" Jacob says, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years, few & evil have been the days of the years of my life & they haven't attained to the days of the yrs of the life of my fathers..."

¹ The New King James Version. (1982). (1 Pe 2:11-12). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Now to you & me 130 yrs seems like quite awhile, but Jacob is speaking to the eternal perspective. The psalmist said it like this, *"Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths, And my age is as nothing before You; Certainly every man at his best state is but vapor."*² In the NT vernacular we read it like this, *"For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away."*³

Jacob says, "In the big picture I've been but a bleep on eternities radar." When he says his days have been "evil" he's not being cynical, he's acknowledge that life is hard & his has been no exception. He doesn't point to his great accomplishments, he's acknowledging the sustaining grace of God's faithfulness. In this world we'll have tribulation (that's what Jesus said) that's why our hope isn't in the world, but in Christ who has overcome the world. Jacob is simply a sinner saved by grace. I'd imagine he acknowledged Pharaoh's goodness/kindness to his son Joseph & said something to the effect of "May God repay you in like manner & may He be good & gracious unto you." No doubt he asked God's blessing upon him for granting his family solitude & refuge in time of need... He was praying *for* & witnessing *to* the most powerful man on the planet; then he went out.

Vs 11-12

Remember that Moses is the one will records these things in writing & so when he mentions the land of "Rameses", that's what it was called in Moses' day, at this time it's Goshen, same place.

But we take note that the family of Israel looked only to *Joseph* as their source of provision & supply. He alone provided them w/bread, took care of them & met their needs. Of course Jesus said, *"I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."*⁴

Even so we look to Jesus (the greater than Joseph) & Jesus only as the source of our provision & supply, materially & spiritually. It's Jesus who meets our needs practically, it's Jesus who sent "The Helper" the Holy Spirit to guide us & strengthen us spiritually.

Vs 13-26

Ok, there are a few things we want to notice in this section of scripture. The 1st thing I want to draw your attention to is all the way back in Vs 13. Underline the words, "There was no bread in all the land."

² The New King James Version. (1982). [Ps 39:5]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

³ The New King James Version. (1982). [Jas 4:14]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁴ The New King James Version. (1982). [Jn 6:35]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

There was no potential for life in all of Egypt. No sustenance, nothing that could keep the people from perishing. So what did they do? Who did they turn to? To Joseph; the Egyptians realized that there was no hope apart from Joseph.

This is the realization that we're praying that those who are in the world will come to, right? That there's no "bread" no sustenance, nothing in this world that can keep people from perishing; therefore it's our prayer that they will look *to* & humble themselves in the sight *of* Jesus... We spoke last week of the invitation that goes out, whatever the problem, whatever the need, Jesus says, "Come unto Me, draw near unto Me."

Now here's what I want you to see; initially Joseph becomes their savior, but ultimately he becomes their Lord (& they were glad to have it so). It seems to me many people are willing to have Jesus become their *Savior*, but not near as many desire that He be their *Lord*. You say, "What do you mean?" Well, people are more than willing to let Jesus *save them*, but they don't really want to respond by giving all that they have, all that they are *to Him*... Jesus said, "Why do you call Me 'Lord' & not do the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46) Did you note the progression here?

1st of all the people realize that apart from Joseph they perish. That's a great place to be, we recognize that apart from Jesus we perish, we come to Him, we ask Him to be our Savior. Then in Vs 14 the people begin to give unto him of their **Purse**, their money. They say, "It's yours, take it." Next in Vs 15-17 they surrender unto Joseph their **Possessions**. They say, "Here is our livestock, our cattle, our flocks, our horses." The next year they give him their **Property**, "Here is our land, take it, why should we die?" Finally they give their **Person**, "Here is my body, I belong to you completely." They came to a place whereby they considered nothing to be their own, everything that they had (their money, their things, their land, even themselves) belongs to him.

Now he's more than their savior, he's their lord. Follow me... Jesus has saved you. He's given you life *personally*, the question is will you give yourself to Him *completely*? Are you clutching to your purse, your property, your possessions; or will you say, "Here I am Lord, take all of me?"

They could've kept their possessions, but they'd have forfeited their lives, but in being willing to give, they gained. What did Jesus say? "**For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.**"⁵ Look at Vs 25 (read)

⁵ The New King James Version. (1982). [Lk 9:24]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

You have brought salvation to us graciously; we will serve you wholeheartedly/gladly, take all of me. I pray that be our resolve before our Savior (J.C.), that He be more than our Savior, but He's our Lord.

Vs 27-31

I'm not sure the significance but I find it interesting that Jacob was w/Joseph the 1st 17 yrs of Joseph's life & the last 17 yrs of his life.

But when the time drew near for him to die (which we'll see next time in Ch 49) he called Joseph to himself to remind his family of their commitments to God, that Egypt wasn't their home. I love that because even in his funeral arrangements it was important for him to point his family to the Lord & to His faithfulness. He's finishing well.

Genesis 48

Vs 1-4

Again as Jacobs time for departure is at hand he's seizing the opportunity to pass on the word & the promises of God. He shares w/him exactly what God said to him, why? Because the *exact words* of God are important! If we're not sharing God's word exactly, than we can be misleading people even inadvertently; it was important to Jacob that Joseph understood exactly what God had said.

Vs 5-6

You understand what's happening right? Jacob is raising up Manasseh & Ephraim w/in his family. He didn't do this for Judah's kids, or Issachar's sons. He's bringing Joseph's boys up w/in the ranks to receive of his inheritance, he's bringing them into the covenant. In essence he's adopting these 2 boys & placing them w/in the ranks of the 1st 2 born to him.

In so doing he's giving to Joseph a "double portion" by giving each of his sons a part of the inheritance. Now one might say, "Well than wouldn't that make 14 tribes of Israel & not 12?" Technically "Yes". However there's never more than 12 listed at a time. Joseph is very rarely mentioned (he's recognized in Ephraim & Manasseh) & Levi never received a portion of land, the Lord was his portion (priestly tribe).

His tribe would be scattered throughout 48 cities in the Land of Israel. So the tribes are arranged in different ways throughout the bible, but always only 12 listed at a time.

Vs 7-12

Don't think that Jacob had never seen Joseph's sons, he couldn't see who they are because his eyes were failing him.

So upon hearing that they're w/him he stops to give God praise for blessing him. "I never thought I'd see *you* again, but God has shown me even your sons." Jacob has seen his fair share of trouble, but in the end Jacob just gives God praise for His goodness. & Even though Joseph had lived a life of high political power it didn't diminish the reverence he had for his father. He bows his face to the earth.

Vs 13-14

It would be typical for the blessing to go to the 1st born, so Joseph lines them up that way. But Jacob crosses his arms & puts his right hand on Ephraim's head & his left hand on Manasseh's head. How many of you have come to realize that we so often anticipate God to work in a certain way but then He switches things up on us? God's ways aren't our ways *are they?* You see the right hand was associated w/God's strength & favor & help, being the 1st born Joseph expected the right hand to be placed on Manasseh. But Jacob put the hand of his favor on the 2nd born...

We've seen this over 4 consecutive generations (Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, Joseph over Reuben & now Ephraim over Manasseh). What's happening here? Listen to me, God is demonstrating that He *rejects the natural order*. He doesn't honor the 1st born, He honors the 2nd born... "What do you mean?" It's not the 1st birth that God acknowledges & honors, it's the 2nd birth. Jesus said that like this, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."⁶ He said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh..." It's not the natural order, the 1st born that God places His favor upon, it's the 2nd birth that God will bless. We've got to be born again by the Spirit of God.

Vs 15-16

We noted that Jacob worked hard (especially when he was working for uncle Laban). But note that his testimony wasn't one of personal merit, it was one of God's grace. It was *God who fed him, who redeemed him from evil*.

When he uses the word "fed" more literally it's "shepherded", it's the 1st mention in the Bible of God as a Shepherd to His people. He's saying, "It was God who took care of me, who tended to me."

Vs 17-20

Interesting that Ephraim means "Fruitful". Joseph thought perhaps Jacob was confused so he tried to reposition his hands. Jacob says, "I know what I'm doing, Manasseh

will be great, but Ephraim will be greater.” God blessed the 2nd born & Ephraim did in fact become a greater tribe (Joshua was of the tribe of Ephraim) & there came a time when all 10 northern tribes were referred to as Ephraim (Jer 31:18).

Vs 21-22

So Jacob is passing the torch from himself to Joseph. God’s workers pass from the scene but His work carries on. Now this is the only mention made of Jacob engaging in war w/the Amorites; but it goes w/out say that we don’t have (nor do we need) every detail of everyone’s life who’s mentioned in scripture. Ultimately it’s not a book pointing to Jacob it’s a book pointing to Jesus.

But again he assures Joseph of God’s faithfulness, that even has God has been w/him, He’ll be w/him. He’s passing on a godly legacy. We often worry about making sure our family is set financially & that’s a noble ambition, but more than that we should be ensuring their future spiritually. **We want our family to be w/us eternally. Teach them of God’s faithfulness, give them God’s word, show them what it means to lead a life that honors Jesus as more than your Savior casually, but that you serve Him whole heartedly, He’s your Lord & you belong to Him completely, amen? Amen.**

Prayer Points:

Father may it be heavy in our hearts to leave a godly legacy, to represent You accurately both to our family & those in the world who don’t know You personally. We want to finish well, to shine as lights in the world. Bless my brothers & sisters. God You’re faithful to us, may we be faithful to You.

God wants to show Himself faithful to you, it’s His desire to forgive you & make you new. There’s no bread, nothing that satisfies in this world. It just leaves you hungry for more. Come to Christ, only Jesus satisfies, He’s the bread of life, turn from your sin, trust In Him & He’ll give you everlasting life.