



Genesis 48

REVERSALS ACCORDING TO GOD

We meet with these crossed hands of blessing frequently in Scripture—the younger son blessed above the elder... And these crossed hands we still meet. For how often does God reverse our order? He blesses that about which we had less concern and seems to put a slight on that which has engrossed our best affection. ...A pursuit we wish to be successful in we can make little of ... while something else into which we have thrown ourselves almost accidentally prospers in our hand and blesses us. ...Does God not know what is oldest with us, what has been longest at our hearts, and is dearest to us? Certainly He does: "I know it, My son, I know it" ... You may be at a loss to know why He does no more to deliver you from some sin, or why He does not make you more successful in your efforts to aid others, or why, while He so liberally prospers you in one part of your condition, you get so much less in another that is far nearer your heart; but God does what He will with His own... He will give you the whole that Christ hath merited; but for the application and distribution of that grace and blessing you must be content to trust Him.

—Marcus Dods (1834-1909)

A The brother's envy and hatred toward Joseph (37:1-28)

B Jacob mourns the "death" of Joseph (37:29-36)

C *Interlude: The birth of Judah's sons (38:1-30)*

D Unexpected reversal: righteous Joseph in prison (39:1-23)

E Joseph: the savior of Egypt (40:1-41:57)

F Journey of the brothers to Egypt (42:1-43:34)

G Joseph tests his brothers (44:1-34)

H **Joseph reveals his identity (45:1-15)**

G Joseph provides for his brothers (45:16-28)

F Journey of the family to Egypt (46:1-27)

E Joseph: the savior of Israel and Egypt (46:28-47:31)

D **Unexpected reversal: younger blessed over the older (48:1-22)**

C *Interlude: The blessing of Jacob's sons (49:1-28)*

B Joseph mourns the death of Jacob (49:29-50:14)

A Joseph's forgiveness and grace toward his brothers (50:15-26)

THE SOBERING TIME OF DEATH (48:1-7)

- The time of death may come _____ than we expect or _____ than we expect. We must be prepared either way.
- The time of death may be a comfort when we reflect on God's faithfulness to us and remember His _____.
- The time of death can be a time to instruct and to _____ one's family and loved ones.

Bless (Hebrew, *barak*) is used as a verb and noun 15x in Gen. 48-49.

The interchange of the names [Jacob-Israel] is not everywhere so significant as here. Jacob lies down sick; Israel draws himself up.

—Franz Delitzsch (1813-90)

Rachel's death is a loss to which Jacob has never been reconciled... On his deathbed, he reverts obsessively to Rachel, who perished in childbirth leaving behind only two sons, and his impulse to adopt the two grandsons by her firstborn expresses a desire to compensate, symbolically and legally, for the additional sons she did not live to bear.

—Robert Alter

It is good to acquaint young people that are coming into the world with the aged servants of God that are going out of it, whose dying testimony to the goodness of God, and the pleasantness of wisdom's ways, may be a great encouragement to the rising generation.

—Matthew Henry (1662-1714)

THE SIMPLE TESTIMONY OF FAITH (48:8-16)

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

- Jacob _____ with the clear vision of faith.
- Jacob _____ with the changed heart of faith.

*The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,
The God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day,
The Messenger who has redeemed me from all evil,
Bless these boys!
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.*

- God is the _____ of all my blessings.
- God is the _____ of all my days.
- God is the _____ from all my sins.

THE SURPRISING TURNS OF GRACE (48:17-22)

- God does not act according to our own expectations.
- God does not act according to the world's conventions.
- God acts according to His sovereign will, His omniscient wisdom, and His incomprehensible grace!
- God acts to redeem even our worst experiences into good.

The eye of faith may be very clear even when the eye of the body is very much clouded.

—Matthew Henry (1662-1714)

Ancient Near Eastern adoption ritual included placing the adopted child on the knees of the adopting parent to symbolize giving him birth in place of the birth mother.

—Thomas Constable

Sheep require more than any other class of livestock, endless attention and meticulous care. It is no accident that God has chosen to call us sheep. Our fears and timidity, our stubbornness and stupidity, our perverse habits are all parallels of profound importance.

—Phillip Keller

Shepherd. Heb., *ra'a*, "to tend a flock; to feed, to shepherd."

Redeem. Heb., *ga'al*, "to act as a kinsman-redeemer." A near relative who would rescue someone from debt and from slavery.

The parallelism strongly suggests equating God with the angel. The incarnate God wrestled with Jacob ...blessed him and delivered him.

—Bruce K. Waltke

The ultimate test of our spirituality is the measure of our amazement at the grace of God.

—D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Between here and heaven, every minute that the Christian lives will be a minute of grace.

—Charles H. Spurgeon

I have given to you one *shechem* (48:22). The Hebrew *shechem* literally means "shoulder" and can refer to a portion (carried on the shoulder), a land ridge, or the city of Shechem (Gen. 34; Josh 24:32).