

## **Joseph & the Famine / Manasseh & Ephraim**

### **Genesis 47 – 48**

#### **Read Genesis 46:31-34 & 47:5-11**

v.5-6, 11 - Pharaoh gives them the best of the land. This blessing is all because of Joseph. He saved Egypt and the surrounding territories from devastating famine. Now the entire family of Israel is blessed and received an inheritance because of Joseph. Undoubtedly, at all this Jacob must have remembered his dream at Bethel. Look up: Genesis 28:13-18

v.9 - Jacob declares he was on a pilgrimage. He knew that his real home was in heaven.

#### **Read Genesis 47:13-27**

Through Joseph, Pharaoh acquires ownership of all Egypt, land and people. At the same time, the nation of Israel obtains property in Goshen and the family of Israel multiplies. In some 400 years, this nation would become a people too numerous to count, multiplying in even greater number after their enslavement (Exodus 1:7, 12). Look up: Genesis 35:11

#### **Read Genesis 48:1-7**

v.3 - Luz is another name for Bethel, where Jacob first met God. Jacob vividly remembered this encounter with the Lord.

#### **Read Genesis 48:8-22**

v.13-14 - The right hand is greatly significant. It has been noted in displaying God's *strength* (Exodus 15:6), *favor* (Psalm 16:11), and *help* (Psalm 20:6). This is why Jesus is described as sitting at the right hand of God the Father (Mark 14:62).

v.15-16 - Israel gave the same blessing to both sons, but the son of the right hand received a greater proportion of the blessing. This was fulfilled in Israel's history. Both tribes were blessed, but Ephraim was greater as a tribe, even to the point where the name "Ephraim" was used to refer to the whole northern nation of Israel (Isaiah 7:17, 11:13).

v.16 - This is the first mention in the Bible of God as a shepherd (Psalm 23) to His people. Look up: John 10:14-15

v.17-20 - Jacob answers Joseph's objection about the order of blessing. Ephraim was not the first *born* but God Himself chose him to take the position of *firstborn*. Look up: Jeremiah 31:9

Jacob displays his wisdom here, in understanding that those who are "firstborn" in the Bible are those in a position of supremacy, not necessarily meaning "first out of the womb." He himself had been given supremacy over his older brother, and Joseph had been given supremacy over his older brothers.

- David had the position of firstborn, even though he was the youngest son (1 Samuel 16:11, Psalm 89:20, 27).
- Jesus is acknowledged as having the supreme position of "firstborn over all creation" (Colossians 1:15). Obviously, Jesus was not literally the first "born" formation of God, because Jesus was not created (John 1:1-2, 10). It is a *description of position and promise*. Look up Colossians 1:18

v.21 – "God will be with you" - What an important truth for all believers to pass on to those they encounter! Jacob's life demonstrates his growth in faith and belief that God was with him.

***For the young believer:*** God gives the *assurance* of His presence and grace - Genesis 28:15

***For the growing believer:*** God expects we'll *trust and obey*, knowing He will be with us - Genesis 31:3-5

***For the mature believer:*** God gives the opportunity to *encourage* others with the promise of His presence - Genesis 48:21

v.20-22 – Jacob was giving these young boys land occupied by the Philistines and Canaanites. His gift became reality when the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh occupied the east and west sides of the Jordan river (Joshua 16).

Look up Hebrews 11:1. In the Hall of Fame of Faith found in Hebrews, this account of Jacob giving the blessing to Ephraim and Manasseh is given as the height of Jacob's faith. Look up: Hebrews 11:21

Look up John 20:29