

Genesis 49

Jacob Blesses His Sons

Then Jacob called for his sons and said: "Gather around so I can tell you what will happen to you in days to come.

² "Assemble and listen, sons of Jacob;
listen to your father Israel.

³ "Reuben, you are my firstborn,
my might, the first sign of my strength,
excelling in honor, excelling in power.

⁴ Turbulent as the waters, you will no longer excel,
for you went up onto your father's bed,
onto my couch and defiled it.

⁵ "Simeon and Levi are brothers—
their swords^[a] are weapons of violence.

⁶ Let me not enter their council,
let me not join their assembly,
for they have killed men in their anger
and hamstringed oxen as they pleased.

⁷ Cursed be their anger, so fierce,
and their fury, so cruel!

I will scatter them in Jacob
and disperse them in Israel.

⁸ "Judah,^[b] your brothers will praise you;
your hand will be on the neck of your enemies;
your father's sons will bow down to you.

⁹ You are a lion's cub, Judah;
you return from the prey, my son.
Like a lion he crouches and lies down,
like a lioness—who dares to rouse him?

¹⁰ The scepter will not depart from Judah,
nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,^[a]
until he to whom it belongs^[a] shall come
and the obedience of the nations shall be his.

¹¹ He will tether his donkey to a vine,
his colt to the choicest branch;
he will wash his garments in wine,
his robes in the blood of grapes.

¹² His eyes will be darker than wine,
his teeth whiter than milk.^[a]

¹³ "Zebulun will live by the seashore
and become a haven for ships;
his border will extend toward Sidon.

¹⁴ "Issachar is a rawboned^[a] donkey
lying down among the sheep pens.^[a]

¹⁵ When he sees how good is his resting place
and how pleasant is his land,
he will bend his shoulder to the burden
and submit to forced labor.

¹⁶ "Dan^[a] will provide justice for his people
as one of the tribes of Israel.

¹⁷ Dan will be a snake by the roadside,
a viper along the path,
that bites the horse's heels
so that its rider tumbles backward.

¹⁸ "I look for your deliverance, LORD.

¹⁹ "Gad^[a] will be attacked by a band of raiders,
but he will attack them at their heels.

²⁰ "Asher's food will be rich;
he will provide delicacies fit for a king.

²¹ "Naphtali is a doe set free
that bears beautiful fawns.^[1]

²² "Joseph is a fruitful vine,
a fruitful vine near a spring,
whose branches climb over a wall.^[2]

²³ With bitterness archers attacked him;
they shot at him with hostility.

²⁴ But his bow remained steady,
his strong arms stayed^[3] limber,
because of the hand of the Mighty One of Jacob,
because of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,

²⁵ because of your father's God, who helps you,
because of the Almighty,^[4] who blesses you
with blessings of the skies above,
blessings of the deep springs below,
blessings of the breast and womb.

²⁶ Your father's blessings are greater
than the blessings of the ancient mountains,
than^[5] the bounty of the age-old hills.

Let all these rest on the head of Joseph,
on the brow of the prince among^[6] his brothers.

²⁷ "Benjamin is a ravenous wolf;
in the morning he devours the prey,
in the evening he divides the plunder."

²⁸ All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when
he blessed them, giving each the blessing appropriate to him.