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Let's resume our study now at the tail end of Genesis chapter 48. I keep threatening to go into chapter 49, but then I keep finding things that seem important right here at the close of this private blessing that Jacob engages in with Joseph, Ephraim, and Manasseh. We've already seen that these things foreshadow in a very real way the later history of these tribes in Israel and also portend things that have not yet been fulfilled.

We see initial inklings of Ephraim's growing large and becoming influential, but it isn't really the ultimate fulfillment that you expect when you hear the words of Jacob. And we know that these things are going to find their ultimate fulfillment in the resurrection. That's when Joseph himself is going to be brought back to the land of his fathers, not just through his descendants, not just through his remains, but in a real and living sense, Joseph will see the fulfillment of all God's promises.

He will see the son of Judah, the son of David, who his life foreshadowed and about whom his life teaches us so much. The Christology and the career of Joseph is again something we're going to visit before we leave our study of Genesis in detail. But what a tremendous thing to see that not only did God bless Joseph after his times of trial and after he is the victim of so much evil machination and so much adversity, but he's going to get to stand on his own two feet and see the Redeemer from his flesh, just the way Job says, and learn about the same things that we're learning about, the way that the Lord Jesus Christ, God used Joseph's life and Joseph's career to teach us and to show us so many things about the ultimate source of our salvation.

As we continue to note the significance of this blessing on Ephraim and Manasseh, we have seen passages in the Psalms, such as Psalm 60, where God talks about the fact that Ephraim is his helmet and Judah is his lawgiver. We have Psalm 78, verse 67, where sadly Ephraim has to be passed by. God has not chosen the tent of Joseph.

He hasn't chosen Ephraim. He chooses Judah to be the ruler. And as much as Jacob elevates Ephraim, he is the first to be blessed.

He is given superiority over his brother. And it's so apropos in the life of Jacob, because Jacob himself is the younger brother who receives the blessing. His favorite wife is the younger daughter of Laban, who bears to him the sons that he loves the most and to whom he desires to give all these gifts.

But in the larger plan of God, it's going to be the tribe of Judah from whom the deliverance will come. But there are so many pictures woven in the later career of these. Let me direct your attention, before we leave this subject, to 1 Chronicles 7. In Chronicles, as you will remember, we have the descendants of the sons of Jacob listed.

This is about the only information we have that spans the gap between these things that

we see in Genesis, with Jacob and his sons coming to dwell in the land of Egypt, and Exodus, where we find Moses being born, and the deliverance that comes many, many years after the close of Genesis. We're going to see that as Joseph's life ends, so does the account of Genesis. And then Exodus picks up with the birth of Moses.

And there's quite a bit of history in between. The only biblical record that spans that are the genealogical records that link the clans and families of later Israel to their patriarchal roots, back to the sons of Jacob, and through Jacob back to Abraham. So in 1 Chronicles, that's what you have.

You have the families in chapter 7 of Issachar and Benjamin and Naphtali and Manasseh. You have then the family of Ephraim, beginning in verse 14 of 1 Chronicles 7. You have the family of Manasseh. His Syrian concubine bore him Machir, the father of Gilead, the father of Asriel.

Machir took as his wife the sister of Hupim and Shupim, whose name was Ma'akah. Gilead's grandson was Zelophehad. Zelophehad bore God-only daughters.

Ma'akah, the wife of Machir, bore a son, and she called his name Peresh. The name of his brother was Shireh. And his sons were Ulam and Rahim, the sons of Ulam.

Bidan, these were the descendants of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh. His sister Hamoliketh bore Ishtad, Abiezer, and Mahlah. And the sons of Shemitah were Achion, Shechem, Likki, and Aniam.

Well, we would have to investigate that at a later time. What I want to get down to is verse 20. The family of Ephraim.

Ephraim is the favored one. He is the one that is going to be more multitudinous. You'll notice the mention of all the daughters and the lack of sons in the line of Manasseh, and it seems to sort of fade out.

But here with Ephraim, the sons of Ephraim were Shuthalah, Barad his son, Tahath his son, Eladah his son, Tahath his son, Zabad his son, Shuthalah his son, Ezer and Eliad. The men of Gath who were born in that land killed them because they came down to take away their cattle. Then Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him.

When he went in to his wife, she conceived and bore a son, and they called his name Bereah because tragedy had come upon his house. Now his daughter was Shearah who built lower and upper Beth Horon, and Uzin Shearah. And Repha was his son, as well as Resheph, and Tila his son, Tahan his son, Laadan his son, Amihud his son, Elishamah his son, Nun his son, and Joshua his son.

So what tribe does Joshua the son of Nun come from? It's Ephraim. Who follows Moses as

the leader in Israel? It's this son of Ephraim, Joshua. Now there are possessions and dwelling places where Beth El and its towns, Naaron on the east, Gezer on the west, and its towns, Shechem and its towns, as far as Ayah and its towns, and by the borders of the children of Manasseh, where Beth Shean and its towns, Anah and its towns, Megiddo and its towns, Dor and its towns.

In these dwelt the children of Joseph, the son of Israel. So what's fascinating here is to see what happens with Ephraim. He has these sons, Shuthila, and the line descending through Shuthila is Bered, Tahath, Eladah, Tahath, Zabad, and then another Shuthila.

And that line ends. It's a little bit obscure in the New King James here, but that is a line. Each of those is the son of the one preceding.

So Shuthila has a son called Bered. Bered has a son called Tahath, and so forth, all the way down until you have a namesake called Shuthila. Then where it says, And Ezer and Eliad, Ezer and Eliad are brothers of the original Shuthila.

They are sons of Ephraim. But what happens? The men of Gath, who were born in that land, killed them because they came down to take away their cattle. This is fascinating because it tells us that in the early days, when Ephraim is alive and has his sons growing up to be adults, and Ephraim is in his late middle age probably, and his sons are young men in their twenties or thirties, or perhaps forties, they are doing business back up in the land.

You know where Gath is. Goliath is from Gath. Gath is up in what will later be the land of the Philistines.

And these men of Gath... You remember how the brothers of Joseph were doing business up around Shechem and north to Dothan? Well, even after they all come down to the land of Egypt and make their dwelling place in their homesteads down there, and they're given a possession in Goshen, in the early days, of course, they're still in the luminous brightness of blessing that comes on Joseph, and they're free. And after the famine is over and things get back to normal up in the Palestine area, some of the sons of Ephraim go up to the area of Gath and are herding livestock and so forth. And they get tangled up with some men from Gath who were born up in that land, who were born up in Gath.

And they wind up getting murdered over cattle. And this is a great source of grief, obviously, to Ephraim because his second- and third-born sons, apparently, are murdered over this attempted theft of cattle. So in verse 22, Ephraim, their father, this tells us that Ezer and Eliad are sons of Ephraim.

They're not further descendants of the line of Shuthala because they belong to Ephraim. And when Ephraim, their father, hears about their death, he mourns many days, and his brethren came to comfort him. His other brothers, Judah and Reuben, and all these guys

are still around.

They come to comfort him. So then he went in to his wife, and she conceived and bore a son. This is like a son of the old age.

All of these other adult sons are out there operating. He apparently had these three sons. Two of them are killed.

Only Shuthala is left to give him a posterity. But then in his old age, sort of, Ephraim has a son. And because it's within a year of the death of his other sons, he names them Berea.

Remember I told you ba means in, by, or with. And Ra'a means evil or grief or calamity. Remember the evil ayin I told you about last time? Ra'a is resh, which is the R in Hebrew, followed by an ayin.

And it's incorporated into that word for evil. And so in evil or in calamity is the name of this son. He's born in calamity.

But look at what happens. Because you have his daughter is also in the picture here. Her name is Shira.

And she builds lower and upper Beth Horon and Uzen Shira. Now to get the full effect of this, we need to turn back to our map again. See if you can find a map of Israel in the time of the patriarchs or even in the Twelve Tribes days.

And if you've got one that shows a lot of the cities there, as I do, this again is map four in the New King James. You find in the region of Dan, this is close to the area of the Philistines. If you go just south of that, you find Ekron and Gath.

And over on the coast you find Ashkelon and Ashdod and that region. Well, what's interesting about this is when it tells us about Ephraim's daughter, Shira, she built lower and upper Beth Horon. And again, if you're on that map four that shows the Twelve Tribes in Canaan, look on the southern border of Ephraim, just north and west of Gibeon, you will find Beth Horon.

If it's not on your map, Gibeon should be there. And Ajalon is due west of Gibeon. You remember that's where the sun stood still, the veil of Ajalon, when Joshua is fighting.

Well, if you draw a line from Gibeon to Ajalon and then go straight north from the middle of that line, you hit Beth Horon. It's due west of Mizpah. ...and built up by this daughter of Ephraim.

So once again, if she's a daughter of Ephraim, the bulk of the sons of Jacob and their families are all living down in Egypt, but some of their children are coming back up into the land and transacting business and founding cities and being murdered over cattle

and this sort of thing. And we always tend to think, well, they're all down there in Goshen and none of them ever leave until Moses delivers them. But in the early days, in the first few generations, when they were free citizens and were favored by the Egyptians, they were free to travel.

And after the famine and the land was over, some of them went back up and did some things up there in the land. What I find particularly interesting here is that you have this daughter Shira not only founding lower and upper Beth Horon, but also Uzzan Shira. Uzzan Shira.

We don't know where Uzzan Shira is. It's not on any of the maps. But you would think, well, it's going to be somewhere in the vicinity of Beth Horon.

It's going to be somewhere in this same area around Gath. The Ephraim children seem to be up in this general vicinity. Gath is not that far from Beth Horon and Eijalon and Timna and some of these other towns.

Well, if you take the name Shira out, what are you left with? Uzzan. And if you shorten that a little bit, what do you get? You get Uzz. What is the provenance, what is the time of the story of Job, who lives in the land of Uz? We know that it's somewhere in the patriarchal period.

It's somewhere before the time of Moses and the giving of the law because he's functioning under the family priesthood. He offers sacrifices for his children. And this doesn't take place after the Levites, so it has to be before.

And people have speculated, well, is he a contemporary of Abraham or is he some other offshoot? But you get the idea because of his faith and because of his connection with God that it would be strange that he's not somewhere in the line of Abraham. Well, I think that he may have been. I think that in this period between Joseph and Moses, where you do have people up in the land, that Job may have lived in this area that was founded by Ephraim's daughter, Shira, and Shira and Uzzah.

Remember the three friends you have visiting. If you turn over to Job real quick, and let me say that this is pure speculation on my part. I can't prove it, and feel free to take it with all the salt you want.

But if you look at Job chapter 1, there is a man in the land of Uzzah whose name was Job. He's blameless and upright. He fears God and shuns evil.

He has seven sons and three daughters. After he loses everything, you remember that part of the disaster that befalls him in verse 15 of chapter 1 is that the Sabaeans raided his oxen and donkeys and took them away. They killed his servants with the edge of the sword, and only one servant escapes to tell him.

Well, the Sabaeans, and if you look at your text note there on verse 15 in the New King James, it tells you that this is literally Sheba. The Sheba ends. Well, if we are up in that area of the land, there ought to be something called Sheba not too terribly far away.

How far, practically speaking, can they take oxen and donkeys? It's not going to be too far. Well, in fact, you do have Beersheba up in that area. It's well south on your 12 tribes in Canaan.

It's just north of center in the land of Simeon there, down south. But that's a reasonable distance for people who are out there foraging. They don't have enough herds and cattle and so forth of their own, and so they're going to their border regions and raiding other people.

So they could go up north to the area between Beth Horon and Gath. Anywhere in that region might have been this land of Uz, or Uz and Shira. What else do we know about Job? There are only a few clues as to his location, but when you get to chapter 2, verse 11, it describes the three friends who come to comfort him.

Job's three friends heard of all this adversity that come upon him. Each one came from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite. Well, do we know where Teman is? We don't.

But the radicals there, T-M-N, are the very same ones that you find in Timnah. And Timnah, if you look on your map, is just south and a little west of Aijalon. It's just east and a little north of Gath.

It's in this very same region. So it would be very convenient if Eliphaz is from Timnah to come over and comfort his friend Job living in Uz and Shira. And you can do the same thing if you track out wherever Shuhai is, Bildad, the Shuhite, Zophar, the Neapothite.

Honestly, I haven't had time to track those down, but I would suggest to you the possibility that the story of Job takes place in this interim period and that Uz and Shira is the Uz area where Job lives. The setting is right. The Chaldeans who come in and take away his camels and the other clues as to the provenance of this all fit.

You're in the time of the family priesthood, pre-Mosaic law, and yet this gives us the opportunity to believe that Job is in fact descended from Abraham. He may even be an Ephraimite. We don't know that for certain, but we do know that Ephraimite offspring are up in this area of Canaan after the time of Joseph.

So just a little interest tweaker there as far as being able to place that story. We find from 1 Chronicles 7 that we do have these things taking place. Ultimately, from another son of Ephraim, you have descended through eight generations.

Eventually you come down to Nun and then Joshua. These eight generations also give us an idea of the span of time between Ephraim himself and his great-great-great-great-

great-great-grandson Joshua. Because there are eight generations that separate them.

If you just assign an arbitrary biblical generation of 40 years to this, then you would have 320 years. But it's ample to demonstrate some other things that we've looked at and we don't have time to go into this morning. But you will remember that I have mentioned before that Amram and Yochebel were not the names of Moses' parents.

And the reason for that is when you look at their position in the genealogy descending from Levi, there are not enough generations between Levi and Amram to get you down into the time of Moses. Here in the genealogy of Joshua, who is a contemporary of Moses, you have eight generations from Ephraim. So obviously there is a shortening and an ellipsis in the genealogy going from Levi down to Moses.

And they are from the clan or the family group of Amram. But Amram is much earlier. He's not the immediate father of Moses and Aaron.

Just something to chew on in your spare time. So anyway, as a result here, we have these blessings on Ephraim and Manasseh from the hands of Jacob. This, by the way, is also the first place in the Bible we have mention made of the laying on of hands.

There's no mention of Isaac placing his hand on Jacob's head when he gives the blessing that he thinks he's giving to Esau. This is the first place where placing the hands on the head is specifically mentioned. And already there is this association with the right hand of superior blessing.

And as we pointed out a lesson or two back, Joseph recognizes this even though the words that Jacob speaks apply equally to both sons. When he delivers this blessing on them, he says in verse 16, 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.

And when Joseph protests and says, Father, you've got the wrong hands on the wrong sons, in verse 19 he says, I know, my son, I know. Manasseh will also become a people and he shall also be great. But truly his younger brother shall be greater than he and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations.

So you have here another repetition of that same principle of reversal that has gone all the way back to the children of Adam and Eve where it's the younger son Abel and then later Seth where Cain misses out because of his attitude. Same thing with Ishmael versus Isaac. Same thing with Jacob versus Esau.

And with the two sons of Judah by Tamar, they're twins and Perez sticks his arm out and gets the scarlet thread tied around it and yet he ends up being passed over in terms of the blessing. You look at the end of chapter 38 when she is giving birth in verse 28. One put out his hand and the midwife took a scarlet thread and bound it saying this one

came out first.

But it happened as he drew back his hand that his brother came out unexpectedly. And she said, how did you break through? This breach be upon you. Therefore his name was called Perez.

Afterward his brother came out who had the scarlet thread and his name was called Zerah. So Zerah is the one who sticks his hand out and gets the thread but then he pulls his hand back in and his younger brother comes out first. And so once again that idea of reversal.

And then Joseph as the younger son getting the double portion blessing. And then once again Rachel as the younger daughter of Laban being associated with Jacob's favor and now Ephraim over Manasseh. And that's not the last time that we will see this take place.

All of these foreshadow in a very large sense Israel as God's firstborn out of Egypt I have called my son. There are many Old Testament passages where God labels Israel as his firstborn. And yet the church who is the Johnny come lately winds up being the first to enjoy the fullness of the Spirit.

The fullness of blessing in association with Jesus Christ. Our resurrection and uniting with God Himself will take place seven years before the resurrection of Israel. And we will come back with Jesus Christ to enjoy the benefits and the fruits of that kingdom time.

One other thing I wanted to mention there in verse 22 I couldn't remember the name for sword and if you are interested in the Hebrew I got my Hebrew text during the break. And in verse 22 there of Genesis 48 when he says I took this from the hand of the Amorite along with, would be my translation, along with my sword and my bow. It's contact with the Amorites.

It's these defugally's with the Amorites that brings the sword and the bow into the life of Jacob. He's never had to do battle with anyone before. But now he is at military odds.

He is in bloodshed odds with the Amorites over this taking of Shechem. And he says his sword and his bow. The word for sword as I mentioned is Kerev which is C-H-E-R-E-V.

And the word for sword is Keshet. Q-E-S-H-E-T. I could remember the S-H and the T but I couldn't remember the Q. So Kerev and Keshet.

And this is I think a little miniature picture and I'll try to develop this more fully in the future but just to stimulate your thinking here. In the same way that God gives blessings to the Lord Jesus Christ that have been won in the course of the angelic conflict. The conflict with the fallen angels.

Our existence as human beings is a way of resolving that. The Lord Jesus Christ does not

take on angelic form as it points out in Hebrews chapter 1. To which of the angels did he ever say, sit at my right hand. It's to the Lord Jesus Christ.

He takes on the form of mankind. And here when Jacob blesses Joseph with this special portion and he gives him, even though this battle was not one that God wanted to fight. God did not initiate the taking of Shechem as it were.

Jacob certainly didn't initiate it. And in the same way, God the Father did not initiate the conflict and the sword and the bow that result in both the angelic civilization and in the human race. That was not God's first choice of things to happen.

But God can turn cursing to blessing. And God will take this unwanted conflict and this fruit of the sword and the bow, which is the possession of Shechem, and he's going to apportion it to his son. To the son that he is treating as his firstborn, Jacob is.

And of course, Joseph foreshadowing the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus is God's firstborn among many brethren. And so he gives him Shechem.

And he's going to take Shechem, which is the place of bloodshed and the place where Jacob becomes a stench in the nostrils of the Amorites in the same way that God is a stench in the nostrils to those who reject him, to those who disapprove and don't want any part of him. And so there's a picture here of God's dealing with Jesus Christ mirrored in what Jacob does with Joseph. This conflict was not one that God wanted.

He didn't initiate it. But it has come. And as a result of it, he has a possession.

He has Shechem. It is the nape of the neck. And you remember the sign of victory in Roman times was to bring the opposing general that had been conquered and lay him down on the ground and put your foot on his neck.

And that's the literal meaning of Shechem, is his shoulder or nape of the neck. And this is the fruit of conquest. It wasn't a battle that was desired.

It wasn't a battle that God wanted to fight. It brought the bow and the sword into the life of Jacob. But since it has happened, Jacob is going to take the fruit of that, the possession that he gains as a result of it, and give it as a possession to his son Joseph.

So again, something to ponder. Now in chapter 49, and we're finally here, Jacob called his sons and said, Gather together that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days. Gather together and hear you, sons of Jacob, and listen to Israel your father.

And after this prologue, he begins in order of birth by wife, the foretelling or the prophetic predictions about each of his sons. But in verse 1, it says, Jacob called his sons and said, Gather together that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days. He gathers them together.

In order to discover what is going to take place in the future, they have to assemble. They have to come together. They're going to, unlike Joseph and his sons Ephraim and Manasseh, this is a collective family gathering.

All of the brothers are present. And to hear the divinely inspired oracle from God, they assemble. And it is a reminder to us that even as they assemble to hear this word, we assemble to hear the word of God.

We have an individual responsibility. We have an individual destiny. We have individual gifting.

But we come together to hear. And you'll see that Jacob uses two different words here. He says, Gather together and hear you sons of Jacob.

In verse 2, And listen to Israel your father. You have to hear and you have to listen. My favorite passage in this regard is Proverbs chapter 2. Where it's one thing to hear, it's another to listen.

You remember also the commission of Isaiah. When God talks to him back in chapter 6. And he says, Go and tell this people in chapter 6 verse 9 of Isaiah, Keep on hearing but do not understand. Keep on seeing but do not perceive.

Make the heart of this people dull and their ears heavy and shut their eyes. Lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts and return and be healed. And the idea that you can see and not perceive, you can hear and not understand is a result of attitude.

The rain falls on the just and the unjust. The rain, the water of the word comes on all of us. But what is it going to produce in our souls and in our soil? God by sending that word divides us.

Every time believers as a group and as an assembly hear the word of God, it is a dividing sword. Jesus said, I have not come to bring peace but a sword. It's a sword that's going to divide families.

It's going to divide parents and offspring. It's going to divide siblings. It's going to divide.

Why? Because we have to choose. At the point that the truth of God is made an issue, it forces a choice. And some people are going to choose one way and some are going to choose another.

When Isaiah goes to what has already manifested itself to be a wicked and perverse generation, when he delivers the word of God, what's their reaction going to be? His presence and his communication of the word of God is going to produce the response of hearing without listening, hearing without understanding, seeing without perceiving. It's

going to out them for what they are. Superficially, they may appear to be offering sacrifices and obeying the law of Moses.

But when this word comes that we reviewed last time through Luke, it's the same gospel that the disciples present to their generation, Jesus' generation. It is going to expose the thoughts and intents of the heart. And this generation to whom God sends Isaiah is one that God already knows is stiff-necked and rebellious.

And when Isaiah communicates, it's going to make them expose that hardness of heart. It's not going to cause them to be hard of heart. It isn't going to blind those who otherwise would have seen.

It's going to expose the blindness and hardness that they have already brought on themselves, that sclerosis of soul. So when Jacob says in chapter 49, Gather together and hear, you sons of Jacob, and listen to Israel your father. They're going to have the opportunity to find out the truth of their future, to find out their opportunities before the Lord, what God is going to tell them.

Because he says ahead of time, I'm going to tell you what shall befall you in the last days. And this is another instance where the personalities and the choices, the priorities and the nature of these sons of Jacob are going to be representative of their offspring down through the ages. How does this take place? Is God going to predestine their offspring to act like their fathers, their tribal namesakes? Not at all.

But God in His wisdom and in His omnipotence can position individuals in the family of Jacob. God can choose when and where any of us is going to be born, what generation we're going to live in, what race and nationality we're going to belong to. He can have all the ones who He knows will choose Him be born in Israel in Old Testament days so that He can conveniently feed and nourish them and rebuke and instruct them.

And He can also select individuals to be born as Jacob's sons without Himself meddling in their choices and their personalities and their nature. But He can put them there to be representatives of their offspring. Their tribe is going to be characterized by this type of behavior.

Why would God do this? Why would God have certain behaviors associated with certain tribes? Because God's national dealings with Israel reflect His dealings with us as individuals. And so He uses a macro scale. You have the Benjamites acting a certain way.

You have the Levites acting a certain way. You have the descendants of Reuben and the others gaining a reputation as a group. How does God deal with people who act this way? Well, He deals with them as a group in the Old Testament and creates an example, not exactly a parable because it's true, but an object lesson for us.

We can see areas in our own life where we act like Reuben, where we're unstable as

water. We can see places where we're hopefully making progress like Joseph and we enjoy the blessings of Ephraim and Manasseh. We can see bits and pieces of each of these brothers in our own souls.

So as we go through these blessings and predictions about the brothers, that's what we're going to be watching for. God can bless us because of good choices. God will discipline us when we make bad choices.

And we're going to see aspects of our nature in each of these descriptions that Jacob is about to deliver. But this is where we're going to have to close. So let's end in prayer.

Father, we thank You for the privilege of studying Your Word. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will use these things to instruct, correct, and rebuke us. Train us up in the way that we should go, for we ask it in Jesus' name.

We should go, for we ask it in Jesus' name.