Genesis Chapter 49 Verses 1 – 2

* This will be the **last act** of Jacob as the patriarch…as their father. And notice, he says here, *“Hear, you sons of Jacob, and listen to Israel your father.”* There is maturity in that statement. He has fully realized and settled that he is **both** what God has made him, ***Israel***…and what he battles daily, **Jacob**… There is peace there.
* Paul said in Romans 7:18, *“In my flesh dwells nothing good,”* but later would go on to say, *“I thank God – through Jesus Christ our Lord.”* Why? Because he had not attained…the battle wasn’t yet over…but it was no longer his battle, ***it’s the Lord’s.*** What God has done in Jacob and what God has done in me and in you cannot be denied. It’s real, it’s powerful and it’s wonderful…and yet daily we struggle and groan in the flesh. **At some point** you exhale, place your hope off of you and onto God and say, *“So be it.”* I am what I am by the grace of God. And you move on…towards the upward calling of God in Christ.
* I love too how he says, *“Hear Jacob,”* but *“Listen to Israel.”* I think there is significance there because to hear something is different then to listen. To **listen** is to *assimilate, receive…react…* There are many things in our lives that we should hear and very few things that we should listen to… (Now if you look at that in the Hebrew it’s the same word so my point/illustration breaks down…so…that stinks, ha!)

Genesis Chapter 49 Verses 3 – 4

* The tribe of Reuben never did excel in anything. *No prophet, no judge, no king* that we know of came from the tribe of Reuben. Later, Reuben will desire to receive his portion of inheritance really outside the land… And yet Jacob speaks of his excellency of dignity and power, ***what happened?*** Reuben never drew a line in his heart and said to himself, *“That’s it…”* The other side of that line, **not for me ever**…and so although he had this excellence, it was essentially **squandered** and that was manifested when he did the *unthinkable* with Bilhah, his father’s wife.
* He *could* have been excellent in power and in dignity…he had it in him but he ends up being entirely unstable and never able to get a footing, never exceling, because in truth, **he never resolved** to be a man of excellence and a man of dignity…so although it was there, *within him*, it turned out in the end not to be…and that was **his** tragic choice.
* **Timeline Study -**  The beginning. Reuben speaks of a “disappointing people.” While Moses was on the mountain top, receiving the perfect law of God to bring to and through the nation of Israel, the people were worshipping an idol made with their own hands and committing abominable acts.

Genesis Chapter 49 Verses 5 – 7

* ***Harsh words!*** These were the two that wiped out the men of Shechem in Genesis 34 because of the rape of their sister, Dinah. Jacob pronounces this curse because of their fierce anger and *in cruelty*, their wrath. Now, just a quick point here…***not all anger is to be rejected.***
* The Bible does speak of godly anger. Psalm 7:11 we read, *“God is a just Judge, and God is angry with the wicked every day.”* But at the same time, God is only good…He is only pure and solely perfect…and so this anger has **no part of evil** in it at all. It is *just.* Paul wrote to the Ephesians in Ephesians 4:26 and 27, *“Be angry, and do not sin…nor give place to the devil.”* But, there is also ungodly anger as Paul continued in Ephesians 4:30-31, *“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit…let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.”* And so this could be confusing…**doesn’t have to be**…the key is here in Genesis 49…***the root of their anger was self-will.***
* Righteous anger will cause you to battle the flesh and stand for righteousness…self-will leading to anger will cause you to battle for yourself and stand for self…there’s the difference. ***Self-willed anger scatters***…precisely what was pronounced upon Simeon and precisely what happened. They were the third largest tribe when they departed Egypt but in the wilderness, more than 60% of the tribe perished and they entered the Promised Land the smallest. (Numbers 26)
* **Timeline Study –** Simeon and Levi speaks of a “dispersed people.” As the nation of Israel depended upon themselves, doing what was “right in their own eyes” and ultimately turning time and time again from God, throughout that time period of their history, they were dispersed. First by the Assyrians in 722 BC and then again by the Babylonians in 586 BC.

Genesis Chapter 49 Verses 8 – 12

* This is amazing…this speaks of **royalty**, this speaks prophetically of the Savior whom will come from the line of Judah…**but Judah was no boyscout.** Remember? He was the one who *wanted to sell* his brother Joseph for profit! He was the one who *dealt wickedly* with his daughter-in-law, Tamar! **But**…remember when Benjamin was being held by Joseph…Judah stepped forward, out of love for his father, and gave himself for his brother. Judah had found repentance…he had grown up…he had changed and he had become the opposite of what he used to be…
* What is on display right here…in these ***magnificent*** words and in this ***magnanimous*** calling placed on Judah….what’s on display is God’s grace primarily…and also, **the power of repentance!** Sin takes us way out of position…way out of place…like a transmission sitting on the side of the road…repentance installs us back into the Lambo! ***Repentance brings us right back into the place we need to be for God to place His grace and calling firmly in our stories!***
* **Timeline Study –** After being a disappointing people, and then a dispersed people, the nation of Israel then becomes a delivered people! The Savior comes forth! According to Josephus, verse 10 is the prophecy that caused the Rabbis in Jerusalem in 12 AD to run through the streets screaming in anguish and tearing their clothes. The nation of Israel’s sovereignty had been taken as Rome removed their power of capital punishment within their own people. (This is why Jesus was take to Pilate). They saw this as a fulfillment of Genesis 49:10 and yet they accused God of not keeping His Word, as Shiloh (shalom) had not yet come. That same year, young Jesus would enter the temple and confound the Jews with His wisdom and presence.

Genesis Chapter 49 Verse 13 – 15

* This is interesting. Issachar was strong, a large tribe, but the text suggests that he was ***docile***, not willing to strive for what was given to him, entrusted to him…**so he lost it**…becoming the servant to foreign masters...a band of slaves. This can become of us as well if we are not willing to put in work and stand for what we ought to stand for in our own lives.
* **Timeline Study –** Zebulun speaks of an exiled people as it was only 40 years after Jesus came on the scene that Israel was no more…sacked in 70AD…and Palestine took its place. Issachar speaks of an exploited people as the Jews mingled into other nations but were exploited and taken advantage of.

Genesis Chapter 49 Verses 16 – 18

* This one is baked in mystery…Dan would be a tribe to produce judges, the most famous being Samson…but some have theorized that the Anti-Christ will come from the tribe of Dan. A couple of reasons why… First Daniel 11:37 says that the coming king (that says he is God) will not honor the God of his fathers…and so many believe him to be at least ***paternally*** Jewish…and Jeremiah 8:16 may speak of a terrifying force (on horses interestingly enough) coming from the tribe of Dan. Now…in the 144,000 from the 12 tribes of Israel that are immortal witnesses of God during the Great Tribulation, **Dan is not mentioned** as one of the tribes…BUT, in Ezekiel 48 Dan is mentioned ***first***, as the first tribe in Ezekiel’s millennial roll call of the tribes…so, it’s interesting.
* And Jacob, after saying this very mysterious yet terrifying prophecy…calls out, *“I have waited for your salvation, O Lord!”* And the word he uses for salvation is *“Yeshuwah”* which is awesome! In the midst of perhaps and end times prophecy…**the name Jesus is announced!** That’s cool!
* **Timeline Study –** Dan speaks of a poisoned people as the snake comes forth from this tribe.

Genesis Chapter 49 Verses 19 – 26

* All of that wonderful blessing upon Joseph and all that he has become…why? ***His bow remained in strength…by the hand so the Mighty God of Jacob***…as Joseph trusted and pressed forward towards God even when many shot at him and hated him…
* **Timeline Study –** Gad speaks of a persecuted people as the Anti-Christ will persecute and pursue them during the Great Tribulation yet Asher speaks of God’s provision and protection during this time. Naphtali speaks of the beautiful words and preaching of the Gospel which will proceed from the mouths of the 144,000 witnesses and the 2 witnesses during the Great Tribulation. Joseph speaks of Jesus…His second coming and the ushering in of the Millennial Reign.

Genesis Chapter 49 Verse 27

* Fulfilled throughout scripture but perhaps most visible in the man Saul of Tarsus…in the morning, the early part of his life…he was the ***devourer*** but then in the evening…the second part of his life he became one that reaped the harvest and divided the spoils.
* **Timeline Study –** Finally, Benjamin speaks of the victorious remnant of Israel as the nation finally receives her Savior, Jesus Christ in all the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy and finally the spoil is divided for all of the nation.

Genesis Chapter 49 Verses 28 – 33

* What a wonderful statement, *“He was gathered to his people.”* A **window** into what awaits each of us in the Lord after this life. There are ***three views of death***…***only three***…throughout the ages. There are some that welcome it…the *death-accepting* view…folks that have no idea or hope of anything more and so they simply accept death. There are those that attempt to *deny death*. They fear it and so they live a life never thinking about it, talking about it, ***never prepared.*** Much of our society…*death-denying*…then there is the Christian…you and me, whom through Christ…we are ***death-defying…***
* ***We neither deny nor fear***…we are solid and confident in hope all because of the promises of Jesus that were confirmed and crystalized when He overcame the grave…and so, just like Jacob, because of Christ, we will all one day be gathered to our people.