



A YEAR
with
GOD
Daily Devotional

DAY 29



A PUBLICATION OF GOD'S THRESHING PLACE
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DAY TWENTY-NINE

Genesis 48 - 50

What God Intended All Along

We have been in Genesis for most of this month. We have watched God make a world, lose it to sin, rescue it through a flood, call a man from Ur, wrestle with his grandson, and orchestrate a betrayal in a pit that became the salvation of a continent. And now we arrive at the last three chapters. The patriarch is dying. The family is gathered. And Jacob has one last thing to say.

He has been practising for this his whole life without knowing it. Every blessing received and given, every name changed, every wrestling match - it was all preparation for this final act. He is going to speak over his sons and his grandchildren. And what he speaks will shape the next four hundred years.

The words spoken over you by people who carried the anointing of God have more weight than you may realise. And the words you speak over others carry the same. Do not be careless with your declarations.

Chapter 48 is Jacob blessing Joseph's sons - Manasseh and Ephraim. Joseph brings them to his father's bedside and positions them deliberately: Manasseh, the firstborn, on Jacob's right.

Ephraim, the younger, on Jacob's left. Joseph knows the pattern by now. The older receives the greater blessing. He has set it up correctly.

And Jacob crosses his hands. His right hand - the hand of the greater blessing - goes to Ephraim. The younger. Again. Joseph tries to correct him. This is the firstborn, put your right hand on his head. And Jacob says: I know, my son, I know.

- He knows. He is not confused. He is not senile. He has been watching God reverse the expected order his entire life - and he has finally stopped fighting it.

God has a pattern of choosing the younger, the smaller, the unexpected. Not to humiliate the older but to demonstrate that His purposes cannot be constrained by human hierarchy or expectation. He works the inversion. He always has.

Jacob blesses them and says: by your names shall Israel bless, saying, may God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh. The names of these two grandsons, born in Egypt, sons of a woman their grandfather never met, become the standard blessing of Israel for generations. What Joseph named Manasseh - God made me forget my suffering - and Ephraim - God made me fruitful in the land of my suffering - are now the words a father reaches for when he blesses his children. Forget and fruitfulness. That is the inheritance.

Chapter 49 is the longest deathbed speech in Genesis. Jacob gathers all twelve sons and speaks over each one. Some of the blessings are tender. Some are hard. Reuben, who defiled his father's bed, loses his pre-eminence. Simeon and Levi, whose violence at Shechem Jacob never forgot, are scattered. Dan is a serpent. Issachar is a strong donkey crouching between the saddlebags.

But when Jacob reaches Judah, everything changes:

“The sceptre will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come”

- Genesis 49:10

Until he to whom it belongs shall come. The Hebrew word is Shiloh - one of the most debated words in the Old Testament, understood by many Jewish and Christian scholars as a title for the Messiah. The sceptre - the authority, the kingship - belongs to Judah until the One comes to whom it ultimately belongs. The Lion of the tribe of Judah. The root of David. The One standing at the end of Matthew 1's genealogy.

Jacob, dying in Egypt, a hundred and forty-seven years old, speaking over a son who once sold his brother into slavery, is pointing toward Jesus. The man who proved his repentance by offering himself as a slave in place of Benjamin is now the ancestor of the One who would offer

Himself in place of all of us. The thread from Judah's tent to Golgotha is unbroken.

Jacob instructs his sons to bury him in Canaan, in the cave of Machpelah. Not in Egypt. This is not nostalgia. This is faith - the declaration that Egypt is not his home, that the promise land is real, that his bones belong in the ground God promised to his grandfather. And he breathes his last.

Joseph falls on his father's face and weeps and kisses him. Egypt mourns seventy days. They make the long journey to Canaan and bury Jacob as he asked. And when they return to Egypt, the brothers begin to panic. Their father is dead. What if Joseph has been waiting all this time to take his revenge now that Jacob is gone?

They send a message to Joseph: our father commanded before he died that you should forgive us. And then they come and fall before him and say: we are your servants. And Joseph weeps.

“You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.”

- Genesis 50:20

You intended to harm me. He does not revise history. He does not say it was not harmful. It was. The pit was real. The slave market was real. The prison was real. The forgotten years were real. He names it honestly: you intended harm.

But God intended it for good. The same events. The same betrayal. The same suffering. Two intentions running through one story simultaneously. And the one that won was not the brothers' intention. It was God's.

Genesis 50:20 is one of the most important verses in the entire Bible for anyone who has been wronged, betrayed, abandoned, or harmed by another person's choice. It does not say God caused the harm. It says God took the harm and worked it for good. The harm was real. The good is also real. Both can be true of the same story. Both are true of yours.

Joseph lives to a hundred and ten. He sees Ephraim's children to the third generation. And at the end, he says something that looks backward across the whole book and forward across all of Israel's history:

“God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up from this place.”

- Genesis 50:24-25

God will surely come to your aid. Joseph is dying in Egypt. He knows his descendants will be here for a long time after he is gone. He knows there is a promise that has not yet been fully given. And he dies with his grip on it. Carry my bones when you go. Because you will go. God will see to it.

- And four hundred years later, in the Exodus, Moses takes Joseph's bones. Because God kept the promise. He always does.

Genesis ends not in resolution but in faith - a dying man confident in a promise he cannot see fulfilled in his lifetime, asking only that when it happens, he goes with them. You are invited to that same posture. Hold the promise. Even past the end of what you can see. God will surely come.

Speak this over yourself today:

What was intended to harm me, God intended for good.

The harm was real. The good is also real.

Both are true of my story.

God will surely come to my aid. He always does.

TOMORROW - Day 30 Exodus 1-3

Genesis is finished. But the story is far from over. Tomorrow we open Exodus – and four hundred years have passed. The family of seventy has become a nation of millions. And Pharaoh is afraid of them. Come back tomorrow - a burning bush is waiting.

Day 29 of 365



PRAY IN VERSES

Pray the Bible verse by verse

Prayer is powerful, but prayer rooted in scripture
is unstoppable. When you declare His Word,
you align with His Will. This is more than prayer,
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