

As we read Genesis 48, we see a beautiful picture of a life coming to its earthly conclusion—not in despair, but in a state of settled faith.

Old Jacob is dying. His body is failing, but his spiritual eyes have never been clearer. This is a scene of transition, where the promises given to the fathers (Abraham, Isaac, and himself) are being passed down to the next generation. It reminds us that while the workmen of God are buried, the work of God goes on.

The Faithful Rehearsal of God's Promises Genesis 48:1–7

Joseph hears that his father is ill and brings his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, to see their grandfather one last time. Notice what Jacob does first. He doesn't talk about his aches and pains; he talks about the faithfulness of God. He reaches back to that moment at Luz—Bethel—where the Almighty appeared to him.

Jacob reminds Joseph of the covenant. Now, think about this: God spoke directly to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. But from this point on, Joseph and his brothers have to rely on the written and spoken Word. They have to trust the testimony of those who walked before them. It's the same for us today. We have this "more sure word of prophecy," the Holy Scriptures, to guide us.

Jacob then does something remarkable: he adopts Joseph's sons as his own. He says, "Ephraim and Manasseh... are mine." By doing this, Jacob is giving Joseph the double portion of the birthright. Instead of just one tribe of Joseph, we get two tribes from his sons. This shows us the overflowing grace of God—He often gives us "exceedingly abundantly" above all we ask or think.

The Mystery of the Crossed Hands Genesis 48:8–14

As Joseph brings the boys near, Jacob's physical sight is dim, much like his father Isaac's had been. Joseph, being a man of order, positions the firstborn, Manasseh, at Jacob's right hand and the younger, Ephraim, at his left. He wants the primary blessing to go to the eldest.

But as Jacob reaches out, he deliberately crosses his hands. He puts his right hand on the younger and his left on the older. Joseph tries to "correct" his father, thinking the old man is making a mistake. But Jacob says, "I know it, my son, I know it." This is such a powerful lesson in the sovereignty of God. God doesn't follow human traditions or "fairness" by our standards. He chooses whom He wills to use for His purposes. It isn't about our effort or our "right" to a blessing; it's about His grace. Just as Jacob (the younger) was chosen over Esau, here Ephraim is placed before Manasseh. God's ways are not our ways!

The God Who Shepherds and Redeems Genesis 48:15–22

Listen to the language Jacob uses in his blessing:

- "The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked" (God the Father)
- "The God who has fed me all my life long" (The sustaining work of the Holy Spirit)
- "The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil" (The Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer)

Jacob recognizes that it wasn't his own cleverness that got him through life—it was the Shepherd of Israel. He speaks of the "Angel who redeemed" him. We know that throughout the Old Testament, the "Angel of the LORD" is often a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ.

Jacob concludes by giving Joseph an extra portion of land, a testimony of victory. He tells Joseph, "I am dying, but God will be with you." What a comfort! Men may leave us, but the Lord never leaves nor forsakes His own.

Practical Application and Challenge

For the Believer: Are you trying to "uncross" God's hands in your life? Sometimes we think we know how the blessing should look or who should be first. We get frustrated when things don't go according to our "order." The challenge today is to trust the "crossed hands" of God. He knows what He is doing. He sees what you cannot see.

Furthermore, look at Jacob's legacy. He spent his final moments talking about God's faithfulness. What are you passing on to your children and grandchildren? Is it a bank account, or is it a testimony of the God who has fed you and redeemed you all your life long?

For the Non-Believer: Jacob spoke of the "Angel who redeemed me." There is only one Redeemer. Jesus Christ came to this earth, God in the flesh, to do for you what you could never do for yourself. He went to the cross and shed His precious blood to pay the price for your sins. He didn't stay in that grave; He rose again, proving that He is indeed God, Savior, and Lord.

The same God who watched over Jacob through all his stumblings and trials wants to be your Shepherd today. You don't have to clean yourself up first; you just have to come to Him.

That is the most important decision a person can ever make. It isn't about joining a religion or following a set of rules; it's about entering into a living relationship with the Creator who loves you and gave Himself for you.

When Jesus shed His blood on that cross, He was paying a debt you and I could never pay. And when He rose from the dead, He proved once and for all that He has power over sin, death, and the grave. He is alive today, and He is ready to transform your life from the inside out.

You can speak to Him right now. There are no "magic words," but if you truly mean it in your heart, you can pray something like this:

"Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner and I cannot save myself. I believe that You are God and that You shed Your blood on the cross to pay for my sins. I believe You rose from the dead to give me life. Right now, I open the door of my heart. I ask You to forgive me, to wash me clean, and to be my Savior and my Lord. Thank You for loving me and for receiving me today. Amen."

Your New Walk with Him

If you prayed that and meant it, the Bible tells us that you are a new creation! The old things have passed away and all things have become new. Here are a couple of practical steps to help you grow in this new relationship:

- **Talk to Him:** This is what we call prayer. You don't need fancy language; just talk to Him throughout your day like you would a father or a friend.
- **Feed on the Word:** Just as Jacob rehearsed God's promises, start reading the Bible daily. A great place to start is the Gospel of John. It will show you the heart of Jesus.
- **Find a Fellowship:** It is so important to gather with other believers where the Bible is taught verse-by-verse and where people love one another. We weren't meant to walk this Christian life alone.