

# Community Bible Church

## The Book of Genesis

### Chapter 49

***Then Jacob summoned his sons and said “Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what will befall you in the days to come.”***

The **Patriarchal period** in the Old Testament is recorded in **Genesis chapters 12-50**. This spans a period of time from around 2100 BC to 1800 BC. The lives of three patriarchs--**Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**--are presented. In **Genesis 49**, the words of the aging and infirm patriarch, **Jacob (Israel)** are recorded as he speaks truth to each of his twelve sons. Jacob was 147 years old at this time.

This chapter is often referred to as the “blessings” given by Jacob. However, there is much more to this chapter than Jacob’s dying words. **Chapter 49** contains profound prophecies for the emerging nation of Israel as Jacob utters blessings, cursings, poetry, judgments, promises, words of guidance, sayings, and future predictions for not only his twelve sons, but for the twelve family tribes and generations that will follow over the next four centuries. The ancestors of these twelve families will eventually leave Egypt and enter Canaan as the nation of Israel, retaining their tribal identities.. This is the record of God’s redemptive history for all of man kind in the birth of the Jewish nation of Israel.

As we study **chapter,49**, understand the prophetic nature of Jacob’s words often extends far into the future, apart from just the twelve sons.

It may be helpful to review briefly Jacob’s family tree. Jacob had twelve sons and one daughter from four wives. These wives were **Rachel** and her sister **Leah**, as well as **Zilpah** and **Bilhah**, servants to Leah and Rachel. The offspring are listed below:

**Rachel** (Joseph, Benjamin), **Leah** (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dinah), **Bilhah** (Dan, Naphtali), and **Zilpah** (Gad, Asher).

1. From each of the prophetic, “blessing” passages below, write a brief one or two sentence description of Jacob’s words to his sons. Try to put this in your own words. Recall that some of the sons had sinful and shameful events in their background.

**(a) vs. 3-4. Reuben**

**(b) vs. 5-7. Simeon & Levi**

**(c) vs. 8-12. Joseph**

**(d) vs. 13. Zebulun**

**(e) vs. 14-15. Issachar**

**(f) vs. 16-18. Dan**

**(g) vs. 19. Gad**

**(h) vs. 20. Asher**

**(i) vs. 21. Naphtali**

**(j) vs. 22-26. Joseph**

**(k) vs. 27. Benjamin**

**2. Read 49:28-33. What were Jacob's final words to his family?**

