

Sunday June 17th 2012
The Letter to the Hebrews
Part Forty Nine

1). Heb 11:21 *By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. 22 By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.*

a). Whilst in Egypt Joseph has two sons by Asenath, daughter of Poti-Pherah, priest of On and these are the two sons who are blessed by Jacob 'when he was dying'.

b). In order to understand the significance of this blessing and in order to be able to see what is pictured in the giving of it, we have to see it within the context of the account of Joseph's life as set out in the Book of Genesis.

c). I really encourage us to read through the whole of this account for ourselves so as to see the incredible detail that is given to us in it.

d). For the sake of brevity though we will look at some of these details today so as to establish the context for the blessing of Joseph's sons.

2). Ge 37:1 ¶ *Now Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. 2 This is the history of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to his father. 3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors. 4 But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him. 5 ¶ Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more. 6 So he said to them, "Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: 7 "There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf." 8 And his brothers said to him, "Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.*

a). Now Jacob loving Joseph more than all his children is a picture of the unique relationship between God the Father and God the Son, especially as we

would see it during the Lord's first advent with Jesus having been begotten during His Father's 'old age'.

b). Within this picture Joseph's brothers typify the nation of Israel who nationally hated Christ 'for his dreams and for his words'.

c). Joseph's dream looked forward to the day when his brothers in the land of Egypt during the 7 years of famine would bow down before him, but looked forward even further to that Day when Israel, whom the brothers picture, will bow down and acknowledge the dominion of their brother Christ – the One whom they mistreated and sold into the hands of the Gentiles.

d). The words spoken by the brothers to Joseph, "*Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?*" are almost identical to the words spoken to Moses, another type of Christ, the day he kills the Egyptian – Ex 2:14 *Then he said, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us?....."*

e). And both these statements look prophetically to the declaration made by Israel on the day of the Lord's crucifixion - Joh 19:15 *But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!"*

f). And it is of course the Lord's death and burial that are pictured in the events of Joseph life recorded in - Ge 37:23 ¶ *So it came to pass, when Joseph had come to his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the tunic of many colors that was on him. 24 Then they took him and cast him into a pit. And the pit was empty; there was no water in it. 25 And they sat down to eat a meal. Then they lifted their eyes and looked, and there was a company of Ishmaelites, coming from Gilead with their camels, bearing spices, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry them down to Egypt. 26 So Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? 27 "Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh." And his brothers listened. 28 Then Midianite traders passed by; so the brothers pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.*

g). The stripping of Joseph of his tunic is a picture of Christ's humiliation before His crucifixion - Mt 27:28 *And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. 29 When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"*

h). The empty pit with no water into which Joseph was cast would picture for us Christ in the place of the dead and Joseph being sold to the Ishmaelites for 20 shekels of silver provides further detail on the experience of Christ - Mt 27:9 *Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet,*

saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced, 10 "and gave them for the potter's field, as the LORD directed me."

3). Ge 41:14 *Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him quickly out of the dungeon; and he shaved, changed his clothing, and came to Pharaoh. 15 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that you can understand a dream, to interpret it." 16 So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace."*

a). We see here that Joseph is 'brought quickly out of the dungeon', and his clothing is changed. Now although in the type Joseph has been in Egypt for some considerable time that which is pictured in the broad sweep of this type is Christ resurrected to the place of power at God the Father's right hand – 1Pe 3:22 *who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.*

b). Ge 41:40 *"You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you." 41 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt." 42 Then Pharaoh took his signet ring off his hand and put it on Joseph's hand; and he clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. 43 And he had him ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried out before him, "Bow the knee!" So he set him over all the land of Egypt. 44 Pharaoh also said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no man may lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." 45 And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-Paaneah.*

c). So then in the overall type we have had rejection, death, burial and now resurrection - 1Co 15:3 *For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,*

4). Ge 41:29 *"Indeed seven years of great plenty will come throughout all the land of Egypt; 30 "but after them seven years of famine will arise, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine will deplete the land. 31 "So the plenty will not be known in the land because of the famine following, for it will be very severe. 32 "And the dream was repeated to Pharaoh twice because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.*

a). Now as we saw last week, the 7 years of plenty and the 7 years of famine picture for us 2 complete periods of time – the period of time associated with the years of plenty – which is Man’s Day as a whole and most particularly the last 2000 years of this dispensation. Then the period of time associated with the 7 years of famine – which is the tribulation, the time of Jacob’s trouble.

b). And we will remember from last week that it is during the time of plenty that Joseph’s 2 sons are born. Manasseh was the firstborn and through the association of his name with the ‘father’s house’ he would picture for us the nation of Israel who is God’s first adopted firstborn son - Ex 4:22 *"Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: "Israel is My son, My firstborn.*

c). Ephraim is the second born and through the association of his name with fruitfulness in the land of Joseph’s affliction, he would picture for us the church, and most particularly, those who would bring forth fruit for the Kingdom in the land of Christ’s affliction.

d). Israel was created as a son of God during Man’s Day and adopted as a firstborn son and this status remains current even though Israel is still at present in a place of disobedience.

e). In a similar fashion Christians, by a special creative act within the parameters of Man’s Day also become sons of God, but their adoption as a firstborn son await the events that surround the Judgment Seat.

f). And it is once those Christians who have been identified as sons according to - Ro 8:14 *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.*

Along with those Christians who have not been led by the Spirit and therefore are not viewed as sons, but children, are removed from the earth that the time pictured in the years of famine – the Tribulation will begin - Ge 41:50 *And to Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him. 51 Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: "For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house." 52 And the name of the second he called Ephraim: "For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction." 53 Then the seven years of plenty which were in the land of Egypt ended,*

g). We might also note, so as not to miss the detail, that Asenath is a Gentile bride received by Joseph once he is exalted to Pharaoh’s right hand following the picture of death, burial and resurrection. It is here that we would return to the type presented in Genesis Chapter 24 in order to fill in more detail concerning this picture.

h). And we will also note that during the time of plenty, when Asenath is revealed to him, that Joseph's brothers are not in view, which pictures the setting aside of Israel during the period of time when Christ's bride is being revealed.

5). And we will remember of course that it is during the time when the famine is severe in all lands that Joseph's brothers have no choice, if they want to live, but to go to him in Egypt to buy grain.

a). The brothers, not surprisingly, don't recognize their brother Joseph, but he certainly recognizes them.

b). And in the same way Christ's brothers, the nation of Israel, will have no choice if they want to live and not die but to cry out to the God of their fathers as the severity of the Tribulation reaches its zenith. And in the same way as Joseph's brothers, Christ's brothers will not realize the true identity of the One to whom they cry out, but He knows exactly who they are.

c). These events along with the Lord's response to them are set out prophetically in both Hosea and 2 Chronicles –

d). 2Ch 7:13 *"When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, 14 "if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*

e). Ho 5:15 *I will return again to My place Till they acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek My face; In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me." 6:1 ¶ Come, and let us return to the LORD; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. 2 After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, That we may live in His sight.*

6). Ge 45:1 ¶ *Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Make everyone go out from me!" So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers.*

a). Through the outworking of circumstances and events Joseph's brothers acknowledge and accept responsibility for their previous treatment of Joseph and it is following this confession that Joseph reveals himself to them - Zec 12:10 *"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*

b). There are two things in particular we will note about this – firstly, that when Joseph deals with his brothers Asenath is not present, making clear to us that Christ’s Bride will not accompany Him when He returns to deal with His brothers. This is further substantiated as we compare scripture with scripture, seeing that Zipporah is not with Moses when he returns to his brothers and Ruth is not present when Boaz redeems the inheritance.

c). And secondly, that Joseph’s brothers are in Egypt when he reveals himself to them giving us significant detail concerning Christ revealing Himself to His brothers – Israel will cry out to the God of their fathers and Christ will reveal Himself to them while Israel is still dispersed amongst the nations. It is then only after these 2 events that Israel will be re-gathered to the land and only then that Gentile world power will be overthrown. By comparing scripture with scripture we see that it is only after Israel is delivered from Egypt under Moses, following the Passover, that the Egyptians are destroyed in the Red Sea and only after Israel has entered the land, under Joshua, that Jericho is destroyed; both of which give us different facets of the same picture.

7). Now in the account of the life of Joseph it is after the conclusion of the 7 years of famine, and after his father and brothers have all come to the land over which he rules that his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh are blessed by his father Jacob - Ge 48:3 *Then Jacob said to Joseph: "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, 4 "and said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and give this land to your descendants after you as an everlasting possession.' 5 "And now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. 6 "Your offspring whom you beget after them shall be yours; they will be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance.*

a). What we see here is that Jacob adopts Joseph sons as his own sons - *as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.* And in doing so Ephraim and Manasseh each receive a full portion of the inheritance - 1Ch 5:1 ¶ *Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel-he was indeed the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel, so that the genealogy is not listed according to the birthright;*

Eze 47:13 ¶ *Thus says the Lord GOD: "These are the borders by which you shall divide the land as an inheritance among the twelve tribes of Israel. Joseph shall have two portions.*

b). Now with respect to the nation of Israel Reuben was Israel's firstborn son and therefore in line to inherit the rights of the firstborn, but we also know, as referenced in our 1 Chronicles scripture, that Reuben forfeited his firstborn rights 'because he defiled his father's bed' - Ge 35:22 *And it happened, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine; and Israel heard about it.*

Ge 49:3 *"Reuben, you are my firstborn, My might and the beginning of my strength, The excellency of dignity and the excellency of power. 4 Unstable as water, you shall not excel, Because you went up to your father's bed; Then you defiled it -He went up to my couch.*

c). Consequently Reuben's birthright was divided amongst 3 of his brothers with rulership over the father's house being given to Judah, the priest in the father's house being given to Levi and the double portion of the inheritance was given to Joseph. The tribe of Judah then would produce the kingly line; out of the tribe of Levi would come the priestly line and the tribe of Joseph received the double portion of the inheritance through Joseph's 2 sons, Ephraim and Manasseh.

d). That which Jacob spoke over Reuben, recorded in Genesis Chapter 49, has been the reality during this present age - Reuben did 'not excel'; from his tribe there has never been a judge, a king or a prophet. That which Reuben forfeited through his sin was lost forever - and during the age to come, the Millennial Kingdom, Reuben's previous status because of his sin will remain. The King will come from the house of Judah - Re 5:5 *But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."*

The priests will be from the house of Levi - Eze 44:15 *"But the priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from Me, they shall come near Me to minister to Me; and they shall stand before Me to offer to Me the fat and the blood," says the Lord GOD.*

And, as we have seen, the double portion will be held by the house of Joseph through Ephraim and Manasseh - Eze 48:4 *"by the border of Naphtali, from the east side to the west, one section for Manasseh; 5 "by the border of Manasseh, from the east side to the west, one section for Ephraim;*

8). Then within the typological framework given to us through the account of Joseph's life we would see that it is at the conclusion of the tribulation, after the destruction of Gentile world power that, that pictured is Jacob's adoption of Joseph's sons is realized with both Israel and the Church, in its true sense,

being God the Father's adopted firstborn sons and within the picture of Ephraim and Manasseh each receives a full portion of the Father's inheritance – Israel receiving the earthly portion and the Church receiving the heavenly portion fulfilling the type of the house of Joseph receiving the double portion.

a). And then from a slightly different perspective we realize that both Israel and the Church, as adopted firstborn sons, each rule over the Father's house, are priests in the Father's house and individually receive a double portion of the inheritance and that all of this must be connected to the portion, earthly or heavenly, which they have received.

b). For Israel then they will be at the head of the nations, in a place of rulership, on the earth - Ge 27:29 *Let peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you.* [the blessing given by Isaac to Jacob]

c). They will also be priests in the Millennial Temple, in Jerusalem, on the earth - Eze 44:14 *"Nevertheless I will make them keep charge of the temple, for all its work, and for all that has to be done in it. 15 "But the priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from Me, they shall come near Me to minister to Me; and they shall stand before Me to offer to Me the fat and the blood," says the Lord GOD.*

d). And this ministry as kings and priests will take place from within the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and will extend out to the 4 corners of the earth – and it is in relation to the earth alone that we could see Israel's double portion.

e). For the Church, our role as a royal priesthood takes place from the heavens over the earth thereby also demonstrating the double portion – Re 2:26 *"And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations-- 27 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels' --as I also have received from My Father; 28 "and I will give him the morning star.*

9). Now there is one last detail we need to look at - Ge 48:13 *And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near him. 14 Then Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, guiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh was the firstborn. 15 And he blessed Joseph, and said: "God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has fed me all my life long to this day, 16 The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, 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." 17 Now*

when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took hold of his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. 18 And Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head." 19 But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations." 20 So he blessed them that day, saying, "By you Israel will bless, saying, 'May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!'" And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

a). Even though we have seen that Ephraim and Manasseh each receive an equal portion of the inheritance we see here that Jacob gives a greater blessing to Ephraim and as a result, according to the scripture, 'thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh'.

b). Ephraim the second born then is set before, is set above in terms of status within the family, Manasseh the firstborn and we see from our verses in Genesis Chapter 48 that Jacob guided 'his hands knowingly' and, going back to our opening scripture this morning, Jacob did this 'by faith'. God had clearly revealed something to him concerning Ephraim and Manasseh otherwise this blessing could not have been given 'by faith'.

c). And that which is pictured for us here is the Church, the youngest adopted firstborn son, being set before Israel, the eldest adopted firstborn son, Israel, in terms of status within the family.

d). And simply put the Church's heavenly calling is a higher calling than Israel's earthly calling – that which Israel rejected at Christ's first advent, the Kingdom of the Heavens, is lost to them forever and that which the Church has gained by accepting and receiving that which Israel rejected has put the Church in the position of being a joint-heir with Christ – no such position or status as this is given with respect to Israel in terms of inheritance.

e). Heb 2:1 ¶ *Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, 4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?*