

# Blessing the Twelve Tribes

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[ 0 : 00 ] As we come to this penultimate chapter in Genesis, we have the blessing of Jacob's 12 sons by himself at the point of his death.

And it's his last words, as it were, his parting shot, his parting blessing to each of his 12 sons. And we see here not only, as it were, the loving words of a father, but we see also the insight of the patriarchal prophet.

There are things here which Jacob himself as a mere man could never know. But which the insight which the Lord gives him, the inspiration which the Lord gives him, we see fulfilled later on.

Now, of course, this is partly what causes some people to say, oh, well, this just proves that the first five weeks of the Bible were written much, much later in the time of Israel's exile. Because look at all this stuff.

They're just sort of looking back. They're just sort of pre-quelling it. And they're writing in afterwards things which happened much later. They're writing them in as though they happened beforehand.

[ 1 : 09 ] No, that is just pure unbelief. That is simply stating that God could not inspire what is written down here. God could not give the prophecy to Jacob.

God could not enable his patriarchs to pronounce the words of prophecy and blessing hundreds of years in advance. It is simply a case of, do you believe that God put these words into Jacob's mouth or don't you?

And the critics will say, well, actually, no, we don't. We think this is just things that men have written down hundreds of years later and it's become the focus of religion for a people group. And, of course, that is those who believe that religion is simply that which people practice for their own comfort in this earthbound context.

Rather than a living relationship with the one true God, which is what the people of God have always been about. From the covenant line from Adam all the way down through Seth and Enoch and on to Noah and Shem and the descendants of the covenant line down through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and now the patriarchs.

It is a covenant line of faith. A covenant line of relationship with the Lord. And that relationship, as we can see, not only from Jacob's own life, but especially the lives of his 12 sons with very few exceptions.

[ 2 : 30 ] They are pretty much a shower of dross. And later on, when they become tribes in their own right, there are very few that do anything that is worthy of note or redemption or cause them to be seen as the Lord's people in any way.

When that happens, it is the exception rather than the rule. In other words, we see right back here in Genesis that as if and when the Lord's people are redeemed at all, clearly it cannot be anything on their part.

Jacob does not bless his sons in this way and prophesy their future because they are virtuous. He does so rather because they are his.

And in the same way, the Lord does not save and redeem his children because of any virtues or merits in and of themselves, but because they are his by the grace of election and the covenant of the same.

It is Christ who does that which is needful to redeem us, not we ourselves. Jacob's sons are not blessed for their virtue, but for their relationship to himself and above all to the God of Jacob and of Abraham and of Isaac.

[ 3 : 48 ] So we begin, Jacob called unto his sons and said, gather yourselves together that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days. It's the final summons with his authority not only as a father, but as a patriarch and prophet to gather his sons who themselves would be getting on a

bit by now with this prophetic gift they were, which was now to be exercised one last time on behalf of each of his sons.

It was no doubt a comfort to Jacob to gather his sons round about him at a time when, you know, there was a time when he thought he was bereft. Not only of his favourite son Joseph, but then also when Simeon was a prisoner in Egypt and they were going to take Benjamin away from him as well. And he sort of cried out in his anguish, you know, Joseph is gone and Simeon is gone and now you're going to take Benjamin away from me. All these things are against me. And we said when we looked at that particular chapter, he saw it as black as it could be and could not yet see, despite the gifts of prophecy the Lord would later bestow on him here.

He could not foresee that this was in fact about to be the beginning of the best time in his life rather than the worst.

But here they all are round about him now at the last who had thought himself for so long bereft. They are all there, not one missing. And thus the Lord will have his sons and daughters at the last day all round about his throne when he makes up his jewels.

[ 5 : 19 ] There will have seemed to be times when some of his elect were going astray. There will have seemed to have been times when some would almost be lost. There will be some, some few, but some who will have been deathbed conversions.

Who up until the last day, when the day dawned on the last day of their lives, they looked like they were set for a lost eternity. But who almost with their dying breath would have put their faith and trust in Christ Jesus alone and so would have been saved.

And the snare of the fowler is broken and their soul flies free from it. There will be some, very few, but some who will be saved at the very last minute.

But either way, whether it is by many or by few, whether it is early or late, at the last day the Lord will have all his children around his throne. Just as Jacob has all his sons now around his deathbed. So you gather yourselves together and hear ye sons of Jacob and hearken unto Israel your father. Gather yourselves together.

[ 6 : 28 ] There's two sentences in which I think we should recognize and understand this. First of all, keep together as a people. They have come down into Egypt as a people. One of them, Joseph, the beloved, is already married to an Egyptian, effectively princess.

His sons are Egyptian born. And yet, Jacob has already said in the previous chapter, they are mine. I'm treating them as my sons, not merely as grandsons, but as my sons, as Simeon and Levi are my sons.

I am making them my sons. So he's saying, keep together. Gather yourselves together. And be not mingled and diluted with the Egyptians. And it would seem as though the Israelites did this.

Because whilst later on in their history, in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, for example, it's one of the things that the Israelites are charged with, that they have mingled with the pagan peoples of the nations round about them.

Even some of the Lord's own people, like Solomon, for example, were guilty of this particular sin. But we don't read that the Hebrews themselves in Egypt seem to have been guilty of this.

[ 7 : 32 ] They kept themselves together as a people. They married within the wider family, the context of the Israelite nation. They kept themselves as a distinct people, such as the Egyptians became afraid of them in the forms of time.

To keep together. Be not mingled and diluted with the Egyptians, however long you may remain here in Egypt. But also, he is encouraging them to unite in brotherly love.

Despite all your differences, gather yourselves together. And here, ye sons of Jacob, hearken unto Israel, your father. Remember who your father is. Remember that you are Israelites.

Have that brotherly love. Do not be separated one from one another when I am gone. As Abraham's sons were all separated from each other. Remember, he kept Isaac with him.

But he sent away all the sons of Ketcher. He sent away, likewise, Ishmael, the son of Hagar. He sent all his other sons away except Isaac. They were all separated from each other.

[ 8 : 35 ] Esau and Jacob were separated from each other. He's saying, don't be separated from each other. Stick together. Keep together. Gather yourselves together. Be not only a family, be a nation.

Be a people of God bound in this covenant. Together to become the people of God. And so we go on to the prophetic blessings that we have here.

It doesn't begin well in that sense. Reuben, the eldest, the firstborn. Thou art my son. Reuben, whose name means see a son. The first child that Leah bore to Jacob. Thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength. The excellency of dignity and the excellency of power. Oh, the blessing you should have been, Reuben. Oh, the good that you should have brought. Oh, the honor you should have been to my name. Unstable as water. Thou shalt not excel. Why? Because thou wentest up to thy father's bed. [ 9 : 33 ] Then defiled Stalit. He went up to my couch. We read about it in chapter 35, verse 22. And this was probably something that happened 20, 30 years previously. But we should see that the stain of that particular sin stayed with him.

It did not go away. It did not simply with the passage of time phase. Oh, well, it was a long time ago. It doesn't really matter now. It continued to matter to Jacob.

It continued to have corrupted and defiled his relationship with his own wife's handmaid, who had been, in a sense, like a secondary wife to himself.

It was adultery. It was, in that sense, a form of incest. It is precisely the kind of sin against which St. Paul rails in 1 Corinthians 5, that one should have his father's wife.

And the church didn't seem to be bothered there in 1 Corinthians 5. And here, Jacob is bothered. Decades later, it is still a sin which has so tainted and undermined Reuben's character and reputation that he cannot continue in the place of the firstborn.

[ 10 : 45 ] It is that which has completely, as it were, destroyed his position. Proverbs 6, we read verses 32 and 33. Who so committed adultery with a woman lack of understanding, he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul.

A wound and dishonour shall he get, and his reproach shall not be wiped away. People might think, oh, nobody sees it, so it doesn't matter.

Oh, nobody knows about it, but me and the other person. Or, I got away with it. Or, it's no real damage. It's just between me and them. The damage that is done by adulterous relationships, not only to the individuals and their lives, with the secrecy, with the lies, with then the aftershock effect in both families and so on.

The damage just goes on and on and on like the ripples on a pond when you drop a stone into it. And the damage here now to Reuben and his reputation seems to have lost all his moral authority in the family.

Just as, for example, David, David the king lost his moral authority in his own family after his relationship with Bathsheba.

[ 11 : 59 ] And when Amnon, of course, forced himself on Tamar, Absalom's young sister, and I think, well, why didn't David punish him? Why didn't he do something about it?

Why didn't he just say nothing? He was displeased, but he didn't do anything about it. Because children are not stupid. And the one charge they can turn on their parents is that of hypocrite, if they see them to be that.

When David went to Bathsheba and she was somebody else's wife, do we imagine that was a complete consensual submission? Do we imagine that another man's wife did not protest, did not put up some kind of struggle or protest, even if she eventually submitted to the wishes of the king? It may not have been rape as such, but it was certainly coercion. It was certainly forcing. This is one reason why David had no moral authority when Amnon forced himself on his half-sister Tamar.

All David's moral authority drained away, and he had no power to stand against Amnon, not against Absalom. Later on, when the rebellion flared up, he was a shadow of his former self.

[ 13 : 14 ] That had not been for Joab and his military, we might say, brutality, David's kingdom, humanly speaking, could not have stood. That is the kind of damage that is done that undermines the very strongest and even godliest of men when this sin enters in.

Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel because thou wentest up to my father's bed, thou defiledst him. He went up to my couch. Now, Reuben, of course, then is disinherited from the place of the firstborn, and his father here in front of all his other brethren, right at the beginning, formally and solemnly downgrades him from the position of the firstborn.

But the thing you should notice here, although there will be a certain amount of shame in this, he is losing the privileges of the firstborn, but he does not lose the privilege of sonship.

He does not cease to be a son. The cost is huge for something which would have been, if it was a pleasure, it would have been a fleeting pleasure, and certainly not worth the cost all these years

later.

But as with, you know, the parable of the pounds in Luke chapter 19, you know, you've got the same servants and their ten individual pounds, and then those who are opposed to the king in that parable, they're slain before his eyes, and all the servant who's dug in the earth or just kept it in the napkin, it's taken away from him and given to the one who has ten.

[14:51] But he doesn't cease to be a servant. He doesn't get slaughtered along with the rebels. He doesn't lose his position as one of the servants of the king. And likewise, we see in 1 Corinthians chapter 3, where Paul talks about building on the one foundation, which is Christ.

And whether we build on gold, silver, precious stones, or wood, or hay, or stubble, the quality of our building is one thing. And the fire will reveal the kind of quality that it is that we have built upon the foundation, that as long as we have the foundation, we ourselves shall be saved.

Even if our lives were not all that they should be, even if what we built upon that foundation was not all that it might have been, even if Reuben has not been as a firstborn ought to have been, he is still a son of Jacob, and he does not lose his sonship.

He is not disinherited, although he loses the privileges of the firstborn. Simeon and Levi, not much better. If anything, we might say perhaps worse.

They are defined forever by the shameful slaughter of the Shechemites, of which we read in chapter 34. They were unrepentant at the time, and perhaps, for all we know, they may have been the main instigators too against Joseph, that Jacob had carried the shame of their mass murder of peaceable men all his days.

[16:16] Cursed be their anger, verse 7. Notice though, it's cursed be their anger, and not cursed be their persons. It is not his sons who are cursed.

It is their sin. It is their anger. It is that of which they are guilty. And whilst we ought never to hate or curse the person, the sinner for the sake of the sin, nor are we, which tends to be more of a problem nowadays in the Church of Jesus Christ, nor are we ever to love, bless, or excuse the sin for the sake of the person committing it.

Because often we find our mouths gagged and our hands tied if someone we know or someone we love happens to be guilty of a particular offense or sin, you say, well, I can't do anything.

Because look, this is a friend, this is a colleague, this is a loved one, and they're doing it, so I can't say anything. I can't do anything. Some of you know my own past in the Church of Scotland and the reasons why I and my family left some years ago.

And at the time, one of my relatives, one of my aunts said, well, of course, we can sympathize to an extent with what you're saying and what you're doing, but we can never take that decision because we know people who are like that.

[17:40] As if we didn't. As if, you know, knowing somebody who's guilty of a particular sin makes that sin okay. Knowing somebody who engages in a particular practice, that makes that okay.

Jacob here curses their anger, but he does not curse his sons. He distinguishes between the sin and the sinner, neither cursing the persons for their sin, nor blessing or loving the sin for the sake of the person who is guilty of it.

Sin is sin, regardless of who does it. It does not become less sinful just because the person doing it is otherwise a good person or somebody we know or somebody we love or somebody we are fond of.

Sin is sin, according to what God in his word has defined. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce, and their wrath, for it was cruel.

I will divide them in Jacob, as indeed they came to be divided. Simeon with his own tribal area, completely surrounded by Judah, and Levi, of course, scattered throughout all of the tribes of Israel with their own, yes, Levitical cities, but no inheritance slipped at all because their inheritance was meant to be the tabernacle and the Lord.

[18:58] Simeon, Levi, then Judah, moving on to a happier subject. Judah, who, of course, when he was born, his mother said, now will I praise God. God was praised for him at his birth.

Chapter 29, verse 35, or 38. God was praised by him and what he did. God was praised in him and all that he was raised up to be.

The name Judah, of course, when Leah gave him that name when he was born, Ahudah is in Hebrew meaning praise, and Jehudah, Jehudah, means praise Jehovah.

She is praising Jehovah, the Lord, praising the one who has given her this son, her fourth son. And, of course, this proves to be the one from whom the tribe from whom the Messiah is raised up. Thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise. Thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies, thy father's children shall bow down before thee, as indeed they were come to do so. When the tribes divided and the northern kingdom of Israel broke away and followed idolatry, Judah became not only the name of the kingdom and the holy land that remained, at least outwardly, faithful to the Lord, but it became the name through which the Lord's people came to be identified, not so much Israelites as such, but Jews.

[ 20 : 20 ] Jew means of Judah. And so it is from this nation, from this people, that the Messiah comes and the Lord's people, according to the flesh, under the old dispensation, were largely identified.

Judah, he is a lion's twelp. Now, if he's a lion's twelp, that means like he's a lion cub. It means that he's young. That means a lion cub has not yet grown up into the fullness of all that he's going to be. At this stage and in the early stage in the Israelites' history, Judah was not yet the power it was going to become. Joseph was the one who was most blessed. Joseph was the one who inherited, if you like, the rights of the firstborn.

Judah, not yet. Judah would become the most numerous. Judah would become the strongest. Judah would become the one to whom David, the king, and his descendants came, and ultimately the Messiah, but not yet.

He's a lion's twelp. He's a lion's cub. He's not yet grown up into the fullness of all that he shall be. The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come.

[ 21 : 31 ] Of course, this term Shiloh, it's been often discussed by commentators. It's a term that as we read in John 9, for example, at verse 7, remember when Jesus says to the blind man, go wash in the pool of Siloam.

It's the same word, Siloam, Shiloh, Isaiah makes a reference in Isaiah chapter 8 at verse 6, you know, for as much as this people refuse at the waters of Shiloh that go softly and rejoice in residence when Elias' son.

It means the pool of Siloam, the gentle waters of Jerusalem as opposed to the raging torrents of the pagan nations round about. Go wash in the pool of Siloam, which is by interpretation sent.

Now, Jesus is the one who identifies himself as sent. John 17, verse 3, we read how he says, this is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.

It is the sent one who is Shiloh and this is the one who you could also say it's interpreted as meaning peace, it's interpreted as the one meaning prosperous but ultimately it is the one who is sent.

[ 22 : 47 ] And the Jews, of course, the people of Judah, of Israel, they would continue to have the line of the kings until the exile and within the exile the judges that were raised up, you know, Samuel Babel, the son of Shealtiel and all those that ruled over them when they rebuilt the walls and so on were in the tribe of Judah until finally the time of the Messiah comes.

And in the days of Jesus' birth, of course, Herod is by then the ruler of Israel. Herod is not a Judah. Herod is an Edomite in that sense but the high priests still ruled.

The high priests, the Levites who were associated with Judah until it comes to the time of Jesus' crucifixion, the final offering up of the sent one and what is it the Jewish leaders say then?

We have no king but Caesar. So the scepter departs finally from Judah at that point because the sent one has come to make his final offering and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

At the moment the gathering of the tribes of Israel is around Jacob. The day will come when they gather around the sent one. Shiloh, the Messiah, binding his fall unto the vine and his ass is cold unto the choice vine.

[ 24 : 05 ] He washed his garments in wine and his clothes in the blood of grapes. Now, if you think about a vine, you think about grapes and you think, you know, grapes you buy in the shops and the sort of fragile, twiggy-like sort of wood it is that the grapes are on the branches of.

It's not strong wood. It's not something you could bind a strong beast like a horse or a fold or a donkey to as a sort of, you know, thing you tie the reins onto like a sort of pine post or a reins post in any way.

It's not strong wood like that but this is the implication that even the wood of their vines which is so fragile and twiggy-like would be so strong that you could bind your ass's cult to the choice vine and

wash the garments of Judah in the blood of grapes.

such will be the abundance of grapes, of wine, of fruitfulness from Judah because he is so blessed, so blessed by the Lord.

This is what we find then. Judah is the one whom his brethren, my brethren, shall praise. The other sons, of course, there's minor blessings given to each of them.

[ 25 : 14 ] Zebulun, Isaac, or Dan, Gad, Asher, and Naphtali. A little aside here under Dan. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, verse 17, implying perhaps the supplication and the cunning of the serpent although he will judge.

That's what the name Dan means, a judge. He shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord. And it's not quite clear whether this verse 18 is in with the blessings that are given to Dan or whether it is almost like an interlude.

And Jacob, having given so many of these blessings so far, you know, about the seventh son now that he's at and the seventh blessing he's giving as though he's having to pause almost for strength, almost for energy to go.

And I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord. Not long now, not long till I go to be with my fathers.

And then Gad and then Asher and then Naphtali and so on.

And then the abundant blessings that have been poured out here upon Joseph. Joseph is a fruitful bough. Joseph is even a fruitful bough by a well whose branches run over the wall.

[ 26 : 32 ] Yes, the arches have sorely grieved and that's the implication of wounding from a distance. Those who perhaps you cannot see shot it and hated it. but his bow abode in strength and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.

The blessings of thy father, verse 26, have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. In other words, there are more blessings flowing out from Jacob here than were ever given from Abraham or from Isaac to their respective sons.

Remember how Esau cried to his father Isaac when Jacob had swindled him out of the blessing of the firstborn. He said, Oh, my father has to have but one blessing. Bless me also.

And Isaac was struggling to find another blessing to give. He had but one blessing although he had some form of words for Esau. Jacob has blessings for all his 12 sons.

Some of them are couched perhaps in rebuke as well and in a measure of judgment too but they are all the blessings of sonship. And yet he says, The blessings of thy father, of himself, Jacob, Joseph's father, have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors.

[ 27 : 47 ] More blessings than Abraham, more blessings than Isaac and the most blessing of all on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.

And because he was separated from his brethren, he was able to provide for them and humanly speaking to keep them alive. Now the word that we've got here translated as separate, verse 26, is the word Nazir from which we get the word Nazarite.

And a Nazarite, of course, was one who was separated unto God, who would not drink wine or strong drink, who wouldn't cut his hair during the time of his vow. He was separated unto God, as Samson was meant to be, of course, as well, and various others during the course of the Old Testament history.

Separate from his brethren. And God had set him apart for this unique purpose, that he might save much people alive. He might not only save the nation of Egypt, but save the covenant family of the Lord's people.

So blessings are shallowed upon his head. A double blessing upon Ephraim and Manasseh because of all that the Lord had used him for.

[ 28 : 56 ] Joseph's became the right of the firstborn. Although Judah became the strongest tribe, Joseph's became the inheritance of the firstborn.

The blessings on Joseph were more than on anybody's else. Benjamin shall raven as a wolf in the morning he shall devour the prey at night he shall divide the spoil.

A reference to the future warlike and violent tribe that Benjamin would become. They would be zealous whether for good or for evil.

In the book of Judges at the end we see the Benjamites zealous for evil. When Saul is king to begin with as of the tribe of Benjamin he is zealous for good and then of course he becomes afflicted by evil.

When Saul of Tarsus is initially persecuting the church of God he thinks he is being zealous for good. In fact he is being zealous for evil. But after he is converted he becomes the most zealous apostle of all.

[ 29 : 54 ] The Benjamites were a furiously zealous tribe. loyal and warlike whether it be against the enemies of Israel whether it be sometimes in the civil wars within Israel whether it be against the Lord's people in persecution or whether it be for them.

The Benjamites didn't do anything by hearts. A violent warlike zealous tribe whether to good or to evil or sometimes both as in the life of Saul of Tarsus.

And so we see that all these verse 28 on to the end all these are the 12 tribes of Israel this is that it that their father spake unto them and blessed them. Every one according to his blessing he blessed them.

Now notice despite the fact they are as we said earlier in many ways a shower of dos none of them is rejected from sonship none of them is cast out they all retain the privileges and the place of sons within Jacob's blessing.

Esau was rejected Jacob's brother but none of Jacob's own sons are rejected there is room for all if they will have it.

[ 31 : 13 ] Now in these closing verses we see you know that Jacob prepares for his death he spells out very very precisely the identity and the place of the cave of Machpelah where he is to be buried that he is to be buried where Abraham was buried there and Sarah his wife Isaac and Rebekah his wife there I buried Leah he has already made preparation he already knows where he intends to go and we read of how he yielded up the ghost and was gathered unto his people now we think of death as separating us from our people the commentator Matthew Henry puts it thus he says though it separates us from our children and our people in this world it gathers us to our fathers and our people in the world to come I'll say that again death though it separates us from our children and our people in this world it gathers us to our fathers and our people in the world to come now that is the case whether it be for good or for ill and that's something we should recognize just as there is a resurrection of the just and of the unjust when we are gathered to our people the Lord discerns with a perfect judgment and a perfect righteousness and accuracy whether our people and our fathers are those who are the redeemed or the lost

Jesus remember says in what to me is one of the most terrifying verses in the New Testament he says to the Pharisees ye are of your father the devil they have claimed God as their father verse 41 in John if ye do the deeds of your father we have one father even God Jesus said if God were your father you would love me for I proceeded forth and came from God neither came I of myself but he sent me now think on that for a minute if God were your father you would love me that means that anybody who is opposed to Christ in this world does not have God for their father if they do not have God for their father then who is their father verse 44 of John 8 ye are of your father the devil and the lusts of your father ye will do he was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him when he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own for he is a liar and the father of it and because

I tell you the truth you believe me not this identifies clearly in Jesus eyes those who are of his father and those who are of their father the devil those who are of God as their father will love the Lord Jesus Christ those who love the devil will hate the Lord Jesus Christ they will trust in lies they will hate the truth because the truth is unpalatable the truth offends them the truth throws down the idol of themselves from the place of worship where they love to have little graven images or whatever it is the idolatry of self ye shall be as gods and that was the lust to which Adam and Eve came to put themselves and all in any form of man made religion in place of that living relationship with the true God whether we are gathered to our fathers in heaven or in hell death will separate us from our people here and it will unite us to our people in the next world for good or for ill and the thing we should recognize with this is that just as all

Jacob's sons are afforded not the benefit of the doubt but the benefit of the blessing which he pours out upon his children despite how bad they are despite what they have done and what they are guilty of with one or two exceptions he does not disinherit them from sonship they are the sons of Jacob the sons of Israel not by virtue of their own merits but by virtue of being his and likewise we if we are enabled by the spirit of God to cry Abba father we are his not by our biology but because of adoption not for anything that you and I have done that means that as long as we are on mercy's ground there is yet hope there is yet opportunity for us to close in with Christ for us to receive this

grace this adoption adoption remember is a process it is something for which if one ever tries to adopt a child legally in this country you have so many hoops to jump through so many forms to do so many things to do adoption is a legal process having a child biologically is a physical in a sense a fleshly sort of thing you're brought into the world in the ordinary way that we all are your biological parents are who they are you can't change that but if you become adopted then you become legally and totally in every sense the child of the person adopting you whatever may be the circumstances of our entry into the world whatever may be the circumstances that surround us of the sins that we are guilty of once we are adopted we become the children of that father who adopts us in every sense in every legality in every fulfillment in every blessing in every privilege and if then we are redeemed that is not because of what we have done but because of whose we are and who has adopted us when

Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons he gathered up his feet into the bed and yielded up the ghost and was gathered unto his people who are his people his people are the covenant land the people of God God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob his fathers it says in Psalm 4 in the final verse I will both lay me down in peace and sleep for thou Lord only make us to me dwell in safety that is our protection in the midst of the long night of this world that is our safety it is not Abraham or Isaac or Jacob but the God whom they worship so much of Genesis is about these three patriarchs we encounter Abraham in chapter 11 we leave Jacob behind in chapter 49 they cover something like 307 years or whatever of this period throughout Genesis so much of it is about the patriarchs Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and now

[ 38 : 32 ] Jacob is gone and when Jacob is gone I think oh what are we going to do now but Jacob is gone but the God of Jacob is not the God of Israel is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is still our father if we will accept his grace his adoption his election his mercy we will never be redeemed for anything we have done some of Jacob's sons may have thought that their misdemeanors from long ago would be forgotten and their father would say it doesn't matter now son just come and give me a kiss and I'll bless you before I die but no he remembered he knew every detail and our heavenly father will know every detail of our lives we will be blessed not because of what we have done but because of who he is and whose sons we are enabled to become whatever our physical gender may be we are sons by adoption because sons inherit if we will have

Christ to our saviour the day will come when we too will be gathered to our fathers and then the question will be who is your father is it God who causes you to love the Lord Jesus Christ or is it the devil who has lied to you all your life and will cause you to lie to think that there is a salvation in any other Jacob gathered up his feet into the bed and yielded up the ghost and was gathered to his people as we shall be the question then is who are my people who is my father who is our God who