

A Word from Kathy

What will your final words be? Have you ever thought about that? I want to be purposeful right up to my last breath. This week we will look at a man who spoke into the hearts and lives of his sons even with his last breath.

Read the chapter at least twice and ask God to help you see the real value of a spoken blessing.

Observation

1. Jacob gathered his sons for one last opportunity to speak truth into their lives and to bless them as only a parent can.
 - Reuben was the firstborn, so Jacob started with him. He started life with such promise, but what did Jacob compare him to?
James 1:5-8 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he would receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.
 - Simeon and Levi had lived their lives by the sword. Why did Jacob mention not taking council from someone like this?
Prov. 22:24-25 Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered, or you may learn his ways and get yourself ensnared.
Levi's tribe would later be the priests for the entire nation of Israel. The priests did not always lead well though. They were scattered across the entire nation. They had no land of their own when Israel, led by Joshua, went in to claim the Promised Land.
 - What position was Judah now being used to fill in his family? He was not there by birth but by his father's words. God had chosen to use his descendants to eventually give birth to the Messiah. There are many references to Christ in this blessing.
 - What was Zebulun promised?
He ended up settling inland. Trade routes did come directly through his land. This tribe is mentioned in other areas of scripture, but it was a small tribe.
 - What was Issachar compared to?
He was a hard worker who could carry a heavy load, but would end up working for others.

- Dan's name means "judge," which is what others would look to him for, but did he sound like a good and righteous judge?
His judgment would harm others. Israel's borders would later be said to be from Dan to Beer-Sheba.

 - What did Jacob say about Gad?
Gad never settled in the Promised Land. He did not cross but settled on the other side of the Jordan River, which left them open to attack.

 - What did Jacob say about Asher?
Asher had a wonderful area for his inheritance, with mountains on one side and the sea on the other, and good land in between. Jacob knew the good things that would come out of Asher's land.

 - Naphtali's blessing is so picturesque. Do you believe he had been a blessing to Jacob?
It is easy to imagine the grace and speed of a doe as she runs and jumps, easily fleeing any perceived threat.

 - What was Joseph compared to?
When water easily reaches the vine, it will grow strong and produce much fruit. The wall gives the vine a sturdy place to grow. Jacob's blessing for Joseph showed the love he had for him.

 - What did Benjamin's blessing sound like?
He obviously would produce mighty warriors. King Saul and the apostle Paul were both of the tribe of Benjamin.
2. What were your thoughts as you read these blessings? Some sounded like something I might want as a blessing, and some did not sound much like a blessing at all. Read verse 28 again and see if you can find an explanation. Write out your answer.
3. In verses 29-32 Jacobs gives specific instructions; what are they?
4. Finally Leah will be the honored wife. All of her married life she had played second to Rachel; what had changed? What did Jacob finally understand that he had not understood all of those years?

Application

5. What have you learned from the blessings you looked at today?
How will you apply this to your walk of faith?

6. Do you believe our actions today are sowing seeds for our tomorrows? If so, would you like to make any changes?