

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2004**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB**

Message Sixteen

The God of Jacob

(6)

**A Type of the Church as God's House—the Intrinsic Significance of the Blessings
Propheied concerning Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulun, and Issachar**

Scripture Reading: Gen. 49:1-15

- I. Jacob's twelve sons eventually became the twelve tribes of Israel, a type of the church as God's house, the Israel of God, composed of all the believers—Gal. 6:16; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 3:5-6:**
 - A. Jacob's maturity in life issued in the overflow of life, his prophesying with blessing for the building up of God's house—Prov. 4:18; Gen. 47:7, 10; 48:14-16; 49:1-28; cf. 1 Cor. 14:4b, 31.
 - B. Whatever was spoken prophetically by Jacob concerning his sons was a type, a picture, of the church and should be applied to the church and to the spiritual experience of the believers, as well as to the sons of Israel—10:6.
- II. The prophecy concerning Reuben is a warning concerning the defilement of fleshly lust, and the prophecy concerning Simeon and Levi is a warning concerning the destruction of the natural disposition—Gen. 49:3-7:**
 - A. Although Reuben had the preeminence of the birthright, because of his defilement he lost the birthright and became in danger of dying or of being greatly decreased—vv. 3-4; Deut. 33:6; 1 Cor. 6:17-20; 1 Thes. 4:3-8; 1 Cor. 9:27; Phil. 1:20; Rom. 6:12-14; 8:2; 12:1-2; 13:11-14; 16:20; 2 Tim. 2:22.
 - B. Because of their cruelty according to their disposition, Simeon and Levi received no blessing from Jacob, but later, Levi used his disposition in a renewed, transformed way in absoluteness for God's interests in order to receive the priesthood—Gen. 49:5-7; 34:25-30; Deut. 22:6-7; Exo. 32:26-28.
- III. The prophecy concerning Judah portrays Christ in the four Gospels (the contents of the gospel), the prophecy concerning Zebulun portrays the shipping out of the gospel in the Acts (borne by the wind of the Holy Spirit), and the prophecy concerning Issachar portrays the practice of the church life in the Epistles (for God's building)—Gen. 49:8-15:**
 - A. The prophecy concerning Judah portrays the good news of Christ—the victory of Christ, the kingdom of Christ, and the enjoyment and rest in Christ:
 1. Judah, likened poetically to a young lion, is a type of Christ as the ultimate Overcomer—v. 8-9; Rev. 5:5:

- a. In His victory, Christ is typified as a young lion overcoming the enemies and couching in satisfaction after enjoying the prey (Gen. 49:9a); this is a picture of the victory of Christ over His enemies in His crucifixion (Col. 2:15; Heb. 2:14) and of His satisfaction and rest in His ascension as the issue of His victory (Eph. 4:8).
 - b. Christ is also the producing lioness, bringing forth many overcomers as His “lion cubs”—Gen. 49:9b; cf. Prov. 28:1; Rev. 22:5.
2. In His authority and kingship, Christ comes as the Peace Bringer, the One to whom all the nations submit and obey—Gen. 49:10; Eph. 2:14-15:
 - a. The scepter, a symbol of the kingdom (Psa. 45:6; Heb. 1:8), denotes the kingly authority of Christ; that the scepter will never depart from Judah means that the kingship will never depart from Christ (Rev. 11:15; 22:1, 3); we must be under the ruling of Christ to reign for Christ over Satan, sin, and death (Col. 2:19; Rom. 5:17).
 - b. *Shiloh*, meaning *peace bringer*, refers to Christ in His second coming as the Prince of Peace, bringing peace to the whole earth—Isa. 9:6-7; 2:4; Rom. 14:17; Col. 3:15; cf. Matt. 14:22-33; Job 3:25; Prov. 3:25-26.
 - c. Due to His victory and kingship, Christ can be enjoyed by us to be our rest—our perfect peace and full satisfaction—Gen. 49:11-12:
 - d. To tie our donkey to the vine (v. 11a) signifies to cease from our labor and our striving in our natural life and to rest in Christ, the living One who is the source of life (John 15:1, 5; Matt. 11:28-30).
 - e. To wash our garments in wine and our robe in the blood of grapes (Gen. 49:11b) signifies to soak our behavior, our daily walk, in the enjoyment of the riches of Christ’s life (Matt. 9:17).
 - f. The eyes being red with wine and the teeth being white with milk (Gen. 49:12) signifies transformation from death to life by the enjoyment of the rich life of Christ (John 10:10; Judg. 9:13); the whiteness of the teeth signifies the sound, healthy function to take in God’s Word as food and to utter His word so that others may be nourished (Eph. 6:19).
- B. The prophecy concerning Zebulun portrays the preaching of the gospel:
 1. Zebulun, a seaport, was part of Galilee, the place where the Lord Jesus began His ministry of the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom—Gen. 49:13; Matt. 4:12-23; 28:7, 10, 16-20.
 2. We can be the Galilean preachers, the gospel “ships,” who sail out from Christ as the “shore” through prayer by the power of the Holy Spirit as the heavenly wind and with the riches of Christ in the Word to reach the whole world—Acts 1:8; 2:2-41; 4:31; Psa. 68:1, 11, 18-19, 27.
- C. The prophecy concerning Issachar is concerning the church life:
 1. In the genuine church life as the issue of the preaching of the gospel, we rest in satisfaction between (outside) the religious sheepfolds to enjoy the pleasant Christ as the good land—Gen. 49:14-15a; Deut. 33:18b.
 2. This enjoyment issues in our willingness to carry out our service, which is assigned by Christ as the Head; such service becomes a tribute offered to the Master for His satisfaction—Gen. 49:15b; 1 Cor. 12:4-6, 18, 28; Eph. 2:10; 4:11-12; cf. Rom. 15:16.

Genesis 49:1-15

- 1 And Jacob called to his sons and said, Gather yourselves together that I may tell you what will happen to you in the last days.
- 2 Assemble yourselves, and listen, O sons of Jacob;
Yes, listen to Israel your father.
- 3 Reuben, you are my firstborn,
My might and the firstfruits of my vigor,
Preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power.
- 4 Ebullient as water, you will not have the preeminence,
Because you went up to your father's bed;
Then you defiled *it*—he went up to my couch.
- 5 Simeon and Levi are brothers;
Weapons of violence are their swords.
- 6 Come not into their council, O my soul;
Be not united with their assembly, O my glory;
For in their anger they slew men,
And in their self-will they hamstrung oxen.
- 7 Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce;
And their wrath, for it is cruel:
I will divide them in Jacob,
And scatter them in Israel.
- 8 Judah, your brothers will praise you;
Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies;
Your father's sons will bow down before you.
- 9 Judah is a young lion;
From the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He couches, he stretches out like a lion,
And like a lioness; who will rouse him up?
- 10 The scepter will not depart from Judah,
Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
Until Shiloh comes,
And to Him shall be the obedience of the peoples.
- 11 Binding his foal to the vine,
And his donkey's colt to the choice vine,
He washes his garment in wine,
And his robe in the blood of grapes.
- 12 Dark are his eyes with wine,
And white are his teeth with milk.
- 13 Zebulun will dwell at the shore of the sea,
And he will be a shore for ships,
And his flank will be toward Sidon.
- 14 Issachar is a strong donkey,
Couching between the sheepfolds.
- 15 And he saw a resting place that was good
And the land that was pleasant,
And he bowed his shoulder to bear,
And became a task-worker to *bring* tribute.