

## Bible Study – January 27, 2021

### Genesis 49:1-4, 8-12

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#### Question: Are we more like Reuben or Judah?

*Then Jacob called for his sons and said: “Gather around so I can tell you what will happen to you in days to come. <sup>2</sup> “Assemble and listen, sons of Jacob; listen to your father Israel.*

*<sup>3</sup> “Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might, the first sign of my strength, excelling in honor, excelling in power. <sup>4</sup> Turbulent as the waters, you will no longer excel, for you went up onto your father’s bed, onto my couch and defiled it....*

*<sup>8</sup> “Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; your father’s sons will bow down to you. <sup>9</sup> You are a lion’s cub, Judah; you return from the prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness—who dares to rouse him? <sup>10</sup> The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his. <sup>11</sup> He will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch; he will wash his garments in wine, his robes in the blood of grapes. <sup>12</sup> His eyes will be darker than wine, his teeth whiter than milk.*

#### Reuben (vv. 3–4)

- Reuben had been sexually intimate with his father’s concubine and he lost his privileges as the firstborn son. Jacob gave that blessing to Joseph and his two sons.
- Warren Wiersbe: “As Jacob’s firstborn son, Reuben should have been a strong man with dignity, who brought honor to his father and family, but he turned out to be a weak man, who disgraced his family by defiling his father’s bed.”
- “Unstable as water” = turbulence and weakness.
- We do not find people in Reuben’s line who led well.
- The army of Reuben didn’t heed the call of Deborah and Barak when they fought the Canaanites.

#### Judah (vv. 8–12)

- Judah suggested to his brothers that they sell Joseph as a slave (37:26–27). Jacob realized that Judah at least saved Joseph’s life and got him to Egypt, where God had a work for him to do.
- Judah offered to stay in Egypt while the rest of the brothers went to get Benjamin.
- When Jacob and family moved to Egypt, he sent Judah to make things ready (46:28).
- Judah had made some mistakes, but he had also made some things right.
- Judah founded the royal tribe that gave Israel their kings, some of whom were godly leaders, and that ultimately brought Jesus Christ into the world (Heb. 7:14).
- The description in vv 11–12 talks about the blessings that will come when the Messiah reigns over Israel. It describes a land so wealthy and a people so prosperous that they can do outrageous things and not have to worry about the consequences.

#### To Ponder This Week:

- How do your past sins affect you today? Have you repented and committed to walk down the narrow path of discipleship or are you wallowing in your sin?
- What legacy are you leaving to the next generation? How are your actions now affecting them?
- Lent is coming: begin asking God where He wants to meet you, convict you of sin, cleanse you, and heal you.