



Genesis Chapter 49

1 Jacob called for his sons and said, "Gather and I will tell you what will happen to you at the end of days.

2 Gather and listen, sons of Jacob, and listen to Israel, your father.

3 Reuben, you are my firstborn, my strength and the first of my might. [You should have been] superior in rank and superior in power.

4 [You have] the restlessness of water; [therefore,] you shall not have superiority, for you ascended upon your father's couch; then you profaned [Him Who] ascended upon my bed.

5 Simeon and Levi are brothers; stolen instruments are their weapons.

6 Let my soul not enter their counsel; my honor, you shall not join their assembly, for in their wrath they killed a man, and with their will they hamstrung a bull.

7 Cursed be their wrath for it is mighty, and their anger because it is harsh. I will separate them throughout Jacob, and I will scatter them throughout Israel.

8 Judah, [as for] you, your brothers will acknowledge you. Your hand will be at the nape of your enemies, [and] your father's sons will prostrate themselves to you.

9 A cub [and] a grown lion is Judah. From the prey, my son, you withdrew. He crouched, rested like a lion, and like a lion, who will rouse him?

10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the student of the law from between his feet, until

אֲוִי־קִרְאָ יַעֲקֹב אֶל-בָּנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הָאֶסְפוּ וְאֶגִּידָה לָכֶם אֶת אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרָא אֲתֶכֶם בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים:

בְּהִקְבְּצוֹ וְשִׁמְעוּ בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב וְשִׁמְעוּ אֶל-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבִיכֶם:

גְּרָאוּבֵן בְּכֹרִי אֶתָּה כְּחִי וְרֹאשִׁית אוֹנִי יִתֵּר שְׂאֵת וַיִּתֵּר עָז:

דִּפְחַז כַּמִּים אֶל-תּוֹתֵר כִּי עָלִית מִשְׁכְּבִי אֲבִיר אֶז חֲלָלֹת יִצְוִעִי עָלָה:

הִשְׁמַעוֹן וְלֵוִי אֲחִים כָּלִי חֲמָס מִכְרֹתֵיהֶם:

וּבְסוֹדֶם אֶל-תִּבָּא נַפְשִׁי בִּקְהָלָם אֶל-תַּחַד כְּבֹדִי כִּי בְּאֶפֶס הָרָגוּ אִישׁ וּבִרְצֹנָם עָקְרוּ שׁוֹר:

ז אַרְוֹר אֶפֶס כִּי עָז וְעִבְרַתָּם כִּי קָשְׁתָּה אֲחֻלָּקָם בִּיעֲקֹב וְאַפִּיצָם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:

חִי הוֹדָה אֶתָּה יוֹדוּךָ אֲחִירֵךְ יִדָּךְ בְּעֶרְףְּ אֲבִירֵךְ יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לָךְ בְּנֵי אֲבִירֵךְ:

ט גּוֹר אַרְיֵה הוֹדָה מִטְרָף בְּנֵי עָלִית כְּרַע רֶבֶץ כְּאַרְיֵה וּכְלָבִיא מִי יִקְיָמוֹנוּ:

י לֹא-יִסּוֹר שִׁבְט מִיְּהוּדָה וּמַחֲקֶק מִבֵּין רַגְלָיו עַד כִּי-יָבֹא שִׁילָה וְלוֹ יִקְהֶת עַמִּים:

Shiloh comes, and to him will be a gathering of peoples.

11He binds his foal to a vine, and to a tendril [he binds] his young donkey. [He launders] his garment with wine, and with the blood of grapes binds his raiment.

12[He is] red eyed from wine and white toothed from milk.

13Zebulun will dwell on the coast of the seas; he [will be] at the harbor of the ships, and his boundary will be at Zidon.

14Issachar is a strong-boned donkey, lying between the boundaries.

15He saw a resting place, that it was good, and the land, that it was pleasant, and he bent his shoulder to bear [burdens], and he became an indentured laborer.

16Dan will avenge his people, like one, the tribes of Israel.

17Dan will be a serpent on the road, a viper on the path, which bites the horse's heels, so its rider falls backwards.

18For Your salvation, I hope, O Lord!

9[As for] Gad, a troop will troop forth from him, and it will troop back in its tracks.

20From Asher will come rich food, and he will yield regal delicacies.

21Naphtali is a swift gazelle; [he is one] who utters beautiful words.

22A charming son is Joseph, a son charming to the eye; [of the] women, [each one] strode along to see him.

23They heaped bitterness upon him and became quarrelsome; yea, archers despised him.

24But his bow was strongly established, and his arms were gilded from the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob; from there he sustained the rock of Israel,

25from the God of your father, and He will help you, and with the Almighty, and He will bless you [with] the blessings of the heavens above, the

יאֲאָסְרִי לִגְפֶּן עֵינָיו (כְּתִיב עִירָה) וְלִשְׂרָקָה
בְּנֵי אֲתָנָו כִּכְסָּ בַיִּין לְבָשׁוֹ וּבְדָם-עֲנָבִים
סוּתָו (כְּתִיב סוּתָה) :

יבְחַלְיִי עֵינַיִם מִיַּיִן וְלִבִּי-שָׁנִים מִחֶלֶב:

יגְזַבּוּלָן לְחוֹף יָמִים יִשְׁכֵּן וְהוּא לְחוֹף אֲנִיֹּת
וְיִרְכָּתוֹ עַל-צִידוֹ:

ידִשְׁשָׁכָר חֲמֹר גָּרָם רֶבֶץ בֵּין הַמְּשָׁפָּתִים:

טוֹיָרָא מְנַחֵה כִּי טוֹב וְאֶת-הָאָרֶץ כִּי נַעֲמָה
נִיט שְׁכָמוֹ לִסְבֹּל וַיְהִי לַמַּס-עֶבֶד:

טזדָן יָדִין עַמּוֹ כְּאֶחָד שְׁבֹטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

יזיְהִי-דָן נָחֵשׁ עַל-יֶדְרֹךְ שְׂפִיפֹן עַל-יֶאֱרֹחַ
הַנָּשֶׁךְ עַקְבֵי-סוֹס וַיִּפֹּל רֶכֶבָּו אַחֲזָר:

יחלִישׁוּעַתְךָ קִנִּיתִי יְהוָה:

יטגָד גְּדוּד גְּדוּדָנוּ וְהוּא יִגְד עִקְבִּי:

כמֵאֲשֵׁר שְׂמֵנָה לַחֲמֹ וְהוּא יִתֵּן מַעֲדָנֵי-
מֶלֶךְ:

כאנִפְתָּלִי אֵילָה שְׁלַחָה הַנָּתַן אִמְרֵי-שֹׁפָר:

כבבֶּן פֶּרֶת יוֹסֵף בֶּן פֶּרֶת עַל-עֵין בְּנוֹת
צִעָדָה עַל-יִשׁוּר:

כגוֹיִמְרָהוּ וְרָבוּ וַיִּשְׁטְמֵהוּ בְּעֵלֵי חֲצִים:

כדוֹתָשֵׁב בְּאִיתָן קִשְׁתּוֹ וַיִּפְּזוּ זְרָעֵי יָדָיו
מִיַּדִּי אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב מִשָּׁם רָעָה אֶבֶן יִשְׂרָאֵל:

כהמֵאֵל אֲבִיךָ וַיַּעֲזֹרְךָ וְאֵת שְׂדֵי וַיְבָרְכֶךָ
בְּרֶכֶת שָׁמַיִם מַעַל בְּרֶכֶת תְּהוֹם רִבְצָת
תַּחַת בְּרֶכֶת שְׂדֵיִם וְנַחֲסִים:

blessings of the deep, lying below, the blessings of father and mother.

26The blessings of your father surpassed the blessings of my parents, the ends of the everlasting hills. May they come to Joseph's head and to the crown (of the head) of the one who was separated from his brothers.

27Benjamin is a wolf, he will prey; in the morning he will devour plunder, and in the evening he will divide the spoil."

28All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father spoke to them **and blessed them**; each man, according to his blessing, he blessed them.

כּוֹבֶרֶכֶת אָבִיךָ גָּבְרוּ עַל-בִּרְכַּת הַזֵּרִי עַד-
תְּאֻת גְּבֻעַת עוֹלָם תִּהְיֶינָה לְרֹאשׁ יוֹסֵף
וּלְקֶדֶד הַיָּר אָחִיו:

כַּזְבִּנִּימִין זֶאֵב יִטְרֹף בְּבֹקֶר יֹאכֹל עֵד
וּלְעֶרֶב יַחְלֹק שָׁלָל:

כַּחֲכַל-אֵלֶּה שְׁבֻטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר
וְזֹאת אֲשֶׁר-דִּבֶּר לָהֶם אָבִיהֶם וַיְבָרֶךְ
אוֹתָם אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר כְּבִרְכָּתוֹ בֵּרַךְ אֹתָם:

RASHI:

and this is what their father spoke to them and blessed them: Now is it not so that some of them he did not bless, but [in fact] chided? Rather, this is what is intended: And this is what their father spoke to them-what is related in this section. One might think that he did not bless Reuben, Simeon, and Levi. Therefore, Scripture states: and he blessed them, meaning all of them. — [From Pesikta Rabbathi 7]
according to his blessing: With the blessing destined to befall each of them.

וזאת אשר דבר להם אביהם ויברך אותם: והלא יש מהם שלא ברכם אלא קינטרן. אלא כך פירושו וזאת אשר דבר להם אביהם מה שנאמר בענין. יכול שלא ברך לראובן שמעון ולוי, תלמוד לומר ויברך אותם, כולם במשמע:

איש אשר כברכתו: ברכה העתידה לבא על כל אחד ואחד:

Mordechai Yosef of Ishbitz, Mei HaShiloach, Vayehi

And Jacob called unto his sons

When Jacob wanted to bless his sons, he was unsure if he really needed to bless them on account of all the distress they caused him (from the selling of Joseph), for it is taught (Talmud Yoma 22b): “*Any scholar who does not avenge himself and bear a grudge like a serpent, is no [real] scholar.*”

Therefore, the text says **called**, meaning crying out and yearning with all his heart that Heaven should guide his heart and mind, and that God should place the right words [the blessings] on his tongue...

This is why the text does not initially say Jacob **blessed** his sons, for he was still not sure what he was going to say to them.



Genesis Chapter 48

1Now it came to pass after these incidents that [someone] said to Joseph, "Behold, your father is ill." So he took his two sons with him, Manasseh and Ephraim.

...

5And now, [as for] your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt, until I came to you, to the land of Egypt they are mine. Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine like Reuben and Simeon.

...

13And Joseph took them both, Ephraim at his right, from Israel's left, and Manasseh at his left, from Israel's right, and he brought [them] near to him.

14But Israel stretched out his right hand and placed [it] on Ephraim's head, although he was the younger, and his left hand [he placed] on Manasseh's head. He guided his hands deliberately, for Manasseh was the firstborn.

15And he blessed Joseph and said, "God, before Whom my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, walked, God Who sustained me as long as I am alive, until this day,

אָנִי־הִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיֹּאמֶר לְיוֹסֵף
הִנֵּה אָבִיךָ חָלָה וַיִּלָּח אֶת־שְׁנֵי בָנָיו עִמּוֹ
אֶת־מְנַשֶּׁה וְאֶת־אֶפְרַיִם:

הוֹעֲתָה שְׁנֵי־בָנָיָךְ הַנּוֹלָדִים לָךְ בְּאֶרֶץ
מִצְרַיִם עַד־בָּאִי אֵלַיךְ מִצְרַיִמָּה לֵי־הֵם
אֶפְרַיִם וּמְנַשֶּׁה כְּרֹאשׁוֹן וְשִׁמְעוֹן יִהְיוּ־לִי:

וַיִּגְיָקֵחַ יוֹסֵף אֶת־שְׁנֵיהֶם אֶת־אֶפְרַיִם
בְּיָמִינוֹ מִשְׁמָאל וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת־מְנַשֶּׁה
בְּשִׁמְאֵלוֹ מִיְּמִין וְיִשְׂרָאֵל נִגַּשׁ אֵלָיו:

יָדָיו־שָׁלַח יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־יָמִינוֹ וַיָּשֶׁת עַל־רֹאשׁ
אֶפְרַיִם וְהוּא הִצְעִיר וְאֶת־שְׁמָאלוֹ עַל־רֹאשׁ
מְנַשֶּׁה שְׂכָל־אֶת־יָדָיו כִּי מְנַשֶּׁה הַבְּכוֹר:

טוֹוִיבָרָךְ אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר
הִתְהַלְכוּ אֲבֹתַי לִפְנֵי אֲבֹתֶם וַיִּצְחָק
הָאֱלֹהִים הַרְעָה אֹתִי מֵעוֹדִי עַד־כִּי־הָיִים הַזֶּה:

16 may the angel who redeemed me from all harm bless the youths, and may they be called by my name and the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, and may they multiply abundantly like fish, in the midst of the land."

טזהמלאך הגאל אתי מכל-רע יברך את-
הנערים ויקרא בהם שמותי ושם אבותי
אברהם ויצחק וידגו לרב בקרב הארץ:

the angel who redeemed me: The angel who was usually sent to me in my distress, as the matter is stated: "And an angel of God said to me in a dream, 'Jacob!...I am the God of Bethel' " ([Gen. 31:11-13](#)). - [after Targum Jonathan ben Uzziel]

המלאך הגאל אתי: מלאך הרגיל להשתלח אלי בצרתי, כענין שנאמר (בראשית לא יא - יג) ויאמר אלי מלאך האלהים בחלום יעקב וגו' אנכי האל בית אל:

בבא בתרא קי"ח ב:ב'

ר' יוסי ברבי חנינא אמר מהכא (בראשית מז, טז) וידגו לרוב בקרב הארץ מה דגים שבים מים מכסים עליהם ואין העין שולטת בהם אף זרעו של יוסף אין העין שולטת בהם:

Bava Batra 118b:2

Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Ḥanina, said that a proof for the notion that the evil eye holds no sway over Joseph and his descendants, is **from here**, Jacob's blessing of Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh: "The angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named in them, and the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac; **and let them grow into a multitude [veyidgu] in the midst of the earth**" (Genesis 48:16). *Veyidgu* is related etymologically to the word for fish [*dag*]. **Just as with regard to the fish in the sea, water covers them and the evil eye has no dominion over them, so too, the seed of Joseph, the evil eye has no dominion over them.**

Question: What kind of "blessing" is this?

Answer: Although not your typical blessing, Jacob revealed to each of his sons their negative and positive traits, which would enable them to better deal with life. That is a great blessing.

Rabbi Avi Geller, Aish