

GENESIS 49

Written and compiled by Gary Kukis

Genesis 49:1–33

Jacob's Last Words to His Sons

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall be have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God." (John 3:16–18). "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!" (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

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Links to the [word-by-word](#), [verse-by-verse](#) studies of **Genesis** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) (that is what this document is). This incorporates 2 previous studies done in the book of Genesis. However, much of this material was thrown together without careful editing. Therefore, from time to time, there will be concepts and exegetical material which will be repeated, because there was no overall editing done once all of this material was combined.

There is a second, less complete set of weekly lessons of Genesis ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)). Every word of that study can be found in the word-by-word, verse-by-verse studies.

This study makes reference to a wide-range of sources. There are quotations from doctrinal teachers, of course; but from Catholic commentaries and from other sources as well. Wherever I found relevant truth, I quoted from it or was inspired by it. Even though it is clear that some churches have a better concept of our reason for being here, that does not mean that there is no truth to be found anywhere else. So, from time to time, I will quote from John Calvin, even though I do not subscribe to 5-point Calvinism; I will quote from some Catholic sources, even

though I believe that they are very wrong regarding Mary, the pope, apostolic succession and other such doctrines. The intention is for this to be the most thorough and accurate study of Genesis available anywhere.

Also, **it is not necessary that you read the grey Hebrew exegesis tables**. They are set apart from the rest of the study so that you can easily skip over them (based upon the suggestion of a friend). However, if you ever doubt the translation of a word, phrase or a verse, these translation tables are then available.

Preface: In Genesis 49, Jacob gives his final words to each of his 12 sons, prophesying in many cases of the future of each tribe. What he says is based very much upon the behavior that these sons have exhibited over the years. Jacob then commands his sons to bury him in Canaan, at which point he dies.

There are many **chapter commentaries** on the book of Genesis. This will be the most extensive examination of Genesis 49, where you will be able to examine in depth every word of the original text. Every attempt has been made to make this both a complete and self-contained study. Therefore, all references, vocabulary, and related concepts should be found within this extensive study. Easy access links to more in-depth studies of some vocabulary words, concepts and doctrines are also provided.

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www.kukis.org		Exegetical Studies in Genesis

Doctrines Covered or Alluded To			

Additional doctrines and links are found in [Definition of Terms](#) below.

Chapters of the Bible Alluded To and/or Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter			

Many who read and study this chapter are 1st or 2nd generation students of R. B. Thieme, Jr., so that much of this vocabulary is second nature. One of Bob's contributions to theology is a fresh vocabulary along with a number of concepts which are theologically new or reworked, yet still orthodox. Therefore, if you are unfamiliar with his work, the definitions below will help you to fully understand all that is being said. Also, I have developed a few new terms and concepts which require definition as well.

In addition, there are other more traditional yet technical theological terms which will be used and therefore defined as well.

Sometimes the terms in the exegesis of this chapter are simply alluded to, without any in-depth explanation of them. Sometimes, these terms are explained in detail and illustrated. A collection of all these terms is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Definition of Terms

Rebound (Restoration to fellowship with God)

In the New Testament, this is naming your sins to God, so that you are both restored to temporal fellowship with God and are then filled with the Spirit of God. In the Old Testament, naming your sins to God would result in a restoration of fellowship and, in some cases, the empowerment of the Holy Spirit once again (the Holy Spirit was not given to all Old Testament believers). See the **Doctrine of Rebound** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Some of these definitions are taken from

<http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/>

<http://rickhughesministries.org/content/Biblical-Terms.pdf>

<http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d>

<http://www.wordoftruthministries.org/terms-and-definitions/>

<http://www.theopedia.com/>

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An Introduction to Genesis 49

Introduction: Genesis 48 was about Jacob calling in his son Joseph and giving him the double portion blessing (each son of Joseph's was blessed as if he were a son of Jacob's; Joseph's two sons would be seen as equal to the Joseph's brothers). In other words, Jacob gave the double-portion blessing to Joseph.

Genesis 49 will be all about the end-of-life blessings given by Jacob to his 12 sons.

Genesis 49 is Jacob's deathbed greatness. Although Jacob was quite hardheaded and spend much of his life out of fellowship, he certainly had his moments and this is one of them. He, under the direction of God the Holy Spirit, tells of the characteristics which are integral to his sons and how these traits will impact their heirs.

Jacob is dying, he can barely see, yet, under the ministry of God the Holy Spirit on his deathbed will have great mental clarity. He obviously has been thinking about these things for some time and has put together a poem, if you will, although it is not completely clear if Jacob wrote this in advance or if he just said these things on the spot. This comes from Jacob's great mentality and the spiritual growth which he has experience over the past couple years. Jacob has the background of growing, retrogressing, growing, retrogressing. Here, he is at a spiritual peak, able to both prophesy and to speak poetically. He is not in a trance state speaking as a robot, but God's Word comes out of his mouth in his vocabulary, from his thoughts, with his own emotions and predilections functioning normally. I pray to have this kind of mental clarity at my death so that my dying grace is not wasted on me.

Many times, I have expressed doubts as to the mental clarity of Jacob; but I believe that it is clear that these are not just words that he is speaking, but what he says here is of great import and is inspired by God. In examining his life, Jacob is a picture of grace. He was a chiseler early on in life, but he was a believer. God gave him grace due to his salvation and because of his grandfather Abraham. However, I don't know that we can simply classify this poem of his as inspired by God. Being recorded in God's Word is not the same as saying it is inspired. My biggest problem is with Zebulun, which we will get to eventually. However, why would God the Holy Spirit include this in Scripture if it was not meaningful?

Jacob will speak to each of his twelve sons, often making a play on the meaning of their names, often looking at their present personality type and projecting that into the future. Moses does something similar in Deut. 33 and we will examine that passage when pertinent to this study and in more detail when we arrive to the point in Deuteronomy.

Jacob is clearly ready to die. Unlike his own father, Isaac, who gave his own end-of-life blessing maybe 40 years too early, Jacob will give his end-of-life blessing to every one of his sons while on his actual deathbed.

Jacob will call his 12 sons together to bless them. Interestingly enough, even though he has already blessed Joseph's sons, effectively giving Joseph the double blessing; he will additionally bless Joseph as well. We should understand this blessing to apply to his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh (throughout the Age of Israel, there will be no tribe of Joseph).

I have wondered about these sorts of blessings. Does Jacob think about this for many weeks (or years), and, as his children grow, he recognizes behavioral factors which will define them and their line? We do know that the Holy Spirit inspires these blessings; but there is no reason to think that God the Holy Spirit simply takes over Jacob's body and vocal cords and gives the blessings through him. This is no doubt that these blessings are given through the power of the Holy Spirit; but probably much more like the power of the Holy Spirit involved when a pastor studies long and hard to produce a one-hour lesson (R. B. Thieme, Jr. used to claim that he would spend 8–12 hours each day in study to give an hour and fifteen minute lesson that night¹). There is no indication that this end-of-life blessing is some sort of mystical, out-of-body experience.

Let me suggest that, because Jacob's blessings are so right-on that, in the final years of his life, in Egypt, Jacob studied the Word of God (Genesis and perhaps the book of Job). The sons of Jacob and their families settled into Egypt, and it is very reasonable, under the circumstances, that they began to worship Y^ehowah-God—very much in recognition of their current blessed status (God's careful guidance preserved Jacob's entire family from the great 7 year famine). These worship services would have involved animal sacrifices and the reading (probably from memory) of Scripture (Genesis 1–47 and the book of Job).

Several of the sons and perhaps even Leah took part in this, each person standing up when it was their turn and repeating their narrative. So, it is my contention that Jacob, on many occasions, verbally spoke the first 36 or so chapters of Genesis; with sons Judah and Joseph (and possibly Leah²) picking up the narrative from that point forward.

I suggested that this is how we got our book of Genesis—the Patriarch of the family would recall most of the book of Genesis from memory, and then his son (or sons) would pick up the narrative at some point. The fact that one of those early chapters is specifically about Judah (Genesis 38), suggests that Judah would have stood up and recounted that information. Judah's unique experience being remembered in Genesis 38, along with his role as leader of the brothers, would suggest that he was one of the men who gave the history of the people of God. Right along side Judah would be Joseph, speaking much of the narrative which we know as the final quarter of Genesis (and it is Judah who probably recounted the narrative portions which took place in Canaan and on route to Egypt).

¹ Having both been on the receiving end of his teaching; and, much later in life, studying and writing myself, I do not doubt Bob's claim in the least.

² She would have spoken of her interactions with Rachel and the children that she bore and how she came to name them.

There were a *lot* of words found in the Bible here in this chapter for the first time; as well as some rare words; as well as some words which occur here only. Part of the reason for this is, this is a poetic chapter. I should have pointed them out, but I only came to realize this about 2/3rds of the way through this chapter.

I think that the point is, these blessings of Jacob are all very original, involving a different vocabulary entirely. So Jacob is not simply drawing on the past and things which have already occurred; but he is very forward looking in these blessings.

Because most of this chapter is an extended quote from the blessings and prophecy of Jacob, I will begin and end his entire quote with quotation marks (vv. 1–27). I will not begin each new paragraph with quotation marks, even though that is proper punctuation.

It is important to understand what has gone before.

The Prequel of Genesis 49

Genesis 49 will begin with

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We need to know who the people are who populate this chapter.

The Principals of Genesis 49

Characters

Commentary

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

We need to know where this chapter takes place.

The Places of Genesis 49

Place

Description

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The Patriarchal Timeline for Genesis 49

Legend	
Birth or death	God speaks with Abraham
Historical incidents (most of which are related to Abraham)	
Parenthetical dates (2065 B.C.) simply refer to taking the date assigned by the chronologist and using Scripture to determine the next date.	
The entire Abrahamic Timeline (HTML) (PDF) (WPD). The entire Patriarchal Timeline (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).	
With Abraham, there are continual references to his age, which helps to determine relative dates. There are far fewer references to the ages of Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, which means that there is more guesswork involved in determining dates during their lifetimes.	

MacDonald (N. Berkeley Bible)	Reese's Chronology Bible	Bible Hub	Ages	Scripture	Event/Description
2234 B.C.	2097 B.C.			Genesis 11:24	Terah, Abram's father, is born. Gen 11:24–26 Nahor lived 29 years and fathered Terah. After he fathered Terah, Nahor lived 119 years and fathered other sons and daughters. Terah lived 70 years and fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.
	1978 B.C.			Genesis 11:25	Death of Nahor, Abram's uncle
	1969 B.C.		Noah is 950	Genesis 9:28–29	Death of Noah
2164 B.C.	1967 B.C.			Genesis 11:26–27	Abraham (Terah's son) and Lot (Haran's son) born in Ur of the Chaldeans. Abram would be the 43 rd generation from Adam. Gen 11:26 Terah lived 70 years and fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.
2078 B.C.	1881 B.C.	2080 B.C.	Abraham is 86	Gen. 16:15–16	Ishmael born to Abraham and Hagar in the land of Canaan. Gen 16:16 Abram was 86 years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to him.
2064 B.C. (2066 B.C.)		2066 B.C.	Abraham is 100	Genesis 21:1–7 1Chronicles 1:34	Isaac born to Abraham. Isaac would be the 44 th generation from Adam. Gen 21:5 Abraham was 100 years old when his son Isaac was born to him.
	1841– 1816 B.C.			Genesis 25:12–16 1Chronicles 1:29–31	Ishmael's children.
	1834 B.C. 1829 B.C. (Klassen)	2054 B.C.		Genesis 22:1–19	Abraham is told by God to go to the land of Moriah to offer up his son Isaac to God as a sacrifice. This was a 3-day journey away. They then go to Beer-sheba , which could simply indicate that they are returning home to Beer-sheba .

MacDonald (N. Berkeley Bible)	Reese's Chronology Bible	Bible Hub	Ages	Scripture	Event/Description
Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge ³ puts this date at 1872 B.C., based upon Antiquities by Josephus.					
(2029 B.C.)	1830 B.C.	2030 B.C.	Abraham is 137	Genesis 23:1–20	The death of Sarah. She dies in Kirjatharba , it is Hebron , in the land of Canaan . Gen 23:1 Now Sarah lived 127 years; these were all the years of her life. She is buried in a cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre ; it is Hebron , in the land of Canaan , purchased by Abraham from the sons of Heth.
(2026 B.C.)				Genesis 24:1–67 Genesis 25:20	Isaac (Abraham's son) and Rebecca. Genesis 25:20 Isaac was 40 years old when he took as his wife Rebekah daughter of Bethuel the Aramæan from Paddan-aram, and sister of Laban the Aramæan. At this time, Isaac is living in the Negev . It is likely that Abraham lived there as well; or near to there.
		2026 B.C.	Isaac is 40	Genesis 25:20	Isaac marries Rebecca. Genesis 25:20
	1826 B.C.			Genesis 25:1	Abraham marries Keturah. Smith puts the date at 1860 B.C.; and Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge at 1853 B.C.
				Genesis 25:2–4 1Chronicles 1:32–33	Abraham's fathers children by Keturah.
	1817 B.C.		Shem is 600	Genesis 11:11	Death of Shem.
2004 B.C.	1807 B.C.	2006 B.C.	Abraham is 160; Isaac is 60	Genesis 25:19, 21–26	Jacob & Esau born to Isaac. Gen 25:26 After this, his brother came out grasping Esau's heel with his hand. So he was named Jacob. Isaac was 60 years old when they were born. Therefore, Abraham would be 160 years old.
(1991 B.C.)				Genesis 25:5–6	Isaac is the heir of all things that Abraham has (but, most importantly, of the covenant of God with Abraham).
1989 B.C.	1792 B.C.	1991 B.C.	Abraham is 175	Genesis 25:7–10	Abraham dies. Gen 25:7 This is the length of Abraham's life: 175 years. He is buried in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, in the field of Nephron (this would be with Sarah).
				Genesis 25:11	God blesses Isaac.
(1943 B.C.)	1788 B.C.			Genesis 25:17	The death of Ishmael. Gen 25:17 This is the length of Ishmael's life: 137 years. He took his last breath and died, and was gathered to his people.
			Eber is 464	Genesis 11:17	Death of Eber.

³ *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, Genesis 22:1.

MacDonald (N. Berkeley Bible)	Reese's Chronology Bible	Bible Hub	Ages	Scripture	Event/Description
	1782 B.C.	1978 B.C.		Genesis 25:27–34	Jacob obtains Esau's birthright for a mess of pottage.
	1782 B.C. 1740 B.C. (Klassen)			Genesis 26:1–5	A famine in the land; God renews covenant with Isaac at Gerar.
				Genesis 26:6–10	Rebecca and Isaac in Gerar.
				Genesis 26:11–16	Isaac is blessed by God in Gerar.
	1782 B.C. 1735 B.C. (Klassen)			Genesis 26:17–22	Strife between Isaac and Philistines in and near Gerar.
	1767 B.C.			Genesis 26:34–35	Esau marries two Canaanite women.
	1757– 1739 B.C. 1733 B.C. (Klassen)			Genesis 26:23–25	Isaac makes an altar in Beer-sheba.
(1943 B.C.)	1744 B.C.		Ishmael is 137	Genesis 25:17–18	The death of Ishmael.
	1738 B.C. c 1732 B.C. (Klassen)	1977 B.C.		Genesis 26:26–33	Isaac's alliance with Abimelech at Beersheba.
(1929 B.C.)	1737 B.C. 1730 B.C. (Klassen)	1929 B.C.		Genesis 27:1–46	Jacob by deception receives a final blessing from Isaac that was meant for Esau.
				Genesis 28:1–5	Jacob goes to his Uncle Laban's home in Padan-aram for a wife.
		1928 B.C.		Genesis 28:10–22	Jacob's dream; God speaks to Jacob.
				Genesis 28:6–9	Esau marries a daughter of Ishmael.
		1906 B.C. (For descendants)		Genesis 36:1–42	Esau's marriages and descendants.
	1736 B.C. 1730 B.C. (Klassen)	1928 B.C.		Genesis 29:1–14	Jacob in Haran (Charan).
	1736– 1729 B.C. 1730– 1723 B.C. (Klassen)			Genesis 29:15–20	Jacob works 7 years to marry Rachel, but is deceived by Laban, and Jacob marries Leah, her older sister.
	1729 B.C. 1724 B.C. (Klassen)	1921 B.C.		Genesis 29:21–31	Jacob marries Rachel

MacDonald (N. Berkeley Bible)	Reese's Chronology Bible	Bible Hub	Ages	Scripture	Event/Description
(1915 B.C.)	1729– 1716 B.C. 1723– 1710 B.C. (Klassen)	1921 B.C. 1916 B.C. (Rachel bears Joseph)		Genesis 29:32–34 Genesis 30:1–6 Genesis 29:35 Genesis 30:9, 7–8, 10–24	Jacob has 12 children by his wives, Rachel and Leah; and by their personal servants as well. Reese breaks the timeline down in smaller increments in his book.
1915 B.C.				Genesis	Joseph is born.
	1711 B.C.			Genesis 36:31–33 1Chronicles 1:43–44 Genesis 26:34–39 1Chronicles 1:45–50 Genesis 36:40–43 1Chronicles 1:51–54	The kings of Edom.
(1909 B.C.)	1716 B.C. 1710 B.C. (Klassen)			Genesis 30:25–43 Genesis 31:1–16	Jacob's final years with Laban.
				Genesis 31:17–55	Jacob's departure from Laban.
		1908 B.C.		Genesis 32:1–23	Jacob returns to Canaan.
		1906 B.C.		Genesis 32:24–32 Genesis 35:10	Jacob wrestles with the angel.
		1906 B.C.		Genesis 33:1–16	Jacob meets Esau face to face.
	1715 B.C. 1710 B.C. (Klassen)	1906 B.C.		Genesis 33:17–20	The resumption of Jacob's journey.
	1711– 1708 B.C. 1706– 1705 B.C. (Klassen)			Genesis 38:1–5 1Chronicles 2:3	Judah fathers 3 sons.
	1700 B.C. 1687 B.C. (Klassen)	1906 B.C.		Genesis 34:1–31	Dinah, daughter of Judah, is defiled.
		1906 B.C.		Genesis 35:1–15	Jacob returns to Bethel.
	1700 B.C. 1710 B.C. (Klassen)	1903 B.C.		Genesis 35:16–19 48:7 35:20–22	Rachel dies when giving birth to Benjamin.
(1898 B.C.)				Genesis 35:27 37:1	The return to Hebron.

MacDonald (N. Berkeley Bible)	Reese's Chronology Bible	Bible Hub	Ages	Scripture	Event/Description
	1699 B.C.		Joseph is 17	Genesis 37:2–11	Joseph—his early days and his dreams.
				Genesis 37:12–35	Joseph in Shechem and Dothan.
1897 B.C.		1898 B.C.		Genesis 37:36 39:1	Joseph is sold into slavery, to end up in Egypt.
	c1699– 1690 B.C.	1898 B.C.		Genesis 39:2–6	Joseph enjoys prosperity in Egypt.
	c1695 B.C. 1707 B.C. (Klassen)	1898 B.C.		Genesis 38:6–11	Judah and Tamar.
	1692 B.C.			Genesis 38:12–26	Judah's wife dies.
	1692 B.C. 1691 B.C. (Klassen)			Genesis 38:27–30 1Chronicles 2:4	The birth of Pharez, the 41 st generation from Adam.
	c1690 B.C. 1689 B.C. (Klassen)	1889 B.C.		Genesis 39:7–19	Joseph flees adultery.
		1889 B.C.		Genesis 39:20–23	Joseph is put into jail; yet prospers in jail.
(1887 B.C.)	1688 B.C.	1887 B.C.		Genesis 40:1–23	Joseph gives the interpretation of the dreams of the baker and the butler.
1884 B.C.	1687 B.C.		Isaac is 180	Genesis 35:28–29	The death of Isaac. Now the days of Isaac were 180 years. (Genesis 35:28)
(1885 B.C.)	1686 B.C.	1886 B.C.		Genesis 41:1–37	Joseph interprets the Pharaoh's dream.
		1886 B.C.		Genesis 41:38–44	Joseph is made governor.
				Genesis 41:45	Joseph marries Asenath.
1884 B.C.	1686– 1679 B.C.	1886 B.C. (Beginning)		Genesis 41:46–49	The 7 years of plenty.
	1685– 1683 B.C.			Genesis 41:50–53	Sons are born to Joseph.
	1685– 1681 B.C.			Exodus 6:16 Num. 3:17 1Chronicles 6:1, 16	The descendants of Levi are born.
	1679– 1672 B.C.	1875 B.C.		Genesis 41:54–57	The seven years of famine.
(1876 B.C.)	1678 B.C. 1677 B.C. (Klassen)	1875 B.C.		Genesis 42:1–44:34	Joseph provides his family with food.

MacDonald (N. Berkeley Bible)	Reese's Chronology Bible	Bible Hub	Ages	Scripture	Event/Description
		1875 B.C.		Genesis 45:1–15	Joseph reveals himself to his brothers.
		1875 B.C.		Genesis 45:16–28	Jacob hears that his son, Joseph, is still alive, and he prepares to travel to Egypt himself.
	1677 B.C.			Ruth 4:18 1Chronicles 2:5	Birth of Hezron, the 40 th generation.
1873 B.C. ⁴	1677 B.C.	1875 B.C.		Genesis 46:1–7, 28	Jacob goes to Egypt after God's assurance in Beersheba.
		1875 B.C.	Jacob is 130	Genesis 46:8–27 Exodus 1:1–5	Summary of the 70 who came to Egypt. Compare Genesis 47:8–9 and 46:27 for Jacob's age.
		1875 B.C.		Genesis 46:29–34 47:1–12	The people of Joseph are established in Egypt.
	1676– 1675 B.C.			Genesis 47:13–21	Joseph continues as prime minister in Egypt, exercising wise leadership during the famine.
				Genesis 47:22–26	The land of the priests in Egypt.
	1672– 1593 B.C.			1Chronicles 2:6–8	Zerah, the brother of Pharez, and his descendants.
	1671 B.C. 1660 B.C. (Klassen)			Genesis 48:1–22	Blessings to Manasseh and Ephraim.
	1660 B.C. 1665 B.C. (Klassen)				Birth of Berith to Ephraim.
				Genesis 47:28–31	The last days of Jacob; his charge to Joseph.
		1859 B.C.		Genesis 49:1–32	Jacob speaks to his sons, giving them their final blessings and encouraging them.
1857 B.C.	1660 B.C.	1859 B.C.	Jacob is 147	Genesis 49:33	The death of Jacob.
		1859 B.C.		Genesis 50:1–14	The burial of Jacob.
				Genesis 50:15–21	The fears of Joseph's brothers after the death of Jacob.
	1638 B.C. 1644 B.C. (Klassen)				Birth of Resheph (who is in the line between Ephraim and Joshua).
	1625 B.C. 1620 B.C. (Klassen)			Num. 26:58	Birth of Aram (Levi's grandson and Moses' father).

⁴ Jacob moves family to the Land of Goshen in Egypt (Genesis 47:28)

MacDonald (N. Berkeley Bible)	Reese's Chronology Bible	Bible Hub	Ages	Scripture	Event/Description
	1623 B.C. 1604 B.C. (Klassen)				The birth of Ram, the 39 th generation.
	1615 B.C. 1625 B.C. (Klassen)				The birth of Telah, in the line between Ephraim and Joshua.
				Genesis 50:22–23	Joseph's last days.
	1606 B.C.			Genesis 50:24–25	Joseph's last words.
1805 B.C. (1805 B.C.)		1806 B.C.	Joseph is 110	Genesis 50:26 Exodus 1:6	The death of Joseph. His brothers also die.
	1606– 1462 B.C.			Genesis 47:27 Exodus 1:7	The population explosion among the Jews living in Egypt.

Bibliography

MacDonald's timeline is from: <http://www.bibleistrue.com/qna/qna63.htm> accessed October 11, 2011 and August 12, 2014. Included in MacDonald's timeline is a timeline for Egypt interspersed.

See <http://www.bibleistrue.com/qna/qna63dating.htm> for his justification of his timeline.

The Bible Hub [timeline](#) (accessed January 11, 2015) appears to be pretty thorough, but no one specifically is credited.

From: http://www.christianshepherd.org/bible_study_guides/abram_to_the_exodus.pdf (Christian shepherd). This source believes that the Jews live only a short time in Egypt (210 years).

The Reese Chronological Bible; KJV translation; Editor: Edward Reese; ©1977 by Edward Reese and Klassen's dating system ©1975 by Frank R. Klassen; ©1980 by Bethany House Publishers, South Minneapolis, MN; pp. 18–19, 54–74.

The Modern Language Bible (The New Berkeley Version), Revised Edition; ©1969 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; pp. 10–54.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Here is what to expect from Genesis 49:

A Synopsis of Genesis 49

Like all chapters of the Word of God, you need more than just the simple plot outline to understand what God wants us to know.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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This appears to be a fairly straightforward chiasm, but most of the time, the central point is the most important. However, I am not sure how Zilpah's sons could be seen as the focal point of this chapter. Therefore, sometimes, we just understand a chiasm as being nothing more than an organizing principle.

William Ramey's Chiasm of Genesis 49:1-33

- A Jacob's sons gather to hear his words (1)
- B Prologue to the prophetic oracle (2)
- C Leah's sons are blessed (3-15)
- D Bilhah's first son is blessed (16-18)
- X Zilpah's sons are blessed (19-20)
- D' Bilhah's second son is blessed (21)
- C' Rachel's sons are blessed (22-27)
- B' Epilogue to the prophetic oracle (28)
- A' Jacob is gathered to his people (29-33)

From <https://www.inthebeginning.org/chiasmus/examples.html> accessed September 19, 2015.

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The first title is often applicable to the entire chapter (although it may pertain just to the verses which follow it to the next section heading).

I may need to redo this; what Utley has done below is incomprehensible. This must be related to the poetic nature of this chapter.

Paragraph Divisions of Modern Translations for Genesis 49 (from Dr. Bob Utley)

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB (FOLLOWS MT)
Israel's Prophecy Concerning His Sons	Jacob's Last Words to His Sons	Jacob's Blessing on His Twelve Sons	The Last Words of Jacob	Jacob's Testament
Gen. 49:1-2 (Gen. 49:2)	Gen. 49:1-27 (Gen. 49:2)	Gen. 49:1-27 (Gen. 49:2)	Gen. 49:1-27 (Gen. 49:2)	Gen. 49:1-27 (Gen. 49:2)
Gen. 49:3-4 (Gen. 49:3-4)	(Gen. 49:3-4)	(Gen. 49:3-4)	(Gen. 49:3-4)	(Gen. 49:3-4)
Gen. 49:5-7 (Gen. 49:5-7)	(Gen. 49:5-7)	(Gen. 49:5-7)	(Gen. 49:5-7)	(Gen. 49:5-7)
Gen. 49:8-12 (Gen. 49:8-12)	(Gen. 49:8-12)	(Gen. 49:8-12)	(Gen. 49:8-12)	(Gen. 49:8-12)
Gen. 49:13 (Gen. 49:13)	(Gen. 49:13)	(Gen. 49:13)	(Gen. 49:13)	(Gen. 49:13)
Gen. 49:14-15 (Gen. 49:14-15)	(Gen. 49:14-15)	(Gen. 49:14-15)	(Gen. 49:14-15)	(Gen. 49:14-15)
Gen. 49:16-18 (Gen. 49:16-18)	(Gen. 49:16-18)	(Gen. 49:16-18)	(Gen. 49:16-17) (Gen. 49:18)	(Gen. 49:16-17) (Gen. 49:18)
Gen. 49:19 (Gen. 49:19)	(Gen. 49:19)	(Gen. 49:19)	(Gen. 49:19)	(Gen. 49:19)
Gen. 49:20 (Gen. 49:20)	(Gen. 49:20)	(Gen. 49:20)	(Gen. 49:20)	(Gen. 49:20)
Gen. 49:21 (Gen. 49:21)	(Gen. 49:21)	(Gen. 49:21)	(Gen. 49:21)	(Gen. 49:21)
Gen. 49:22-26 (Gen. 49:22-26)	(Gen. 49:22-26)	(Gen. 49:22-26)	(Gen. 49:22-26)	(Gen. 49:22-26)

Gen. 49:14-27 (Gen. 49:27)	(Gen. 49:27)	(Gen. 49:27)	(Gen. 49:27)	(Gen. 49:27)
Gen. 49:28-33	Gen. 49:28	Gen. 49:28	Gen. 49:28	Gen. 49:28
	Jacob's Death And Burial (Gen. 49:29 to Gen. 50:14)	The Death of Jacob and the Final Days of Joseph (Gen. 49:29 to Gen. 50:26)	The Death and Burial of Jacob (Gen. 49:29 to Gen. 50:14)	Jacob's Last Moments and Death
	Gen. 49:29-33	Gen. 49:29-33	Gen. 49:29-33	Gen. 49:29-32 Gen. 49:33

From Dr. Bob Utley, Copyright © 2014 Bible Lessons International; www.freebiblecommentary.org; from e-sword; Genesis 49 chapter comments).

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Chapter Updates:

I will use this space to indicate any format changes.

Every verse will be hyperlinked from the first page, so that you can easily go to a specific verse in this chapter.

At the end of the exegesis of every verse, I will make certain that there is a Kukis mostly literal translation and a Kukis paraphrase, both of them marked as such.

I have decided to add spacing between the translation and the commentary.

In the future, I would really like to add a few translations, fill in the translation of this chapter (at the end of this document); and provide additional sources at the end of this document.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

As always, 3 separate translations will be produced for each verse. The slavishly literal translation attempts to preserve word order and number, making it more literal than Young’s translation (however, I do not preserve the consistency of the translation that Young does). The moderately literal translation may add or delete a definite article, change the number of a noun to correspond with the English sense of thinking, and the order is often changed in order to better represent our English sentence structure. The paraphrase is an attempt to give a thought-for-thought interpretation of what each verse tells us.

**Jacob's End-of-Life Message to All His Sons
Assembling the Sons**

Kukis slavishly literal:

And so calls Jacob unto his sons and so he says, “Gather [yourselves] and I will tell to you [all] what will befall you [all] in the end of days. Assemble [yourselves] and hear, sons of Jacob, and hear unto Israel, your father.

Genesis 49:1–2

Kukis moderately literal:

Jacob called to his sons and said, “Gather [yourselves] that I may tell you (all) what will befall you (all) in the end of days. Assemble [yourselves] and hear, sons of Jacob; hear Israel, your father.

Kukis not-so-literal paraphrase:

Jacob called to his sons and said, “Gather yourselves so that I may tell you all that will happen to your descendants in days to come. Assemble yourselves, O sons of Israel, and hear your father Israel.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Note: I compare the Hebrew text to English translations of the Latin, Syriac (= Aramaic) and Greek texts, using the Douay-Rheims translation⁵; George Lamsa’s translation, and Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton’s translation as revised and edited by Paul W. Esposito, respectively. I often update these texts with non-substantive changes (e.g., *you* for *thou*, etc.). I often use the text of the Complete Apostles’ Bible instead of Brenton’s translation, because it updates the English text.

The Septuagint was the earliest known translation of a book (circa 200 B.C.). Since this translation was made before the textual criticism had been developed into a science and because different books appear to be translated by different men, the Greek translation can sometimes be very uneven.

When there are serious disparities between my translation and Brenton’s (or the text of the Complete Apostles’ Bible), I look at the Greek text of the Septuagint (the LXX) to see if a substantive difference actually exists (and I reflect these changes in the English rendering of the Greek text). I use the Greek LXX with Strong’s numbers and morphology available for e-sword. The only problem with this resource (which is a problem for similar resources) is, there is no way to further explore Greek verbs which are not found in the New Testament. Although I usually quote the Complete Apostles’ Bible here, I have begun to make changes in the translation when their translation conflicts with the Greek and note what those changes are.

The Masoretic text is the Hebrew text with all of the vowels (vowel points) inserted (the original Hebrew text lacked vowels). We take the Masoretic text to be the text closest to the original. However, differences between the Masoretic text and the Greek, Latin and Syriac are worth noting and, once in a great while, represent a more accurate text possessed by those other ancient translators.

In general, the Latin text is an outstanding translation from the Hebrew text into Latin and very trustworthy (I say this as a non-Catholic). Unfortunately, I do not read Latin—apart from some very obvious words—so I am dependent upon the English translation of the Latin (principally, the Douay-Rheims translation).

Underlined words indicate differences in the text.

Bracketed portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls are words, letters and phrases lost in the scroll due to various types of damage. Underlined words or phrases are those in the Dead Sea Scrolls but not in the Masoretic text.

I will only list the translation from the Dead Sea Scrolls if it exists and if it is different from the Masoretic text.

The Targum of Onkelos is actually the Pentateuchal Targumim, which are The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel. On the Pentateuch With The Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum From the Chaldee by J. W. Etheridge, M.A.

⁵ I have begun to doubt my e-sword Douay-Rheims version, so I now use www.latinvulgate.com.

From http://www.becomingjewish.org/texts/targum/onkelos_genesis.html and first published in 1862.

The very fact that we have ancient Greek, Latin, Syriac and Arabic translations of the Bible testifies to its accuracy. There may be a difference word or phrase here or there; the Greek may have a singular where the Hebrew has a plural, but there is no set of doctrines in the Latin Bible which are any different from those found in the Greek Bible or the Syriac Bible. These different cultures when they chose to translate the Bible chose to translate it as accurately as possible. Where human viewpoint would expect to find doctrinal differences between the Bible of the Hebrews, of the Greeks or of the Romans, no such differences exist.

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so calls Jacob unto his sons and so he says, "Gather [yourselves] and I will tell to you [all] what will befall you [all] in the end of days. Assemble [yourselves] and hear, sons of Jacob, and hear unto Israel, your father.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum (trans. Etheridge)	.
Targum (Onkelos)	And Jacob called his sons, and said, Gather together, and I will show you what will befall you in the end of the days; assemble, and hearken, O sons of Jakob, and receive instruction from Israel your father. Translation for Onkelos and Pseudo-Jonathan by J. W. Etheridge, M.A. (1862).
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And Jakob called his sons and said to them, Purify yourselves from uncleanness, and I will show you the hidden mysteries, the ends concealed, the recompense of reward for the righteous, the retribution of the wicked, and the bower of Eden, what it is. And the twelve tribes of Israel gathered themselves together around the golden bed whereon he reclined, and where was revealed to him the Shekina of the Lord, (though) the end for which the king Meshiha is to come had been concealed from him. Then said he, Come, and I will declare to you what shall befall you at the end of the days. Gather yourselves together and hear, ye sons of Jakob, and receive instruction from Israel your father.
Jerusalem targum	And our father Jakob called his sons, and said to them, Gather together, and I will teach yon the concealed end, the secret mysteries, the recompense of reward for the just, and the punishment of the wicked, and the blessedness of Eden, what it is. And the twelve tribes of Jakob assembled and surrounded the golden bed whereon our father Jakob lay, desiring that he should teach them (at the) end in benediction and consolation. Then was revealed to him the secret that had been hidden from him, and then was opened the door which had been shut to him. Our father Jakob turned therefore and blessed his sons, every man according to his good did he bless him. [When the twelve tribes of Jakob were assembled, and surrounded the golden bed whereon our father Jakob lay, they expected that he would make known to them the order of blessing and consolation: but they were hidden from him. Our father Jakob answered and said to them: From Abraham my father's father arose the profane Ishmael and all the sons of Keturah; and from Izhak my father arose the profane Esau, my brother; and I am afraid lest there should be among you a man whose heart is separated from his brethren to go and worship before strange idols. The twelve tribes of Jakob answered all together, and said, Hear us, Israel our father! The Lord our God is one Lord! And Jakob our father answered, and said, May His Great Name be blessed for ever and ever!.
Revised Douay-Rheims	.
Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)	And Jacob called his sons, and said to them: Gather yourselves together that I may tell you the things that shall befall you in the last days.

	Gather yourselves together, and hear, O ye sons of Jacob, hearken to Israel your father:...
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	Ya'aqub called to his sons, and said: "Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which will happen to you in the days to come.
Peshitta (Syriac) ⁶	Assemble yourselves, and hear, you sons of Ya'aqub. Listen to Yisrael, your father. THEN Jacob called his sons and said to them, Gather yourselves together that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days. Gather yourselves together and listen, O sons of Jacob; and hearken o Israel your father.
Septuagint (Greek)	Jacob's last words. Gn.49.1-28 And Jacob called his sons, and said to them, Assemble yourselves, that I may tell you what shall happen to you in the last days. Gather yourselves together, and hear me, sons of Jacob; hear Israel, hear your father. This is the New Brenton translation from http://www.katapi.org.uk/
NETS (Greek)	.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:⁷

Bible in Basic English	And Jacob sent for his sons, and said, Come together, all of you, so that I may give you news of your fate in future times. Come near, O sons of Jacob, and give ear to the words of Israel your father.
Easy English	Then Jacob called for his sons. He said, 'Come here to me. Then I can tell you what will happen to you, in future years. Sons of Jacob come together and listen. Listen to your father, Israel.' Now Jacob says what is going to happen to each of his sons and to their descendants.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	.
Easy-to-Read Version–2008	.
God's Word™	Jacob [Israel] Blesses His 12 Sons Jacob called for his sons and said, "Come here, and let me tell you what will happen to you in the days to come. "Gather around and listen, sons of Jacob. Listen to your father Israel.
Good News Bible (TEV)	The Last Words of Jacob Jacob called for his sons and said, "Gather around, and I will tell you what will happen to you in the future: "Come together and listen, sons of Jacob. Listen to your father Israel.
International Children's B. <i>The Message</i>	. Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather around. I want to tell you what you can expect in the days to come." Come together, listen sons of Jacob, listen to Israel your father.
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	Jacob Gives Blessings to His Sons Then Jacob sent for his sons. He said, "Gather around me so I can tell you what will happen to you in days to come.

⁶ From the George Lamsa Translation of the Peshitta, taken from <http://www.studylight.org/>

⁷ Many of these Bible translations fall into 2 or more categories. The CEV, for instance, is **approved** by the Catholic Church, it is a limited vocabulary Bible, and it is a paraphrase, for the most part.

"Sons of Jacob, come together and listen.
Listen to your father Israel.

New Simplified Bible .

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	<p>Jacob reveals his sons' destinies Jacob summoned his sons and said, "Gather around so that I can tell you what will happen to you in the coming days. Assemble yourselves and listen, sons of Jacob; listen to Israel your father.</p>
Contemporary English V.	<p>Jacob called his sons together and said: My sons, I am Jacob, your father Israel. Come, gather around, as I tell your future.</p>
The Living Bible	.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	.
New Life Version	.
New Living Translation	<p>Jacob's Last Words to His Sons Then Jacob called together all his sons and said, "Gather around me, and I will tell you what will happen to each of you in the days to come. "Come and listen, you sons of Jacob; listen to Israel, your father.</p>

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	<p>Then Jacob called the rest of his sons and said to them: 'Gather here so I can tell you what will happen to you in later years. Gather and listen to me, sons of Jacob. Listen to IsraEl... listen to your father!</p>
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard V	<p>Jacob's Final Blessings After this, Jacob called his sons together and told them, "Assemble yourselves around me [The Heb. lacks <i>around me</i>] so I can tell you all what is going to happen to you in the last days [Or <i>in days to come</i>]. "Gather together and listen, you children of Jacob. Listen to your father Israel."</p>
New Advent (Knox) Bible	<p>Then Jacob summoned all his sons to him; Gather about me, he said, to hear what awaits you in the days still to come; gather about me, sons of Jacob, and listen; it is Israel, your father, who speaks.</p>
Revised Knox Bible	.
Today's NIV	.
Translation for Translators	<p>Jacob prophesied what would happen to his sons and their descendants Jacob summoned all his sons, and said to them, "Gather around close to me in order that I can tell you what will happen in the future. My sons, come and listen to me. I am your father, <i>Jacob, whom God named Israel.</i></p>

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible	<p>Jacob was to call his sons and was to say, "Be gathering, I was to proclaim to yous, that which was to be encountered in the latter days. Be gathering and be listening yous sons of Jacob, even be listening to Isra-el, your father:...</p>
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Conservapedia	Jacob called his sons, saying, "Gather 'round, because I'm going to tell you what's going to happen to you in the future." "Gather 'round, and hear, sons of Jacob, and listen to your father Israel."
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	Jacob's Blessings to his Sons Jacob afterwards called his sons and said ; " Assemble and I will inform you What will befall you in future times ; Collect and listen, sons of Jacob, Yes, list to your father Israel ;...
God's Truth (Tyndale) HCSB	. Jacob's Last Words Then Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather around, and I will tell you what will happen to you in the days to come. Come together and listen, sons of Jacob; listen to your father Israel:.
Jubilee Bible 2000 H. C. Leupold	. CHAPTER XLIX 14. Conclusion of Jacob's History (Continued) c. The Blessing of His Own Sons (49:1-27) And Jacob summoned his sons and said: Assemble yourselves and I will tell you what shall befall you in the end of the days. Come together and hearken, ye sons of Jacob, And hearken unto Israel, your father.
Lexham English Bible	Jacob Blesses His Twelve Sons Then Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather together so that I can tell you what will happen with you in {days to come}. Assemble and hear, O sons of Jacob! Listen to Israel your father!
NIV, ©2011 NIV – UK Tree of Life Version	. . Jacob Speaks Over His Sons Jacob called his sons and said to them: Gather together so that I can tell you what will happen to you in the last days. Be assembled and listen, sons of Jacob, and listen to Israel your father.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988) The Heritage Bible	. And Jacob called to his sons and said, Gather yourselves together, and I will cause what will happen to you in the last days to stand out boldly to you. Gather yourselves together, and attentively hear, sons of Jacob, and attentively hear Israel, your father.
New American Bible (2002) New American Bible (2011) ⁸	. <i>Jacob's Testament.</i> * [49:1–27] The testament, or farewell discourse, of Jacob, which has its closest parallel in Moses' farewell in Dt 33:6–25. From his privileged position as a patriarch, he sees the future of his children (the eponymous ancestors of the tribes) and is able to describe how they will fare and so gives his blessing. The dense and archaic poetry is obscure in several places. The sayings often involve wordplays (explained in the notes). The poem begins with the six sons of Leah (vv. 2–15), then deals with the sons of the two secondary wives, and ends with Rachel's two sons, Joseph and

⁸ Also called the revised edition.

Benjamin. Reuben, the oldest son, loses his position of leadership as a result of his intercourse with Bilhah (35:22), and the words about Simeon and Levi allude to their taking revenge for the rape of Dinah (chap. 34). The preeminence of Judah reflects his rise in the course of the narrative (mirroring the rise of Joseph). See note on 44:1–34.

Jacob called his sons and said: “Gather around, that I may tell you what is to happen to you in days to come.

“Assemble and listen, sons of Jacob,
listen to Israel, your father.

New Jerusalem Bible

Jacob called his sons and said, 'Gather round, so that I can tell you what is in store for you in the final days.

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

New Revised Standard V.
Revised English Bible

JACOB summoned his sons. “Come near,” he said, “and I shall tell you what is to happen to you in days to come.

“Gather round me and listen, you sons of Jacob; listen to Israel your father.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible

(iv) Then Ya’akov called for his sons and said,
“Gather yourselves together, and I will tell you
what will happen to you in the acharit-hayamim.
Assemble yourselves and listen, sons of Ya’akov;
pay attention to Isra’el your father.

exeGesés companion Bible

YAAQOV BLESSES HIS SONS

And Yaaqov calls to his sons, and says,
Gather
and I tell you what confronts you in the final days.
Gather and hear, you sons of Yaaqov
and hearken to Yisra El your father.

Hebraic Roots Bible
Israeli Authorized Version
JPS (Tanakh—1985)
Kaplan Translation

Jacob's Blessings: Reuben, Simeon, Levi

Jacob called for his sons. [When they came,] he said, 'Come together, and I will tell you what will happen in the course of time [Literally, 'at the end of days.' Compare Moses' blessing; Deuteronomy 33.].

Come and listen, sons of Jacob; listen to your father Israel. The Kaplan Translation, particularly in Exodus through Deuteronomy, takes note of historic rabbinic opinions.

Orthodox Jewish Bible

And Ya’akov called unto his banim, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the acharit hayamim (last days).

Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye Bnei Ya’akov; and pay heed unto Yisroel Avichem.

The Scriptures 1998

And Ya’aqob called his sons and said, “Gather together, so that I declare to you what is to befall you in the last days: “Gather together and hear, you sons of Ya’aqob, and listen to Yisra’el your father.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible

Israel’s Prophecy concerning His Sons

Then Jacob called for his sons and said, “Assemble yourselves [around me] that I may tell you what will happen to you and your descendants in the days to come.

“Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob;
And listen to Israel (Jacob) your father.

The Expanded Bible

Jacob Blesses His Sons

Then Jacob called his sons to him. He said, “Come here to [Gather around] me, and I will tell you what will happen to you in the future [days to come].

“Come [Assemble] together and listen, sons of Jacob.

Listen to Israel [another name for Jacob; 32:28], your father.”

Kretzmann’s Commentary

Verses 1-4

The Blessing upon Reuben

And Jacob called unto his sons, he summoned them to his death-bed, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days. In prophetic exaltation and in poetic form he sets before them what the future has in store for them, especially as to the Messianic blessings, until the end of time. Gather yourselves together and hear, ye sons of Jacob, and hearken unto Israel, your father. The solemn and impressive admonition was made in order to get their full attention. The things which would befall them according to their dispositions and natures, but above all according to the providence and will of God, are now set forth.

NET Bible®

The Blessing of Jacob

Jacob called for his sons and said, “Gather together so I can tell you what will happen to you in the future.

“Assemble and listen, you sons of Jacob;

listen to Israel, your father. When it comes to making an actual material change to the text, the NET Bible® is pretty good about indicating this. Since most of these corrections will be clear in the more literal translations below and within the Hebrew exegesis itself, I will not continue to list every NET Bible® footnote. Language footnotes will be placed in the Hebrew exegesis. Some footnotes will quoted elsewhere in this document.

Syndein/Thieme

{Dying Words of Jacob/Israel}

And Jacob called unto his sons, and kept on saying, "Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days {end of the Jewish Age}."

{Note: What Jacob describes will be how each of the Tribe of Israel will exist in the Tribulation. He will describe each of his sons and the genes or characteristics that he will pass on to his descendants.}

Gather yourselves together, and hear, you sons of Jacob {Israel}

{means this message is particularly for the Jews}

and hearken unto Israel {Jacob} your father."

The Voice

The Children of Jacob

Leah	Zilpah	Bilhah	Rachel
1 Reuben	7 Gad	5 Dan	11 Joseph
2 Simeon	8 Asher	6 Naphtali	12 Benjamin
3 Levi			
4 Judah			
9 Issachar			
10 Zebulun			
Dinah			

The Children of Joseph

- Asenath
- 1 Manasseh
- 2 Ephraim

After this, Jacob called all of his sons to him.

Jacob: Gather near to me, so I can let you know what to expect in the days to come.

Gather around and pay attention, you sons of Jacob.
Listen *carefully, my sons*, to Israel, your father.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Benner's Mechanical Trans.	...and Ya'aqov ^[He restrains] called out to his sons and he said, be gathered and I will tell to you what will meet you in the end of the days, be gathered together and hear, sons of Ya'aqov ^[He restrains] , and hear Yisra'el ^[He turns E] your father,...
Concordant Literal Version	.
Context Group Version	And Jacob called to his sons, and said: gather yourselves together, that I may tell you (pl) that which shall befall you (pl) in the latter days. Assemble yourselves, and hear, you (pl) sons of Jacob; And listen to Israel your (pl) father.
Darby Translation	And Jacob called his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, and I will tell you what will befall you at the end of days. Assemble yourselves, and hear, ye sons of Jacob, And listen to Israel your father.
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	.
English Standard Version	.
English Standard V. – UK	.
Evidence Bible	.
Green's Literal Translation	.
Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	Jacob Blesses His Sons Jacob called to his sons and said, "Gather yourselves together, so that I may tell you what will befall you in the last days. Gather yourselves together and hear, sons of Jacob, and listen to your father Israel.
Modern KJV	.
NASB	Israel's Prophecy concerning His Sons Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, "Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what will befall you in the days to come. "Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob; And listen to Israel your father.
New European Version	Jacob Blesses his Sons Jacob called to his sons, and said: Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which will happen to you in the days to come. Assemble yourselves, and hear, you sons of Jacob. Listen to Israel, your father.
New King James Version	Jacob's Last Words to His Sons And Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days: "Gather together and hear, you sons of Jacob, And listen to Israel your father.
Owen's Translation	.
Ron Snider's Translation	.
Stuart Wolf's Translation	.
Third Millennium Bible	.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster's Bible Translation	.
World English Bible	.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	.
Young's Updated LT	And Jacob calls unto his sons and says, "Be gathered together, and I declare to you that which does happen with you in the latter end of the days. "Be assembled, and hear, sons of Jacob, And hearken unto Israel your father.

The gist of this passage: Jacob calls to his sons to gather to him, and he will tell them about what will happen in the future.

1-2

Genesis 49:1a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (אָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i>]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lamed]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
Ya'ăqôb (בְּקָעִי) [pronounced <i>yah-ăuh-KOH^BV</i>]	<i>supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent; heel; and is transliterated Jacob</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3290 BDB #784
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

Gary Everett: Gesenius says the Hebrew name "Jacob" "Ya'aqob" (בְּקָעִי) (H3290) means, "taking hold of the heel, supplanter, layer of snares." Strong says it means, "heel-catcher, supplanter." Strong says it comes from the primitive root (בָּקַעַ) (H6117), which means, "to seize by the heel, to circumvent." One Hebrew derivative (בָּקַעַ) (6119) means, "heel, (figuratively) the last of anything."⁹

Translation: [Jacob called to his sons...](#)

How soon this follows Genesis 48, it is unknown. However, based upon Jacob believing his time on earth coming to an end, he calls his sons to him, to bless them and to speak of future events.

Genesis 49:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

⁹ Gary H. Everett *Gary Everett's Bible Commentary*; ©1981-2013; from e-sword, Genesis 25:26.

Genesis 49:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'âçaph (אָפַף) [pronounced aw-SAHF]	<i>be assembled, be gathered, assemble, gather</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Niphal imperative	Strong's #622 BDB #62

The full BDB meanings (and some from Gesenius) for the Niphal are *to assemble, be gathered; to be gathered to one's fathers; to be brought in or into (association with others), to be received; to be taken away, removed, perish.*

Translation: ...and said, "Gather [yourselves]..."

I think that the Niphal can include reflexive concepts. The Niphal imperative probably implies more than *allow [yourselves] to be gathered*. It makes less sense for the sons to take an inactive role here and to somehow be caused to gather. The stem which is reflexive is the Hithpael; and this verb is not found in the Hithpael.

What follows is Hebrew poetry, where some word meanings are different; some words are used here when there are synonyms for those words found in narrative text; the sentence structure is different; and the grammar is somewhat different (the Hebrew has grammar rules but no grammar symbols). Properly translated, from this point forward, an English translation ought to look like poetry (for instance, indented; hard returns between thoughts, and/or centered text—as can be found in many of the translations above¹⁰).

Genesis 49:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
The NET Bible: <i>After the imperative, the cohortative with prefixed vav (ו) indicates purpose/result.</i> ¹¹			
nâgad (נִגַּד) [pronounced naw-GAHD]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	1 st person singular, Hiphil imperfect with the cohortative hê	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
The cohortative expresses volition. In the English, we often render this with <i>let</i> or <i>may</i> ; in the plural, this can be <i>let us</i> . The cohortative is designed for the 1 st person, it can express a wish or a desire or purpose or an intent. It is found in conditional statements. Generally there is the hê suffix to indicate this.			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	Indicates next word is the object of the verb; sometimes translated <i>to</i>	untranslated mark of a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

¹⁰ Interestingly enough, there are several translations which do not change their format at all when dealing with poetic text—such as, the Bible in Basic English and the Orthodox Jewish Bible. However, for the most part, nearly every Bible formats poetic text so that it appears as poetry from a glance.

¹¹ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 9, 2017.

Genesis 49:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, they mean <i>how, that which, what, whatever; whom, whomever. Possibly when, whenever.</i>			
qârâ' (אָרַךְ) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to encounter, to befall, to meet; to assemble [for the purpose of encountering God or exegeting His Word]; to come, to assemble</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7122 & #7125 BDB #896
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>you; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to you, toward you</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʾachăriyth (אֲחֵרִית) [pronounced akh-ar-EETH]	<i>after part, end; end, issue, event; latter time (prophetic for future time); posterity; last, hindermost</i>	feminine singular adjective (or substantive) construct form	Strong's #319 BDB #31
yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced yaw-MEEM]	<i>days, a set of days; time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

The NET Bible translates this *in the future*. The NET Bible: *The expression "in the future" (אֲחֵרִית תִּיְהִי, 'akharit hayyamim, "in the end of days") is found most frequently in prophetic passages; it may refer to the end of the age, the eschaton, or to the distant future. The contents of some of the sayings in this chapter stretch from the immediate circumstances to the time of the settlement in the land to the coming of Messiah. There is a great deal of literature on this chapter, including among others C. Armerding, "The Last Words of Jacob: Genesis 49," BSac 112 (1955): 320-28; H. Pehlke, "An Exegetical and Theological Study of Genesis 49:1-28" (Th.D. dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1985); and B. Vawter, "The Canaanite Background of Genesis 49," CBQ 17 (1955): 1-18.¹²*

Translation: ...that I may tell you (all) what will befall you (all) in the end of days.

Jacob realizes that he is speaking to what will happen in the end times, the last days. So what he will say does not apply to these men directly, but it will apply to their descendants.

Although both Owen and the NASB translate the last couple words as *days to come*, we have the feminine noun ʾachăriyth (אֲחֵרִית) [pronounced akh-ar-EETH] and it means *last, latter, end, after-part, close*. With the preposition b^e (ב) and the noun for *days*, it should read *in the latter days* or *in the last days*. The infinitive of the verb *to come* is nowhere to be found in this verse.

This is the first occurrence of this famous phrase, *the latter days*. This is not always a reference to exactly the same thing. It can refer to (1) the end of the rule by Gentile nations in Dan. 2:28–10:14; (2) Israel's final rebellion against God and the tribulation (Deut. 4:30 31:29 Ezekiel 38:16 Hos. 3:5); (3) the first advent of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:2 1Peter 1:20) (4) the end of the church age (2Timothy 3:1 James 5:3 1Peter 1:5 2Peter 3:3)¹³;

¹² From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 9, 2017.

¹³ I may want to review these. Perhaps it refers to any time during the Church Age?

and (5) the resurrection (John 6:39, 40, 44, 54 11:24 w/ 12:48) (John is the only Apostle to record this use of *the last day*, as employed by our Lord).

There are times when this final phrase, *the end of days*, *the last days*, can be understood in a technical sense, to refer to the Tribulation. However, in a general sense, this simply refers to what will happen in the future.

Genesis 49:1 And Jacob called to his sons and said, “Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what will happen to you in the days to come.

Genesis 49:1 Jacob called to his sons and said, “Gather [yourselves] that I may tell you (all) what will befall you (all) in the end of days. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

This chapter appears to be a song or a psalm, even though this is the end-of-life blessing which Jacob will give to his sons. There will be a different meter or rhythm to this chapter than is found in the narratives which preceded it.

Jacob himself recognizes the prophetic nature of his final words to his sons. At this time, he is 147 years old and these will be his final words (Genesis 47:28 49:33).

At the end of this verse, it literally reads *in the last days*, *in the latter days*, *in the end times*. Because that phrase is often (but not always) associated with the end times (that is, the Tribulation), most translators translate these words in a somewhat different way: *in the days to come* is quite common (Amp Bible, ESV, Green, NASB, NEV, REB, the Voice, WEB); but many translate this verse *in the last days* (IAV, ISV, KJV, NKJV, TLV, UTV, VW). A few render this, *in the latter days* (CGV) and *in the future* (ExpB, NET Bible). So, we may simply understand that most of Genesis 49 as what will take place in the future regarding Jacob’s sons. There is no reason to place some sort of tribulational spin on anything that he says.

Jacob is coming to the end of his life; and one of the important traditions in the ancient world is the end-of-life, conferred blessing by the patriarch. The ancient patriarch will bless his sons, which blessings often took into account the sons’ names, their history and their futures. I think that the patriarch giving these blessings ruminated over them for some time before he gave them.

Now, did Jacob scribble out some notes? Did he have note cards to refer to? Bear in mind that this is speculation, but I believe that Jacob, after thinking about this, knew almost exactly what he was going to say, and he had the ability to remember all of this without any notes. I am of the persuasion that, ancient men, like the patriarchs, had a greater mental capacity than we do, as they were closer in time to the creation of Adam and Eve. If I was going to do what Jacob did, I would have needed, at the very least, notes and maybe a teleprompter. Jacob, even at the point where he barely had control of his body (he is in bed this entire time, sitting up), and he was unable to see; yet his mind remained as sharp as ever.

What Jacob will describe are historical trends for each tribe, speaking as inspired by God the Holy Spirit. Let me suggest that the speaker or writer of Scripture did not always fully appreciate what he said or wrote.

Much of the book of Genesis is defined by the words *cursing* and *blessing* (for instance, the line of Abraham versus the line of Lot; the line of Isaac versus the line of Ishmael); the word *blessing* (s) is found 75 times in the book of Genesis. The word *cursed* will be found in this chapter as well as the word *blessings* (5 times).

Genesis 49:2a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
qâbats (קָבַצְ) [pronounced kaw-BATS]	<i>be gathered, be collected, be congregated, congregate yourselves</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Niphal imperative	Strong’s #6908 BDB #867

Genesis 49:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâma' (שָׁמַעַ) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHG</i>]	<i>listen [intently], hear, listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], hearken to, be attentive to, listen and be cognizant of</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Ya'ăqôb (יַעֲקֹב) [pronounced <i>yah-ġuh-KOH^BV</i>]	<i>supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent; heel; and is transliterated Jacob</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3290 BDB #784

Translation: Assemble [yourselves] and hear, sons of Jacob;...

Interestingly enough, the verb here has a Hithpael form which is found elsewhere. Here, Jacob stays with the Niphal, which is the passive of the Qal. However, it makes sense for the ones gathering themselves, rather than for them to simply allow themselves to be gathered.

Genesis 49:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâma' (שָׁמַעַ) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHG</i>]	<i>listen [intently], hear, listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], hearken to, be attentive to, listen and be cognizant of</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Yis'êrâ'el (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

The NET Bible: *The name Israel means "God fights" (although some interpret the meaning as "he fights [with] God"). See Gen 32:28.¹⁴ The NIV Study Bible understands his name to mean, he struggles with God.¹⁵ See Genesis 32:22–30.*

¹⁴ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen35.htm> (footnote) accessed January 2, 2015.

¹⁵ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 46 (footnote).

Genesis 49:2b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'âb (אָב) [pronounced aw ^b v]	<i>father</i> , both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; <i>ancestor, grandfather; founder, civil leader, military leader; master, teacher</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

Translation: ...hear Israel, your father.

Twice they are commanded to hear their father. Often, in poetry, there are parallel thoughts—sometimes these are given in such a way to indicate emphasis of that thought, and sometimes, these are similar thoughts, but with some importance distinctions.

Syndein/Thieme: *The more you know about the future, the more you can fight the trends of your Old Sin Nature. So, by prophesying to the sons what they are like and their descendents will be like, Jacob is truly blessing his sons. Now they can be believers and use doctrine to counteract the trends of their Old Sin Natures. This gives them all stability in time.*¹⁶

Genesis 49:2 Gather yourselves together, and hear, sons of Jacob, and listen to Israel your father.

Genesis 49:2 **Assemble [yourselves] and hear, sons of Jacob; hear Israel, your father.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Jacob uses synonyms to express a similar thought (the repetition of the words *gather yourselves together* is actually 2 different verbs in the Hebrew). That Jacob would do this further suggests the poetic nature of his discourse.

The verb *listen, hear* is the same verb; it is the 2nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative of *shâma'* (שמע) [pronounced *shaw-MAHG*], which means, *listen [intently], listen up, pay attention; hear, listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], hearken to, be attentive to, listen and be cognizant of.* Strong's #8085 BDB #1033. Sometimes, this word means *listen and obey*; but here, it means, *listen carefully and remember.* They listened so closely as to remember and repeat these words to future generations (which is why we are able to study these words over 3000 years later). It is possible that each man of each tribe remembered what Jacob said of him.

We have the parallel language of *sons of Jacob* along with *Israel your father*. I believe that this parallel means something. When speaking of himself as *Jacob*, this is the man who was still conniving, who still wanted to do things his own way. These sons were born to *that* Jacob. However, in the final 17 years of his life, Jacob actually matured; and the man who lays before them is Israel, their spiritually mature father. It took Jacob some time, but he did enter into spiritual maturity.

Genesis 49:1–2 **Jacob called to his sons and said, “Gather [yourselves] that I may tell you (all) what will befall you (all) in the end of days. Assemble [yourselves] and hear, sons of Jacob; hear Israel, your father.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:1–2 **Jacob called to his sons and said, “Gather yourselves so that I may tell you all that will happen to your descendants in days to come. Assemble yourselves, O sons of Israel, and hear your father Israel.** (Kukis paraphrase)

¹⁶ From http://syndein.com/Genesis_49.html accessed January 15, 2017.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Reuben

Jacob begins with his firstborn son, Reuben:

Reuben, my firstborn, you [are] my strength and a beginning of my vigor; a remnant of majesty, a remnant of strength; recklessness like waters, you do not let remain, for you went up to a bed of your father, then you profaned my bed, you had gone up to.

Genesis
49:3–4

Reuben, [you are] my firstborn, [and] you [are] my strength as well as the [very] beginning of my vigor; the remnant of majesty and the remnant of strength. [However, you are] unstable as water, you did not let [things] remain [as they should remain]; for you went up to your father's bed, [and] then you profaned my bed, having gone up there.

Reuben, you are my firstborn, the beginning of my strength and vigor; yet just a remnant of majesty and personal strength. You are as unstable as water, not allowing things to simply remain as they should. You went up to your father's bed and then you defiled my bed.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Reuben, my firstborn, you [are] my strength and a beginning of my vigor; a remnant of majesty, a remnant of strength; recklessness like waters, you do not let remain, for you went up to a bed of your father, then you profaned my bed, you had gone up to.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum of Onkelos	.
Jerusalem targum	REUBEN,my firstborn art thou, my strength, and the beginning of my sorrow. To thee my son Reuben would it have pertained to receive three portions above thy brethren, birthright, priesthood, kingdom: but because thou hast sinned, Reuben, my son, the birthright is given unto Joseph, the kingdom to Jehuda, and the high priesthood to the tribe of Levi. I will liken thee, my son Reuben, to a little garden into the midst of which there enter rapid torrents, which it cannot bear, but is carried away before them. Be repentant then, my son Reuben, with good works, for thou hast sinned; and sin no more, that that which thou hast sinned may be forgiven thee.
Revised Douay-Rheims	.
Targum (Onkelos)	Reuben, thou art my first born, my strength, and the beginning of my power.[7] Thine should it have been taking to take the three portions, the birthright, the priesthood, and the kingdom: but because thou hast proceeded perversely,[8] behold, as water outpoured thou wilt not prosper, neither wilt thou receive the excellent portion; because thou wentest up to thy father's place of sleep: then, my son, didst thou become profane, when thou wentest up to my bed.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	Reuben thou art my firstborn, the beginning of the strength of my generation, and the chief event of my thoughts To thee belonged the birthright, and the high priesthood, and the kingdom: but because thou hast sinned, my son, the birthright is given to Joseph, and the, kingdom to Jehuda, and the priesthood to Levi. I will liken thee to a little garden in the midst of which there enter torrents swift and strong, which it cannot bear, but is overwhelmed. Be repentant then, Reuben my

son, for thou hast sinned, and add not; that wherein thou hast sinned it may be forgiven thee; for it is reckoned to thee as if thou wentest in to have to do with the wife of thy father at the time that thou didst confound my bed upon which thou wentest up.

Revised Douay-Rheims
Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)

.
Ruben, my firstborn, thou art my strength, and the beginning of my sorrow: excelling in gifts, greater in command.
Thou art poured out as water, grow thou not: because thou wentest up to thy father's bed, and didst defile his couch.

Latin Vulgate
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta

.
"Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength; excelling in dignity, and excelling in power. Gen 49:4 Boiling over as water, you shall not excel; because you went up to your father's bed, then defiled it. He went up to my couch.

Peshitta (Syriac)

Reuben, you are my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, and the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power: You went astray like water, you shall not excel; because you went up to your fathers bed; truly, you have defiled my bed by going up into it.

Septuagint (Greek)

Ruben, you *art* my first-born, you my strength, and the first of my children, hard to be endured, *hard and* self-willed. You was insolent like water, burst not forth with violence, for you went up to the bed of your father; then you defiled the couch, whereupon you went up.

NETS (Greek)
Brenton's Septuagint

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Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English

Reuben, you are my oldest son, the first-fruit of my strength, first in pride and first in power: But because you were uncontrolled, the first place will not be yours; for you went up to your father's bed, even his bride-bed, and made it unclean.

Easy English

Jacob said, 'Reuben you are my oldest son. You were my first child after I became a man. Of all my sons, you think yourself most important. And you are the strongest.

Yet you are as wild as the sea. People will no longer know you as the most important son (or first-born son) because you went to your father's bed. And you slept with my concubine. This was a wrong thing to do. You made me ashamed.

Easy-to-Read Version–2001

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Easy-to-Read Version–2006 **Reuben**

"Reuben, my first son, you are my strength, the first proof of my manhood.
You were the most honored and powerful of all my sons.
But your passion was like a flood you couldn't control.
So you will not remain my most honored son.
You climbed into your father's bed and slept with one of his wives.
You brought shame to my bed, to the bed you lay on.

God's Word™
Good News Bible (TEV)

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International Children's B.	<p>"Reuben, my first son, you are my strength. Your birth showed I could be a father. You have the highest position among my sons. You are the most powerful. But you are uncontrolled like water. So you will no longer lead your brothers. This is because you got into your father's bed. You shamed me by having physical relations with my slave girl.</p>
<i>The Message</i>	<p>Reuben, you're my firstborn, my strength, first proof of my manhood, at the top in honor and at the top in power, But like a bucket of water spilled, you'll be at the top no more, Because you climbed into your father's marriage bed, mounting that couch, and you defiled it.</p>
Names of God Bible	<p>"Reuben, you are my firstborn, my strength, the very first son I had, first in majesty and first in power. You will no longer be first because you were out of control like a flood and you climbed into your father's bed. Then you dishonored it. He climbed up on my couch.</p>
NIRV	<p>"Reuben, you are my oldest son. You were my first child. You were the first sign of my strength. You were first in honor. You were first in power. But you are as unsteady as water. So you won't be first anymore. You had sex with my concubine on my bed. You lay on my couch and made it 'unclean.'</p>
New Simplified Bible	<p>»Reuben, you are my firstborn; you are my strength and the first child of my manhood. You are the proudest and strongest of all my sons. »You are like a raging flood. But you will not be the most important, for you slept with my concubine. You dishonored your father's bed.</p>
Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:	
Common English Bible	<p>Reuben, you are my oldest son, my strength and my first contender, superior in status and superior in might. As wild as the waters, you won't endure, for you went up to your father's bed, you went up and violated my couch.</p>
Contemporary English V.	<p>Reuben, you are my oldest, born at the peak of my powers; you were an honored leader. Uncontrollable as a flood, you slept with my wife and disgraced my bed. And so you no longer deserve the place of honor.</p>
The Living Bible	<p>"Reuben, you are my oldest son, the child of my vigorous youth. You are the head of the list in rank and in honor. But you are unruly as the wild waves of the sea, and you shall be first no longer. I am demoting you, for you slept with one of my wives and thus dishonored me.</p>
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	<p>"Reuben, my first son, you are my strength. Your birth showed I could be a father. You have the highest position among my sons,</p>

and you are the most powerful.
 But you are uncontrolled like water,
 so you will no longer lead your brothers.
 This is because you got into your father's bed
 and shamed me by having sexual relations with my slave girl.

New Life Version

"Reuben, you are my first-born, my power and the beginning of my strength, first in pride and first in power. But because you are as wild as water, the first place will not be yours. It is because you went to your father's bed and made it unclean.

New Living Translation

"Reuben, you are my firstborn, my strength,
 the child of my vigorous youth.
 You are first in rank and first in power.
 But you are as unruly as a flood,
 and you will be first no longer.
 For you went to bed with my wife;
 you defiled my marriage couch.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible

'ReuBen; You're my firstborn and my strength. You're the first of my children, but you're hard to endure, [pig headed], 4 and as unruly as water; so bring an end to your violence! You even climbed up on your father's bed and dirtied the couch that you climbed on.

Beck's American Translation

International Standard V

On the Future of Reuben

"Reuben, you're my firstborn,
 my strength,
 and the first fruit of my vitality.
 You excel in rank
 and excel in power.
 But you're as undisciplined as a roaring river,
 so eventually you won't succeed,
 because you got in your father's bed [Cf. Gen 35:22],
 defiled it, and then approached my couch."

Revised Knox Bible

You, Ruben, are my first-born, my pride, my manhood's first-fruits; yours was the privilege, yours the right to rule, but all went to waste like water. Never may you thrive you who would lie between your father's sheets, and defile his bed.

Today's NIV

Translation for Translators

Reuben, you are my oldest son.
 You were born when I was young and energetic/strong.
 When I became a grown man, you were my first child.
 You are prouder and stronger than all the rest of my sons.
 But you were as uncontrollable as a flood [SIM].
 So now you will not be my most important son,
 because you climbed up onto my bed,
 and had sex with [MTY] my «concubine/slave who became one of my wives».
 That caused me, your father, to have great shame.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible

Reuben is my first born, my strength and the beginning of my vigor; the excess of my elevation and the excess of my might.
 Reckless as water - was you to excel? - For you is to have went up, to your father's bed; you is to have defiled it, even is you to have went up to my bed!

Conservapedia	"Reuben, you, my firstborn, my vigor, the beginning of my manhood, the surplus of dignity and surplus of strength, are ebullient, like water. You will not have a surplus. You went up to your father's bed, and then profaned it; you went up to my berth." Referring to Reuben's affair with Bilhah.
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	Reuben ! The first of my vigour, — You are the crown of my passion ; Excelling in beauty, excelling in strength ! Boiling like water, you lost- command ; — For mounting your father's bed, Yes ! defiling my honour's abode.
God's Truth (Tyndale)	Ruben, you are mine eldest son, my might and the beginning of my strength, chief in receiving and chief in power. As unstable as water was you: you shall therefore not be the chiefest, for you went up upon your fathers bed, and then defiled you my couch with going up.
HCSB	Reuben, you are my firstborn, my strength and the firstfruits of my virility, excelling in prominence, excelling in power. Turbulent as water, you will no longer excel, because you got into your father's bed and you defiled it—he got into my bed.
Jubilee Bible 2000	.
Lexham English Bible	.
H. C. Leupold	Reuben, thou art my first-born, My strength and the beginning of my might, The pre-eminence of dignity and the preeminence of power, Seething as water does—thou shalt not enjoy pre-eminence, For thou hast gone up upon thy father's bed, Then didst thou defile—my couch did he mount.
NIV, ©2011	.
NIV – UK	.
Tree of Life Version	Reuben, my firstborn are you, my vigor and firstborn of my power, endowed with extra dignity, endowed with extra strength— like water boiling over you will not have extra, for you got up into your father's bed, when you defiled a maid's couch.
Urim-Thummim Version	Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of nobility and the nobility of power. Unstable as water, you will not have the nobility because you went into your father's bed, then profaned yourself sexually, when he went into my bed.
Wikipedia Bible Project	Reuben, you are my firstborn, my strength and my first ability, abundant in dignity and abundant in courage. Restless as water, without power, because you went atop your father's lay; you did defile yourself, gone on my issuer.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	Reuben, you are my firstborn, my strength and the firstfruits of my manhood! excelling in honor and excelling in power. Restless as water, you will excel no more for you went to your father's wife, on to my bed and defiled it.
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The Heritage Bible	Reuben, you are my firstborn, my power, and the first of my effectiveness, what is left of my being raised up, and what is left of force; Like froth on water you shall not excel, because you ascended your father's bed; at that time you defiled; he ascended to my couch.
New American Bible (2002)	"You, Reuben, my first-born, my strength and the first fruit of my manhood, excelling in rank and excelling in power! Unruly as water, you shall no longer excel, for you climbed into your father's bed and defiled my couch to my sorrow.
New American Bible (2011)	"You, Reuben, my firstborn, my strength and the first fruit of my vigor, excelling in rank and excelling in power! Turbulent as water, you shall no longer excel, for you climbed into your father's bed and defiled my couch to my sorrow. Gn 35:22; 1 Chr 5:1–2
New Jerusalem Bible	Reuben, you are my first-born, my vigour, and the first-fruit of my manhood, foremost in pride, foremost in strength, uncontrolled as water: you will not be foremost, for you climbed into your father's bed, and so defiled my couch, to my sorrow.
New RSV Revised English Bible	. "Reuben, you are my firstborn, my strength and the first fruit of my vigour, excelling in pride, excelling in might. Uncontrollable as a flood, you will excel no more, because you climbed into your father's bed, and defiled his concubine's couch.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	"Re'uven, you are my firstborn, my strength, the firstfruits of my manhood. Though superior in vigor and power you are unstable as water, so your superiority will end, because you climbed into your father's bed and defiled it — he climbed onto my concubine's couch!
exeGesés companion Bible	Reu Ben, my firstbirth: you - my force and the beginning of my strength; the remainder of exaltation and the remainder of strength: frothy as water, you remain not, because you ascended to the bed of your father; then you profaned it: he ascended to my couch.
Hebraic Roots Bible JPS (Tanakh—1985)	. Reuben, you are my first-born, My might and first fruit of my vigor, Exceeding in rank And exceeding in honor. Unstable as water, you shall excel no longer; For when you mounted your father's bed, You brought disgrace—my couch he mounted!
Judaica Press Complete T. Kaplan Translation	. 'Reuben, you are my firstborn, my strength and the beginning of my manhood, first in rank and first in power. [But because you were] unstable as water, you will no longer be first. This is because you moved [(Sh'muel ben Chofni; Radak; Sherashim; Ibn Ezra; Bereshith Rabbah 98). See 1 Chronicles 5:1, that as a result of this, Reuben lost the birthright.

There is a question as to whether this refers to the episode with the mandrakes (Genesis 30:14) or that with Bilhah (Genesis 35:22) (Bereshith Rabbah 98). The Hebrew can also be translated, 'he went up [on] his father's bed.' See note on Genesis 49:4, 'He moved my bed!'.] **your father's beds, committing a profane act. He moved my bed** [(Ralbag; following cantellation notes). Literally, 'then you profaned my couch - went up.' Various interpretations, 'You profaned that which went up on my couch' (Rashi); 'You profaned my couch, [but] went up [and repented]' (Lekach Tov); 'You profaned my exalted couch' (Saadia; Sekhel Tov); 'You profaned my couch; it is cut off' (Radak, Sherashim, s.v. Alah; Ibn Ezra; Bereshith Rabbah 98); 'You profaned my couch by removing it' (translation of Sh'muel ben Chofni); or '[Your instability] arose when you profaned my couch' (Radak, Sherashim).]!

Orthodox Jewish Bible

Reuven, thou art my bechor, my koach, and the reshit of my strength, the excellency of honor, and excellency of oz (power):

Unstable as mayim, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to mishkevei avicha (thy father's bed, i.e. incest); then defiledst thou it; he went up to my couch.

The Scriptures 1998

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible

"Reuben, you are my firstborn;
My might, the beginning of my strength and vigor,
Preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power [that should have been your birthright].

"But unstable and reckless and boiling over like water [in sinful lust], you shall not excel or have the preeminence [of the firstborn],

Because you went up to your father's bed [with Bilhah];

You defiled it—he went up to my couch.

The Expanded Bible

"Reuben, my first son [firstborn], you are my strength.

·Your birth showed I could be a father [and the first of my virility/vigor].

·You have the highest position among my sons [excelling in pride/rank/authority], and you are the most powerful [excelling in power].

But you are uncontrolled [unstable] like water [often a symbol of chaos or evil], so you will no longer lead your brothers [excel].

This is because you got into your father's bed

and shamed me by having sexual relations with my slave girl [you defiled it by going up on my couch; 35:22].

The Geneva Bible

Kretzmann's Commentary

Reuben, thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power. Jacob speaks with deep feeling: Reuben, my first-born thou, my might and the head of my strength. He was the first-fruits of Jacob's vigor, both spiritual and bodily. In him the dignity of the priesthood should have been united with the power of the ruler. But all this Reuben had forfeited. **Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel**; he was like the bubbling of boiling water, rashly impulsive, and therefore he would lose the dignity and the preference of his birthright. **Because thou wentest up to thy father's bed**, in lying with Bilhah, his father's concubine, Genesis 35:22; **then defiledst thou it**, he desecrated what should have been sacred to him. It was a crime from which the father even now, after the lapse of so many years, turned with horror, saying, with a tinge of repulsion and bitterness; **he went up to my couch**.

NET Bible®

Reuben, you are my firstborn,
my might and the beginning of my strength,
outstanding in dignity, outstanding in power.
You are destructive like water and will not excel,
for you got on your father's bed,

Syndein/Thieme	<p>then you defiled it – he got on my couch! {Verses 3-15: The Three Sons of Leah} {Verses 3-4: Reuben: Great Potential But Downside in Verse 4} "Reuben {R@'uwben - name means - 'SEE a son . . . an exclamation in Hebrew'}, you are my {Jacob's} firstborn, my might . . . and the beginning of my strength, the excellency {yether} of dignity {great in potential}, and the excellency {yether} of power {again great potential}. Unstable as water {unstable in mental attitude - see James 1:8} {great potential but will not make it because of instability - See Chapter 42:37}, you {Reuben} shall not excel {potential never realized}. Because you went up to your father's bed and then you defiled it {see Genesis 35:22-23 - incest with Bilhah - a concubine of Jacob}. He went up to my bed." {Note: Sometimes unstable people do not get along with other people but love animals. The tribe of Reuben should have been the rulers of the other tribes but never were. And, when it came to cross into the Promised Land, the descendents of Reuben wanted to stay with the cattle and not cross. See also I Chronicles 5:1-2 - as firstborn Reuben should have had the rulership, the priesthood, and the double-portion (meaning the financial inheritance). He lost the rulership to Judah, the priesthood to Levi and the double-portion to Joseph (via two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh).}</p>
The Voice	<p>Reuben, you are my firstborn <i>son</i>, my power and the vigor of my youth, first in rank and first in power. But you are out of control, like floodwaters; you have forfeited your place because you have lain with your father's wife and defiled his bed—you climbed onto my couch!</p>

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Benner's Mechanical Trans.	<p>...Re'uven ^[See a son], you are my firstborn, my strength and the summit of my vigor, the remainder of elevation and the remainder of the strong, reckless like water, you will not be reserved given that you went up to the laying place of your father, at that time you pierced, my couch had gone up,...</p>
Concordant Literal Version	<p>Reuben, my firstborn, you are my vigor, and the beginning of my virility, with a surplus for bearing and a surplus of strength. Ebullient as water, you must not have a surplus! For up you went to the bed of your father. Then you violated my berth to which you went up.</p>
Context Group Version Darby Translation	<p>. Reuben, thou art my firstborn, My might, and the firstfruits of my vigour: Excellency of dignity, and excellency of strength. Impetuous as the waters, thou shalt have no pre-eminence; Because thou wentest up to thy father's couch: Then defiledst thou [it]: he went up to my bed.</p>
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	<p>Reuben, my first-born, thou, My vigour, and the first-fruit of my strength,—Pre-eminence of elevation and pre-eminence of power: Boiling over like water, thou mayest not have pre-eminence, Because thou didst mount the bed of thy father,—Then, wast thou profane—My marriage-bed, he mounted!</p>
English Standard Version	.
English Standard V. – UK	.
Evidence Bible	.
Green's Literal Translation	.
H. C. Leupold	.
Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern KJV	.

NASB	<p>“Reuben, you are my firstborn; My might and the beginning of my strength, Preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power. “Uncontrolled as water, you shall not have preeminence, Because you went up to your father’s bed; Then you defiled it—he went up to my couch.</p>
New European Version	<p>Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength; excelling in dignity, and excelling in power. Boiling over as water, you shall not excel; because you went up to your father’s bed, then defiled it. He went up to my couch.</p>
New King James Version	<p>“Reuben, you are my firstborn, My might and the beginning of my strength, The excellency of dignity and the excellency of power. Unstable as water, you shall not excel, Because you went up to your father’s bed; Then you defiled it— He went up to my couch.</p>
Owen's Translation	.
Stuart Wolf	.
Third Millennium Bible	.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	<p>Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power. Like bubbling water, you shall not excel, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it; he went up to my couch.</p>
Webster’s Bible Translation	.
World English Bible	.
Young's Literal Translation	.
Young’s Updated LT	<p>Reuben! You [are] my first-born, My power, and beginning of my strength, The abundance of exaltation, And the abundance of strength; Unstable as water, you are not abundant; For you have gone up your father’s bed; Then you have polluted: My couch he went up!</p>

The gist of this passage: Reuben is Jacob’s firstborn, and should have been the preeminent son; but he was undependable and he committed incest.

3-4

Genesis 49:3a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
R ^o ûwbên (רְבוּאֵן) [pronounced roo-BANE]	<i>behold a son; transliterated Reuben</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong’s #7205 BDB #910
b ^e kôwr (רִאשׁוֹן) [pronounced b ^e KOHR]	<i>firstborn; metaphorically used for anything which is chief or first of its kind</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong’s #1060 BDB #114
’attâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced aht-TAW]	<i>you (often, the verb to be is implied)</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong’s #859 BDB #61
kôwach (כֹּחַ) [pronounced KOE-ahkh]; and spelled kôach (כֹּחַ) [pronounced KOE-ahkh]	<i>strength, power, ability; produce; substance, riches, wealth [of soil]; the product of one’s labors</i>	masculine singular substantive with the 1 st person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #3581 BDB #470

Genesis 49:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ, וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
rê'shîyth (רֵאשִׁיִּית) [pronounced <i>ray-SHEETH</i>]	<i>first fruit, firstling, first of one's kind, first, chief; a beginning, a former state; former times</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #7225 BDB #912
Inexplicably, Owen (upon whom I depend to parse my verbs for me) lists this as a feminine singular construct, which makes little sense because this is a plural noun (always found in the plural form).			
'ôwn (אֵין) [pronounced <i>ohn</i>]	<i>strength, power, vigor; substance, wealth; faculty, ability</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #202 BDB #20

Translation: Reuben, [you are] my firstborn, [and] you [are] my strength as well as the [very] beginning of my vigor;...

Jacob first addresses Reuben, his firstborn son. Generally speaking, it is the firstborn who stands in the place of his father. He is called Jacob's strength and the beginning of his vigor. These are both positive evaluations of Reuben; but they describe essentially what is his potential, and not what he achieved. This is what Reuben should have been, but he was not.

Unlike his father and grandfather, Jacob had many sons and all of them were Jews; meaning all of them were believers in Jesus Christ, although many of them did not grow much beyond the salvation stage. Reuben is the first-fruits of his strength; or, in this context, the first-fruits of his virility. The word is 'ôwn (אֵין) [pronounced *ōne*] and Owen renders it *strength*, but BDB translates it as *manly vigor, strength or wealth*. Reuben is the first in a long line of sons to come, yet would be considered first in line when it comes to the double portion and pre-eminence. However, Reuben only held this position for a short while early in life. His failure came when he and his brothers plotted to kill Joseph. Although he did what he could to protect Joseph, it was a half-hearted attempt which showed lack of leadership. There is a point at which you must draw the line between right and wrong and there is no in between. What the brothers intended to do to Joseph was completely wrong; there was no middle ground between their plotting to kill Joseph and Reuben understanding the Joseph should be free. As the oldest brother; as their federal head, Reuben should have stood up to his brothers and freed Joseph. He was not alone in his realization that what they were doing was wrong—he just did not have the internal fortitude to take a stand here.

You may recall the instead of requiring Joseph to be cut free, Reuben instead took the middle position between death and freedom, and suggested that Joseph be sold into slavery. Even though that may appear to be a middle ground choice, it was still wrong and unfair.

Genesis 49:3a Reuben, you are my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength,...

Reuben is Jacob's *kôwach* (כֹּחַ) [pronounced *KOE-ahkh*], which means, *[his] strength, power, ability; produce; substance, riches, wealth [of soil]; the product of one's labors*. Strong's #3581 BDB #470. The MKJV translates this *might*. He is called *the first of my strength*.

What Jacob says here is actually what Reuben should have been, but he was not. The firstborn son usually stood in for his father and eventually took over the position of his father's authority. Generally the authority of the father and the double portion would fall upon the eldest son. Reuben would not receive either.

There were many times when Reuben would be out there with his brothers, without their father. At such times, he should have taken on the authority of his father. However, he never quite pulled it off. In fact, if you will recall, at some point, Judah assumed this position. Judah eventually led his brothers; Judah became the spokesman for his brothers.

Then Jacob continues to describe the double portion which Reuben should have enjoyed:

Genesis 49:3b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
yether (יֶתֶר) [pronounced YEH-ther]	<i>residue, remainder, remnant, [the] rest [of]; other part; excess; abundantly (adverb); abundance, affluence; superiority, preeminence, excellency</i>	masculine singular construct	#3499 (#3498) BDB #451
This is the first occurrence of this noun in Genesis; it is only found twice in Genesis and both times in this verse.			
s ^e êth (שֵׁת) [pronounced s ^e -AYTH]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❶ a raising up, an uprising, a lifting up (Genesis 4:7 [dubious] Job 41:17), ❷ eminence, a place rising up on the skin (Exodus 13:2, 10, 19); ❸ excellency, majesty (Genesis 49:3 Job 13:11); and ❹ a sentence or decree of a judge (Hab. 1:7—others take this to be pride) 	feminine singular noun	Strong's #7613 BDB #673

Translation: ...the remnant of majesty...

As Jacob's son, Reuben takes on the remnant of Jacob's power and majesty. This appears to be a lessening of his evaluation.

In any case, the firstborn was to carry on the name and traditions of his father; and, ideally speaking, even become better than his father—however, this was not the case for Reuben.

Genesis 49:3b ...the excellency of dignity...

The masculine singular construct found here twice is yether (יֶתֶר) [pronounced YEH-ther], which means, *residue, remainder, remnant, [the] rest [of]; other part; excess; abundantly (adverb); abundance, affluence; superiority, preeminence, excellency*. #3499 (#3498) BDB #451. Although this is a fairly common word, found over 100 times in the Old Testament, it is only found twice in the book of Genesis, in this verse, in 3b and 3c.

It is first affixed to the feminine singular noun s^eêth (שֵׁת) [pronounced s^e-AYTH], which has 4 primary meanings:

- ❶ a raising up, an uprising, a lifting up (Genesis 4:7 [dubious] Job 41:17),
- ❷ eminence, a place rising up on the skin (Exodus 13:2, 10, 19);
- ❸ excellency, majesty (Genesis 49:3 Job 13:11); and
- ❹ a sentence or decree of a judge (Hab. 1:7—others take this to be pride).

Strong's #7613 BDB #673. It would make sense for this to have a similar meaning here and in Job, as both of these sections are poetry, and words can sometimes have a somewhat different meaning in poetry. This is what Reuben should have been—the **preeminence of Jacob's majesty** (Jacob, although a mere shepherd, is royalty in the royal family of God). He has great respect amongst not only his sons, but in Egypt (as we will later find out).

Reuben *should have been* preeminent in *exaltation, eminence, dignity*. Reuben should have led the other brothers in moral and spiritual realms. As the oldest son of Jacob, he should have been able to step up and guide his brothers when that was called for.

Genesis 49:3c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yether (יֶתֶר) [pronounced <i>YEH-ther</i>]	<i>residue, remainder, remnant, [the] rest [of]; other part; excess; abundantly (adverb); abundance, affluence; superiority, preeminence, excellency</i>	masculine singular construct	#3499 (#3498) BDB #451
'az (אֲז) [pronounced <i>gahz</i>]	<i>strong, mighty, fierce</i>	masculine singular adjective; acts as a noun on its own	Strong's #5794 BDB #738

Translation: ...and the remnant of strength.

As Jacob's son, Reuben takes on the remnant of Jacob's power and majesty. This appears to be a lessening of his evaluation.

In any case, the firstborn was to carry on the name and traditions of his father; and, ideally speaking, even become better than his father—however, this was not the case for Reuben.

Genesis 49:3c ...and the excellency of power.

Yether is repeated and affixed to the very common noun for *strength, might*. "You, Reuben, *should have been the preeminence of my strength*," Jacob says. This is what the firstborn generally is.

The second area of preeminence should have been with *power, strength, might*; that is, Reuben should have led his brothers in the realm of power. Reuben should have been the political power; he should have led the other tribes.

Genesis 49:3 Reuben, [you are] my firstborn, [and] you [are] my strength as well as the [very] beginning of my vigor; the remnant of majesty and the remnant of strength. ... (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Various Translations of Genesis 49:3:

JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Reuben, you are my first-born, My might and first fruit of my vigor, Exceeding in rank And exceeding in honor.
Kaplan Translation	'Reuben, you are my firstborn, my strength and the beginning of my manhood, first in rank and first in power.
Revised English Bible	"Reuben, you are my firstborn, my strength and the first fruit of my vigour, excelling in pride, excelling in might.
New American Bible (2011)	"You, Reuben, my firstborn,

	my strength and the first fruit of my vigor, excelling in rank and excelling in power!
The Heritage Bible	Reuben, you are my firstborn, my power, and the first of my effectiveness, what is left of my being raised up, and what is left of force;
New Century Version	“Reuben, my first son, you are my strength. Your birth showed I could be a father. You have the highest position among my sons,
The Living Bible	“Reuben, you are my oldest son, the child of my vigorous youth. You are the head of the list in rank and in honor.

Although we see quite a variety of interpretations here, Reuben should have been first in everything. Furthermore, we should understand this to mean, *Reuben, this is what you should have been; this is who you could have been.* At this point, we will see why these words are only *potentially* applied to Reuben as the firstborn (which ranking is given at the beginning).

Then, at this point, Jacob states what Reuben’s problem is...

Genesis 49:4a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
pacha (פַּחַז) [pronounced pahk-AHZ]	wantonness, recklessness, unbridled license, frothiness; unstable	masculine singular noun	Strong’s #6349 BDB #808
Translations were quite imaginative when it came to translating this word:			
The NET Bible: <i>The Hebrew noun פַּחַז (pakhaz) only occurs here in the OT. A related verb occurs twice in the prophets (Jer 23:32; Zeph 3:4) for false prophets inventing their messages, and once in Judges for unscrupulous men bribed to murder (Judg 9:4). It would describe Reuben as being “frothy, boiling, turbulent” as water. The LXX has “run riot,” the Vulgate has “poured out,” and Tg. Onq. has “you followed your own direction.” It is a reference to Reuben’s misconduct in Gen 35, but the simile and the rare word invite some speculation. H. Pehlke suggests “destructive like water,” for Reuben acted with pride and presumption; see his “An Exegetical and Theological Study of Genesis 49:1-28” (Th.D. dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1985).</i> ¹⁷			
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong’s # BDB #453
mayim (מַיִם) [pronounced mah-YIHM]	water (s)	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong’s #4325 BDB #565

Translation: [However, you are] unstable as water,...

Then Jacob smacks Reuben right between the eyes, figuratively speaking. He calls him *unstable as water*. I think the idea is, Reuben fits himself into whatever situation that he finds himself. He does not become the leader, but he becomes the guy who goes along with whatever, exerting, at best, influence.

The first word is difficult because it is found only here in the Bible. Pachaz (פַּחַז) [pronounced PAHK-az] has its counterpart in the verb pāchaz (פַּחַז) [pronounced paw-KHAZ] and it is found in Jud. 9:4 and Zephusians 3:4. BDB

¹⁷ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 9, 2017.

gives the definition as *wanton, reckless*. The feminine noun is found in Jer. 23:32. I personally do not buy this *reckless* definition. It does not seem to fit exactly. The key word here is *water*. This is the simple Hebrew word for water—not rain, not ocean, not ice—simply water. Water has the characteristics that it is transparent and it takes the shape of whatever container it is placed in. Reuben takes on whatever morality is proper for the situation (in his own mind). *Irresolute* might be a reasonable translation.

When Reuben slept with his father's concubine (Genesis 35:22), he showed a total lack of a moral center. He did not realize that he was crossing over a line that should not be crossed over. He acted out of lust and with no moral focus.

In Judges 9:4, Abimelech does not have seventy men who follow him because of his leadership capabilities; he hires mercenaries—men who, for a higher price, would turn against him. They had no moral center, no sense of loyalty—the container they were poured in was that of a mercenary loyal to Abimelech. With a little more money, they could be poured into a container loyal to his enemies.

Jer. 23:25–32 is the Lord speaking against the false prophets. These false prophets are men whose hearts are filled with deception even to the point of deceiving themselves (v. 26). Their intention is to make the people forget the Lord's name (v. 27). They lead the people astray with their lies and their lack of a moral focus; their lack of a true loyalty to God, Whom they do not even know. These false prophets are not even the slightest benefit to Israel (v. 32). ZEphesians 3:4 is also speaks of false prophets—specifically those in Jerusalem and they are called treacherous men and *pâchaz* is also applied to them. These are moral relativists. They are not related to truth, to what is right. You place them in a new situation and their actions and their concept of right and wrong change accordingly. These men are all unstable, malleable, transparent, supposed to be related to truth but lacking a true morality. Hence, this word should be translated as *irresolute, unsubstantial, amoral, inconsistent, unreliable, corruptible, unreliable, spineless, and/or unprincipled*. Reuben had two points in his life of which we are aware when it was time for him to have a backbone, to stand up for what is true and correct, to show leadership abilities through stability and morality. He was unable to do so and following the sale of Joseph into slavery, we never hear about Reuben in a leadership position again. When trying to convince his father in Genesis 46 that they must return to Egypt and that he would leave his sons as hostages, Jacob ignores the suggestion. Jacob knows that Reuben's word means nothing; change the circumstances and what Reuben stands for also changes.

Genesis 49:4a [However, you are] Unstable as water,...

I have added the words *however, you are* to the MKJV (which is the version I have used throughout this study).

Reuben never came close to reaching his potential. In many translations, he is called *unstable as water*. This is the most common translation, as it comes from the KJV (which translation, even today, over 400 years later, carries a lot of weight). A great deal of respect is afforded the KJV, so when a word or phrase is difficult to translate, often the KJV becomes the default translation. The word translated *unstable* only occurs here (like several words in this passage); and although it has a verb cognate, that verb is only found in one place (ZEphesians 3:4).

A better understanding is, Reuben is like water, inasmuch as, he assumes the expedient position in whatever situation he is found, just as the shape of water is determined by the container which holds it. A leader takes a position and holds to that position; he leads. The position a leader takes may be different from his subordinates; but he holds that position, confident in his own wisdom, experience and judgment. The leader takes a position and those whom he leads must take that position as well. In the office of the United States president, he takes a position. The members of his cabinet, for the most part, must follow his lead and take that same position (or not comment).

A poor leader puts his finger in the air, determines the direction of the wind, and that determines his opinion on any matter. A poor leader is concerned with his own standing right now; but he is not concerned with the future

of those he leads. A poor leader wants to be popular; he wants to be looked up to; a good leader wants to guide those under him to do the right thing.

Reuben did not seem to be able to take a principled position. He looked at the circumstances, he considered the opinions of those around him, no matter that they were right or wrong, and allowed those thing to guide him. That allowed him to take a position. So, when his brothers wanted to kill Joseph, he did not say, “Not on your life; you must kill me in order to kill Joseph.” Instead, he said, “Look, we cannot receive any benefit from killing him; let’s sell him into slavery instead. That is the smart and beneficial move for us to make.” Reuben said this, even though his plan was to rescue Joseph later and not to sell him. Reuben was too weak to take an unequivocal position regarding the safety of his youngest brother. So, Reuben’s words and intention did not reveal the viewpoint of a leader, but the plan of a sneak. Whenever it was just the brothers, and Jacob was not around, it fell into Reuben’s lap to lead—but he never assumed a true leadership role.

A leader has to make decisions. He may call a half-dozen or more people to advise him, and they may give him a variety of views; but, in the end, he chooses the path that they will take. Ideally speaking, even those who offered a different approach ought to be able to admit, “In the end, he made the right decision.” (At least, most of the time.)

Reuben, as the eldest, was to lead his younger brothers and, when Jacob was not there, to stand in for Jacob, to have the authority of Jacob. He never properly took to this leadership position. He never seemed to have a natural leadership mindset. He did not instinctively make the right calls. Or, assuming that he knew the right thing to do, he did not take that position and bend his brothers to his will.

Reuben is a good study because most of us have, at some time or another, some kind of leadership role. A father leads his family; the mother leads her children—these are the most common and the most important (and nearly universal universal) leadership roles. In business, in school, in the armed forces, etc., many people have leadership roles, even though they may be temporary. As a teacher in the classroom, I was the leader of that classroom. As a leader, you do not take a day off in front of those you lead. A follower can waste time and dink around; a leader cannot.

Genesis 49:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
לֹא (אל or אול) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong’s #3808 BDB #518
yâthar (יָתַר) [pronounced <i>yaw-THAHR</i>]	<i>to save over, to preserve alive; to cause someone to abound with something; to let remain, to leave; to make profit; to show [have] excess</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect; jussive form	Strong’s #3498 BDB #451

The NET Bible: “Do not excel!” The Hiphil of the verb יָתַר (*yatar*) has this meaning only here. The negated jussive is rhetorical here. Rather than being a command, it anticipates what will transpire. The prophecy says that because of the character of the ancestor, the tribe of Reuben would not have the character to lead (see 1 Chr 5:1).¹⁸

¹⁸ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 9, 2017.

Genesis 49:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
A jussive expresses the speaker's desire, wish or command. We often add into the translation <i>may</i> or <i>let</i> . ¹⁹ The jussive involves only the imperfect form of a verb and may be used in the 2 nd or 3 rd persons (although the latter is the most common). A strong verb is identified as a jussive by context, as it is no different than the imperfect form. A weak verb as a jussive is generally a shortened form of the imperfect. ²⁰			

Translation: ... you did not let [things] remain [as they should remain];...

A minor point: there are times when the third person is used instead of the first or the second (in this case, the second) as context and identity have already been established. We find this also in Isaiah 54:1 Lam. 3:1 and Micah 7:18. This sort of thing is done for emphasis.

Now, I immediately think of Reuben's defense of Joseph, which was not full-throated, but he may have been the only son to stand up, to a small degree, for Joseph. Jacob looks at Reuben from a more personal angle.

Genesis 49:4c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
'âlâh (אָלָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>to go up, to ascend, to come up, to rise, to climb</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
mishkâb (מִשְׁכָּב) [pronounced <i>mish-AW^bV</i>]	<i>bed, couch; bier; laying down, the act of lying down</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #4904 (from #7901) BDB #1012
'âb (אָב) [pronounced <i>aw^bV</i>]	<i>father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; ancestor, grandfather; founder, civil leader, military leader; master, teacher</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

The NET Bible: *This is a euphemism for having sexual intercourse with Jacob's wives (see Gen 35:22).*²¹

Translation: ...for you went up to your father's bed,...

Reuben did go up to his father's bed, and we never received much explanation for this. Did Reuben hope to supplant his father? Did he do this in rebellion to his father? Did he do this out of sexual lust, having been seduced by Jacob's concubine? We have no idea. We only know this occurred, but we have no other details.

By the Mosaic Law and by the commentary here, we know that this is way wrong (which ought to be something that most people understand).

¹⁹ This is all taken from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, pp. 131, 292.

²⁰ *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, p. 131.

²¹ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 9, 2017.

Genesis 49:4d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'âz (אָז) [pronounced awz]	<i>then, after that, at that time, in that case (when following an if or though), now, as things are; that being so, therefore, because of that</i>	a temporal/resultant adverb	Strong's #227 BDB #23
châlal (חָלַל) [pronounced khaw-LAHL]	<i>to profane, to make [to treat as] common, defile, pollute; to violate the honour of, dishonour; to violate [break] (a covenant); to cast down, to destroy</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #2490 BDB #320
yâtsûwa' (יָצָא) [pronounced yaw-TSOO-ahg]	<i>story, a single floor; a chamber, a structure; an extension; in poetry: a couch, a bed</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #3326 BDB #426–#427
'âlâh (אָלָה) [pronounced gaw-LAWH]	<i>to go up, to ascend, to come up, to rise, to climb</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748

This is an odd repetition of this verb. The thought seems complete without it.

The NET Bible: *The last verb is third masculine singular, as if for the first time Jacob told the brothers, or let them know that he knew. For a discussion of this passage see S. Gevirtz, "The Reprimand of Reuben," JNES 30 (1971): 87-98.*²²

Translation:... [and] then you profaned my bed, having gone up there.

Reuben first went up to Jacob's bed (the bed of his mistress), and then he defiled or profaned that bed. The verb *to go up* is repeated. Perhaps it provides a poetic flourish? Perhaps it indicates when Reuben went way wrong.

We read in 1Chronicles 5:1–2 [The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel \(for he was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's couch, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel, so that he could not be enrolled as the oldest son; though Judah became strong among his brothers and a chief came from him, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph\),...](#) (ESV)

Reuben's tribe is mentioned first in the early lists, e.g., Exodus 1 and Num. 1; however, in the lists of the tribes which follow, Reuben is no longer given preeminence and leadership was vested in the tribe of Judah (we see a kernel of that in Genesis 44 and it begins to take place as soon as Num. 2:3). The tribe of Reuben, along with the tribe of Manasseh and Gad, were so far north that they began to act independently of the rest of Israel, losing their focus of why God had made them a peculiar people, losing focus of Jesus Christ their eternal savior. As a tribe, notice this lack of stability and lack of a moral focus, just like their father.

Reuben is potentially a sympathetic character; it is not difficult to see him sympathetically rather than negatively. For instance, all or most of his younger brothers wanted to kill Joseph; Reuben says, "Let's sell him into slavery instead;" with the intention of sneaking back and freeing Joseph at a later time. It is easy to see this and say, "Well, what Reuben did was not ideal, but it was way better than his bloodthirsty brothers." However, the spiritual life is not one of relative righteousness. So we have this additional fact about Reuben which puts him in a very bad light (at least to most people). In any case, the Bible gives us an objective view of these men—it does not present these men as saints (I use that word in the common way; not in the technical sense, where all believers are *saints*).

²² From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 9, 2017.

Genesis 49:4 Unstable as water, you will not excel, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it. He went up to my couch.

We don't know many of the details about this incident. Reuben slept with one of Jacob's concubines. We don't know why or much of anything else. The sum total of this incident comes from this verse and Gen. 35:22a **While Israel lived in that land, Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine. And Israel heard of it.** (ESV). We also read this in Genesis 49:4 above, as well as 1Chronicles 5:1–2. These passages, even taken together, do not give us a complete picture of what happened. But, since it is mentioned three times, that suggests that this was a significantly bad decision on Reuben's part.

Reuben was simply unable to make principled decisions. Did he seduce this woman? Did she seduce him? Regardless, Reuben should not have (perhaps this explains why the sons of Bilhah will be found in the center of this chapter's chiasmus).

Although this was not the only example of Reuben's inability to make good decisions, it is a significant choice that he made which was completely wrong. For all we know, this could be the first time that Reuben knows that his father knew; or, his affair could have been drawn out further (the passages sound like this was a one-time affair).

Got Questions provides an excellent summary of this phrase: *Further, Reuben was “unstable as water” (some versions translate it “turbulent as water”), and in this phrase we find several lessons for all Christians. For one thing, Reuben’s virtue was unstable; he did not have control of himself and his own appetites. The charge of instability could refer to his being sometimes very regular and orderly, while at other times wild and undisciplined. As Christians, we are to be in control of our flesh and its appetites and desires at all times. Most importantly, we are to be steadfast in our faith and not “tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine” (Ephesians 4:14).*²³

The only thing I would quibble with here is the translation *unstable* or *turbulent as water*. I think the proper understanding is, Reuben was very much like water, which assumes the shape of whatever container it is placed in.

Reuben, as the firstborn, should have led his brothers; the royal line ought to go through him; but he was a lousy leader (Reuben was not a bad guy, just a bad leader). As we have studied, when the brothers went to Egypt two times for grain, Judah finally took the lead, after promising his father that he personally would be responsible for Benjamin.

Reuben, seeing that the situation called for some strong words, said, “You may kill my two sons if I don't bring Benjamin back.” Just exactly what did Reuben think this approach would accomplish? How does this make sense in the plan of God?

There are times when Reuben comes off as an okay guy—such as, when he tried to protect Joseph.²⁴ However, he did not use his birth-order authority at that time, when his authority was absolutely called for. As the eldest son, Reuben has his father's authority when he father was not around. So when the other brothers began to speak of killing Joseph, it is right there that Reuben needed to put his foot down and say, “No way; get that idea out of your heads because that is not happening.” Instead, Reuben tried to find a halfway point between freedom for his younger brother and death.

Leaders are theoretically much more than people who tell everyone else what to do. You may look at someone in a leadership position and think, *yeah, that's me; I like bossing people around!* But with any sort of leadership position comes responsibility; you are responsible for those who follow you. You are to see to their needs first, and your own after. Unless you fully understand that responsibility is half of this position, you cannot be a good leader.

²³ From <https://www.gotquestions.org/tribe-of-Reuben.html> accessed November 8, 2017.

²⁴ You may recall that Joseph kept Simeon behind as his prisoner and not Reuben. That suggests that Simeon was loudly calling for Joseph's death.

Some people have this aspect in their character naturally. For those of us who have been in Physical Education courses, where multiple sports are played, it is obvious that there are some team leaders. Often this is based upon their skills in and knowledge of various sports; but there is often more to it than that. They naturally take charge (in P.E.). They certainly do not know all about leadership; but it is something inherent in them.

We observed as we studied Genesis, Judah eventually took the lead—which was prophetic of what was to come. However, Reuben's loss of leadership was not based upon that, but upon his taking his father's wife as a lover (1Chronicles 5:1–2). The first third of 1Chronicles lists the genealogical lines. In 1Chronicles 1, we have Adam to Abraham. In 1Chronicles 2, we have the line of Judah. We do not find Reuben until 1Chronicles 5. 1Chronicles 5:1–2 *The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (for he was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's couch, his birthright [the double portion went to Joseph] was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel, so that he could not be enrolled as the oldest son; though Judah became strong among his brothers and a chief came from him [Judah became the ruling tribe], yet the birthright belonged to Joseph),...* (ESV)

As a result, Reuben would just be another tribe of Israel. He would not be the ruling tribe. The ruling tribe of Israel would be Judah. He would not have the double portion; Joseph took that.

The book of Chronicles often presents God's perspective; or provides perspective to what has happened in the past. Throughout much of the Pentateuch, Reuben's tribe will be mentioned first, even though we have been able to recognize in our study at the end of Genesis that he is not seen by God as the leader of the leading tribe.

Genesis 49:4 *Unstable as water, you will not excel, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it. He went up to my couch.*

Genesis 49:4 *[However, you are] unstable as water, you did not let [things] remain [as they should remain]; for you went up to your father's bed, [and] then you profaned my bed, having gone up there.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

It is quite fascinating to me that, despite Jacob's strong words here, Reuben will be continued to be thought of as the preeminent tribe, generally being named first in the books of the Pentateuch whenever all the tribes are named. However, when we get to Chronicles, which appears to be divine viewpoint looking back on the kings of Israel, Judah is clearly the preeminent tribe.

As the firstborn, Reuben was also entitled to a double portion; however, it is Joseph who receives the double portion (there is no *tribe of Joseph*; his two sons make up the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh).

In the time of the judges, Deborah and Barak defeated Sisera, and the armies of the Canaanites. However, the one tribe which did not participate was Reuben. Judges 5:15–16 *...the princes of Issachar came with Deborah, and Issachar faithful to Barak; into the valley they rushed at his heels. Among the clans of Reuben there were great searchings of heart. Why did you sit still among the sheepfolds, to hear the whistling for the flocks? Among the clans of Reuben there were great searchings of heart.* (ESV) Supporting one's brothers ought to have been a no-brainer for Reuben; but they spent time among the sheepfolds thinking about this war and what they ought to do. Deborah, in her song, notes that the tribe of Reuben did nothing apart from ruminating about the conflict.

Got Questions provides an excellent summary of the tribe of Reuben: *Jacob's sad prophecy for Reuben certainly came true. No judge, prophet, ruler, or prince came from that tribe, nor any person of renown except Dathan and Abiram, who were noted for their rebellion against Moses. Reuben's tribe chose a settlement on the other side Jordan, a further indication of the loss of godly influence on his brothers to which his birthright entitled him. Although Reuben was the firstborn, the kingdom was given to Judah and the priesthood to Levi, leaving Reuben's tribe to be small and non-influential.*²⁵

²⁵ From <https://www.gotquestions.org/tribe-of-Reuben.html> accessed November 8, 2017.

Genesis 49:3–4 Reuben, [you are] my firstborn, [and] you [are] my strength as well as the [very] beginning of my vigor; the remnant of majesty and the remnant of strength. [However, you are] unstable as water, you did not let [things] remain [as they should remain]; for you went up to your father’s bed, [and] then you profaned my bed, having gone up there. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:3–4 Reuben, you are my firstborn, the beginning of my strength and vigor; yet just a remnant of majesty and personal strength. You are as unstable as water, not allowing things to simply remain as they should. You went up to your father’s bed and then you defiled my bed. (Kukis paraphrase)

The Tribe of Reuben — a Summary Table			
Mother:	Leah	Meaning of name:	<i>Look, a son!</i>
Order of birth to mother:	1 st	Order of birth to Jacob:	1 st
Order of blessing from Jacob:	1 st	Order of blessing from Moses:	1 st
On the mountain of , the mountain of		Aligned with Ephraim in the divided kingdom	
First census:	46,500 men able to war	Second census:	43,730
Famous supergrace heroes: None.			
People of renown: Dathan and Abram, who rebelled against Moses.			
Tribal facts:	Reuben should have been the leading tribe; but political leadership went to Judah and spiritual leadership went to Levi. The double-portion regarding inheritance went to Joseph.		
Moses’ blessing of Reuben: Deut. 33:6 "Let Reuben live, and not die, but let his men be few." (ESV).			
Chapter Outline		Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines	

Regarding these tables (there will be a table for each tribe):

Locations of Information for Tables	
Topic	Scripture
Birth order and mothers:	Genesis 29:32–30:24 35:16–19
Blessing from Jacob:	Genesis 49 (and 48)
Blessing from Moses	Deuteronomy 33
Mount Gerizim or Mount Ebal	Deuteronomy 27:12–13
The first census of the men of Israel, determining how many were able to go to war.	Numbers 1
Second census of the men of Israel able to go to war after the plague.	Numbers 26
Simeon was within the borders of Judah, so Judah and Simeon (whatever was left of this tribe) made up the southern kingdom; the other tribes made up the northern kingdom.	
Chapter Outline Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines	

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Simeon and Levi

We are studying the end-of-life blessings given by Jacob to his 12 sons. Simeon and Levi are *blessed* as a pair.

Simeon and Levi [are] brothers. Weapons of violence; swords; in their assembly, did not come in my soul; in their convocation, is not united my honor; for in their nostril, they have executed a man; and in their free will, they have hamstrung an ox. Cursed is their nostril for [it is] fierce; and their outburst [of anger] for she is fierce. I will divide them up in Jacob and I will scatter them in Israel.

Genesis
49:5–7

Simeon and Levi [are] brothers. [Their] swords [are] weapons of violence. My soul did not come into their assembly; my honor is not united with their convocation; for in their anger, they executed [many] men; [furthermore] they have chosen to hamstrung oxen. Their anger is cursed for [it is] fierce; and their outburst [of anger] [is cursed], for it is fierce [and pitiless]. I will divide them up in Jacob and I will scatter them in Israel.

Simeon and Levi are brothers, and they are bad influences upon each other. They use their swords as weapons of violence. My soul would not enter into their assembly and my honor would not unite with their convocation, because they have executed many men and hamstrung their oxen. Their anger is cursed because it is fierce and pitiless. Their outburst of anger is cursed, also being fierce and pitiless. Therefore, I will divide up Simeon and Levi and scatter them into different regions in Israel.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

Simeon and Levi [are] brothers. Weapons of violence; swords; in their assembly, did not come in my soul; in their convocation, is not united my honor; for in their nostril, they have executed a man; and in their free will, they have hamstrung an ox. Cursed is their nostril for [it is] fierce; and their outburst [of anger] for she is fierce. I will divide them up in Jacob and I will scatter them in Israel.

Dead Sea Scrolls
Targum of Onkelos

Shimeon and Levi are brothers; mighty men in the land of their sojourning, they did mightily [Sam. Vers. "they accomplished the fraud of their covenant."]. My soul was not in their secret; into their company to come I would not have descended from mine honour. For in their anger they slew a slaughter, and in their wilfulness they razed the wall of their enemy. Accursed [Sam, Vers. "proud."] was their anger, for it was strong, and their wrath, for it was relentless. I will divide them in Jakob, and I will scatter them in Israel.

Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)

Shimeon and Levi are brothers of the womb [Achin telamin, "fratres uterini."-Castel,3903]; their thoughts are of sharp weapons for rapine. In their counsel my soul bath not had pleasure, and in their gathering against Shekem. to destroy it mine honour was not united; for in their anger they slew the prince and his ruler, and in their ill will they demolished the wall [Or, "destroyed the oxen."] of their adversary. And Jakob said, Accursed was the town of Shekem. when they entered within it to destroy it in their violent wrath; and their hatred against Joseph, for it was relentless. If, said Jakob, they dwell together, no king nor ruler may stand before them. Therefore will I divide the inheritance of the sons of Shimeon into two portions; one part shall come to them out of the inheritance of the sons of Jehuda, and one part from among the rest of the tribes of Jakob; and the tribe of Levi I will disperse among all the tribes of Israel.

Jerusalem targum	Shimeon and Levi are brothers of the womb, men who are masters of sharp weapons; they made war from their youth; in the land of their adversary they wrought out the triumphs of war. In their counsels my soul found no pleasure; and in their gathering together at the city of Shekem to destroy it, they were not favourable to my honour; for in their anger they slew kings with princes, and in their wilfulness they sold Joseph their brother, who is compared to the ox. Accursed was the town of shekem when Shimeon and Levi entered to destroy it in their wrath, for it was strong, and in their anger, for it was cruel. And Jakob our father said, If these remain together, no people or kingdom can stand before them. I will divide the tribe of Shimeon, that they may become preachers and teachers of the law in the congregation of Jakob; and I will disperse the tribe of Levi in the houses of instruction for the sons of Israel.
Latin Vulgate	Simeon and Levi brethren: vessels of iniquity, waging war. Let not my soul go into their counsel, nor my glory be in their assembly: because in their fury they slew a man, and in their selfwill they undermined a wall. Cursed be their fury, because it was stubborn: and their wrath because it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and will scatter them in Israel.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"Simeon and Levi are brothers. Their swords are weapons of violence. My soul, do not come into their council. My glory, do not be united to their assembly; for in their anger they killed men. In their self-will they hamstrung cattle. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel. I will divide them in Ya'aqub, and scatter them in Yisrael.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Simeon and Levi are brothers; instruments of anger are in their nature. I never agreed to their counsels; nor did I lower myself to sit in their assembly; for in their anger they slew men and in their rage they destroyed a town wall. Cursed be their anger, for it is raging: and their wrath, for it is fierce; I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.
Septuagint (Greek)	Symeon and Levi, brethren, accomplished the injustice of their cutting off. Let not my soul come into their counsel, and let not mine inward parts contend in their conspiracy, for in their wrath they slew men, and in their passion they houghed a bull. Cursed be their wrath, for it was willful, and their anger, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.
NETS (Greek)	.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Simeon and Levi are brothers; deceit and force are their secret designs. Take no part in their secrets, O my soul; keep far away, O my heart, from their meetings; for in their wrath they put men to death, and for their pleasure even oxen were wounded. A curse on their passion for it was bitter; and on their wrath for it was cruel. I will let their heritage in Jacob be broken up, driving them from their places in Israel.
Easy English	Simeon and Levi are brothers. They use their swords only to hurt people. Verse 4 See also 35:22. Verse 5 See also 34:26.

I will not take part in their plans. They kill men when they are angry. And they hurt animals only because they want to. So, I will not meet with them.
 May they be cursed because they are angry. This is because they are so cruel. And I will make your descendants live with other people. They will not have their own land. They will live all over the country of Israel.

Easy-to-Read Version–2001 .

Easy-to-Read Version–2006

Simeon and Levi

“Simeon and Levi are brothers.

They are violent with their swords.

I will not join their secret meetings.

I will not take part in their evil plans.

They have killed people out of anger
 and crippled animals for fun.

Their anger is so strong that it is a curse.

They are too cruel when they are angry.

They will not get their own land in the land of Jacob.

They will be spread throughout Israel.

God’s Word™

Good News Bible (TEV)

The Message

Simeon and Levi are two of a kind,
 ready to fight at the drop of a hat.

I don’t want anything to do with their vendettas,
 want no part in their bitter feuds;

They kill men in fits of temper,
 slash oxen on a whim.

A curse on their uncontrolled anger,
 on their indiscriminate wrath.

I’ll throw them out with the trash;

I’ll shred and scatter them like confetti throughout Israel.

Names of God Bible

NIRV

“Simeon and Levi are brothers.

Their swords have killed a lot of people.

I won’t share in their plans.

I won’t have anything to do with them.

They became angry and killed people.

They cut the legs of oxen just for the fun of it.

May the LORD put a curse on them
 because of their terrible anger.

I will scatter them in Jacob’s land.

I will spread them around in Israel.

New Simplified Bible .

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible

Simeon and Levi are brothers,
 weapons of violence their stock in trade.

May I myself never enter their council.

May my honor never be linked to their group;

for when they were angry, they killed men,
 and whenever they wished, they maimed oxen.

Cursed be their anger; it is violent,
 their rage; it is relentless.

I’ll divide them up within Jacob

and disperse them within Israel.

Contemporary English V.	Simeon and Levi, you are brothers, each a gruesome sword. I never want to take part in your plans or deeds. You slaughtered people in your anger, and you crippled cattle for no reason. Now I place a curse on you because of your fierce anger. Your descendants will be scattered among the tribes of Israel.
The Living Bible	“Simeon and Levi are two of a kind. They are men of violence and injustice. O my soul, stay away from them. May I never be a party to their wicked plans. For in their anger they murdered a man, and maimed oxen just for fun. Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce and cruel. Therefore, I will scatter their descendants throughout Israel.
New Berkeley Version New Century Version	. “Simeon and Levi are brothers who used their swords to do violence. I will not join their secret talks, and I will not meet with them to plan evil. They killed men because they were angry, and they crippled oxen just for fun. May their anger be cursed, because it is too violent. May their violence be cursed, because it is too cruel. I will divide them up among the tribes of Jacob and scatter them through all the tribes of Israel.
New Life Version	"Simeon and Levi are brothers. They hurt others with their swords. May my soul not have a part in their secrets, nor my shining-greatness be joined to them. Because in their anger they killed men and for no reason they hurt cattle. Their anger will be punished, for it is bad. Their bad temper will be punished, for it is bad. I will divide them in Jacob and spread them apart in Israel.
New Living Translation	“Simeon and Levi are two of a kind; their weapons are instruments of violence. May I never join in their meetings; may I never be a party to their plans. For in their anger they murdered men, and they crippled oxen just for sport. A curse on their anger, for it is fierce; a curse on their wrath, for it is cruel. I will scatter them among the descendants of Jacob; I will disperse them throughout Israel.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'SimeOn and Levi; You are brothers who are good at the injustices that separated you. May my soul pay no attention to the things that you say, and may my feelings never have any part in your conspiracies. For you've killed men in anger, and in your passion, you've cut off the feet of bulls. May your anger be cursed, because it is willful and cruel. So I will separate you in [the land of] Jacob and scatter you in IsraEl.
Beck's American Translation International Standard V	. <i>On the Future of Simeon and Levi</i> “Simeon and Levi are brothers; their swords are violent weapons. I'll [Lit. <i>Let my soul</i>] never join their council; I'll never enter their assembly. In their anger they committed murder and lamed cattle just for fun. Their anger is cursed, because it is so fierce,

as is their vehemence,
because it is so cruel.
I will separate them throughout Jacob's territory [The Heb. lacks *territory*]
and disperse them throughout Israel."

New Advent (Knox) Bible	Simeon and Levi are brothers indeed, warriors both, and ready tools of violence. Never may this soul of mine take part in their conspiracy, this heart be of their company; raging, they slew their enemy, recklessly they broke down a city wall ['Broke down a city wall'; the Hebrew text is generally understood as meaning 'hamstrung an ox']. A curse on this unrelenting rage of theirs, this bitter spite! I will distribute them here and there in Jacob, I will scatter them throughout Israel.
Translation for Translators	Simeon and Levi, you two have both acted like criminals. You use your swords to act violently. I do not want to be with you when you make evil plans [DOU]. I do not want to join you in your meetings, because you killed people when you became very angry, and you ◀hamstrung/cut the tendons in the legs of▶ oxen just to ◀have fun/see them suffer▶. God says, 'I will ◀curse/cause bad things to happen to▶ them for being very angry, for acting very cruelly when they were very furious. I will scatter their descendants [MTY] throughout Israel land.'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible	Simeon and Levi are brothers; with implements of violence they pierce. Was my breath to come into their fixed assembly? - Was my dignity to unite with them? - In your blustering, you is to have slain a man, and in your pleasure, you is to have hamstrung a head of cattle. You is being cursed in your blustering, in your fierce outpouring, you is to have been obdurate, even was you to be divided in Jacob, and was to be dispersed in Isra-el.
Conservapedia	"Simeon and Levi, brothers: your broadswords are implements of wanton violence [Not just any violence, but violence without good cause; referring to the massacre at Shechem.]. My soul must not enter into their deliberation, nor my honor be united in their assembly. In their anger they killed a man, and in their presumption [Literally, "the approval of them," often rendered "self-will." ²⁶] they lamed an ox. Let their anger stand accursed, for it was fierce; and their rage, because it was obstinate. I will apportion them in Jacob, and will scatter them in Israel." Simeonite territory would be surrounded entirely by Judah-ite territory. The Levites would never have a discrete territory, but would have cities to call their own within the territories of other tribes.
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	To Simeon and Levi Simeon and Levi are brothers ; Cruel weapons are hidden with them ; To their plottings go not my soul ! My honour, join not their clan ! For they murdered guiltless men, And joyfully murdered a prince. Curse their crime, as great, and their transgression, For it sorely troubled Jacob, and Israel shamed.
God's Truth (Tyndale)	The brethren Simeon and Levi, wicked instruments are their weapons. Into their secrets come not my soul, and unto their congregation be my honor not coupled: for in their wrath they slew a man, and in their self will they houghed [to cut the senows of the leg so that it could not walk. (hamstring)] an ox. Cursed be their wrath

²⁶ I am assuming that this is where the footnote belongs.

	for it was strong, and their fierceness for it was cruel. I will therefore divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.
HCSB Jubilee Bible 2000	. Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of injustice are their weapons. Let my soul not enter into their secret; nor let my honour join their assembly; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their own will they dug down a wall. Cursed be their anger, which is strong, and their wrath, which is hard; I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.
Lexham English Bible H. C. Leupold	. Simeon and Levi are brothers, Their tools are implements of violence. May my soul not enter into their council, And may my glory not join in their assembly. For in their anger they slew men, In their self-will they hocked cattle. Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce, And their wrath, for it is cruel! I will parcel them out in Jacob. And scatter them in Israel.
NIV, ©2011	“Simeon and Levi are brothers— their swords are weapons of violence. Let me not enter their council, let me not join their assembly, for they have killed men in their anger and hamstringed oxen as they pleased. Cursed be their anger, so fierce, and their fury, so cruel! I will scatter them in Jacob and disperse them in Israel.
NIV – UK Tree of Life Version	. Simeon and Levi are brothers, instruments of violence are their knives. In their secret counsel may my soul not enter. In their contingent may my honor never be united. For in their anger they slew men, and in their self-will they maimed oxen. Cursed be their anger for it was strong and their rage for it was cruel— I will disperse them in Jacob, I will scatter them in Israel.
Urim-Thummim Version	Simeon and Levi are brothers: their swords are an arsenal of violence. By my life do not enter into their circles, let my honor not be united with their assembly, for in their anger they killed men, and in pleasure they hamstringed the ox. Cursed be their anger for it was fierce, and their rage, for it was fierce: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.
Wikipedia Bible Project	Brothers Simon and Levi, weapons of hatred are their familiars. Let my soul not come into their confidence, and let my honor dwell not within their crowd: because they purposely killed men, and with their will, they castrated an ox. Cursed are their spirits because of this, their transgressions were hard. I will divide them among the sons of Jacob, and spread them throughout Israel.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

- Christian Community (1988) .
The Heritage Bible Simeon and Levi are brothers, instruments of violence with their swords. Let my soul not come into their assembled counsel; do not let my heavy glory be one with their assembly, because in the explosion of their nostrils they fatally struck a man, and in their delight they hamstrung a bull. Cursed are their nostrils because it was forceful, and their outburst, because it was dense; I will allot them in Jacob, and dash them to pieces in Israel.
- New American Bible (2002) "Simeon and Levi, brothers indeed, weapons of violence are their knives [Knives: if this is the meaning of the obscure Hebrew word here, the reference may be to the knives used in circumcising the men of Shechem (= Genesis 34:24; cf = Joshua 5:2).].
Let not my soul enter their council, or my spirit be joined with their company; For in their fury they slew men, in their willfulness they maimed oxen.
Cursed be their fury so fierce, and their rage so cruel! I will scatter them in Jacob, disperse them throughout Israel.
- New American Bible (2011) "Simeon and Levi, brothers indeed, weapons of violence are their knives. **Knives:** if this is the meaning of the obscure Hebrew word here, the reference may be to the knives used in circumcising the men of Shechem (34:24; cf. Jos 5:2).
Let not my person enter their council,
or my honor be joined with their company;
For in their fury they killed men,
at their whim they maimed oxen [Gn 34:25].
Cursed be their fury so fierce,
and their rage so cruel!
I will scatter them in Jacob,
disperse them throughout Israel.
[49:5–7] This passage probably refers to their attack on the city of Shechem (Gn 34). Because there is no indication that the warlike tribe of Levi will be commissioned as a priestly tribe (Ex 32:26–29; Dt 33:11), this passage reflects an early, independent tradition.
- New Jerusalem Bible Simeon and Levi are brothers in carrying out their malicious plans.
May my soul not enter their council nor my heart join their company, for in their rage they have killed men and hamstrung oxen at their whim.
Accursed be their rage for its ruthlessness, their wrath for its ferocity. I shall disperse them in Jacob, I shall scatter them through Israel.
- New RSV .
Revised English Bible "Simeon and Levi are brothers, weapons of violence are their counsels.
My soul will not enter their council, my heart will not join their assembly; for in anger they killed men, wantonly they hamstrung oxen.
A curse be on their anger, for it was fierce; a curse on their wrath, for it was ruthless! I shall scatter them in Jacob, I shall disperse them in Israel.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

- Complete Jewish Bible "Shim'on and Levi are brothers,
related by weapons of violence.
Let me not enter their council,
let my honor not be connected with their people;
for in their anger they killed men,
and at their whim they maimed cattle.
Cursed be their anger, for it has been fierce;
their fury, for it has been cruel.
I will divide them in Ya'akov

exeGeser companion Bible	<p>and scatter them in Isra'el. Shimon and Levi: brothers with instruments of violence in their swords: come not into their secret, O my soul; to their congregation, unite not, O my honor: for in their wrath they slaughtered a man and in their pleasure they hamstrung oxen: cursed be their wrath, for it is strong; and their fury, for it is hard:</p>
Hebraic Roots Bible	<p>I allot them in Yaaqov and scatter them in Yisra El. Simeon and Levi, brothers; their weapons are instruments of violence. Let not my soul come into their counsel; let not my spirit be joined to their company. For in their anger they killed a man; and in self-will they lamed an ox. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel. I will divide them in Jacob, and I will scatter them in Israel.</p>
JPS (Tanakh—1985) Israeli Authorized Version	<p>. Shimon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Yaakov, and scatter them in Yisrael.</p>
Kaplan Translation	<p>'Simeon and Levi are a pair [(Bereshith Rabbah 98; Rashi). Literally, 'brothers.']; instruments of crime are their wares [(Saadia; Sh'muel ben Chofni; Ibn Ezra). Or 'weapons' (Rashi); 'brother' (Rashbam); 'companions' (Sekhel Tov); 'food' (Sh'muel ben Chofni); 'troops' (Ibn Janach). Others translate the verse, 'They are at home with instruments of crime' (Rashi; Ralbag; Bereshith Rabbah 98); or 'They plot with instruments of violence' (Septuagint)]. Let my soul not enter their plot; let my spirit [(Radak; cf. Psalms 16:9). The Hebrew word kavod here usually means honor.] not unite with their meeting - for they have killed men [Referring to Shechem; see Genesis 34:26.] with anger, maimed bulls [Literally, 'maimed a bull.' Some say that this refers to Joseph (Targum Yonathan; Lekach Tov; Rashi; see Deuteronomy 33:17); see note on Genesis 37:19,24. Some translate the verse, 'they tore down a wall with their will' (Ibn Ezra).] with will. Cursed be their rage, for it is fierce, and their fury, for it is cruel. I will disperse them in Jacob, scatter them in Israel.</p>
Orthodox Jewish Bible	<p>Shimon and Levi are achim; kelei chamas (instruments of violence) are in their swords. O my nefesh, enter not thou into their sod (secret, council); unto their kehal, mine kavod, be not thou united; for in their anger they slaughtered ish, and in their ratzon (self-will) they lamed shor (ox). Arur (cursed) be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel; I will dispense them in Ya'akov, and scatter them in Yisroel.</p>
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	<p>"Shim'on and Lēwi are brothers, their weapons are implements of violence. "Let my being not enter their council, let my esteem not be united to their assembly; because they slew a man in their displeasure, and they lamed an ox in pleasure. "Cursed be their displeasure for it is fierce, and their wrath for it is cruel! I divide them in Ya'aqob and scatter them in Yisra'el.</p>

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	<p>"Simeon and Levi are brothers [equally headstrong, deceitful, vindictive, and cruel]; Their swords are weapons of violence and revenge. "O my soul, do not come into their secret council;</p>
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Let not my glory (honor) be united with their assembly [for I knew nothing of their plot];
 Because in their anger they killed men [an honored man, Shechem, and the Shechemites],
 And in their self-will they lamed oxen.
 “Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce;
 And their wrath, for it was cruel.
 I will divide *and* disperse them in Jacob,
 And scatter them in [the midst of the land of] Israel.
 “Simeon and Levi are brothers
 who used their ·swords [or circumcision knives; or counsels; or treaties;
 ch. 34] to do violence.
 I will not join their secret talks,
 and I will not ·meet with them to plan evil [L join them in their assembly].
 They killed men because they were angry,
 and they ·crippled [hamstrung] oxen ·just for fun [or at will; 34:25–31].
 May their anger be cursed, because it is too ·violent [severe; strong; intense].
 May their violence be cursed, because it is too ·cruel [harsh].
 I will divide them up among the tribes of Jacob
 and scatter them through all the tribes of Israel [C neither Simeon nor Levi
 received a tribal allotment in the Promised Land; Josh. 13–22].

The Expanded Bible

The Geneva Bible
Kretzmann's Commentary**Verses 5-7**

The blessing upon Simeon and Levi

Simeon and Levi are brethren, not only by parentage, but also in character; they also were unfit for leadership. Instruments of cruelty are in their habitations, the swords which they used in their revenge upon the Shechemites were weapons of wickedness, and Jacob does not wish to be identified with outrages of this kind. O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united; the thought of being closely identified with them fills Jacob with horrified dismay. For in their anger they slew a man, their murdering of the helpless Shechemites was an infamous trick; and in their self-will they digged down a wall, rather, houghed oxen; the cattle of the people of Shechem which they had not taken with them after their raid, Genesis 34:28, they had cruelly mutilated and caused to die a slow death by cutting the sinews of the hinder feet. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; the anger in itself may have been justified at the time, but the fact that its violence sought such an outlet is beyond excuse; and their wrath, for it was cruel; they went to excess in their angry impetuosity. I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel. This prophecy was fulfilled in such a way as to make Simeon the weakest among the tribes even before the entry into Canaan, Num. 26:14, to omit the tribe in the blessing of Moses, Deuteronomy 33, and to give to the tribe only a few cities within the boundaries of Judah, Joshua 19, 1-9; 1Chronicles 4:27-43, while Levi also, redeemed in some measure by the heroic act of a member of the tribe, Num. 25:11-13, received no section of Canaan for his portion, but lived in cities ceded by the other tribes. Thus a whole family, and even a whole nation, may have to bear the guilt of a few sinners whom the Lord was obliged to condemn.

NET Bible®

Simeon and Levi are brothers,
 weapons of violence are their knives!
 O my soul, do not come into their council,
 do not be united to their assembly, my heart,
 for in their anger they have killed men,
 and for pleasure they have hamstrung oxen.
 Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce,

Syndein/Thieme	<p>and their fury, for it was cruel. I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel! {Jacob States Why He Basically Ignored These Two of His Sons} Simeon and Levi are brothers {meaning full brothers (mother was Leah) and also very alike in personality} . . . instruments of cruelty {see Genesis Chapter 34:25} . . . in their habitations {m@kerah - meaning dubious}. O my soul {vocative addressed to Jacob himself}, come not you into unto their plotting/'secret assembly' {cowd mahal} {mental attitude of cruelty - they were miserable so wanted everyone around them miserable and they would work up the anger of each other talking about the 'victim'}. O my honor {vocative addressed to Jacob himself again}, be not you united for in their anger they killed/slew men, and in their self-will {ratsown - full of their own ego} they 'cut the tendons' {'aqar} of oxen showr} {see Genesis 34:28} {the animals do not bleed to death but they suffer and are helpless and are not only ruined but are suffering horribly - motivated by revenge}.</p> <p>Cursed be their anger . . . for it was fierce. And their wrath . . . for it was implacable. I will divide them in Jacob {the brothers were separated by their father}, and scatter them in Israel {same with their descendents - these tribes could not allowed to be concentrated in one area without trouble - see Numbers 26:14 and Joshua 19:1-9 Simeon did not receive a portion of the land - only a few cities in the area controlled by Judah - Judah was strong and had to ride firmly on those with troublemaker genes}.</p> <p>{SideNote: The tribe of Simeon represents believers who do not use rebound. They are perpetually in carnality. They are saved and cannot lose their salvation, but are not a blessing to anyone. The tribe of Levi was made up of exactly the same type of character as the tribe of Simeon but they used rebound and later did generate blessings for Israel.}</p>
The Voice	<p>Simeon and Levi are <i>indeed</i> brothers, <i>kindred spirits</i> who use their swords for <i>cruelty and violence</i>. I never enter their confidence; from the two of them I must part company to retain my honor. in their anger, they've killed men, and they've hamstrung oxen on a whim. anger be cursed, for they have fierce tempers. Their wrath <i>be cursed</i>, for they can be cruel. I will scatter their <i>children</i> among Jacob's <i>descendants</i> and spread them throughout <i>the land of Israel</i>.</p>

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Benner's Mechanical Trans.	<p>...Shimon ^[Heard] and Lewi ^[Joined] are brothers, instruments of violence are their caves, in their council you will not come, my being is in their assembled flock, my honor will not unite given that in their nose they killed a man and their will they plucked up an ox, spitted upon is their nose given that their wrath was strong, given that she was hard, I will apportion them in Ya'aqov ^[He restrains] and I will scatter them abroad in Yisra'el ^[He turns E],...</p>
Concordant Literal Version	<p>Simeon and Levi are brothers. They concluded violence out of their covenants. Into their deliberation you must not come, my soul! And in their assembly you must not contend, my glory. For in their anger they killed men, and in their acceptance they felled a chief.</p>

Context Group Version	<p>Cursed is their anger, for it was strong. And their rage, for it was obstinate. Apportion them will I in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel. Simeon and Levi are brothers; They determined to destroy violently. O my life, don't come into their council; To their assembly, [for my] my public honor, don't be united [with them]; For in their anger they killed a man, And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; And their retaliation, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel.</p>
Darby Translation <i>Emphasized Bible</i>	<p>. Simeon and Levi, are brethren,—Instruments of violence, are their agreements: Into their circle, do not thou enter my soul! In their convocation, do not thou join mine honour! For in their anger, they slew brave men, And in their wantonness, they hamstrung oxen. Accursed, be their anger, because fierce, And their wrath because cruel,—I divide them in Jacob, And I disperse them in Israel.</p>
English Standard Version English Standard V. – UK Evidence Bible Green's Literal Translation H. C. Leupold Jack Ballinger's translation Modern English Version	<p>. Simeon and Levi are brothers; weapons of violence are their swords. Let my soul not enter into their council; let my glory not be united with their assembly; for in their anger they killed men and in their self-will they hamstrung oxen. 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.</p>
Modern KJV NASB	<p>. "Simeon and Levi are brothers; Their swords are implements of violence. "Let my soul not enter into their council; Let not my glory be united with their assembly; Because in their anger they slew men, And in their self-will they lamed oxen. "Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel. I will disperse them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel.</p>
New European Version	<p>Simeon and Levi are brothers. Their swords are weapons of violence. My soul, don't come into their council. My glory, don't be united to their multitude; for in their anger they killed men. In their self-will they hamstrung cattle. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel. I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.</p>
New King James Version	<p>"Simeon and Levi are brothers; Instruments of cruelty <i>are in</i> their dwelling place. Let not my soul enter their council; Let not my honor be united to their assembly; For in their anger they slew a man, And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox. Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce;</p>

And their wrath, for it is cruel!
I will divide them in Jacob
And scatter them in Israel.

- Owen's Translation .
- Benner's Mechanical Trans. .
- Stuart Wolf .
- Third Millennium Bible .
- Updated Bible Version 2.11 .
- A Voice in the Wilderness .
- Webster's Bible Translation .
- World English Bible .
- Young's Literal Translation .
- Young's Updated LT .

"Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they dug down a wall. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel! I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.

Simeon and Levi are brothers! Instruments of violence—their espousals! Into their secret, come not, O my soul! Unto their assembly be not united, O my honour; For in their anger they slew a man, And in their self-will eradicated a prince. Cursed is their anger, for *it is* fierce, And their wrath, for it is sharp; I divide them in Jacob, And I scatter them in Israel.

The gist of this passage: Jacob recounts the viciousness displayed by Simeon and Levi and then speaks of them being divided in Jacob and scattered in Israel (in the future).

5-7

Genesis 49:5a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Shim ^e ōwn (שמעון) [pronounced <i>shim^e-GOHN</i>]	<i>hearing, one who hears and is transliterated Simeon</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #8095 BDB #1035
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Lêvîy (לוי) [pronounced <i>lay-VEE</i>]	<i>joined to transliterated Levi</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3878 BDB #532
'achîym (אחים) [pronounced <i>awhk-EEM</i>]	<i>brothers, kinsmen, close relatives; tribesmen; fellow-countrymen</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #251 BDB #26

Translation: Simeon and Levi [are] brothers.

We have talked, over the last many chapters, of which line God would honor and which lines He would not. Simeon and Levi were very violent and angry brothers; and likely bad influences on one another.

You may recall that Joseph placed Simeon in jail, to allow for his brothers to return home and bring back Benjamin. It is very likely that Simeon was the loudest voice to kill Joseph; so throwing him in jail for a few months (or a year) to cool his heels was not a difficult choice for Joseph to make. Here it is, many years later, and Jacob is

remembering their cruelty. We saw one and a half examples²⁷ of their cruelty; but doubtless, there were many more times.

Genesis 49:5b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
k ^é lîy (יֵלֵךְ) [pronounced k ^é lee]	<i>manufactured good, artifact, article, utensil, vessel, weapon, armor, furniture, receptacle; baggage, valuables</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #3627 BDB #479
châmâç (חַמָּץ) [pronounced khaw-MAWS]	<i>violence, wrong, cruelty, oppression; that which is gained by violence and wrongdoing</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2555 BDB #329
mekêrah (הַרְכָּמ) [pronounced meh-k-ay-RAW]	<i>swords, weapons, devices (meaning is dubious)</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4380 BDB #468

The NET Bible: *The meaning of the Hebrew word הַרְכָּמ (makherah) is uncertain. It has been rendered (1) "habitations"; (2) "merchandise"; (3) "counsels"; (4) "swords"; (5) "wedding feasts." If it is from the verb תַּרְכָּ (karat) and formed after noun patterns for instruments and tools (maqtil, miqtil form), then it would refer to "knives." Since the verb is used in Exod 4:25 for circumcision, the idea would be "their circumcision knives," an allusion to the events of Gen 34 (see M. J. Dahood, "'MKRTYHM' in Genesis 49,5," CBQ 23 [1961]: 54-56). Another explanation also connects the word to the events of Gen 34 as a reference to the intended "wedding feast" for Dinah which could take place only after the men of Shechem were circumcised (see D. W. Young, "A Ghost Word in the Testament of Jacob (Gen 49:5)?" JBL 100 [1981]: 335-422).²⁸*

Translation: [Their] swords [are] weapons of violence.

A sword would have been used for a number of different things; but Simeon and Levi used their swords as weapons of violence.

Genesis 49:5 Simeon and Levi are brothers; tools of violence are their weapons.

Genesis 49:5 Simeon and Levi [are] brothers. [Their] swords [are] weapons of violence. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

As we have already studied, Dinah, their younger sister, was raped by a man named Shechem (*Shechem* is both the name of the rapist and the name of their town). Simeon and Levi took it out on all of the males related to Shechem in Genesis 34:25–31. They killed them all. What Simeon and Levi did was extremely cruel. Few things are more heinous than the rape of a sister; but Simeon and Levi took their revenge to the extreme, involving dozens of people who were not related to the incident. It is not completely clear that these other men of Shechem would have supported the rapist or not. However, Simeon and Levi never gave them the chance to make such a decision.

On top of that, Simeon and Levi used one of the rituals of their faith (circumcision) to set up the males of Shechem. They said, "If we want to join our tribes together, then all of your males must be circumcised." The men of Shechem agreed to this, and then they were killed while recovering from being circumcised.

²⁷ Their anger and hatred was expressed towards Shechem. We have reasonably supposed that both men argued for the killing of Joseph, although that is not recorded.

²⁸ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 9, 2017.

Genesis 49:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
çôwd (דוּרס) [pronounced sohd]	<i>a sitting together, an assembly [of friends, judges, of the wicked, of the Godhead]; a deliberation, a council</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5475 BDB #691
This noun properly means <i>a couch, a cushion</i> . In general, it is used to mean <i>a council, counsel</i> , because it refers to people sitting around in a group for conversation (Jer. 6:11 15:17). More specifically, its meanings are ❶ <i>a sitting together, an assembly [of friends, judges, of the wicked, of the Godhead]</i> ; ❷ <i>A deliberation, a counsel</i> ; ❸ <i>familiar conversation, familiar acquaintance</i> (Job 19:19 Proverbs 55:15); ❹ <i>a secret</i> (Proverbs 11:13 20:19 25:9 Amos 3:7).			
lô' (אֵל אוֹל) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance; to attain</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced NEH-fesh]	<i>soul, life, living being; breath; mind; desire, volition; will</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5315 BDB #659

Translation: [My soul did not come into their assembly](#)...

Jacob says, *my soul did not come into their assembly* (I do not agree with the other basic way that this is translated). Jacob did not approve of what they did. They gathered together, these two men, and plotted against Shechem. Jacob was not a part of this plotting; he would not have approved of their plans.

[Genesis 49:6a](#) [Oh my soul, do not come into their secret](#) [lit., *council, counsel, assembly*].

What Simeon and Levi did was extremely dishonorable. They managed to come off worse than the rapist whom they wanted to punish. They killed many men and their animals as well. Simeon and Levi made it seem as if they were joining their family to worship the same God; this is how the men of Shechem were drawn into Simeon and Levi's counsel.

Jacob says, "[Do not enter into their counsel](#)..." That is, do not look to them for advice or wisdom. These two sons are unable to think about the rightness or wrongness of their actions; they went off half-cocked against the men of Shechem. They tricked the men of Shechem using the practices of the Y^ehowah faith to beguile them, and then killed them all.

Jacob has just explained that Reuben could not be followed as a leader; and he says that these men are not the right men to consult for guidance either. In other words, they were not fit to lead either.

Recall that the future leading tribe would be Judah (approximately 1000 years future from this time in Genesis); and therefore, how this came about needed to be explained. The human authors were not cognizant of this, but God the Holy Spirit, the Divine Author, was. So, in the final 16 or so chapters of Genesis, we had to find out why

the 3 oldest sons would not be the patriarchs of the leading tribe; and we found out why Judah would become the patriarch of the leading tribe.

I believe that Judah and Joseph primarily preserved the history that we find at the end of Genesis; but if you took them aside after they spoke this history and asked Judah, “Do you believe that you ought to be the leading tribe of Israel? Is that what you are trying to say?” he would not know what you are talking about. He is simply giving the history as he lived it; and the same goes for Joseph. At first, they stood before their extended families, and told them the family history—what we read in the final chapters of Genesis. But they did not have an agenda. They did not have some meeting where Judah said, “You will be tribe #2 and I will be tribe #1.” They simply recited the events of their family history, as their fathers had done before them—the narrative I like to call, *The History of God and Man; the Book of Genesis*.

God the Holy Spirit, the Divine Author, knew that Judah would become the leading tribe. In fact, at one point, only the Judahites and the Levites would remain as the two clearly identifiable tribes (10 tribes would be removed from the land under the principle of the 5th stage of national discipline²⁹). God knows all of this because He knows the end from the beginning; so these last 16 or so chapters of Genesis simply tell us why. Or, if you would prefer, these chapters plant the seeds of Judah becoming the leading tribe in Israel.

Jacob, whether knowingly or not, supports this very conclusion with the words that he speaks about Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah. Jacob’s authority transfers to Judah; and the double portion transfers to Joseph. Whether the sons fully appreciated that is a whole other topic.

Genesis 49:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong’s # BDB #88
qâhâl (קהל) [pronounced kaw-HAWL]	<i>an organized assembly, a called convocation; this is not just a crowd, but people who were assembled for a reason</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong’s #6951 BDB #874
lô’ (לא or לול) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong’s #3808 BDB #518
yâchad (יחד) [pronounced yaw-KHAHD]	<i>to be united; to make one, to declare one, to unite</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #3161 BDB #402
kâbôwd (כבוד) [pronounced kaw ^b -VODE]	<i>glory, honor [with an emphasis upon power, wealth and/or abundance]</i>	masculine singular adjective which sometimes acts as a noun; with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong’s #3519 BDB #458

Owens translates this *O my spirit*.

²⁹ Also known as the 5th cycle of discipline.

Genesis 49:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
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The NET Bible: *The Hebrew text reads “my glory,” but it is preferable to repoint the form and read “my liver.” The liver was sometimes viewed as the seat of the emotions and will (see HALOT 456 s.v. II לֵבָב) for which the heart is the modern equivalent.*³⁰

Translation: ...my honor is not united with their convocation;...

What Simeon and Levi did was evil and it lacked honor. Jacob could not approve of what they did. The convocation is simply the alliance between Simeon and Levi.

Genesis 49:6c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
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kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
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b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
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ʾaph (אף) [pronounced <i>ahf</i>]	<i>nose, nostril, but is also translated face, brow, anger, wrath</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #639 BDB #60
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hârag (גרַה) [pronounced <i>haw-RAHG</i>]	<i>to kill, to slay, to execute; to destroy, to ruin</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #2026 BDB #246
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ʾîysh (איש) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, each man, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
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Translation: ...for in their anger, they executed [many] men;...

Guided by their anger, they executed all of the male inhabitants of Shechem.

Genesis 49:6d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
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w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
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b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
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râtsôwn (רצוֹן) [pronounced <i>raw-TSOWN</i>]	<i>own will, free will, favour, grace, accepted, desire, pleasure, delight</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #7522 BDB #953
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³⁰ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 9, 2017.

Genesis 49:6d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
What appears to be involved is <i>free will, acceptance, and even pleasure</i> on the part of the recipient. This is why some translations follow this word with <i>to you</i> , to indicate that the volition of the recipient is a part of this. The common thread is the concept of free will and this being a good or a favorable thing.			
ʾâqar (אָקַר) [pronounced <i>gaw-KAHR</i>]	<i>to hamstring [horses]</i>	3 rd person plural, Piel perfect	Strong's #6131 BDB #785
shôwr (שׁוֹר) [pronounced <i>shohr</i>]	<i>an ox, a bull, a head of cattle, oxen</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7794 BDB #1004
Some interpretations have this word instead:			
shûwr (שׁוֹר) [pronounced <i>sher</i>]	<i>a wall</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7791 BDB #1004

Translation:... [furthermore] they have chosen to hamstring oxen.

Simeon and Levi cruelly destroyed their livestock; so that their livestock died painful deaths.

The KJV and the NASB both read *in their self-will, they...*(hamstrung an ox). *The Emphasized Bible* and Owen use the word *wantonness*. The word is *râtsôwn* (רָצוֹן) and it means *goodwill, favor, acceptance, will, pleasure*. It is very similar to the Old English use of the word *pleasure*. The retired English aristocrat is sitting in his sitting room; he is thirsty and his servant asks him "What would be your pleasure, sir?" It is an exercise of free will to attain something which is desirable. It is difficult to translate a word like this with one word. *Self-will* is definitely involved, but it is a degenerate, sick sort of self-will.

In many families, there will be some brothers who are closer than others. Some may be more similar in interests and temperament. So it was with Simeon and Levi. They were quite similar and made most of their decisions together. In Genesis 34, we saw how that degenerate Shechem raped their sister Dinah, and then had the audacity to ask for her hand in marriage. However, Simeon and Levi are so outraged that they murder the entire male population of Shechem (Shechem's home town). This is excessive to say the least. These men got carried away by their emotions, lost complete track of what is right and wrong, and committed a much greater sin against the people of that area. In v. 6, it would be common for us to say that they killed men and oxen, but the use of the singular is a means of showing emphasis in the Hebrew. This figure of speech is known as *heterosis* (pronounced *HET-e-RŌ-sis*).

When Reuben was unable to lead the sons of Israel, then Simeon would have been next in line followed by Levi. We find out from this passage that whatever cattle which they were unable to steal from these people, they viciously killed and allowed the beasts to suffer. However, neither one stood up on behalf of Joseph and neither one, when Judah was trying to convince Jacob that they had to return to Egypt, took part.

It ought to be apparent that these men were the opposite of exemplary.

Genesis 49:6 Oh my soul, do not come into their secret [lit., *council, counsel, assembly*]. Let not my honor be united with their assembly. For in their anger they killed a man, and in their self-will they hamstrung a bull.

Genesis 49:6 My soul did not come into their assembly; my honor is not united with their convocation; for in their anger, they executed [many] men; [furthermore] they have chosen to hamstring oxen. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

They were extremely angry that their sister had been raped (this is normal). However, they took revenge and acted in anger. It says that they killed a man here; but they killed many men.

What does it mean *they hamstringed a bull*? Their cruelty extended to creatures who could not possibly be related to the rape. They cut the tendons of a bull, leaving that bull to die a long, slow painful death of starvation, in a helpless state. This would not have been just a single bull, but they probably did this to all of the animals belonging to the people of Shechem that they did not want to take for themselves.

Genesis 49:7a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'ârar (אָרַר) [pronounced aw-RAHR]	<i>cursed, being [bitterly] cursed, receiving a curse</i>	Qal passive participle	Strong's #779 BDB #76
'aph (אָפַח) [pronounced ahf]	<i>nose, nostril, but is also translated face, brow, anger, wrath</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #639 BDB #60
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
'az (אָז) [pronounced gahz]	<i>strong, mighty, fierce</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5794 BDB #738

Translation: Their anger is cursed for [it is] fierce;...

Their anger is out of control. Perhaps we could understand it to mean *pitiless*. There was one man to blame for the rape of their sister, and that was Shechem. One might even make a connection to his father, and hold him partially to blame (although we do not know how much his father actually knew about Shechem's attack on Dinah, the sister of Simeon and Levi).

That something should have been done goes without saying. But the killing of every male in Shechem (the city of Shechem) was making an assumption that the men of Shechem would have stood behind Shechem (the son), no matter what.

Genesis 49:7b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'ev ^e râh (עֲרֵבָה) [pronounced gē ^b v-RAW]	<i>an outburst of anger, overflow of fury, an outpouring of anger, an overflowing rage, fury, wrath; overflow; pride, arrogance, haughtiness</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5678 BDB #720
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471

Genesis 49:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
qâshâh (קָשָׁה) [pronounced kaw-SHAWH]	<i>to harden, to be severe, to stiffen, to be fierce; to become inflexible, unyielding and self-willed; to become obstinate, stubborn, pig-headed and unalterable; to be hard [difficult, severe]</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7185 BDB #904

Translation: ...and their outburst [of anger] [is cursed], for it is fierce [and pitiless].

Their outburst of anger was their attack against the people of Shechem. This outburst is curse because it was fierce and lacking in pity. Every person of Shechem suffered because of their pitiless attack.

When speaking of their wrath, the word qâshâh (קָשָׁה) [pronounced kaw-SHAWH] is used and it properly means *to be dense and hard* and therefore comes to mean *severe, fierce, implacable*. This means that had anyone sat these two brothers down prior to this rampage, they would not have listened. You cannot talk sense to people such as these two brothers—when they are angry, they will act out of their anger without regard for right or wrong or reason. Part of the problem was the combination of the two brothers. They worked each other up and they overlooked sound judgement when they were together. What God did was separate the two tribes by the tribe of Judah, the country of Moab and the Dead Sea so that there was no adjacent portion of their territories.

During the desert wandering, the tribe of Simeon was the hardest hit, falling in population from 59,300 adult males to 22,100 adult males. Even the second generation of the half-tribe of Manasseh was larger at the end of the forty years of wandering.

Genesis 49:7a-b Let their anger be cursed, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel.

The anger and cruelty of Simeon and Levi continued throughout time. Most men, after fighting 6 or 7 years of war—as Israel did to take the land—would want to avoid war after that, if humanly possible. However, first thing that we read about Simeon, after the Israelites take the land and move to their assigned portions, is Simeon was ready for more killing. Judah and Simeon continue to remove the people from their portion of the land. Now, this was legitimate; however, it is quite something to have completed a war and yet be ready to go back for more.

Also, the Korah rebellion against Moses and Aaron will have descendants of Levi and Reuben in it (Num. 16:1). Jude 11 **Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error and perished in Korah's rebellion.** (ESV)

No leader or prophet came from the tribe of Simeon.

Levi, as the ones who saw to the spiritual side of things, as the ones who did not generally go to war, after the land of taken—do we have any evidence of their fierce anger and cruel wrath later on in the future from Jacob's words? Yes we do—the priestly class came out of the Levites and their killing of the Lord on the cross was brutal and vicious. Even though the Romans performed the actual crucifixion, the priests and scribes knew what would happen; they knew the great pain that the Lord would endure—and yet they pushed for this at every turn, as the death for a man who had never sinned. All Jesus had done is show that they did not really know the Scriptures.

Genesis 49:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
châlaq (חָלַק) [pronounced chaw-LAHK]	<i>to divide, to apportion, to allot; to distribute, to disperse</i>	1 st person singular, Piel imperfect with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #2505 BDB #323
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
Ya'ăqôb (יַעֲקֹב) [pronounced yah-ġuh-KOH ^{BV}]	<i>supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent; heel; and is transliterated Jacob</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3290 BDB #784

Translation: I will divide them up in Jacob... These brothers could not be allowed to associate with one another. The end result would be, these two tribes would not be confined to the same area. Simeon would be placed in a piece of land surrounded by Judah; and the tribe of Levi would not have a particular piece of land which they owned, but would living in specific cities, not owning the land, but providing spiritual support for nation Israel.

To help to keep them under control, they were apportioned an area in the midst of the land of Judah in Josh. 19:1. What they actually received was a portion of the inheritance which went to Judah (Josh. 19:9). Due to their genetic predilection toward irrational violent behavior, they needed to be monitored and adjacent to people who are generally rational and clear thinking, so God placed them within Judah. Whereas they did retain a tribal identity, much of Simeon was absorbed by Judah and Moses does not even mention this tribe in his familial dissertation in Deut. 33.

Genesis 49:7d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
pûwts (פָּוֹץ) [pronounced poots]	<i>to scatter, to send abroad; to agitate [harass] [anyone]; to pour out [used metaphorically of anger]; to spread oneself abroad; to cause [things] to be scattered [dispersed]</i>	1 st person singular, Hiphil imperfect with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #6327 BDB #806
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: ...and I will scatter them in Israel.

It is the tribe of Levi which would specifically scattered throughout Israel (the nation Israel).

People do change and generations do change; David was supported by a larger number of Simeonites (7100) than Judites (6800) in the early monarchy (1Chronicles 12:24 2:5). However, due to their close proximity, the two tribes became so enmeshed that the tribe of Simeon is not mentioned in many of the tribal lists in the book of Judges and it is absent from the books of Samuel and Kings.

Jacob prophesies that they will be separated or divided as tribes. At this point in time, they spent a great deal of time together and were a bad mix. God the Holy Spirit obviously recognized this and promised Simeon and Levi that they would be divided. This separation of the two tribes had a very positive affect on the tribe of Levi. Moses and Aaron were both descended from the tribe of Levi, the former being one of the greatest men in the Old Testament. The entire priesthood, the spiritual guardians of Israel, came from the tribe of Levi. The Levites were not given a particular plot of land, but were scattered throughout Israel. Whereas Jacob recognized the split of the tribes, he did not see in the future the great spiritual prominence that the Levites would hold. Deut. 33 deals with the spiritual side of the tribe of Levi, who taught the Law and presented the various offerings to the Lord. This is what is known as progressive revelation—the position of the tribe of Levi was to come much later (400+ years later); apparently they were not ready yet to receive this sort of information. They required the constant control and influence of Moses in order to function properly. Without his strength of character, they were a group of amoral vigilantes.

What Jacob predicted was surprisingly on the money. When the tribes were given their inheritance, Levi was scattered throughout the land, not holding any contiguous parcel of land, but occupying cities in tandem with the tribe who was apportioned that area (Joshua 21). They were a precursor of the Israelites in general, who would later be scattered throughout the world, just as the Levites were scattered throughout Israel. Simeon, on the other hand, was not scattered throughout Israel, but was not given a particular parcel of land as the other tribes, but received some cities out from the inheritance of Judah (Joshua 19:1–9). Simeon appeared to occupy territory completely within the tribe of Judah.

The NET Bible: Divide...scatter. What is predicted here is a division of their tribes. Most commentators see here an anticipation of Levi being in every area but not their own. That may be part of it, but not entirely what the curse intended. These tribes for their ruthless cruelty would be eliminated from the power and prestige of leadership.³¹

Simeon would later be consumed by the people of Judah.

Genesis 49:7b I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.

Genesis 49:7 Their anger is cursed for [it is] fierce; and their outburst [of anger] [is cursed], for it is fierce [and pitiless]. I will divide them up in Jacob and I will scatter them in Israel. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The locations of the tribes of Simeon and Levi were unique among the brothers. Simeon had a section of land in the midst of Judah—the only tribe to be placed in the midst of another tribe. As the centuries continued, their borders eventually disappeared and they become completely subsumed by Judah. By the time of the 1st advent, there does not appear to be any men of Simeon remaining. No descendants of Simeon are ever named; and the tribe is only mentioned once in the New Testament, in Revelation 7:7.

Genesis 49:5–7 Simeon and Levi [are] brothers. [Their] swords [are] weapons of violence. My soul did not come into their assembly; my honor is not united with their convocation; for in their anger, they executed [many] men; [furthermore] they have chosen to hamstring oxen. Their anger is cursed for [it is] fierce; and their outburst [of anger] [is cursed], for it is fierce [and pitiless]. I will divide them up in Jacob and I will scatter them in Israel. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

³¹ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 9, 2017.

Genesis 49:5–7 Simeon and Levi are brothers, and they are bad influences upon each other. They use their swords as weapons of violence. My soul would not enter into their assembly and my honor would not unite with their convocation, because they have executed many men and hamstringed their oxen. Their anger is cursed because it is fierce and pitiless. Their outburst of anger is cursed, also being fierce and pitiless. Therefore, I will divide up Simeon and Levi and scatter them into different regions in Israel. (Kukis paraphrase)

Levi became the priestly tribe, of all things. However, they were not given any piece of land as their inheritance. They occupied the cities throughout Israel, never owning a piece of land themselves. There was a twofold reason: (1) to fulfill these words of Jacob and (2) to indicate that the true spiritual heritage was not of this earth.

Some individual Levites certainly owned homes and land; but the tribe itself was never assigned a specific plot of land at the end of Joshua (where all of the tribes are assigned their own section of land in Canaan). What happened was, there were cities designed for the Levites to share with another tribe. Levites would live in these cities; but the land specifically belonged to another tribe.

Now, any person, no matter what his lineage, can change his mind about Jesus Christ. Anyone can go from unbelief to faith in Jesus Christ; and then cursing is turned to blessing. You may have the worst family in the world; the worst lineage in the world; the worst upbringing in the world (see Judges 6:15)—yet God is able to turn this around, if you exercise faith in His Son.

God will go to Moses (a Levite) and tell him what to do and Moses will do it (for the most part, although he was rather tentative at first). Aaron, Moses' brother, will also respond in faith and accompany Moses; and eventually Miriam, Moses' sister, will play an important part when Israel is gathered in the desert-wilderness. So, despite coming from the tribe of Levi, Moses and Aaron turned things around by their faith in the Revealed God and their obedience to God. And I should emphasize that this was not perfect obedience exercised by either man.

At one point, the Levites had to *thin the herd*, as it were. When Moses was up on Mount Horeb receiving the Law from God, the people began to get restless and they made a golden calf to worship (Exodus 32). Moses could not ignore this. In Exodus 32:26–28 ...then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, "Who is on the LORD's side? Come to me." And all the sons of Levi gathered around him. And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Put your sword on your side each of you, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and each of you kill his brother and his companion and his neighbor.'" And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And that day about three thousand men of the people fell. (ESV) Here, the Levites had to choose the Lord over their own brothers, and this redeemed them.

Later, Moses will pray on behalf of the Levites, for their blessing.

Deut. 33:8–11 And of Levi he said, "Give to Levi your Thummim, and your Urim to your godly one, whom you tested at Massah, with whom you quarreled at the waters of Meribah; who said of his father and mother, 'I regard them not'; he disowned his brothers and ignored his children. For they observed your word and kept your covenant. They shall teach Jacob your rules and Israel your law; they shall put incense before you and whole burnt offerings on your altar. Bless, O LORD, his substance, and accept the work of his hands; crush the loins of his adversaries, of those who hate him, that they rise not again." (ESV) So no people and no tribe is lost if they return to the Lord.

The Tribe of Simeon — a Summary Table

Mother:	Leah	Meaning of name:	<i>Joined</i>
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Gen. 29:33 She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the LORD has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also." And she called his name Simeon.

Order of birth to mother:	2 nd	Order of birth to Jacob:	2 nd
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Order of blessing from Jacob: 2nd and 3rd Order of blessing from Moses: none given

On the mountain of Gerizim, the mountain of blessing. Aligned with Judah in divided kingdom

First census: 59,300 Second census: 22,200

Famous supergrace heroes: None that I know of.

Unusual facts: Simeon's territory was completely within Judah's. Joshua 19:9

Moses' blessing of Simeon: No separate blessing was given.

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The Tribe of Levi — a Summary Table

Mother: Leah Meaning of name:

Gen. 29:34 *Again she conceived and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will be attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called Levi.*

Order of birth to mother: 3rd Order of birth to Jacob: 3rd

Order of blessing from Jacob: 2nd and 3rd Order of blessing from Moses: 3rd

On the mountain of Gerizim, the mountain of blessing. Distributed among the tribes in the divided kingdom

First census: a census was not taken (Num. 1:49) Second census: none taken

Famous supergrace Heroes: Moses, Aaron, Miriam; Phinehas; Abiathar.

Unusual facts: (1) The Levites were never assigned ownership over a particular territory in Canaan. (2) The priests are taken out of the Levites. (3) No census was taken of Levi to determine how many warriors were available among them (Num. 1:49). They were numbered 22,000, which numbered all males from 1 month old and older (Num. 3:39).

Moses' blessing of Levi: Deut. 33:8–11 *And of Levi he said, "Give to Levi your Thummim, and your Urim to your godly one, whom you tested at Massah, with whom you quarreled at the waters of Meribah; who said of his father and mother, 'I regard them not'; he disowned his brothers and ignored his children. For they observed your word and kept your covenant. They shall teach Jacob your rules and Israel your law; they shall put incense before you and whole burnt offerings on your altar. Bless, O LORD, his substance, and accept the work of his hands; crush the loins of his adversaries, of those who hate him, that they rise not again." (ESV)*

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Jacob is giving his end-of-life blessings to his 12 sons. Judah is his 4th son and he will be blessed after Reuben, Simeon and Levi (all of whom we have previously studied). As we have noted, Judah is clearly the natural leader of his brothers and he will become the preeminent tribe. Although we have enough evidence and information to confirm Judah's preeminence in the book of Genesis, the 12 tribes, whenever listed, usually begin with the first 4 sons of Leah in their birth order—until we get to the genealogies in 1Chronicles.

Judah, interestingly enough, is given more discussion than any of the other sons. 5 verses are given over to him (the same number of verses which were given over to Reuben, Simeon and Levi combined). Joseph will also receive 5 verses of blessing from Jacob.

We should recall that Judah did not conduct himself perfectly in his life either. He was certainly a failed man in many respects. First off, he married a Canaanite woman; and then he had relations with someone he believed to be a prostitute (one time is recorded in the Bible; we do not know how many times he did this before or after³²). But, in the end, he did the amazing thing of offering himself in exchange for his brother Benjamin. This also indicated that he took true responsibility for his brother Benjamin. Jacob's actions of offering himself instead of Benjamin also established a parallel to the crucifixion of Christ, and that was a great thing.³³

As an aside, Judah had no idea that he was looking forward to Jesus Christ as a type. When it comes to types, the type does not realize that he is a type or anything about what the type means (one of the amazing aspects of the science of typology). Abraham offered up his son Isaac to show his complete obedience to God; but Abraham had no idea that this action was typical of the Lord, Whose Father would offer Him up for our sins. We find similar typical portions of Scripture in Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53—both of which describe a set of circumstances which looks forward to the Suffering Messiah. However, it is unlikely that either writer understood *Who* they actually were writing about. The human author of Scripture has one perception of what he is recording; the Divine Author of Scripture sometimes has a whole other idea about what He is recording, even though the same words are being used to describe the same incident. This doctrine is known as the Dual Authorship of Scripture, something which we need to cover in the future.

We studied typology back in lessons #251–252. It is one of the amazing sciences of Scripture; and one of the many proofs of the divine nature of Scripture.

What Judah did moved Joseph so much, that Joseph then revealed himself to his brothers. Their support of Benjamin and Judah's willingness to give himself in place of Benjamin were remarkable things to Joseph.

*Barnes: Judah, the fourth son of Jacob, comes in for the supremacy after the three former have been set aside. His personal prowess, the perpetuity of his dominion, and the luxuriance of his soil are then described.*³⁴

*Keil and Delitzsch: Judah, the fourth son, was the first to receive a rich and unmixed blessing, the blessing of inalienable supremacy and power.*³⁵

What follows establishes the preeminence of Judah over the other tribes.

Jacob spends more time speaking about Judah than any other tribe, outside of Joseph (who is now actually two tribes). Judah has shown himself to be the leader of the brothers. It was he who convinced his father to allow them to return to Egypt with Benjamin and he was involved with most of the negotiations with Joseph. Judah is not yet the leader of his brothers, although he is exhibiting all the characteristics of a leader. It from Judah that the line of David and Solomon will come to rule over Israel during her golden age.

³² There is nothing about the narrative which makes us think that this was behavior out of the ordinary for Judah.

³³ I thought that I had covered this parallel in detail, but I did not.

³⁴ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:8–12.

³⁵ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 49:8–12.

Judah you [are]; will praise you your brothers; your hand in a neck of your enemies; and will bow down to you brothers of your father. A cub of a lion Judah from prey; my son you have gone up; he bent the knees; he laid down as a lion; and as a lion who has roused him up.

Genesis
49:8–9

You [are] Judah; your brothers will praise you; your hand [will be] on the neck of your enemies; and the brothers of your father will bow down to you. Judah [is] a lion's cub away from [his] prey. You have gone up, my son; [yet] he has crouched down. He lies in wait [or, *reclines*] like a lion; and, as a lion, who would rouse him up?

You are Judah and your brothers will praise you. Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies and your brothers will bow down to you. Judah is a lion cub separated from his prey. You have gone up, my son; but he has crouched down. He is lying in wait; who would be foolish enough to rouse him up?

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

Judah you [are]; will praise you your brothers; your hand in a neck of your enemies; and will bow down to you brothers of your father. A cub of a lion Judah from prey; my son you have gone up; he bent the knees; he laid down as a lion; and as a lion who has roused him up.

Dead Sea Scrolls
Targum of Onkelos

Jehuda, thou art praise and not shame; thy brethren shall praise thee [Sam. Vers. "love thee."]; thy hand shall prevail against thine adversaries, thine enemies shall be dispersed; they will be turned backward before thee, and the sons of thy father will come before thee with salutations. The dominion shall be (thine) in the beginning, and in the end the kingdom shall be increased from the house of Jehuda, because from the judgment of death, my son, hast thou withdrawn [Or, "gone up."]. He shall repose, and abide in strength as a lion, and as a lioness, there shall be no king that may cut him off.

Pseudo Jonathan targum

Jehuda, thou didst make confession in the matter of Tamar: therefore shall thy brethren confess [Or, "praise."] thee, and shall be called Jehudain from thy name. Thy hand shall avenge thee of thy adversaries, in throwing arrows upon them when they turn their backs before thee; and the sons of thy fathers shall come before thee with salutations. I will liken thee, my son Jehuda, to a whelp, the young of a lion; for from the killing of Joseph my son thou didst uplift thy soul, and from the judgment of Tamar thou wast free. He dwelleth quietly and in strength, as a lion; and as an old lion when he reposes, who may stir him up?

Jerusalem targum

JEHUDA, thee shall all thy brethren praise, and from thy name shall all be called Jehudae; thy hand shall avenge thee of thy adversaries; all the sons of thy father shall come before thee with salutation. I will liken thee, my son Jehuda, to a whelp the son of a lion: from the slaying of Joseph thou wast free, from the judgment of Tamar thou, my son, wast acquitted. He remaineth tranquil in the midst of war, as the lion and as the lioness; nor is there people or kingdom that can stand against thee.

Latin Vulgate

Juda, thee shall thy brethren praise: thy hands shall be on the necks of thy enemies: the sons of thy father shall bow down to thee.
Juda is a lion's whelp: to the prey, my son, thou art gone up: resting thou hast couched as a lion, and as a lioness, who shall rouse him?

Aramaic ESV of Peshitta

"Yudah, your brothers will praise you. Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies. Your father's sons will bow down before you.
Yudah is a lion's cub. From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down, he crouched as a lion, as a lioness. Who will rouse him up?

Peshitta (Syriac)	Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your fathers sons shall bow down before you. Judah is a lions whelp; from the prey, my son, you are gone up; he stooped down, he crouched as a lion, and as a young lion; who shall rouse him up?
Septuagint (Greek)	Juda, your brethren have praised you, and your hands shall be on the back of your enemies; your father's sons shall do you reverence. Juda is a lion's whelp: from the tender plant, my son, you are gone up, having couched you lie as a lion, and as a whelp; who shall stir him up?
NETS (Greek)	.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	To you, Judah, will your brothers give praise: your hand will be on the neck of your haters; your father's sons will go down to the earth before you. Judah is a young lion; like a lion full of meat you have become great, my son; now he takes his rest like a lion stretched out and like an old lion; by whom will his sleep be broken?
Easy English	Judah, your brothers will praise you. You will kill your enemies. Your father's sons will bow down to you. Judah is like a wild animal that has eaten its meal. He rests after eating. Nobody would want to wake a wild animal.
Easy-to-Read Version–2001	.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	Judah “Judah, your brothers will praise you. You will defeat your enemies. Your brothers will bow down to you. Judah is like a young lion. My son, you are like a lion standing over the animal it killed. Like a lion, Judah lies down to rest, and no one is brave enough to disturb him.
God's Word™	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
The Message	You, Judah, your brothers will praise you: Your fingers on your enemies' throat, while your brothers honor you. You're a lion's cub, Judah, home fresh from the kill, my son. Look at him, crouched like a lion, king of beasts; who dares mess with him?
Names of God Bible NIRV	. “Judah, your brothers will praise you. Your enemies will be brought under your control. Your father's sons will bow down to you. Judah, you are like a lion's cub. You return from hunting, my son. Like a lion, you lie down and sleep. You are like a mother lion. Who dares to wake you up?
New Simplified Bible	.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible Contemporary English V.	. Judah, you will be praised by your brothers; they will bow down to you, as you defeat your enemies. My son, you are a lion ready to eat your victim! You are terribly fierce; no one will bother you.
The Living Bible New Berkeley Version New Century Version	. . "Judah, your brothers will praise you. You will grab your enemies by the neck, and your brothers will bow down to you. Judah is like a young lion. You have returned from killing, my son. Like a lion, he stretches out and lies down to rest, and no one is brave enough to wake him.
New Life Version	"Judah, your brothers will praise you. Your hand will be on the neck of those who hate you. Your father's sons will bow down to you. Judah is a young lion. Like a lion full of meat, you have become great, my son. He lies down and sleeps like a lion. And as a lion, who is willing to wake him?
New Living Translation	"Judah, your brothers will praise you. You will grasp your enemies by the neck. All your relatives will bow before you. Judah, my son, is a young lion that has finished eating its prey. Like a lion he crouches and lies down; like a lioness—who dares to rouse him?

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'Judah; Your brothers have spoken well you, so your hands will stay on the backs of your enemies and your father's sons will bow to you... for Judah is the cub of a lion. 'My son: You've grown from the tender plant [you once were], And now you are a young lion. So, by whom can you ever be beaten?
Beck's American Translation International Standard V	. <i>On the Future of Judah</i> "Your brothers will praise you, Judah.f Your hand will be at the throat of your enemies, and your father's children will bow down to you. Judah is a lion cub. My son, you have gone up from the prey. Crouching like a lion, he lies down, Like a lioness, who would dare rouse him?
Revised Knox Bible	But you, Juda, shall win the praise of your brethren; with your hand on the necks of your enemies, you shall be revered by your own father's sons. Juda is like a lion's whelp; on the hills, my son, you roam after your prey; like a lion couched in his lair, a lioness that none dares provoke.
Today's NIV Translation for Translators	. Judah, your <i>older and younger</i> brothers will praise you.

They will bow down before you,
because you will thoroughly defeat [MTY] your enemies.
Judah is like a young lion [SIM] that has returned to its den satisfied
after eating the animals that it has killed.
He is like a lion that lies down and stretches out after eating;
no one would dare to disturb it [RHQ].

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible	Judah, your brothers were to cast themselves down to you. Your hand be on the neck of them being hostile to you. Your father's sons were to bow down to you. Judah is a lion's whelp. The prey, my son, is you to have ascended up to; you is to have crouched, and is to have stretched out as a lion; as a lioness - was you to be roused up?.
Conservapedia	Judah, you are the one whom your brothers shall acclaim. Your hand will be on the nape of the neck of your enemies; your father's sons will bow down before you. Judah is a lion's whelp. From the prey, my son, have you gone up. He bows and reclines like a lion, and like a parent lion, who will make him get up?" Male lions are well known for their totally relaxed repose—until someone dares awaken them.
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	To Judah Judah you shall direct your brothers ; Your hand shall be on the neck of your foes ; To you shall the sons of your father bow ! — A young lion, Judah, for plunder ! My son springs from his couch like a lion — And as a lioness,- — who dare rouse him .
God's Truth (Tyndale)	Juda, your brethren shall praise you, and your hand shall be in the neck of your enemies, and your fathers children shall stoop unto you. Juda is a lions whelp. From spoil my son you are come on high: he laid him down and couched himself as a lion, and as a lioness. Who dare stir him up?
HCSB	.
Jubilee Bible 2000	.
Lexham English Bible	.
H. C. Leupold	Judah, thee, yes thee will thy brethren praise: Thy hand shall be on the nape of the neck of thine enemies; The sons of thy father shall bow down to thee. A whelp of a lion is Judah; Thou hast mounted up, my son, after eating the prey. He crouches, then lies down, as would a lion, or a lioness. Who would dare to rouse him?
NIV, ©2011	.
NIV – UK	.
Tree of Life Version	.
Urim-Thummim Version	.
Wikipedia Bible Project	Judah, you are well known to your brothers, because your hand holds the nape of the neck of all your enemies. Your brothers will bow to you. You are a lion's cub, Judah, from the preying of my son you rose, you kneel and crouch as the lion and her cubs, who shall found us?

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	Judah, your brothers will praise you! You shall seize your enemies by the neck! Your father's sons shall bow before you.
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	Judah, a young lion! You return from the prey, my son! Like a lion he stoops and crouches, and like a lioness, who dares to rouse him?
The Heritage Bible	Judah, your brothers shall raise their hand to you; your hand shall be on the neck of those hating you; your father's children shall prostrate themselves to you. Judah is a lion's cub; my son, you are ascended from the fresh food; he bends down his knee, he lies down as a lion, and as a lioness; who shall rouse him up?
New American Bible (2002)	"You, Judah, shall your brothers praise - your hand on the neck of your enemies; the sons of your father shall bow down to you. Judah, like a lion's whelp, you have grown up on prey, my son. He crouches like a lion recumbent, the king of beasts - who would dare rouse him?"
New American Bible (2011)	.
New Jerusalem Bible	Judah, your brothers will praise you: you grip your enemies by the neck, your father's sons will do you homage. Judah is a lion's whelp; You stand over your prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches and lies down, a mighty lion: who dare rouse him?
New RSV	.
Revised English Bible	"Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies. Your father's sons will bow to you in homage. Judah, a lion's whelp, you have returned from the kill, my son; you crouch and stretch like a lion, like a lion no one dares rouse

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	"Y'hudah, your brothers will acknowledge you, your hand will be on the neck of your enemies, your father's sons will bow down before you. Y'hudah is a lion's cub; my son, you stand over the prey. He crouches down and stretches like a lion; like a lioness, who dares to provoke him?
exeGesés companion Bible	Yah Hudah: you to whom your brothers spread hands: your hand is on the neck of your enemies; the sons of your father prostrate to you: Yah Hudah is a whelp of a lion: from the prey, my son, you ascend: he kneels; he crouches as a lion and as a roaring lion; who rouses him?
Hebraic Roots Bible	.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	You, O Judah, your brothers shall praise; Your hand shall be on the nape of your foes; Your father's sons shall bow low to you. Judah is a lion's whelp; On prey, my son, have you grown. He crouches, lies down like a lion, Like the king of beasts—who dare rouse him?
Judaica Press Complete T. Kaplan Translation	. <i>Judah</i> 'Judah, your brothers shall submit (yodu) [(Rashbam; Sforino). Or 'praise' (Rashi; Ibn Ezra; Ralbag).] to you. Your hand shall be on your enemies' necks; your father's sons shall bow to you.

Orthodox Jewish Bible 'Young lion, Judah, you have risen from prey, my son. He crouches, lies like a lion, like an awesome lion [See Avoth deRabbi Nathan B 43. Cf. Hirsch. See Numbers 24:9.], who will dare rouse him?
Yehudah, thou art he whom thy achim yoducha (they will praise you); thy yad shall be in the oref (neck) of thine enemies; Bnei Avicha shall bow down before thee. Yehudah is the cub of an aryeh (lion); from the prey, beni (my son), thou hast gone up; he stooped down, he couched like an aryeh, and like a lioness; who shall rouse him?

The Scriptures 1998 .

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible
The Expanded Bible .
"Judah, your brothers will praise you [^Cthe Hebrew verb for "praise" sounds like the name Judah].
·You will grab your enemies by the neck [^LYour hand will be on the neck of your enemies],
and ·your brothers [^Lthe sons of your father] will bow down to you.
Judah is like a ·young lion [lion cub].
You have ·returned from killing [^Lcome up from the prey], my son.
Like a lion, he stretches out and ·lies down to rest [crouches],
and [^Llike a lioness] ·no one is brave enough to [who will...?] wake him.

The Geneva Bible
Kretzmann's Commentary .

Verses 8-12

The Blessing upon Judah
Judah, 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. The prophecy of the patriarch here rises to a joyful exultation, as he makes Judah the prince and ruler among his brethren and explains his name. Judah should occupy a position of power among all the children of Israel, conquer his enemies by taking hold of their necks and subduing them, in consequence of which all the tribes would recognize his sovereignty, as at the time of David. Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up; he stooped down, he couched as a lion and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? From his youth Judah had shown that he possessed the nature, the character of a lion, as a whelp, as a young lion, as a mature lion. Having caught his prey, the lion returns to his mountain fastnesses, into his den, where a person will attack him only at the risk of his own life. The tribe of Judah, forming the vanguard during the wilderness journey, settled on the highlands and mountains of Judea, grew to be a mighty tribe, gaining strength from the many defeats of its enemies, secure in its dominion.

NET Bible®
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.
You are a lion's cub, Judah,
from the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He crouches and lies down like a lion;
like a lioness – who will rouse him?

Syndein/Thieme
{Verses 8-12: Judah - The Ruling Tribe of Israel}
Judah {the name means 'he who will be praised'} {ancestor of David and of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ}, you are he whom your brethren shall praise {see 2Samuel 7:8-16 and Psalms 89: 20-37}.
Your hand shall be in the neck of your enemies {means an aggressive conquering warring tribe}.

Your father's children shall bow down before you {Reuben's right to rulership would pass to the tribe of Judah}.

Judah is a young lion {reference to great power, vigor, and great ability one of the titles for Jesus Christ in Revelation 5:5 is the Lion of the tribe of Judah} . . . from the prey, my son, you are gone up {means is always successful - always gets the prey}. He stooped down, he couched/'lying down' as a lion, and as an old lion . . . who shall rouse him up? {prophecy that there would be a time when Judah would no longer rule - from the time of Nebuchadnezzar to Jesus Christ no member of the tribe Judah sat on David's throne - lying down means no longer reigning - the Answer to Who will rouse him up is Jesus Christ.}.

The Voice

But Judah, your brothers will praise you.

Your hand will *firmly* grasp the neck of your enemy,
and your brothers will bow down before you *in respect*.

Judah is a lion cub;

my son, who rises from the prey,

Who crouches down and stretches out like a lion,
and like a lioness—who dares to rouse him?

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Benner's Mechanical Trans.	...Yehudah ^[Praised] , your brothers will thank you, your hand is in the neck of the hostile ones, the sons of your father will bend themselves down to you, a whelp of a lion is Yehudah ^[Praised] , from the prey, my son, you went up, he stooped, he stretched out like a lion, like a lioness, who will make him rise,...
Concordant Literal Version	Judah, you and your brothers will acclaim. Your hands shall be on the scruff of your enemies. Prostrate to you shall the sons of your father. The whelp of a lion is Judah. From the prey, my son, bow will he, recline as a lion. And as a parent lion, who will make him rise?
Context Group Version	.
Darby Translation	.
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	.
English Standard Version	.
English Standard V. – UK	.
Evidence Bible	.
Green's Literal Translation	.
H. C. Leupold	.
Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern KJV	.
NASB	.
New European Version	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. Judah is a lion's cub. From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down, he crouched as a lion, as a lioness. Who will rouse him up?.
New King James Version	"Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand <i>shall be</i> on the neck of your enemies; Your father's children shall bow down before you. Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?
Owen's Translation	.
Benner's Mechanical Trans.	.
Stuart Wolf	.

Third Millennium Bible .
 Updated Bible Version 2.11 .
 A Voice in the Wilderness .
 Webster's Bible Translation .
 World English Bible .
 Young's Literal Translation .
 Young's Updated LT .

Judah! You—your brothers praise you! Your hand is on the neck of your enemies, Sons of your father bow themselves to you. A lion's whelp is Judah, For prey, my son, you have gone up; He has bent, he has crouched as a lion, And as a lioness; who causes him to arise??

The gist of this passage: Judah will take down his enemies as a lion takes prey in his mouth. After finishing a meal of its prey, the lion (Judah) lays down; who would be so foolish as to disturb him?

8-9

Genesis 49:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Y ^e hûwdâh (יְהוּדָה) [pronounced y ^e hoo- DAW]	possibly means <i>to praise, to be praised</i> ; and is transliterated <i>Judah</i>	masculine proper noun/location	Strong's #3063 BDB #397
'attâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced aht-TAW]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61

Translation: You [are] Judah;...

There is much more stuff that Jacob says about Judah; far more than he said about his other sons. Was Jacob aware of what Judah had done? Judah was willing to offer himself in the place of his youngest brother Benjamin; and this was a very big deal.

You may think, *well, this is the Bible; how would Jacob not know?* It appears that Joseph recorded most of the final chapters of Scripture; and Jacob has been getting old and he was fairly blind at this point. Would Joseph have shared this information with him? We have no idea. However, Jacob clearly understands that Judah's future (that is, the future of his descendants) would be quite unlike that of his brothers.

Jacob starts out by saying, "You [are] Judah." No one else got this sort of a beginning.

Genesis 49:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
yâdâh (יָדָה) [pronounced yaw-DAWH]	<i>to profess, to confess; to show or point out</i> [with the hand extended]; <i>to give thanks, to praise, to celebrate</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3034 BDB #392

The NET Bible: *There is a wordplay here; the name Judah (יְהוּדָה, y^ehudah) sounds in Hebrew like the verb translated praise (יָדָה, yodukha). The wordplay serves to draw attention to the statement as having special significance.*³⁶

³⁶ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 11, 2017.

Genesis 49:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾachîym (אחײם) [pronounced <i>awhk-EEM</i>]	<i>brothers, kinsmen, close relatives; tribesmen; fellow-countrymen</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26

Translation: ...your brothers will praise you;...

When it says, *your brothers will praise you*; it means that the descendants of Judah's brothers would praise the descendants of Judah. They would give thanks to him; and, we may also understand this as them giving thanks for the ultimate son of Judah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is a wordplay here, where *Judah* and *praised* are very similar words in the Hebrew. This is known as a paronomasia, which is where two words sound similar, but they do not necessarily mean the same thing. *Judah* is pronounced *yeh-hoo-DAH* and *praise* is pronounced *yaw-DAW*. All of his sons were given names which had meaning and throughout this dissertation, he will use various Hebrew phrases closely akin to the names of his sons.

Genesis 49:8a-b *Judah, may your brothers praise you.*

More literally, this reads, "You are Judah; your brothers will praise you." This is actually a play on words. *Judah*, in the Hebrew, is *Y^ehûwdâh* (יְהוּדָה) [pronounced *y^ehoo-DAW*]; and *praise* is the word *yâdâh* (יָדָה) [pronounced *yaw-DAWH*]. *Judah's* name is based upon the word for *praise*.

Now, why is this important that Jacob puts together two words that sound alike? Jacob is using the meaning of the name *Judah* as a kicking off point. This gives us a rough idea as to the thinking of Jacob, and how he uses the meaning of *Judah* to speak of the future of the tribe of *Judah*.

You may recall that Joseph, many years previous, had some dreams where his sheave stood up and the sheaves of his brothers fell down and bowed before his sheave. There was a prophecy that his older brothers would, at some point in time, bow down to him. These words of Jacob's are very similar—"May your brothers praise you." Jacob is not saying that Judah's brothers would slap him on the back and say, "Hey, Judah, you're alright!" It means that they would look up to him; that they would follow him. Furthermore, *praise* is often related to spiritual matters; so that this *praise* given to *Judah* will be related to spiritual things.

Altogether, there will be 5 prophecies specifically for *Judah*: (1) *Judah* would conquer his enemies; (2) *Judah* would lead his brothers; (3) *Judah* would be fierce in battle; (4) the eternal rulership over Israel will rest upon *Judah*; and (5) the people would obey Him (that is, the eternal ruler to come out of the tribe of *Judah*). This is a remarkably accurate set of prophecies. One of the reasons that critics of Scripture do not like the fact that *Genesis* was written before *Moses* is, it is filled with accurate prophecies of the future. Critics of the Bible do not believe in its prophetic nature.

Genesis 49:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	<i>hand; figuratively for strength, power, control; responsibility</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

Genesis 49:8c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿôreph (עֹרֵף) [pronounced ʒO-rehf]	<i>neck, back of neck; back</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6203 BDB #791
<i>To give the neck means to turn away from someone, to turn one's back (that is, to flee). Hard of neck means obstinate, hard-headed.</i>			
ʾâyab (אֵיבָיִם) [pronounced aw-YA ^B V]	<i>enemies, those being at enmity with you; those with enmity, those with hostility</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #340 & #341 BDB #33

Translation: ...your hand [will be] on the neck of your enemies;...

This is an unusual statement. In many other passages, we read about one man's foot being on the neck of his enemies (different appendage; different preposition). I am not sure exactly what is being communicated here.

There will be parallels between Judah and a lion which follow; just as a lion grabs his prey by the neck, so Judah has his hand on the neck of his enemies, indicating complete and total control of them.

It is not clear why Judah's feet are not said to be on the neck of the enemy, which is a phrase found elsewhere in Scripture.

The neck is often a picture of the volition of man (just as the bit in the mouth of a horse turns the neck of the horse, which in turns controls the entire body). The direction that the head turns in, which is on the neck, is a picture of volition. One who has control of the neck denotes superiority and control of the volition. This phrase *your hand on the neck of your enemies* means that Judah will have control over her enemies. They were be subservient to Judah. We have a similar use of the word neck in Job 16:12, 2Samuel 22:41, Psalm 18:40 and Lam. 5:5.

Genesis 49:8c *May your hand be in the neck of your enemies.*

The men of Judah were fierce warriors who were feared by their enemies. King David was one of the most effective warriors in the history of Israel, and he was from the tribe of Judah.

The most common expression is, having *your foot on the neck of your enemies*. This is generally a picture of completely and total domination. Jacob, instead, says, "*May your hand be on the neck of your enemies.*"

Barnes gives his explanation: *[Judah's enemies] shall flee before him, but shall not escape his powerful grasp. They shall be compelled to yield to his overwhelming power.*³⁷

Compare David's words in Psalm 18:40 *You [a reference to God] made my enemies turn their backs to me, and those who hated me I destroyed.* (ESV)

³⁷ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:8–12.

Gill: [These words are fulfilled by] the Messiah, in a spiritual sense, Who has conquered and subdued all His and His people's enemies, sin, Satan, the world and death.³⁸

Judah's tribe will become preeminent among all of the tribes. The 10 tribes in the north will eventually become the 10 lost tribes (God knows where they all are, but we don't); and Simeon would lose his identity in Judah.

Genesis 49:8d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâchah (שָׁחָה) [pronounced shaw-KHAW]	<i>to bow down, to prostrate oneself, to do obeisance to; to honor [with prayers]; to do homage to, to submit to</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #7812 BDB #1005
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
bânîym (בָּנִים) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
'âb (אָב) [pronounced aw ^b v]	<i>father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; ancestor, grandfather; founder, civil leader, military leader; master, teacher</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

Translation: ...and the brothers of your father will bow down to you.

Judah would become the ruling family; so all of the descendants of the other brothers would bow down before him.

This is quite interesting for Jacob to say this because, by all accounts, it would appear that Joseph will be the ruling party in the future, as he is now.

Genesis 49:8d May your father's sons bow before you.

Messiah's domination will be complete and total; every knee shall bow to Jesus Christ (Isaiah 45:23 Romans 14:11).

Genesis 49:8 You [are] Judah; your brothers will praise you; your hand [will be] on the neck of your enemies; and the brothers of your father will bow down to you. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Judah will become the ruling tribe. At first, Saul, from the tribe of Benjamin, became king; but God had to reject him because Saul rejected God's authority over him (Samuel the prophet, was Saul's authority, as no king of Israel was ever the highest sovereign).

³⁸ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:8 (slightly edited).

David, from the tribe of Judah, took Saul's place. David would make some serious mistakes in his life, but he always understood the authority of God. When Nathan came to him and upbraided him for his sin, David recognized the truth of his accusation. David, unlike some of the kings who followed him, understood that he was always under the authority of God, which meant he was under the authority of these prophets who came and spoke to him (and sometimes harshly).

Similarly, Jesus Christ was under the authority of His Father. John 6:38 **For I have come down from heaven, not that I should do My will, but the will of the One having sent Me.** (Berean Literal Bible).

Genesis 49:9a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
gûwr (גור) or gur (גור) [pronounced <i>gurr</i>]	<i>whelp, cub, young [lion]</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1482 BDB #158
'ar'yêh (אֵרֵי) [pronounced <i>ahr-YAY</i>]	<i>lion</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #744 BDB #71
This appears to be equivalent to 'ăryî (אֵרֵי) [pronounced <i>uh-REE</i>]. Strong's #738 BDB #71.			
Y ^e hûwdâh (הַדְּוּדָה) [pronounced <i>y^ehoo-DAW</i>]	possibly means <i>to praise, to be praised</i> ; and is transliterated <i>Judah</i>	masculine proper noun/location	Strong's #3063 BDB #397
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
t̄ereph (תֵּרֵף) [pronounced <i>THE-rehf</i>]	<i>prey, food; meat; leaf</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2964 BDB #383

Translation: Judah [is] a lion's cub away from [his] prey.

I think the idea here is, Judah will be dangerous, just as a lion's cub separated from his prey would be dangerous.

In other translations, they understand this to mean that the lion cub is done with his prey (done eating his prey).

Genesis 49:9b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
'âlâh (אָלַע) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>to go up, to ascend, to come up, to rise, to climb</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748

Translation: You have gone up, my son;...

Perhaps we should understand this as a lion; a lion which leaps up.

Or, this can simply refer to a lion going off to rest after a large meal.

Genesis 49:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kâra ^c (עָרָךְ) [pronounced kaw-RAHG]	<i>to bend the knees, to bow down, to bend down before</i> [usually used for doing obeisance to a king]; <i>to crouch [down]</i> ; by implication: <i>to fall, to sink</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3766 BDB #502
râbats (רָצַב) [pronounced raw ^b -VAHTS]	<i>to lie down, to lie in wait; to recline, to stretch oneself out, to settle upon</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7257 DB #918
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
'ar ^e yêh (הִירָא) [pronounced ahr-YAY]	<i>lion</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #744 BDB #71

This appears to be equivalent to 'ârîy (אִירָא) [pronounced uh-REE]. Strong's #738 BDB #71.

Translation: ...[yet] he has crouched down. He lies in wait [or, reclines] like a lion;...

The lion would later crouch down; the lion would also lie in wait, looking to take down prey. The overall idea is, Judah would be a dangerous tribe to cross; enemies of Israel did not want to face the sons of Judah in battle.

The verb which is translated *to lie in wait*, also means *to recline*. So, perhaps we are looking at a lion which has taken down its prey and has feasted, and now it wandered off and rests, reclines, stretches out.

Genesis 49:9d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
lâbîy' (אִיבִל) [pronounced law ^b -VEE].	<i>lion, lioness</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3833 BDB #522

Lion, old lion as a masculine noun; *lioness* as a feminine noun.

Various spellings: lâbîy' (אִיבִל) [pronounced law-BEE]; l^ebâ'ôth (תּוֹאֲבִל) [pronounced lehb-aw-OHTH]; l^ebâ'îym (אִיבִלִּים) [pronounced lehb-aw-EEM]; l^ebîyâ' (אִיבִל) [pronounced lehb-ee-YAW].

mîy (מִי) [pronounced mee]	<i>who, whom; whose, whomever; what; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative; the verb <i>to be</i> may be implied	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
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Genesis 49:9d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Under some circumstances, the mîy pronominal interrogative can express a wish or a desire, as in Deut. 5:28 2Samuel 15:4 or 23:15. ³⁹ So, it could be translated, <i>o that!</i>			
qûwm (קוּם) [pronounced koom]	<i>to cause to raise up, to cause to stand, to establish, to fulfill; to uphold, to perform [a testimony, a vow, a commandment, a promise]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6965 BDB #877

Translation: ...and, as a lion, who would rouse him up?

I think the idea here is, *who is foolish enough to rouse the lion; you see a lion laying down; why would you go over and kick him?* If the picture is, a lion who has laid down after a meal, would you really want to rouse this lion up?

Genesis 49:9 Judah is a lion's whelp. My son, you have gone up from the prey. He stooped, he crouched like a lion; and like a lioness, who will rouse him?

Genesis 49:9 Judah [is] a lion's cub away from [his] prey. You have gone up, my son; [yet] he has crouched down. He lies in wait [or, *reclines*] like a lion; and, as a lion, who would rouse him up? (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Few things are more powerful, deadly and feared than the lion. When a lion has sighted his prey, there is little that can dissuade him from his attack.

Genesis 49:8–9 You [are] Judah; your brothers will praise you; your hand [will be] on the neck of your enemies; and the brothers of your father will bow down to you. Judah [is] a lion's cub away from [his] prey. You have gone up, my son; [yet] he has crouched down. He lies in wait [or, *reclines*] like a lion; and, as a lion, who would rouse him up? (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:8–9 You are Judah and your brothers will praise you. Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies and your brothers will bow down to you. Judah is a lion cub separated from his prey. You have gone up, my son; but he has crouched down. He is lying in wait; who would be foolish enough to rouse him up? (Kukis paraphrase)

Could Jacob be looking in part into the future to King David? For his early life, David was a vicious warrior, a true patriot of Israel.

*Barnes: At first, Judah is the lion's whelp, the young lion, giving promise of future vigor; then the full-grown lion, exulting in his irresistible force, seizing and overmastering the prey.*⁴⁰

*The Pulpit Commentary: By a bold and striking figure Judah is compared to a young lion, ripening into its full strength and ferocity, roaming through the forests in search of prey, repairing to his mountain den...when his booty has been devoured, and there in quiet majesty, full of dignified repose, lying down or crouching in his lair, and calmly resisting all attempts to disturb his leonine serenity.*⁴¹

³⁹ *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; p. 566.

⁴⁰ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:9 (slightly edited).

⁴¹ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, from e-sword, Genesis 49:8–12.

The tribe of Judah would be a great warrior tribe. Under King David, the hostile nations all about Israel would be defeated; and they will find it smartest to not rouse the tribe of Judah during the reign of Solomon. As an example, the Philistines continually invaded Israel until David led two successful campaigns against them, finally knocking them back to a point where they no longer threatened Israel.

The New Living Testament gives us a very good idea as to what is going on.

New Living Translation “Judah, your brothers will praise you.
 You will grasp your enemies by the neck.
 All your relatives will bow before you.
 Judah, my son, is a young lion
 that has finished eating its prey.
 Like a lion he crouches and lies down;
 like a lioness—who dares to rouse him?”

Judah, as a lion would, grasps his enemies by the neck; his brothers will bow down to him. Judah takes his prey, his enemies, and eats them, as a young lion would. Then the lion lays down in the sun and enjoys a rest. Who would be foolish enough to stir such a lion?

When Saul was king and then David, there were constant challenges made to Israel. And over and over again, these other countries were soundly defeated.

Will not depart a scepter from Judah and a lawgiver from a midst of his [two] feet until comes in Shiloh; and to him obedience of peoples. Binding to the vine his donkey and to the choice vine a son of a donkey. He has washed in the wine his garment; and in blood of the grape, his clothing. Red [his] [two] eyes from wine; and white his [two] teeth from milk.

Genesis
49:10–12

The scepter will not depart from Judah and the Lawgiver [will not depart] from the midst of His feet until Shiloh comes; and He has the obedience of the peoples. Binding His donkey to the vine and [binding] a foal to a choice vine. He has washed His garment in the wine and [He has washed] His clothing in the blood of the grape. [His] eyes are red from wine and his teeth are white from milk.

The scepter of rulership will not depart from the tribe of Judah; and the Lawgiver will not depart from the midst of His feet until Shiloh comes. At that time, He will have the obedience of all the people. He binds His donkey to the vine and his foal to the choice vine. He has washed His garment in the wine and His clothing in the blood of the grape. His eyes are red from the wine but His teeth are white from milk.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

Will not depart a scepter from Judah and a lawgiver from a midst of his [two] feet until comes in Shiloh; and to him obedience of peoples. Binding to the vine his donkey and to the choice vine a son of a donkey. He has washed in the wine his garment; and in blood of the grape, his clothing. Red [his] [two] eyes from wine; and white his [two] teeth from milk.

Dead Sea Scrolls
Targum of Onkelos

.
He shall repose, and abide in strength as a lion, and as a lioness, there shall be no king that may cut him off. He who exerciseth dominion shall not pass away from the house of Jehuda, nor the saphra from his children's children for ever, until the Meshiha come, whose is the kingdom, and unto whom shall be the obedience of the

nations (or, whom the peoples shall obey). Israel shall pass round about in his cities; the people shall build his temple, they will be righteous round about him, and be doers of the law through his doctrine. Of goodly purple will be his raiment, and his vesture of crimson wool with colours [Or, "wool dyed bright with colours."]. His mountains shall be red with his vineyards, and his hills be dropping with wine; his valleys shall be white with corn, and with flocks of sheep.

Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan) Kings shall not cease, nor rulers, from the house of Jehuda, nor sapherim teaching the law from his seed, till the time that the King the Meshiha, shall come, the youngest of his sons; and on account of him shall the peoples flow together How beauteous is the King, the Meshiha who will arise from the house of Jehuda! He hath girded his loins, and descended, and arrayed the battle against his adversaries, Slaying kings with their rulers; neither is there any king or ruler who shall stand before him. The mountains become red with the blood of their slain; his garments, dipped in blood, are like the outpressed juice of grapes. How beautiful are the eyes of the king Meshiha, as the pure wine! He cannot look upon what is unclean, nor on the shedding of the blood of the innocent; and his teeth, purer than milk, cannot eat that which is stolen or torn; and therefore his mountains are red with wine, and his hills white with corn, and with the cotes of flocks.

Jerusalem targum Kings shall not cease from the house of Jehuda, nor sapherim teaching the law from his children's children, until the time that the King Meshiha shall come, whose is the kingdom, and to whom all the kingdoms of the earth shall be obedient. How beauteous is the King Meshiha, who is to arise from the house of Jehuda! Binding his loins, and going forth to war against them that hate him, he will slay kings with princes, and make the rivers red with the blood of their slain, and his hills white with the fat of their mighty ones; his garments will be dipped in blood, and he himself be like the juice of the winepress. More beautiful are the eyes of the king Meshiha to behold than pure wine; they will not look upon that which is unclean, or the shedding of the blood of the innocent. His teeth are employed according to the precept rather than in eating the things of violence and rapine; his mountains shall be red with vines, and his presses with his wine, and his hills be white with much corn and with flocks of sheep.

Revised Douay-Rheims The sceptre shall not be taken away from Juda, nor a ruler from his thigh, till he come that is to be sent, and he shall be the expectation of nations. Tying his foal to the vineyard, and his ass, O my son, to the vine. He shall wash his robe in wine, and his garment in the blood of the grape. His eyes are more beautiful than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.

Latin Vulgate
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta .
The sceptre will not depart from Yudah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs. To him will the obedience of the peoples be. Binding his foal to the vine, his donkey's colt to the choice vine; he has washed his garments in wine, his robes in the blood of grapes. His eyes will be red with wine, his teeth white with milk.

Peshitta (Syriac) The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until the coming of the One to whom the sceptre belongs, to whom the Gentiles shall look forward. He shall tie up his foal to the vine, and his ass's colt to a branch; he shall bleach his garments with wine, and his robe with the juices of the grape; His eyes shall be radiant with wine, and his teeth white with milk?

Septuagint (Greek) A ruler shall not fail from Juda,
nor a prince from his loins,
until there come the things stored up for him;
and he is the expectation of nations.
Binding his foal to the vine,
and the foal of his ass to the branch of it,
he shall wash his robe in wine,

and his garment in the blood of the grape.
His eyes shall be more cheering than wine,
and his teeth whiter than milk.

NETS (Greek) .
Brenton's Septuagint .

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English The rod of authority will not be taken from Judah, and he will not be without a law-giver, till he comes who has the right to it, and the peoples will put themselves under his rule. Knotting his ass's cord to the vine, and his young ass to the best vine; washing his robe in wine, and his clothing in the blood of grapes: His eyes will be dark with wine, and his teeth white with milk.

Easy English The royal sceptre will not leave him. And the staff of rulers will stay with him. It will stay with him until one man comes. That will be the man that it belongs to. And everyone will obey that man.'

Judah will be like a king. Then the person that God has chosen will come to take his place. Bible students think that this means King David, then Christ. A royal sceptre is something that a king holds. Its shape is like a stick with a ball on the top.

'Judah will tie his donkey to a vine. He will tie his horse to the best branch. He will wash his clothes in red wine.'

A vine is a plant. Grapes grow on it These make wine. Its branches grow over many things. Vines were valuable plants in Old Testament times.

Jacob is saying that Judah will be very rich. He will tie his horse to the best branch of a valuable plant. And he will wash his clothes in wine. He will be very rich.

'His eyes are red from drinking lots of wine. And his teeth are white from drinking milk.'

Jacob is saying that Judah will have plenty of everything.

Easy-to-Read Version–2001 .

Easy-to-Read Version–2006 Men from Judah's family will be kings.
The sign that his family rules
will not leave his family before the real king comes.
Then many people will obey and serve him.
He ties his donkeys to the best grapevines.
He washes his clothes in the best wine.
His eyes are red from drinking wine.
His teeth are white from drinking milk.

God's Word™
Good News Bible (TEV)

Judah will hold the royal scepter,
And his descendants will always rule.
Nations will bring him tribute
And bow in obedience before him.
He ties his young donkey to a grapevine,
To the very best of the vines.
He washes his clothes in blood-red wine.
His eyes are bloodshot from drinking wine,
His teeth white from drinking milk.

International Children's B. Men from Judah's family will be kings.
Someone from Judah will always be on the throne.
Judah will rule until the real king comes.

	<p>And the nations will obey him. He ties his donkey to a grapevine. He ties his young donkey to the best branch. He can afford to use wine to wash his clothes. He even uses grape juice to wash his robes. His eyes are bright from drinking wine. His teeth are white from drinking milk. The scepter shall not leave Judah; he'll keep a firm grip on the command staff Until the ultimate ruler comes and the nations obey him. He'll tie up his donkey to the grapevine, his purebred prize to a sturdy branch. He will wash his shirt in wine and his cloak in the blood of grapes, His eyes will be darker than wine, his teeth whiter than milk.</p>
<i>The Message</i>	
Names of God Bible NIRV	<p>The right to rule will not leave Judah. The ruler's scepter will not be taken from between his feet. It will be his until the king it belongs to will come. The nations will obey that king. He will tie his donkey to a vine. He will tie his colt to the very best branch. He will wash his clothes in wine. He will wash his robes in the red juice of grapes. His eyes will be darker than wine. His teeth will be whiter than milk.</p>
New Simplified Bible	<p>»The royal scepter shall not depart from Judah. His descendants will always rule. Nations will bring him tribute and bow in obedience before him. This, until Shiloh comes and all will obey him. »He will tie his donkey to a grapevine, his colt to the best vine. He will wash his clothes in wine, his garments in the blood of grapes. »His eyes are darker than wine. His teeth are whiter than milk.</p>
Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:	
Common English Bible	<p>The scepter won't depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from among his banners. Gifts will be brought to him; people will obey him. He ties his male donkey to the vine, the colt of his female donkey to the vine's branches. He washes his clothes in wine, his garments in the blood of grapes. His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.</p>
Contemporary English V.	<p>You will have power and rule until nations obey you and come bringing gifts. You will tie your donkey to a choice grapevine and wash your clothes in wine from those grapes. Your eyes are darker than wine, your teeth whiter than milk.</p>
The Living Bible	<p>"Judah, your brothers shall praise you. You shall destroy your enemies. Your father's sons shall bow before you. Judah is a young lion that has finished eating its prey. He has settled down as a lion—who will dare to rouse him? The scepter</p>

shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh comes, whom all people shall obey. He has chained his steed to the choicest vine and washed his clothes in wine. His eyes are darker than wine and his teeth are whiter than milk.

New Berkeley Version
New Century Version

.
Kings will come from Judah's family;
 someone from Judah will always be on the throne.
Judah will rule until Shiloh comes,
 and the nations will obey him.
He ties his donkey to a grapevine,
 his young donkey to the best branch.
He can afford to use wine to wash his clothes
 and the best wine to wash his robes.
His eyes are dark like the color of wine,
 and his teeth are as white as the color of milk.

New Life Version

The right of a ruler will not leave Judah. The ruler's special stick will not go from between his feet, until Shiloh comes. Then the people will obey Him. He ties his young donkey to the vine, his donkey's young one to the best vine. He washes his clothes in wine, his coats in the blood of grapes. His eyes are darker than wine. And his teeth are whiter than milk.

New Living Translation

.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible

'There will always be a ruler from Judah,
And princes will come from his loins,
Until the one we're awaiting arrives...
The one who's the hope of the nations.
'[He'll] tie his foal to a vine [Matthew 21:5]...
The foal of his burro to a branch.
And he'll wash his robes in [fine] wine...
In the blood of grapes [Revelation 19:11], wash his clothes.
His eyes will bring more cheer than wine,
And his teeth [will be] whiter than milk.

Beck's American Translation .
International Standard V

The scepter will never depart from Judah,
 nor a ruler's staff from between his feet,
 until the One [Or *until Shiloh*] comes, who owns them both [Lit. *comes to whom it belongs*; i.e. the authority represented by the scepter and ruler's staff],
 and to him will belong the allegiance [Or *obedience*] of nations.
Binding his donkey to the vine
 and his mare's foal to its thick tendrils,
 he will wash his garments in wine
 and his robe in the juice of grapes.
His eyes are darker than wine
 and his teeth whiter than milk."

New Advent (Knox) Bible

Juda shall not want a branch from his stem ['A branch'; literally, 'a rod'. The sense intended may be that of a royal sceptre. The meaning of the word rendered 'who is to be sent to us' is very uncertain in the Hebrew text. For 'he, the hope of the nations', the Hebrew text gives 'he shall have the obedience of the nations'.], a prince drawn from his stock, until the day when he comes who is to be sent to us, he, the hope of the nations. To what tree will he tie his mount; the ass he rides on? The vine for him, the vineyard for him; when he washes his garments, it shall be in wine, all his vesture shall be dyed with the blood of grapes. Fairer than wine his

eyes shall be, his teeth whiter than milk. The words used about Ruben, Simeon and Levi seem to be a reference, for the most part, to past events; cf. 35.22, and chapter 34 above. The blessing of Juda is more naturally understood of the position which the tribe of Juda was to occupy.

Today's NIV

Translation for Translators

There will always be a ruler [MTY] from the descendants of Judah [MTY]. Each one will hold a scepter/staff to show that he has authority as a king. He will do that until the one to whom the scepter belongs comes, the one to whom the nations will bring tribute and show that they will obey him.
The grapevines of his descendants will produce grapes very abundantly. As a result, they will not object to tying their young donkeys to the grapevines in order that they can eat the leaves of the grapevines.
Wine will be very plentiful, with the result that they will wash their clothes in wine; they will wash their cloaks in wine that is as red as blood [MET]. Their eyes will be red because of drinking too much wine, but their teeth will be very white because of drinking much milk from the cows.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible

Was the Branch to be turned aside from Judah? Decreeing in pace, surely till tranquility was to come, and the purging of the peoples.
Binding your he-ass to the vine, and your she-ass's young to the choice vine, you is to have washed his clothing in wine, and your garments in the blood of grapes. Your eyes are dark from wine, and your teeth white from milk.

Conservapedia

The scepter shall not be withdrawn from Judah, nor a lawgiver's staff from between his feet, until he comes to Shiloh. To him will belong the Expectation of peoples [Jesus Christ is, of course, that Expectation.]. He is tying his colt to the vine, and his donkey's colt to the yellow muscatel grape. He launders his clothing in wine, and his coverlet in the blood of grapes [A direct reference to Jesus' entry (in peace) into Jerusalem and the role of the blood of Christ in washing away a man's sins. Muscatel grapes were the most expensive grapes then available.]. His eyes will be flushed with wine, and his teeth white from milk."

Ferrar-Fenton Bible

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,
Or the Giver of Law from between his feet,
Till peace arrive, and the nations obey him. —
Bound to the vine like an ass,
And a colt the son of a stepper,
He washed his garments in wine,
And his clothes in the blood of clusters !
His eyes shall be bright with wine,
And his teeth be white with milk !

God's Truth (Tyndale)

The scepter shall not depart from Juda, nor a ruler from between his legs, until Silo come, unto whom the people shall hearken. He shall bind his foal unto the vine, and his asses colt unto the vine branch, and shall wash his garment in wine and his mantle in the blood of grapes: his eyes are rowdier [roudier (unknown of sources) maybe rowdier: wilder or red from rouge] than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.

HCSB

The scepter will not depart from Judah
or the staff from between his feet
until He whose right it is comes
and the obedience of the peoples belongs to Him.
He ties his donkey to a vine,
and the colt of his donkey to the choice vine.
He washes his clothes in wine

and his robes in the blood of grapes.
His eyes are darker than wine,
and his teeth are whiter than milk.

Jubilee Bible 2000
Lexham English Bible
H. C. Leupold
NIV, ©2011
NIV – UK
Tree of Life Version
Urim-Thummim Version

The Scepter will not be abolished from Judah, nor a governor of Elohim, until Shiloh come; and to him shall the cleansing of the people be.

He will harness his donkey to a vine tree, his female donkey's colt to the choicest branch, he will wash as a fuller his clothing in wine, his vestment in the blood of grapes.

Red are the eyes with wine, and white are the teeth with milk!

Wikipedia Bible Project

The sceptre will not leave Judah, nor a lawmaker's staff from between his legs, so long as they come to Shiloh, to him the people will sway.

I will attach his foal to the vine, and the choice vine his donkey's foal, his sheep dressed in wine, his vest in the blood of grapes.

His eyes will be filled with wine; and his teeth will with milk be white.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)
The Heritage Bible

The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh comes, and obedience of people shall be his,
Binding his colt to the vine, and his donkey's son to the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes;
His eyes shall be dark brilliant with wine, and his teeth white from milk

New American Bible (2002)

The scepter shall never depart from Judah, or the mace from between his legs, While tribute is brought to him [While tribute is brought to him: this translation is based on a slight change in the Hebrew text, which, as it stands, would seem to mean, "until he comes to Shiloh." A somewhat different reading of the Hebrew text would be, "until he comes to whom it belongs." This last has been traditionally understood in a Messianic sense. In any case, the passage foretells the supremacy of the tribe of Judah, which found its fulfillment in the Davidic dynasty and ultimately in the Messianic Son of David, Jesus Christ.], and he receives the people's homage. He tethers his donkey to the vine, his purebred ass to the choicest stem. In wine he washes his garments his robe in the blood of grapes [In wine . . . the blood of grapes: Judah's clothes are poetically pictured as soaked with grape juice from trampling in the wine press, the rich vintage of his land; cf → Isaiah 63:2.]. His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth are whiter than milk.

New American Bible (2011)

The scepter shall never depart from Judah, or the mace from between his feet, Until tribute comes to him [Until tribute comes to him: this translation is based on a slight change in the Hebrew text, which, as it stands, would seem to mean, "until he comes to Shiloh." A somewhat different reading of the Hebrew text would be, "until he comes to whom it belongs." This last has been traditionally understood in a messianic sense. In any case, the passage aims at the supremacy of the tribe of Judah and of the Davidic dynasty.], and he receives the people's obedience. He tethers his donkey to the vine, his donkey's foal to the choicest stem. In wine he washes his garments,

his robe in the blood of grapes [**In wine...the blood of grapes:** Judah's clothes are poetically pictured as soaked with grape juice from trampling in the wine press, the rich vintage of his land; cf. Is 63:2.].

His eyes are darker than wine,
and his teeth are whiter than milk.

New Jerusalem Bible

The sceptre shall not pass from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute be brought him and the peoples render him obedience.

He tethers his donkey to the vine, to its stock the foal of his she-donkey. He washes his clothes in wine, his robes in the blood of the grape.

His eyes are darkened with wine and his teeth are white with milk.

New RSV

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,
nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,

until tribute comes to him [*Or until Shiloh comes or until he comes to Shiloh or (with Syr) until he comes to whom it belongs*];

and the obedience of the peoples is his.

Binding his foal to the vine

and his donkey's colt to the choice vine,

he washes his garments in wine

and his robe in the blood of grapes;

his eyes are darker than wine,

and his teeth whiter than milk.

Revised English Bible

The sceptre will not pass from Judah, nor the staff from between his feet, until he receives what is his due and the obedience of the nations is his.

He tethers his donkey to the vine, and its colt to the red vine; he washes his cloak in wine, his robe in the blood of grapes.

Darker than wine are his eyes, whiter than milk his teeth.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible

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exeGesés companion Bible

Neither turns the scion aside from Yah Hudah
nor a statute setter from between his feet

until Shiloh come;

and the obedience of the people is his:

binding his foal to the vine

and the son of his she burro to the choice;

he launders his robes in wine

and his veil in the blood of grapes:

his eyes flush with wine

and his teeth whiten with milk.

Hebraic Roots Bible

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JPS (Tanakh—1985)

The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet;

So that tribute shall come to him

And the homage of peoples be his.

He tethers his ass to a vine,

His ass's foal to a choice vine;

He washes his garment in wine,

His robe in blood of grapes.

His eyes are darker than wine;

His teeth are whiter than milk.

Israeli Authorized Version

The sceptre shall not depart from Yhudah, nor a Torahgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Kaplan Translation	<p>Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.</p> <p>'The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor legislation [(Sh'muel ben Chofni; Radak; Ralbag; cf. Psalms 60:9, 105:9). The Hebrew me-chokek has the connotation of both law and writing. Hence, others translate it as 'the scribe's pen' (Sekhel Tov; Ibn Ezra); 'the scribe' (Bereshith Rabbah 98; Radak, Sherashim); or 'the law inscribing pen' (Hirsch).] from his descendants [(Targum). A euphemism, literally, 'from between his legs.' Others, 'the scribal pen will not depart from his lap' (Ibn Ezra), or 'the scribe will not depart from near his feet' (Bereshith Rabbah 98).] Nations will submit to him [(Targum; Ibn Ezra; Radak, Sherashim, s.v. Yikah; cf. Proverbs 30:17). Others, 'He will gather nations' (Ramban; Bereshith Rabbah 99); 'He will have a gathering of nations' (Rashi; Rashbam); or 'He will make nations gnash their teeth' (Bereshith Rabbah 99).] until the final tranquility [(Sforno; Torah Sh'lemah 157; cf. Jeremiah 12:1, Job 3:26). This may be seen as referring to the Messianic age. Others write that the Hebrew word shiloh here is from the root nashal, and translate the verse, 'until the exile comes' (Sh'muel ben Chofni; cf. Deuteronomy 7:1, 19:5, Job 27:8). Or, it can be taken as a form of she-lo (that which is his), and the verse is then rendered, 'until that which is [rightly] his comes' (Targum; Septuagint; Bereshith Rabbah 99; cf. Ezekiel 21:32). Or, it can be seen as two words shai lo (a gift to him), and the verse is, 'Until a gift is brought to him' (Rashi; Lekach Tov; cf. Isaiah 18:7). Or, shiloh can denote a special descendant; 'until he has a special descendant' (Targum Yonathan; Lekach Tov; Ibn Ezra; Ralbag Sh'muel ben Chofni; cf. Deuteronomy 28:57). Or, 'until it reaches its final nadir' (Hirsch). Others see Shiloh as a proper noun, possibly a name of the Messiah (Sanhedrin 98b; Bereshith Rabbah 99). Of course, Shiloh was also the name of the site of the Tabernacle before the Temple was built in Jerusalem (Joshua 18:1, 1 Samuel 1:3 etc.). Hence, some translate the verse, 'The scepter will not begin (yasar) in Judah....until Shiloh comes to an end' (Sekhel Tov; Ba'aley Tosafoth; Toledoth Yitzchak).] comes.</p> <p>'He loads down his donkey with a [single] grapevine, his young donkey with a single vine branch. He even washes his clothes in wine, his cloak in the blood of grapes. But his eyes are more sparkling than the wine, his teeth whiter than milk.</p>
Orthodox Jewish Bible	<p>The shevet (sceptre) shall not depart from Yehudah, nor a Mekhokek (Lawgiver) from between his raglayim, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall be the obedience of the amim (peoples, nations).</p> <p>He ties his foal unto the gefen (vine), and his donkey's colt unto the choice vine; he will wash his levush (garments) in yayin, and his robe in the dahm anavim (blood of grapes); His eyes shall be darker with yayin, and his shinayim (teeth) whiter than cholov (milk).</p>
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	<p>"The scepter [of royalty] shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh [the Messiah, the Peaceful One] comes, And to Him shall be the obedience of the peoples.</p> <p>"Tying his foal to the [strong] vine And his donkey's colt to the choice vine, He washes his clothing in wine [because the grapevine produces abundantly], And his robes in the blood of grapes. "His eyes are darker and sparkle more than wine,</p>
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The Expanded Bible	<p>And his teeth whiter than milk.</p> <p>·Kings will come from Judah's family [^LNo one will turn aside the scepter from Judah; ^Ca scepter is a symbol of kingship];</p> <p>·someone from Judah will always be on the throne [^Lthe ruler's staff/mace from between his feet; ^Canticipates the rise of a perpetual kingship from the tribe of Judah; 2 Sam. 7].</p> <p>Judah will rule until ·Shiloh comes [or he comes to Shiloh; or he comes to whom it belongs; or tribute comes to him],</p> <p>and the ·nations [peoples] will obey him.</p> <p>He ties his donkey to a grapevine,</p> <p>his young donkey to the best ·branch [vine].</p> <p>He ·can afford to use wine to wash his clothes [^Lwashes his clothes in wine]</p> <p>and the ·best wine [^Lblood of grapes] to wash his robes.</p> <p>His eyes are dark like the color of wine,</p> <p>and his teeth are as white as the color of milk.</p>
The Geneva Bible Kretzmann's Commentary	<p>.</p> <p>The scepter shall not depart from Judah nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be. This is one of the most remarkable and inspiring Messianic promises in the entire Old Testament. The scepter is the mark of royal power, and the ruler's staff, or the mace of the chieftain, resting between his feet as he sat upright, likewise belonged to the insignia of authority and power. The government, the princely power, was to remain in the hands of Judah, culminating finally in the reign of Shiloh, the Messiah, the Author and Source of true rest, the Prince of Peace, through whom all mankind should have peace with God by the acceptance of the justification earned by Him, Romans 5:1. To Him the nations, His people, render obedience in faith and thus become partakers of all the blessings of His kingdom, here in time, and hereafter in eternity. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine, he washed his garments in wine and his clothes in the blood of grapes. This part of the prophecy refers not only to the extraordinary fertility of the country of Judah in the Land of Promise, which promised him a superabundance of the most precious products of the field, garden, and herd, but represents a type of the Messianic kingdom, the kingdom of peace, with its beauty and glory, its mercy and its blessing. In Jesus Christ, the Lion out of the tribe of Judah, all these words have been fulfilled. His eyes shall be red with wine and his teeth white with milk. In Him we have the fullness of those gifts which will bring us true happiness here and eternal salvation beyond the grave.</p>
NET Bible®	<p>The scepter will not depart from Judah,</p> <p>nor the ruler's staff from between his feet [Or perhaps "from his descendants," taking the expression "from between his feet" as a euphemism referring to the genitals. In this case the phrase refers by metonymy to those who come forth from his genitals, i.e., his descendants.],</p> <p>until he comes to whom it belongs;</p> <p>the nations will obey him.</p> <p>Binding his foal to the vine,</p> <p>and his colt to the choicest vine,</p> <p>he will wash his garments in wine,</p> <p>his robes in the blood of grapes.</p> <p>His eyes will be dark from wine,</p> <p>and his teeth white from milk.</p>
Syndein/Thieme	<p>The scepter {symbol of rulership} shall not depart from Judah {even though Judah will not actively be on the throne for 400 years},</p>

nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come {Shiyloh - a word for peace - it refers to the 2nd Advent of Jesus}. And unto Him shall the gathering of the people be {prophecy of the regathering of Israel at the 2nd Advent of Christ}. Binding his foal unto the vine and his ass's colt unto the choice vine {idiom for prosperity - at the 2nd Advent they will be so prosperous they can tie their animals to vines and they will not get loose - great prosperity}. He washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes {idiom of great prosperity - we might say light your cigar with a hundred dollar bill - wine is so plentiful it is used like water}. His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk {more idioms for great prosperity in an agricultural society}. The scepter will not depart from Judah; the ruler's staff will rest *securely* between his feet. Until the One comes to whom true royalty belongs, all people will *honor and obey* him. He ties his foal to the vine and his donkey's colt to the choicest vine. He washes his clothing in wine and dips his robe in the blood of grapes. His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth are whiter than milk.

The Voice

Israel's blessing speaks not only what is but what will be. His words establish Judah as the father to the royal line from which King David and his dynasty will one day come. They anticipate God's eternal covenant with David that brings peace and prosperity to the entire world. It is little wonder that early Christians referred to the risen Jesus as "the lion of the tribe of Judah," for they found in Him the fulfillment of Israel's blessing.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

- Benner's Mechanical Trans. ...the staff will not turn aside from Yehudah ^[Praised] and the inscribing from between his feet until tranquility comes and to him is the obedience of the peoples, tying me up to the grapevine of his colt, and to the choice vine, my son, his she-donkey, he treaded upon in the wine his clothing and in the blood of the grapes of his coat, dull red are the eyes from wine, and white the teeth from fat,...
- Concordant Literal Version Not withdraw shall the sceptre from Judah, nor a statue-maker's staff from between his feet, till it be that ease shall come to him. And to it shall the expectation of the people be. Bind to a vine will he his colt, and to a yellow muscat grape the foal of his she-ass, he rinses in wine his apparel, and in the blood of grapes his coverlet. Flushed will be his eyes from wine, and white, his teeth, from milk.
- Context Group Version .
- Darby Translation .
- Emphasized Bible .
- English Standard Version The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. Binding his foal to the vine and his donkey's colt to the choice vine, he has washed his garments in wine and his vesture in the blood of grapes. His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.

English Standard V. – UK	.	
Evidence Bible	.	
Green’s Literal Translation	.	
H. C. Leupold	.	
Jack Ballinger’s translation	.	
Modern English Version		The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to him will be the obedience of the people. He tethers his foal to the vine, and his colt to the choicest vine; he washes his garments in wine, his clothes in the blood of grapes. His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.
Modern KJV	.	
NASB	.	
New European Version	.	
New King James Version		The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him <i>shall be</i> the obedience of the people. Binding his donkey to the vine, And his donkey’s colt to the choice vine, He washed his garments in wine, And his clothes in the blood of grapes. His eyes <i>are</i> darker than wine, And his teeth whiter than milk.
Owen's Translation	.	
Benner’s Mechanical Trans.	.	
Stuart Wolf	.	
Third Millennium Bible	.	
Updated Bible Version 2.11	.	
A Voice in the Wilderness	.	
Webster’s Bible Translation	.	
World English Bible	.	
Young's Literal Translation	.	
Young’s Updated LT		The sceptre turns not aside from Judah, And a lawgiver from between his feet, Till his Seed come; And his is the obedience of peoples. Binding to the vine his ass, And to the choice vine the colt of his ass, He has washed in wine his clothing, And in the blood of grapes his covering; Red are eyes with wine, And white are tees with milk!

The gist of this passage: Judah will become the ruling tribe; and Judah is also associated in this prophecy with Messiah.

10-12

Genesis 49:10a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
lô’ (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced low]	not, no	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong’s #3808 BDB #518

Genesis 49:10a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
çûwr (סור) [pronounced soor]	<i>to turn aside, to depart, to go away; to deviate</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693
shêbet (שֶׁבֶט) [pronounced SHAY ^B -vef]	<i>rod, staff, club; spear; scepter and figuratively for a tribe, subdivision of a tribe or family and for a ruler (scepter-bearer), governor</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7626 BDB #986
min (מן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Y ^e hûwdâh (יְהוּדָה) [pronounced y ^e hoo-DAW]	possibly means <i>to praise, to be praised</i> ; and is transliterated Judah	masculine proper noun/location	Strong's #3063 BDB #397

Translation: [The scepter will not depart from Judah...](#)

Joseph would have the double-portion, but the authority of the firstborn would go to Judah. Reuben, Simeon and Levi were all passed over for taking the leadership position; but Judah was not. Judah finally showed great leadership skills himself when he offered himself for his youngest brother.

The scepter is the rod of tribal supremacy. Even though Jacob became several tribes, there still had to eventually be some system of rule and order and supremacy, and that fell into Judah's lap. Judah, by a great act of being willing to take the place and the punishment of his youngest brother, became a Christ figure.

[Genesis 49:10a The scepter will not depart from Judah,...](#)

The *scepter* is shêbet (שֶׁבֶט) [pronounced SHAY^B-vef], which means *rod, staff, club; spear; scepter* and figuratively for a *tribe, subdivision of a tribe or family* and for a *ruler (scepter-bearer), governor*. Strong's #7626 BDB #986. This is the ruling symbol. 1000 years later, after these words were spoken, David, of the tribe of Judah, would become king over Israel, and establish a dynasty of Judahites (more accurately, God would establish a Davidic dynasty, as per Psalm 89).

Long after other tribes lost their land and tribal identity, the tribe of Judah lived on its land and had a well-recognized lineage. Even the Jewish people today bear Judah's name (*Jew* comes from the proper noun *Judah*⁴²).

*Barnes: Long after the other tribes had lost their individuality, Judah lingered in existence and in some measure of independence; and from the return his name supplanted that of Israel or Jacob, as the common designation of the people.*⁴³

Of course, at the very end, Jesus Christ, who is in the line of David (he is called David's Greater Son), will rule over the earth in the Millennium.

⁴² This is a rather long and complex [story](#); and the less complex [version](#).

⁴³ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:10.

Genesis 49:10b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
châqâq (חָקַק) [pronounced <i>khaw-KAK</i>]	<i>lawgiver, lawmaker; leader, governor; scribe [engraver]; a scepter</i>	Poel participle	Strong's #2710 BDB #349
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
bêyn (בֵּין) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>in the of midst, between, among; when found twice, it means between</i>	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107
This phrase means .			
rag ^e layim (רַגְלַיִם) [pronounced <i>RAHG-lah-yim</i>]	<i>feet, [two] feet; metaphorically for steps taken in one's life</i>	feminine dual noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7272 BDB #919

Translation: ...and the Lawgiver [will not depart] from the midst of His feet...

The participle is often used to define the vocation of a man; and here, the Poel participle means *lawgiver, lawmaker; leader, governor; scribe [engraver]; a scepter*.

Genesis 49:10b ...nor a Lawgiver from between his feet,...

The keyword here is *châqâq* (חָקַק) [pronounced *khaw-KAK*], which means *lawgiver, lawmaker; leader, governor; scribe [engraver]; a scepter*. Barnes suggests a *lawgiver, judge, dispenser of laws*.⁴⁴ Strong's #2710 BDB #349. This would refer to the king, who is the ultimate lawgiver of the land; and then to the Messiah King, Who is the Ultimate Lawgiver. Barnes suggests⁴⁵ this more properly be translated: ...nor the Judicial staff from between his feet,...

Between his feet is likely a reference to the descendants of Judah. Once the line of Judaic kings is established, it will continue as long as Israel (later known as *Judah*) is an independent nation.

*Barnes: Lawgiver is to be understood as judge, dispenser or administrator of law. Judah had the forerank among the tribes in the wilderness, and never altogether lost it. Nahshon the son of Amminadab, the prince of his tribe, was the ancestor of David, who was anointed as the rightful sovereign of all Israel, and in whom the throne became hereditary. The revolt of the ten tribes curtailed, but did not abolish the actual sovereignty of Rehoboam and his successors, who continued the acknowledged sovereigns until some time after the return from the captivity.*⁴⁶

Bear in mind, Jacob is saying all of this about Judah hundreds of years before King David (this is one of the many reasons that some historians claim that Genesis could not be written so long ago—it is just too accurate in its prophecy; and many critics of the Bible do not believe that prophecy is real).

⁴⁴ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:10.

⁴⁵ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:10.

⁴⁶ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:10.

Genesis 49:10c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʿad (עד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i>]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until; while, so long as; to, even to [some certain limit]; even to [unto], unto</i>	preposition of duration or of limits	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
Owens and the KJV render these words together as <i>until</i> ;			
bōw' (אוב) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance; to attain</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
Shīylōh (שִׁילֹה) [pronounced <i>shee-LOW</i>]	<i>he whose it is, that which belongs to him; tranquility meanings uncertain; transliterated Shiloh; possibly a reference to Messiah</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7886 BDB #1010

The NET Bible: *The Hebrew form שִׁילֹה (shiloh) is a major interpretive problem. There are at least four major options (with many variations and less likely alternatives): (1) Some prefer to leave the text as it is, reading "Shiloh" and understanding it as the place where the ark rested for a while in the time of the Judges. (2) By repointing the text others arrive at the translation "until the [or "his"] ruler comes," a reference to a Davidic ruler or the Messiah. (3) Another possibility that does not require emendation of the consonantal text, but only repointing, is "until tribute is brought to him" (so NEB, JPS, NRSV), which has the advantage of providing good parallelism with the following line, "the nations will obey him." (4) The interpretation followed in the present translation, "to whom it [belongs]" (so RSV, NIV, REB), is based on the ancient versions. Again, this would refer to the Davidic dynasty or, ultimately, to the Messiah.⁴⁷*

Translation: ...until Shiloh comes;...

What I was leaning toward as another interpretation is, the Law would not depart from the midst of his feet until Shiloh comes (presumably a reference to the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ). Perhaps we could understand this to refer to Moses, who is a metonym for the Mosaic Law.

There are several problems, even though many understand this as being a Messianic passage: why is something in the midst of someone's feet (in between their feet)? Who would that someone be? The idea here is, the person would come from Judah's loins; the line of royalty would be a Judæan line.

The next problem is, *just what does "Shiloh" mean?* I expect quite a variety of interpretations.

The true kingdom of the Jews was Judah, which was ruled by the seed of Judah, until the end of this kingdom in approximately 583 B.C. The second verse might read **until Shiloh comes** or **until He comes to Shiloh**. The word in question, the one transliterated Shiloh, is Shīylōh (שִׁילֹה) [pronounced *shee-LOW*] and it is by changing the vowel points that we get **until He comes to Whom it belongs**. An English rendering from the Septuagint is **A ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor a prince from his loins until there come the things stored up for him; he is the expectation of nations**. *The Emphasized Bible* reads: **until he come in as a Shiloh**.

This is one of those times I don't want to venture to strong an opinion. I wouldn't be surprised if Shiloh turns out to be a transliteration of an Egyptian word as there does not appear to be any Hebrew word which is close enough

⁴⁷ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 12, 2017.

to this to help us with its meaning. In any case, it is clear that someone is to come, and that is when the staff will depart from Judah. Furthermore, most early Jewish commentators believed this to reference the Messiah.

Judah is not in a rulership position at this time so this passage, in effect, prophesies the rulership in the line of David. Our Lord Jesus Christ's humanity came from the line of Judah, but his divinity was from the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ will rule over Israel as the Son of David, eternally. We have a very similarly-worded verse in Ezekiel 21:27: **This also will be no more until He comes whose right it is; and I will give it [to Him]**. In both cases, we have a prediction of the rule of our Lord in His second advent.⁴⁸

Genesis 49:10c ...until Shiloh come.

Until Shiloh come is a phrase that has been debated for centuries. Many understand this to be the coming of the Messiah, who will be the last ruling member of the tribe of Judah, David's Greater Son. Shîylôh (שִׁילוֹה) [pronounced *shee-LOW*] means, *he whose it is, that which belongs to him; tranquility* meanings uncertain; transliterated *Shiloh*; possibly a reference to *Messiah*. Strong's #7886 BDB #1010. Nearly every translation transliterates this word, taking it to be a proper noun.

As per the Strong's #, this word appears to be found only here. However, Strong's #7887 is the exact same word (with a variety of spellings⁴⁹), and it is found over 30 times in Scripture. It simply refers to a city in Ephraim with that name. However, it is reasonable to separate these two words, as this use of *Shiloh* appears to be unique; and the other use simply refers to a city.

From Barnes: *Shiloh, a softened form of שִׁילוֹן shîylôn, a derivative of שָׁל shol, the ultimate root of שָׁלַח shâlâh, שָׁלַם shâlam, and possibly שָׁלַט shâlat, and hence, denoting "the peacemaker, the prince of peace."*⁵⁰

Barnes suggests⁵¹ that this is otherwise translated *until he come to Shiloh*. Generally speaking, in the Hebrew, when there is some confusion as to what the subject is (as the subject could be placed anywhere in the sentence), the direct object will be preceded by a preposition or by the untranslated sign of the direct object. In this instance, there is no grammatical indication in the Hebrew that *Shiloh* is anything other than the subject. So, this cannot be understood to mean *until he comes to Shiloh*.

Shiloh, the city, is noteworthy because this is the first place that the Tent of Meeting (and the Ark of God) was set up as a semi-permanent location (Joshua 18:1). It was moved a few hundred years later, but the Tent of Meeting (the Tabernacle) and the Ark speak of the Lord Jesus Christ typically. I don't think that there is anything to be derived from the timing of the Tabernacle being set up in Shiloh; but that this suggests that the common interpretation, that *Shiloh*, in Genesis 49:10, does refer to the future Messiah.

Genesis 49:10a-c The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the lawmaker from between his feet, until Shiloh come,... (Green's LT)

In the English, we often understand *until* to indicate that we are coming to the *end* of something. That is, **the scepter will not depart from Judah and the Lawmaker from between His feet...** do not continue *until* Shiloh comes, and then that is the end of them; but we may understand this to mean that those things continue and keep on continuing *when Shiloh comes*. *When Shiloh* comes is a fulfillment or a completion or a culmination of the scepter remaining in Judah and the lawmaker (judge, ruler) from Judah continuing to reign in Israel (later, Judah).

⁴⁸ See *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, p. 108, for more information

⁴⁹ There are many ways in the Hebrew to indicate the *i*; and at least two ways to indicate the *o*. The 4 spellings given simply different ways of indicating those two letters.

⁵⁰ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:10.

⁵¹ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:10.

We may also understand this as assurance that, even though the Jews lost their sovereignty after the 5th stage of national discipline occurred (when the people of Judah were removed from the land in 586 B.C.⁵²), that God would continue to be with them, that the tribe of Judah would remain the leading tribe, and that Messiah would still come.

What we recognize as Messianic are also the passages which the Jews themselves have understood to be Messianic, including this passage. In A.D. 11, the Jews lost the right to apply capital punishment when the Mosaic Law called for it. So Rabbi Rachman said, "When the members of the Sanhedrin found themselves deprived of the/their right over life and death, a general consternation took possession of them; they covered their heads with ashes, and their bodies with sackcloth, exclaiming: 'Woe unto us, for the scepter has departed from Judah, and the Messiah has not come!'"⁵³ So, even though their interpretation and application might be a little off, the religious experts of that era understood *Shiloh* to represent the Messiah.

3 targums (which are sort of a paraphrase of the Pentateuch) use *Messiah* or *King the Messiah* in this passage (although, they do not do a word-for-word translation; so there is all kinds of additional text). But this indicates that the earliest paraphrases of Scripture understood this passage to be Messianic.

Unfortunately, we do not know exactly what this passage means, or how to interpret Shiloh. The most common understanding is, *Shiloh* refers to the Messiah. This understanding would suggest that the tribe of Judah would continue to be the ruling tribe until Messiah comes. For all intents and purposes, Judah is the only tribe which has put a person on the throne since Saul. The tribe of Levi has to be a remaining tribe as well, given that there was a corrupt, but operating priesthood at the time of Jesus Christ.

You may recall the cruelty of Levi and Simeon. The cruelty of the Levite is made undoubtedly clear when they conspired against Jesus Christ to have Him killed on a Roman cross, despite His having done no sin. Death on the cross had to be one of the cruelest punishments a man could endure, and the sons of Levi manipulated the situation so put the Lord at the mercy of the Roman executioners.

A second possible understanding is that *shiloh* is actually *siloh/selloh*, which means *whose it is, belonging to him*. That would give us: *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the lawmaker from between his feet, until "belonging to him" has come,...* What belongs to Judah? The Messiah, as per the Davidic Covenant.

The Davidic Covenant is found at least twice in Scripture. One is Psalm 89.

The Davidic Covenant (quoted from Psalm 89)

Then You did speak in a vision to Your holy one and said, "I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people.

I have found David My servant; with My holy oil have I anointed him.

With him My hand shall be established; Mine arm shall also strengthen him.

The enemy shall not exact from him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him.

And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him.

But My faithfulness and My mercy shall be with him,
and in My name shall his horn be exalted.

I will set his hand also over the sea, and his right hand over the rivers.

He shall cry unto Me, 'You are my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.'

Also I will make him My firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.

My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and My covenant shall stand fast with him.

His Seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.

Psalm 89:19–29 from the Niobi Study Bible.

⁵² They were returned to the Land of Promise in stages around 516 B.C.

⁵³ From *Bible Query*; March 2006 version. Copyright (c) Christian Debater(tm) 1997-2006.; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:10.

These words begin and they are promises made to David; but in the end, it is Messiah, David's Greater Son, Who is being spoken of.

The Messiah, the greater Son of David, belongs to the tribe of Judah (David's tribe). The Bible is known for its plays on words. In fact, interestingly enough, there is a very thick book devoted to this topic alone: *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* by E. W. Bullinger. The figures of speech found in Scripture are classified and explained therein. This particular verse is found under *Enigma* and *Metonym* (the latter being, where one thing stands in for another). His understanding is that *scepter (the Rod of tribal supremacy)* stands in for *He who is entitled to hold the scepter*.⁵⁴ So, *the Scepter will not depart from Judah* is saying that *the Messiah will not depart from Judah* (that is, Messiah will come from the tribe of Judah). The fact that the Scripture often uses plays on words, it is not out of the ordinary for these words to have more than one prophetic meaning, which meanings overlap and are not contradictory to one another.

I have mentioned the idea that some passages of Old Testament Scripture have both a human and a divine meaning. They were written by man and therefore have a very specific meaning to the human author of Scripture. However, God the Holy Spirit is also the co-Author of Scripture, meaning, the Holy Spirit writes each and every word of Scripture and reveals a divine meaning of these same words to us.

One example of this is Isaiah 53, which is clearly about Jesus on the cross; but that was not original the intention of the human author of Scripture (although his intention is harder to determine).

The Two Meanings of Genesis 49:10a-c

The Human Understanding	The Divine Meaning
The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until He comes to whom He belongs. (The WEB Bible, slightly edited and capitalized)	The Scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the Ruler's Staff from between his feet, until He comes to whom He belongs. (The WEB Bible, slightly edited and capitalized)
Explanation: Judah will be the ruling tribe (which is said twice in the first two parallel phrases); and this will continue until <i>Messiah comes to whom He belongs</i> (which is the tribe of Judah and the people of Israel).	The <i>Scepter</i> and <i>the Ruler's Staff</i> are both metonyms for the Person able to wield the staff of rulership and judgement over the tribe of Judah. This Person is God; and prior to the incarnation, this is the Revealed God, the 2 nd Person of the Trinity. And this will continue until the incarnation, when Jesus will come to His people.

When viewing Scripture as having a divine and human meaning, these meanings are never contradictory or at odds with one another. In this case, they appear to complement one another.

Genesis 49:10d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	to, for, towards, in regards to	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

⁵⁴ *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; p. 603.

Genesis 49:10d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
yiqqâhâh (יִקְרְאֵהָ) [pronounced yihk-kaw-HAW]	<i>obedience, cleansing, purging; gathering</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3349 BDB #429
‘ammîym (עַמִּיִּם) [pronounced gahm-MEEM]	<i>peoples, nations; tribes [of Israel]; relatives of anyone</i>	masculine plural collective noun	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

The NET Bible: “and to him [will be] the obedience of the nations.” For discussion of this verse see J. Blenkinsopp, “The Oracle of Judah and the Messianic Entry,” *JBL* 80 (1961): 55-64; and E. M. Good, “The ‘Blessing’ on Judah,” *JBL* 82 (1963): 427-32.⁵⁵

Translation: ...and He has the obedience of the peoples.

Jesus Christ in the Millennium has the obedience of both the Jews and the various tribes of gentiles; therefore, He has the obedience of all the peoples.

Notice that we are no longer talking about Judah but about He Who will come after Judah, when the scepter shall depart from the hand of Judah, and this person is to be identified with two colors: red (the blood of grapes), which speaks of judgement and His spiritual death; and white, which speaks of His purity. When speaking of grapes, these are crushed to make wine, as He will be crushed for our sins; yet his teeth are mentioned, a sign of tenacity and strength.

Genesis 49:10d And the obedience of the peoples to Him.

Genesis 49:10 The scepter will not depart from Judah and the Lawgiver [will not depart] from the midst of His feet until Shiloh comes; and He has the obedience of the peoples. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

I believe that *him* refers back to *Shiloh*, and the people of Israel would be obedient to *Shiloh*. Properly, we would capitalize *Him* (it is not found that way in the MKJV). *Him* is capitalized in the *Amplified Bible*, Kretzmann's Commentary, the NKJV, VW, the KJ3, the Niobi SB, the RHB6r, the Syndein/Thieme expanded translation and *The Scriptures 1998+*. This is a considerable number of important translations, given that well over half of the translations do not capitalize pronouns which refer to God or to Jesus Christ. As an aside, there are no capital letters in the Hebrew; and, if memory serves, the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament are written in all capital letters.

Genesis 49:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
‘âçar (אַחַר) [pronounced aw-SAWHR]	<i>binding, tying [up, together, to]; imprisoning, confining, making captive; restraining</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #631 BDB #63
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

⁵⁵ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 12, 2017.

Genesis 49:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
gephen (גֶּפֶן) [pronounced GEH-fehn]	<i>vine, vine tree [used figuratively of Israel; metaphorically for stars fading at Jehovah's judgment; and figuratively of prosperity]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1612 BDB #172
'ayir (אֵייר) [pronounced GAH-yir]	<i>male ass, male donkey (young and vigorous)</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5895 BDB #747

Translation: Binding His donkey to the vine...

Why does He bind His donkey to the vine; what does the donkey stand for and what does the vine stand for? And do they belong to the Lord or to the lawgiver?

Genesis 49:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
sôrêq (קֶרֶשׁ) or sôwrêq (קֶרוֹשׁ) [pronounced soh-RAKE]	<i>a choice vine, a species of vine; a very reddish or purple grape vine</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #8321 BDB #977
The feminine form of this word is sôrêkâh (הֶקֶרֶשׁ) [pronounced soh-ray-KAW].			
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
'âthôwn (אֲתוֹן) [pronounced aw-THOHN]	<i>ass, she-ass, donkey</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #860 BDB #87

Translation: ...and [binding] a foal to a choice vine.

We have parallel thoughts throughout. Do they all mean the same thing? That is, is this phrase equivalent to the previous phrase? Throughout, these phrases appear to carry over the verb from the first phrase.

The tying of his donkey and his donkey's colt with a choice vine indicates royalty.

We find fulfillment of this in Matt. 21:4–5 [Jesus is speaking] **But all this happened that might be fulfilled that spoken by the prophet, saying: "Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold, your King comes to you, meek and mounted on an ass, even a colt, the son of an ass."** Isa. 62:11; Zech. 9:9 (LITV)

Genesis 49:11a-b Binding his foal to the vine, and his ass's colt to the choice vine,...

Some understand Judah to have an abundance of vines so that at any point, they could tie their animals to a vine; even to a choice vine. This also suggests that most people own a pack animal.

The Geneva Bible writes: *A country most abundant with vines and pastures is promised to him.*⁵⁶

Keil and Delitzsch suggest a similar interpretation: *Now, when Judah's conflicts are over, and he has come to rest, he also may bind his ass to the vine and enjoy in peaceful repose the abundance of his inheritance.*⁵⁷

This very much describes Judah under the leadership of King Solomon and later under the helm of Jesus Christ. 1Kings 4:45 *During Solomon's lifetime Judah and Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, lived in safety, everyone under their own vine and under their own fig tree.* (NIV)

In this verse, we have a pair of parallel thoughts. The first is about tying a donkey to a vine. In both cases, we are referring to young donkeys and tying them to a vine is interesting, as it suggests that this would not be difficult to disengage from. That suggests to me a high level of prosperity and a high level of personal security.

I also think that this is related to the Lord when He rode into Jerusalem for that final week prior to the crucifixion, where He rode a donkey and a colt into the city.

Isa 62:11 Behold, the LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth: "Say to the daughter of Zion, "Behold, your salvation comes; behold, His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him." (ESV; capitalized)

Zech. 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

And we find these fulfilled in Matt. 21:5–7 (Jesus is speaking to His disciples) "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.' " The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and He sat on them. (ESV; capitalized) Jesus has combined those two passages together and quoted them; and this is also a fulfillment of Genesis 49:11a.

Genesis 49:11c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kâbaç (כַּבַּח) [pronounced kaw-BAHÇ]	to wash [garments, a person]	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #3526 BDB #460
The NET Bible: <i>The perfect verbal form is used rhetorically, describing coming events as though they have already taken place.</i> ⁵⁸			
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yayin (יַיִן) [pronounced YAH-yin]	wine	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3196 BDB #406

⁵⁶ Geneva Bible Translation Notes; courtesy of e-sword; 1599; Genesis 49:11.

⁵⁷ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 49:11–12.

⁵⁸ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 12, 2017.

Genesis 49:11c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
לְבָשׁוֹ (בְּלִישׁ) (בְּלִישׁ) [pronounced ləb-OOSH]	<i>garment, clothing, rainment</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3830 BDB #528

Translation: He has washed His garment in the wine...

The garment is washed in wine; and, again, I am presuming that this is the garment of Messiah; washing in wine would represent His dying for our sins; the blood being the payment for our sins (not literal blood but it stands in for our Lord's spiritual death on our behalf).

This is also interpreted as being so prosperous that they have enough wine to use to wash their garments in.

Genesis 49:11d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
וְ (or וֵ) (וּ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
בְּ (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
dâm (דָּם) [pronounced dawm]	<i>blood, often visible blood; bloodshed, slaughter; bloodguilt; blood of the grape [wine]</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1818 BDB #196
עֲנָבִים (בְּנֵי) [pronounced éy-NAWB ^v]	<i>grape (s)</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #6025 BDB #772
שָׂרָב (סוּר) [pronounced sooth]	<i>clothing, clothes; vesture</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5497 BDB #691

Translation: ...and [He has washed] His clothing in the blood of the grape.

Again, this appears to carry with it the same thought as the previous phrase.

Genesis 49:11c-d ...He washed His garments in wine, and His clothes in the blood of grapes. (Throughout these lessons, unless otherwise noted, the Green's MKJV is used, but I have added in quotations and capitalizations of the pronouns.)

Some would understand the prosperity of Judah to be so great as to have a surfeit of wine; enough to wash one's clothes in.

Dr. Peter Pett: *The picture is not intended to be practical but a vision of a theoretical paradise (as we may speak of a city with its streets 'paved with gold').*⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Dr. Peter Pett; *Commentary Series on the Bible*; from e-sword, Genesis 49:8–12.

Genesis 49:11 Binding His donkey to the vine and [binding] a foal to a choice vine. He has washed His garment in the wine and [He has washed] His clothing in the blood of the grape. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Quite obviously, no one would wash their garments in wine or in the juice of the grape (called *blood* here). The parallel to Jesus Christ comes to mind, as we are made clean by His blood—that is, by His death on the cross on our behalf. This is how our garments are made clean, by washing them in the blood of the Lamb. Revelation 7:14b “**These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**” (ESV) Isaiah 1:18 “**Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.**” (ESV) See also 1John 1:7.

This allows us two interpretations: there would be periods of time in Israel which involve great prosperity (primarily, when Israel is turned towards God); and the Savior would wash us in His blood, with the result that we will become white like snow, being made clean from all sin.

Genesis 49:12a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
chakelîyl (חִלְכִּי) [pronounced <i>khahk-LEEL</i>]	<i>dull [from wine], dark; dark flashing; brilliant; red, reddish</i>	masculine singular adjective:	Strong's #2447 BDB #314
ʿêynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced <i>ġay-nah-YIM</i>]	<i>eyes, two eyes, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes; face, appearance, form; surface</i>	feminine dual noun	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yayin (יַיִן) [pronounced <i>YAH-yin</i>]	<i>wine</i>	masculine singular noun pausal form	Strong's #3196 BDB #406

Translation: [His] eyes are red from wine...

His eyes are red or they are dull or they are dark or they are brilliant. I do not know which nor what this means.

Could this be both a close association with the wine, as being representative of happiness; and with the blood sacrifice necessary in order to save us.

Genesis 49:12b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâbân (לָבָן) [pronounced <i>law^b-VAWN</i>]	<i>white; pale; pale color</i>	adjective	Strong's #3836 BDB #526
shinnayim (שִׁנַּיִם) [pronounced <i>sheen-nah-yihm</i>]	<i>teeth [two rows of teeth]</i>	feminine dual noun	Strong's #8127 BDB #1042

Genesis 49:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
châlâb (חֶלֶב) [pronounced <i>khaw-LAW^bV</i>]	<i>milk; cheese</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2461 BDB #316

The NET Bible: *Some translate these as comparatives, "darker than wine...whiter than milk," and so a reference to his appearance (so NEB, NIV, NRSV). But if it is in the age of abundance, symbolized by wine and milk, then the dark (i.e., red or perhaps dull) eyes would be from drinking wine, and the white teeth from drinking milk.*⁶⁰

Translation: ...and his teeth are white from milk.

The *pair of teeth* his simply refers to the upper and lower jaws of teeth. White generally speaks of the Lord's purity (meaning, He has not sinned).

Genesis 49:12 His eyes will be sparkling with wine, and his teeth white from milk.

Genesis 49:12 [His] eyes are red from wine and his teeth are white from milk. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

I am of two minds on this verse. Does the wine and milk speak of the prosperity of the land of Judah? Or are we still contrasting the color of the wine (the dark, blood red) with the whiteness of the teeth? That is, the contrast of being washed with blood and coming out white. I would go with the latter understanding of this passage.

The Cambridge Bible: *The versions, LXX and Vulg., give another rendering, which is probably to be preferred, "his eyes are more sparkling than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk." In this case, the verse will symbolically describe the beauty of his personal appearance, rather than the productiveness of his territory.*⁶¹

I believe that Keil and Delitzsch give a good sense of what is being said here: *Of wine and milk, the most valuable productions of his land, he will have such a superabundance, that, as Jacob hyperbolically expresses it, he may wash his clothes in the blood of the grape, and enjoy them so plentifully, that his eyes shall be inflamed with wine, and his teeth become white with milk.*⁶²

It is my opinion that learned writers of Scripture never fully understood or appreciated all that they said (or wrote down). We have completed what Jacob said about Judah. Judah could not simply stop his father at that time and say, "Okay, pops, now just exactly what did you mean by all that?" And then Jacob would give an explanation very similar to what we have been studying in this passage. Jacob could not do that. He may have understood, at some level, that Messiah was in this mix and related to the tribe of Judah, and even that Judah would become a leading tribe in Israel; but Judah would not understand this in any way that he could articulate clearly with the same detail that I have give above.

Let's try another example. In Psalm 22, David speaks of himself as being under great suffering; and his sufferings appear to be parallels to the cross of our Lord. I do not believe if someone came to David, the day after he wrote Psalm 22, and asked him, "What does this foreshadow?" that David would have a cogent answer to that question.

⁶⁰ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 12, 2017.

⁶¹ *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*; 1882-1921; by Cambridge University Press; General Editor J. J. S. Perowne, from e-sword, Genesis 48:12.

⁶² Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Genesis 49:11-12.

Genesis 49:10–12 The scepter will not depart from Judah and the Lawgiver [will not depart] from the midst of His feet until Shiloh comes; and He has the obedience of the peoples. Binding His donkey to the vine and [binding] a foal to a choice vine. He has washed His garment in the wine and [He has washed] His clothing in the blood of the grape. [His] eyes are red from wine and his teeth are white from milk. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:10–12 The scepter of rulership will not depart from the tribe of Judah; and the Lawgiver will not depart from the midst of His feet until Shiloh comes. At that time, He will have the obedience of all the people. He binds His donkey to the vine and his foal to the choice vine. He has washed His garment in the wine and His clothing in the blood of the grape. His eyes are red from the wine but His teeth are white from milk. (Kukis paraphrase)

It is always a good exercise to, after studying a passage of Scripture, to go back and look it over—read it, and see if you understand what it is you just studied.

ISV Translation of Genesis 49:8–12

⁸“Your brothers will praise you, Judah [The Heb. verb *praise* is a word play on the name *Judah*].

Your hand will be at the throat of your enemies,
and your father’s children will bow down to you.

⁹Judah is a lion cub.

My son, you have gone up from the prey.

Crouching like a lion,

he lies down,

Like a lioness,

who would dare rouse him?

¹⁰The scepter will not depart from Judah,
nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet,

until the one [Or *until Shiloh*] comes, who owns them both [Lit. *comes to whom it belongs*; i.e. the authority represented by the scepter and ruler’s staff],

and to him will belong the allegiance [Or *obedience*] of nations.

¹¹Binding his donkey to the vine
and his mare’s foal to its thick tendrils,
he will wash his garments in wine
and his robe in the juice of grapes.

¹²His eyes are darker than wine
and his teeth whiter than milk.”

From [Bible Gateway](#); accessed November 8, 2017.

The New Living Bible gives a good translation here:

The Living Bible: The scepter will not depart from Judah,
 nor the ruler’s staff from his descendants,
until the coming of the one to whom it belongs,
 the one whom all nations will honor.
He ties his foal to a grapevine,
 the colt of his donkey to a choice vine.
He washes his clothes in wine,
 his robes in the blood of grapes.
His eyes are darker than wine,
 and his teeth are whiter than milk.

This looks forward in time, where Judah will be the ruling tribe, and his family will continue to be the tribe in charges. Other nations will honor Judah, as we had in the peaceful reign of Solomon.

The Tribe of Judah — a Summary Table

Mother:	Leah	Meaning of name:	Praise
Order of birth to mother:	4 th	Order of birth to Jacob:	4 th
Order of blessing from Jacob:	4 th	Order of blessing from Moses:	2 nd
On the mountain of Gerizim, the mountain of blessing	Aligned with Simeon in the divided kingdom		
First census:	74,600 men able to fight	Second census:	76,500
Famous supergrace heroes:	David, Solomon, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah and Josiah. Jesus, Mary and Joseph are all from the tribe of Judah. No tribe compares to Judah.		
Unusual facts:	Judah was given the lion's share of territory to begin with; and the territory that we most often associate with Israel.		
Moses' blessing of Judah:	Deut. 33:7 And this he said of Judah: "Hear, O LORD, the voice of Judah, and bring him in to his people. With your hands contend for him, and be a help against his adversaries." (ESV)		

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Zebulun and Issachar

Jacob continues to speak of each son, usually taking them one at a time, giving them the end of life blessing.

Zebulun is Jacob's 10th son and his 6th and final son with Leah.

Zebulun to a shore of seas he dwells; and he [is] to a shore of ships; and his border is upon Sidon.

Genesis
49:13

Zebulun dwells to the shore of the sea; and he [is] to a shore of ships. His border is Sidon.

Zebulun will have access to the seas where he dwells and and he will participate in shipping throughout the seas. Zebulun will border Sidon.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

Zebulun to a shore of seas he dwells; and he [is] to a shore of ships; and his border is upon Sidon.

Dead Sea Scrolls
Targum of Onkelos

.
Zebulun will dwell nigh the haven of the sea; he will subdue provinces with ships, and will eat the good of the sea, and his boundary shall come unto Sidon.

Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)

Zebulun shall dwell upon the banks of the sea, and have dominion over the havens he will surmount the breakers of the sea with ships and his border extend unto Zidon.

Revised Douay-Rheims

.

Latin Vulgate	Zabulon shall dwell on the sea shore, and in the road of ships, reaching as far as Sidon.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"Zebulun will dwell at the haven of the sea. He will be for a haven of ships. His border will be on Sidon.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Zebulun shall dwell at the shore of the seas; and he shall be a haven for ships; and his border shall extend as far as Zidon.
Septuagint (Greek)	Zabulon shall dwell on the coast, and he <i>shall be</i> by a haven of ships, and shall extend to Sidon.
NETS (Greek)	.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	The resting-place of Zebulun will be by the sea, and he will be a harbour for ships; the edge of his land will be by Zidon.
Easy English	'Zebulun will live by the sea. And his town will be a safe place for ships to stay. His land will go as far as Sidon.
Easy-to-Read Version–2001	.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	Zebulun "Zebulun will live near the sea. His seacoast will be a safe place for ships. His land will continue as far as the city of Sidon.
<i>God's Word</i> TM	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
<i>The Message</i>	Zebulun settles down on the seashore; he's a safe harbor for ships, right alongside Sidon.
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	"Zebulun will live by the seashore. He will become a safe harbor for ships. His border will go out toward Sidon.
New Simplified Bible	»Zebulun will live by the coast. He will have ships by the coast. His border will go as far as Sidon.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Zebulun will live at the seashore; he'll live at the harbor of ships, his border will be at Sidon.
Contemporary English V.	Zebulun, you will settle along the seashore and provide safe harbors as far north as Sidon.
The Living Bible	.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	"Zebulun will live near the sea. His shore will be a safe place for ships, and his land will reach as far as Sidon.
New Life Version	"Zebulun will live beside the sea and be a safe place for ships. His land will lie beside Sidon.
New Living Translation	.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible Beck's American Translation International Standard V	'Zebulun will live on the coast, near a shipping port that reaches to Sidon. On the Future of Zebulun "Zebulun will settle down near the sea shore and become a safe haven for shipping, bordering Sidon."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Zebulun shall dwell by the sea shore, where the ships find harbour, at Sidon's gates.
Today's NIV Translation for Translators	. Zebulun, your descendants will live by the seashore where there will be a safe harbor for ships. Their land will extend north as far as Sidon <i>city</i> .

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible	Zebulun was to abide on the shore of the sea, a shore for ships, and to your side is Sidon.
Conservapedia	"Zebulun will encamp at the seaport. He will serve as a seaport, and his flank will stretch to Sidon." The Zebulunites were to be a seafaring tribe.
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	To Zebulun Let Zebulun dwell on the shore of the sea, On the shore of the ships, And extend his legs to the fishery !
God's Truth (Tyndale) HCSB	. Zebulun will live by the seashore and will be a harbor for ships, and his territory will be next to Sidon.
Jubilee Bible 2000	Zebulun shall dwell at the port of the sea; and he <i>shall be</i> for a port of ships; and his border <i>shall be</i> unto Zidon.
Lexham English Bible H. C. Leupold	. Zebulun shall dwell toward the seashore, Yea, he shall be toward the shore where ships come, And his flank shall be toward Sidon.
NIV, ©2011 NIV – UK Tree of Life Version	. Zebulun will dwell by the seashore, and be by a harbor for ships— his distant border reaches Sidon.
Urim-Thummim Version	Zebulun will settle on the seacoasts, and he will harbor ships with his utmost border as far as Zidon.
Wikipedia Bible Project	Zebulun, in the coast of the sea will dwell, his will be the boats of the coast, and his thigh upon Tzidon (Zidon).

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	Zebulun lives by the seashore; he is a haven for the ships, and his flank stretches to Sidon.
The Heritage Bible	Zebulun shall lodge at the cove of the sea, and he shall be for a haven for ships, and his border to Zidon.
New American Bible (2002)	"Zebulun shall dwell by the seashore (This means a shore for ships), and his flank shall be based on Sidon.
New American Bible (2011)	.
New Jerusalem Bible	Zebulun will live by the seashore and be a sailor on board the ships, with Sidon on his flank.

New RSV
Revised English Bible .
"Zebulun lives by the seashore; his coast is a haven for ships, and his frontier touches Sidon.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible "Z'vulun will live at the seashore,
with ships anchoring along his coast
and his border at Tzidon.

exeGesés companion Bible Zebulun:
he tabernacles at the haven of the sea:
and he is for a haven of ships;
and his flank is to Sidon.

Hebraic Roots Bible .
JPS (Tanakh—1985) Zebulun shall dwell by the seashore;
He shall be a haven for ships,
And his flank shall rest on Sidon.

Judaica Press Complete T. .
Kaplan Translation *Zebulun*
'Zebulun shall settle the seashores; he will be a harbor for ships; his border shall reach Sidon [The northwest boundary of the Holy Land; Genesis 10:19. Cf. Genesis 10:15. Also see Tzava'ath Zebulun 6.].

Orthodox Jewish Bible Zevulun shall dwell at the seashore; and he shall be a haven for oniyot (ships); and his border shall be unto Tzidon.

The Scriptures 1998 .

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible "Zebulun shall dwell at the seashore;
And he shall be a haven (landing place) for ships,
And his flank shall be toward Sidon.

The Expanded Bible "Zebulun will live near [at the shore/coast of] the sea.
His shore [coast] will be a safe place for ships,
and his land will reach as far as Sidon [10:15].

The Geneva Bible .
Kretzmann's Commentary **Verses 13-18**
The Blessing upon Zebulun, Issachar, and Dan
Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for an haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon. The country later inhabited by the tribe of Zebulun fronted on two seas, on the Sea of Galilee in the east and on the Mediterranean in the west. Its northwestern boundary was to extend to Phenicia. Although the actual physical boundaries of Zebulun afterward did not include all this country, its influence extended to both seas and to Zidon by means of its commerce.

NET Bible® Zebulun will live by the haven of the sea
and become a haven for ships;
his border will extend to Sidon.

Syndein/Thieme {Zebulun -10th Son of Jacob- The Stable Son- Out of Order of Birth}
Zebulun {name means dwelling or habitation - good to have around - represents a stead comforting person.} shall dwell at the haven of the sea {Tribes of Zebulun control sea ports - havens from storms}.
And he shall be for an haven of ships.
And his border shall be unto Zidon {Zidon was a gentle false degenerate group - so this means that the Zebulun type stands fast in the face of false doctrine}.

{Note: When Jesus was a baby, Satan influenced people to try and kill him. So Joseph had to flee to Egypt and from there to Galilee - which is an area controlled by the tribe of Zebulun - that was where the young Jesus dwelled in protection.}

The Voice

Jacob: Zebulun will settle near the shores of the sea, and he will be a safe harbor for ships. His border will extend to Sidon.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Benner's Mechanical Trans.	...Zevulun ^[Residence] , to the shore of the water he will dwell and he is for the shore of ships, his hollow is upon Tsidon ^[Hunting] ,...
Concordant Literal Version	Zebulun at a port of the seas shall tabernacle, and at a port for ships with its flank unto Sidon.
Context Group Version	.
Darby Translation	Zebulun will dwell at the shore of the seas; Yea, he will be at the shore of the ships, And his side [toucheth] upon Sidon.
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	.
English Standard Version	"Zebulun shall dwell at the shore of the sea; he shall become a haven for ships, and his border shall be at Sidon.
English Standard V. – UK	.
Evidence Bible	.
Green's Literal Translation	.
H. C. Leupold	.
Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern KJV	.
NASB	.
New European Version	.
New King James Version	"Zebulun shall dwell by the haven of the sea; He shall become a haven for ships, And his border shall adjoin Sidon.
Owen's Translation	.
Benner's Mechanical Trans.	.
Stuart Wolf	.
Third Millennium Bible	.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster's Bible Translation	.
World English Bible	"Zebulun will dwell at the haven of the sea. He will be for a haven of ships. His border will be on Sidon.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	.
Young's Updated LT	Zebulun at a haven of the seas does dwell, And he is for a haven of ships; And his side is unto Zidon.

The gist of this passage: The tribe of Zebulun would be associated with the seas and with ships, with a border that stretches out to Sidon.

Genesis 49:13a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Z ^e būlūn (זְבֻלֹן) [pronounced z ^e b-oo- LOON]	exalted, honored; transliterated Zebulun	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #2074 BDB #259

Genesis 49:13a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^o]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
chôwph (חוף) [pronounced <i>khohf</i>]	<i>sea shore, shore, coast; [sheltered] cove</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #2348 BDB #342
Owens translates this <i>haven</i> .			
yammîym (יַמִּיִּם) [pronounced <i>yam-MEEM</i>]	<i>seas, lakes, rivers</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #3220 BDB #410
shâkan (שָׁכַן) [pronounced <i>shaw-KAHN</i>]	<i>to tabernacle, to pitch a tent; to dwell, to reside, to live in, to domicile at, to settle, to settle down, to encamp</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7931 BDB #1014

The NET Bible: *The verb שָׁכַן (shakhan) means "to settle," but not necessarily as a permanent dwelling place. The tribal settlements by the sea would have been temporary and not the tribe's territory.*⁶³

Translation: Zebulun dwells to the shore of the sea;...

Zebulun would have its borders along the sea coast; or with access to the sea coast.

This verse is somewhat confusing as maps show that Zebulun was landlocked by Asher and Naphtali. This is described in Joshua 19:17–23, but there is today confusion as to where all of these boundaries actually were. ZPEB points out a possible textual corruption. Josephus implies that the boundaries of Zebulun went from Gennesareth to the land belonging "to Carmel and the sea."⁶⁴ Moses implies that the wealth which Zebulun would receive in the future shall come through the seas in Deut. 33:19. Isaiah 9:1 tells us that this had not been fulfilled in Isaiah's time, but would be fulfilled later. *But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make [it] glorious by way of the sea, on the other side of the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.* The preposition used with Sidon (which is on the shore in Northern Israel) is 'al (עַל) [pronounced *a*] and it has a variety of meanings and applications. It can mean *over, against* and it can mean a direction *towards*. It is also possible that their fusion with Asher and Issachar could have opened up their boundaries to the sea. Moses groups the tribes of Zebulun and Issachar together and speaks of them taking from the abundance of the seas (Deut. 33:18–19).

The other possibility is that what Jacob said was not inspired. This is discussed in greater detail in Joshua 19:10, listing the two problems with interpreting this either way. Personally, I cannot make sense of some words of Jacob being remarkably prophetic and others not. So, either we have a problem with the text or an improper understanding of the future of Zebulun.

In any case, the valley of Jezreel, which is in the area occupied by Zebulun, was the ideal highway to transport goods from the Mediterranean coast inland. If the border was not on the coast, the northern border was pointed in the direction of the ancient commercial centers of Phœnicia, of which Sidon was chief.

⁶³ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 12, 2017.

⁶⁴ Antiq. Vol. 1:22

Genesis 49:13b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûw' (אוּה) [pronounced <i>hoo</i>]	<i>he, it; him, himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one); same</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> , is implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
chôwph (חוֹף) [pronounced <i>khohf</i>]	<i>sea shore, shore, coast; [sheltered] cove</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #2348 BDB #342
'ăniyyâh (אֲנִיָּיָה) [pronounced <i>uh-nee-YAW</i>]	<i>a ship; shipmen, seamen</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #591 BDB #58

Translation: ...and he [is] to a shore of ships.

Zebulun would be involved with shipping (importing and exporting).

As we have shown in the city of Houston, you do not have to actually border the ocean in order to ship products by means of ships (Houston is the 3rd largest port in the United States). Perhaps Zebulun specialized in the building of boats, and, as would seem natural, people to sail them? This is only speculation.

Genesis 49:13c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
y ^e rêkâh (הַכְּרִי) [pronounced <i>yehr-ay-KAW</i>]	<i>flank, side, extreme parts, recesses, remote regions; back, rear; hinder</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3411 BDB #438
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
Tsîydôwn (צִידוֹן) [pronounced <i>tsee-DOHN</i>]	<i>hunting, fishing, catching fish; transliterated Sidon or Zidon</i>	proper noun; location	Strong's #6721 BDB #851

Translation: His border is Sidon.

Zebulun would border Sidon.

All of this came from the mouth of Jacob, maybe as much as 500 years before this all comes to pass.

Kretzmann's Commentary writes: *Although the actual physical boundaries of Zebulun afterward did not include all this country, its influence extended to both seas and to Zidon by means of its commerce.*⁶⁵

Genesis 49:13 Zebulun will live at the sea shore. And he will be a haven for ships, and his border beside Sidon.

Interestingly enough, every map I have seen of Zebulun has them landlocked. It does not appear to have a clear path to the Mediterranean Sea or to the Sea of Galilee. However, Zebulun sits between them both.

12 Tribes of Israel (a map); from Pereformat.ru; accessed January 4, 2017. Quite obviously, the map originally comes from www.jesuswalk.com.

It appears by the prophecy that Zebulun, at some point in time, increased its border to extend to the Mediterranean Sea. Or that Zebulun, despite not having a border with either sea, was able to somehow exploit the nearby seas.

Genesis 49:13 Zebulun dwells to the shore of the sea; and he [is] to a shore of ships. His border is Sidon. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

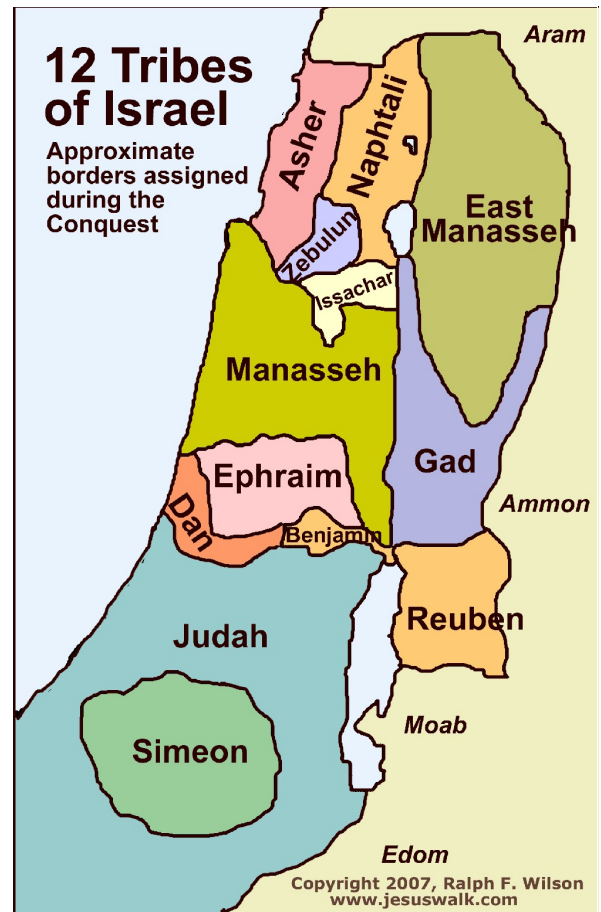
Genesis 49:13 Zebulun will have access to the seas where he dwells and and he will participate in shipping throughout the seas. Zebulun will border Sidon. (Kukis paraphrase)

Genesis 49:13 Zebulun will live at the sea shore. And he will be a haven for ships, and his border beside Sidon. Bear in mind that Jacob gave these prophecies in Egypt.

The Prophecies About Zebulun (Various Commentators)

Guzik: *He shall become a haven for ships: The tribe of Zebulun seems to settle the piece of land sitting between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee. Literally, shall dwell by the haven of the sea can be rendered "looking towards the sea." Zebulun did look to the sea, both to the East and West.*⁶⁶

Keil and Delitzsch: *So far as the territory allotted to the tribe of Zebulun under Joshua can be ascertained from the boundaries and towns mentioned in Joshua 19:10–16, it neither reached to the Mediterranean, nor touched directly upon Sidon...It really lay between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean, near to both, but separated from the former by Naphtali, from the latter by Asher.*⁶⁷



⁶⁵ From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/kpc/genesis-49.html> accessed January 12, 2017.

⁶⁶ David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; Genesis 49:13.

⁶⁷ Keil and Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament; from e-Sword; Genesis 49:13.

The Prophecies About Zebulun (Various Commentators)

Dr. Peter Pett: *It seems probable that Zebulun has revealed a liking for the sea and has taken an interest in ships. For the family tribe will have had constant contact with merchants who may have stimulated such an interest, and his residence in Egypt may have brought him in contact with the ships and sailors that had become his passion. This may be why Jacob forecasts such a continuing interest for him and his seed. (This would be an unusual interest in Canaan where harbours were both small and a rarity because of the coastline, which was not suited for shipping, but is understandable in Egypt).*

Pett continues: *There is no reason indeed why, with Joseph's endorsement, he should not be engaging in some kind of activity in shipping, and this may be what Jacob is referring to. It would not need to be very large to excite Jacob.*

Pett continues: *"His flanks will reach towards Sidon."* This may refer to some proposed maritime activity aiming to trade with Sidon, a well known merchant seaport in Phoenicia.

Pett continues: *The prophecy may include the thought that his descendants too would take up their residence by the sea and would provide harbours for the use of ships with their 'sides' or boundaries reaching towards Sidon. Assuming that Phoenician Sidon is meant, this last may simply indicate desire rather than fulfilment. As Sidon was famous for its maritime adventures so will Zebulun reach out to emulate them. But there is nothing in the tribe's actual future as recorded in Scripture to suggest this. In the blessing of Moses Zebulun, with Issachar, will 'suck the abundance of the seas and the hidden treasures of the sands' (Deut. 33:19), but that simply refers to a fishing industry. (It does however connect them to the sea).*

Pett concludes: *Alternately 'the sea' may reflect the Sea of Galilee, but the mention of Sidon is against this, and besides originally Zebulun territory did not even touch on that. But the migrations of tribes were not unusual (compare Issachar and Dan (Judges 18) and some may possibly have moved there.⁶⁸*

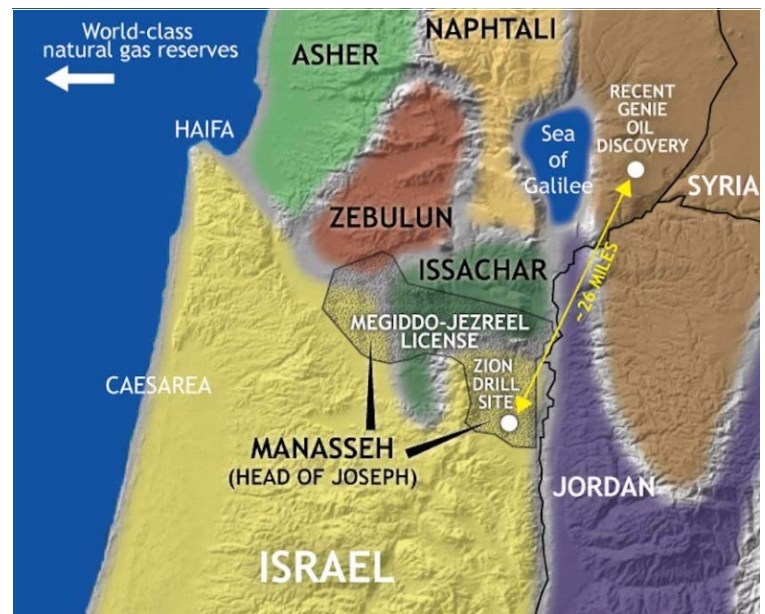
Even though there is not a clear reference in Scripture which suggests that this prophecy was fulfilled, that does not mean that it was not fulfilled.

Both tribes (Zebulun here and Issachar in Deut. 33:19) are said to draw from the abundance of the seas, suggesting that, both nations carved some kind of pathway or access to the seas (the Mediterranean and the Sea of Galilee), from whence they got their seafood and whatever other wealth they derived from the seas (such as, from shipping and trading).

The **hidden treasures of the sand** is quite interesting. Could there be oil or natural gas in that region? I know that down by the Salt Sea there are great natural gas deposits (possibly even related to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah). I do not know about the land going further north, up by the Sea of Galilee, however.

Zion Oil & Gas Exploration Update (a map); from oilinisrael.net/ (accessed April 26, 2017). According to this map, there are drilling places beneath both Zebulun and Issachar (even though these specific tribes do not occupy this space any more).

Sidon is also along the northern coast of Asher.



⁶⁸ Dr. Peter Pett; *Commentary Series on the Bible*; from e-sword, Genesis 49:13.

Zebulun’s border is *not* Sidon, but it is *beside Sidon*. Sidon is nearby.

This makes me wonder—did Joshua, who was a great spiritual and military leader of Israel—did he read the words of Jacob and then use them to assign the land to the tribes of Israel?

[Chapter Outline](#)
[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

The Tribe of Zebulun — a Summary Table			
Mother:	Leah	Meaning of name:	Dwell, dwelling
Order of birth to mother:	6 th	Order of birth to Jacob:	10 th
Order of blessing from Jacob:	5 th	Order of blessing from Moses:	8 th
On the mountain of Ebal, the mountain of cursing		Aligned with Ephraim in the divided kingdom	
First census:	57,400 men able to fight	Second census:	60,500
Famous supergrace heroes: Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel			
Unusual facts:	Smith: <i>The tribe is not recorded to have taken part, for evil or good, in any of the events of the wandering or the conquest...[situated in a place] remote from the centre of government, Zebulun remains throughout the history with one exception, in the obscurity which envelops the whole of the northern tribes...The conduct of the tribe during the struggle with Sisera, when they fought with desperate valor side by side with their brethren of Naphtali, was such as to draw down the special praise of Deborah, who singles them out from all the other tribes. Judges 5:18.</i> ⁶⁹		
Moses’ blessing of Zebulun: Deut. 33:18–19 And of Zebulun he said, "Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out, and Issachar, in your tents. They shall call peoples to their mountain; there they offer right sacrifices; for they draw from the abundance of the seas and the hidden treasures of the sand." (ESV)			
Chapter Outline		Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines	

Issachar is the 9th son of Jacob and his 5th son by Leah. His younger brother, Zebulun, is named before him, although I could not tell you why. The prophecy about Issachar is less than laudatory, suggesting the Zebulun fathered a better tribe than Issachar did, and therefore, was named first.

<p>Issachar, an ass strong reclining in the midst of the sheepfolds. And so he sees a place of rest that [is] good and the land, for she is pleasant. And so he bows down his shoulder to bear and so he becomes a worker being a slave.</p>	<p>Genesis 49:14–15</p>	<p>Issachar [is] a strong ass reclining in the midst of the sheepfolds. He sees a place of rest that [is] good and the land that is pleasant. Consequently, he bows his shoulder to bear [burdens] and he becomes a slave worker.</p>
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⁶⁹ Dr. William Smith, *Smith’s Bible Dictionary*; 1894; from e-Sword, topic: Zrnulun.

Issachar is a strong ass lying in wait among the sheepfolds. He sees a place of rest that appears to be good. He observes the land which seems to be pleasant. However, he bows his shoulder to bear burdens, as he has become enslaved.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Issachar, an ass strong reclining in the midst of the sheepfolds. And so he sees a place of rest that [is] good and the land, for she is pleasant. And so he bows down his shoulder to bear and so he becomes a worker being a slave.
Dead Sea Scrolls Targum of Onkelos	. Issakar [Sam. Vers. 'Issakar, an ass sojourning, lying down between two burdens.'], rich in substance, will have his heritage between the boundaries; and he, seeing his portion that it is good, and the land that it is fruit bearing [Sam. Vers. "fat.'], will subdue the provinces of the people, and disperse their inhabitants, and they who remain of them will become servants to him and bringers of tribute.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	Issakar is an ass in the law; a strong tribe, knowing the order [Or, "intention.'], of the times; and he lieth down between the, limits of his brethren. And he saw the rest of the world to come that it is good, and the portion of the land of Israel that it is pleasant; therefore bowed he his shoulders to labour in the law, and unto him shall come his brethren bearing presents.
Jerusalem targum	ISSAKAR is a strong tribe, and his limits shall be in the midst between two boundaries. And he saw the house of the sanctuary, which is called Quietness [Menucha], that it is good, and the land that its fruits are rich; and bared his shoulders to labour in the law, and to him shall be all his brethren bringing tribute.
Latin Vulgate	Issachar shall be a strong ass lying down between the borders. He saw rest that it was good: and the land that it was excellent: and he bowed his shoulder to carry, and became a servant under tribute.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"Issachar is a strong donkey, lying down between the saddlebags. He saw a resting place, that it was good, the land, that it was pleasant. He bows his shoulder to the burden, and becomes a servant doing forced labour.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Issachar is a mighty man couching by the highways; And he saw that his dwelling place was good, and his land fertile; and he bowed his shoulder to servitude, and became a servant to tribute.
Septuagint (Greek)	Issachar has desired that which is good; resting between the inheritances. And having seen the resting place that it was good, and the land that it was fertile, he subjected his shoulder to labour, and became a husbandman.
NETS (Greek) Brenton's Septuagint	. .

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Issachar is a strong ass stretched out among the flocks: And he saw that rest was good and the land was pleasing; so he let them put weights on his back and became a servant.
Easy English	Issachar is like a donkey. The donkey is lying down between 2 saddlebags. He saw how good his resting-place was. And he saw how nice the country was. So he stayed there. And he worked like a slave for other people.'

Jacob is saying that Issachar is strong. He is saying that he will work like a donkey. Donkeys carry heavy things in their saddlebags. Issachar will work for other people, for food and a nice place to stay.

Easy-to-Read Version–2001 .

Easy-to-Read Version–2006 **Issachar**

“Issachar is like a donkey that has worked too hard.
He will lie down under his heavy load.
He will see his land is pleasant
and that his resting place is good.
But he will agree to carry heavy loads;
he will agree to work as a slave.

God’s Word™

Good News Bible (TEV)

“Issachar is no better than a donkey
That lies stretched out between its saddlebags.
But he sees that the resting place is good
And that the land is delightful.
So he bends his back to carry the load
And is forced to work as a slave.

International Children’s B.

“Issachar is like a strong donkey.
He lies down while carrying his load.
He will see his resting place is good.
He will see how pleasant his land is.
Then he will put his back to the load.
He will become a slave.

The Message

Issachar is one tough donkey
crouching between the corrals;
When he saw how good the place was,
how pleasant the country,
He gave up his freedom
and went to work as a slave.

Names of God Bible

NIRV

“Issachar is like a wild donkey
lying down among the sheep pens.
He sees how good his resting place is.
He sees that his land is pleasant.
So he will carry a heavy load on his back.
He will obey when he’s forced to work.

New Simplified Bible .

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible

Issachar is a sturdy donkey,
bedding down beside the village hearths.
He saw that a resting place was good
and that the land was pleasant.
He lowered his shoulder to haul loads
and joined the work gangs.

Contemporary English V.

Issachar, you are a strong donkey resting in the meadows.
You found them so pleasant that you worked too hard and became a slave.

The Living Bible

“Issachar is a strong beast of burden resting among the saddlebags. When he saw how good the countryside was, how pleasant the land, he willingly bent his shoulder to the task and served his masters with vigor.

New Berkeley Version

New Century Version

“Issachar is like a strong donkey

who lies down while carrying his load.
When he sees his resting place is good
and how pleasant his land is,
he will put his back to the load
and become a slave.

New Life Version

New Living Translation

“Issachar is a sturdy donkey,
resting between two saddle packs.
When he sees how good the countryside is
and how pleasant the land,
he will bend his shoulder to the load
and submit himself to hard labor.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible

'IshSachar has desired the best thing... to rest among the [other] inheritances. And [when he finds] the resting place good and the land fertile, he will put his shoulders to work and become a farmer.

Beck's American Translation

International Standard V

On the Future of Issachar
“Issachar is a strong donkey,
resting between sheepfolds.
He observed that his resting place was excellent,
and that the land was pleasant;
he bent down,
picked up his burdens,
and became a slave at forced labor.”

New Advent (Knox) Bible

Issachar lies secure within its own confines, like some beast of burden that has great strength; so pleasant he finds his resting-place, so fair his land, that he is willing to bow under the yoke, and pay tribute to others.

Today's NIV

Translation for Translators

Issachar, your descendants will be like strong donkeys
that are lying down on the ground between their loads,
so tired that they cannot get up!
They will see that their resting place is good,
and that the land pleases them very much.
But they will bend their backs to carry heavy loads
and be forced to work for others.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible

Issachar is as a bone of an ass, stretching out over sheepfolds.
He was to perceive a resting place that is appropriate, and solid grounds that are delightful. You was to turn aside your back to bear loads, serving for tribute.

Conservapedia

"Issachar is a ribbed donkey reclining between the hearthstones. He sees that good resting place, and the land, that it is pleasant, and will stretch out his shoulder blade to bear a burden, and will become a servant and pay tribute."

Ferrar-Fenton Bible

To Issakar
A strong ass, Issakar, lies in the stall ;—
And he saw that rest was good,
And the land, that it was pleasant,
So he gives his back to the load,
And becomes a servant for hire !

God's Truth (Tyndale)

HCSB	.
Jubilee Bible 2000	.
Lexham English Bible	.
H. C. Leupold	Issachar was a strong-boned ass, Couching between the sheepfolds. He saw that rest is good, And that the land is pleasant. So he stooped over with his shoulder to take on a burden And became a toiling labour band.
NIV, ©2011	“Issachar is a rawboned donkey lying down among the sheep pens. When he sees how good is his resting place and how pleasant is his land, he will bend his shoulder to the burden and submit to forced labor.
NIV – UK	.
Tree of Life Version	.
Urim-Thummim Version	Issachar is a strong donkey couching down between the saddlebags. And he saw the resting place was good and the land being pleasant. So he bowed his shoulder to bear, and was a tributary slave.
Wikipedia Bible Project	Yisaschar is a built-up donkey-- squatting between the sheepfolds And will see that an offering thats good, and that the land is pleasant; and will give his shoulder for hauling, and he will be a servant porter.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	Issachar is a sturdy ass, lolling be side the sheepfolds. He saw that a resting place was good, and that the land was pleasant. He bends his back to the burden and submits to forced labor.
The Heritage Bible	Issachar <i>is</i> a big boned donkey lying down between two cattle stalls; And he saw that peaceful rest was good, and the land, that it was pleasant; and stretched out his neck to bear, and was a worker under forced labor.
New American Bible (2002)	.
New American Bible (2011)	“Issachar is a rawboned donkey, crouching between the saddlebags. When he saw how good a settled life was, and how pleasant the land, He bent his shoulder to the burden and became a toiling serf.
New Jerusalem Bible	.
New RSV	.
Revised English Bible	“Issachar, a gelded donkey lying down in the cattle pens, saw that a settled home was good and that the land was pleasant, so he bent his back to the burden and submitted to forced labour.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	“Yissakhar is a strong donkey lying down in the sheep sheds. On seeing how good is settled life and how pleasant the country, he will bend his back to the burden, and submit to forced labor.
exeGesés companion Bible	Yissachar:

a bony he burro
 crouching between the stalls:
 and he sees that rest is good
 and that the land pleases;
 and bows his shoulder to bear
 and becomes to serve as a vassal.

Hebraic Roots Bible
 JPS (Tanakh—1985)

.
 Issachar is a strong-boned ass,
 Crouching among the sheepfolds.
 When he saw how good was security,
 And how pleasant was the country,
 He bent his shoulder to the burden,
 And became a toiling serf.

Israeli Authorized Version
 Kaplan Translation

.
Issachar

'Issachar is a strong-boned donkey [(Rashi; Ibn Ezra). Or, 'Issachar has a powerful body' (Saadia; Sh'muel ben Chofni), 'Issachar shall haul by donkey' (in contrast to Zebulun; Bereshith Rabbah 99); or 'Issachar was caused by a donkey' (Niddah 31a; Bereshith Rabbah 98). According to one opinion, a donkey found the mandrakes and died (Genesis 30:14; Midrash Aggadah, quoted Tzeror HaMor as Midrash HaGaluy).], stretching out between the saddlebags [(Radak; Sforno). Or, 'resting between stops' (Rashi; Targum); or 'lying between the extremes [of the land]' (Sh'muel ben Chofni; cf. Ibn Janach).].

But he sees that the resting place is good, and that the land is pleasant, so he will bend his back to the load, working like a slave [(Ibn Ezra; Sh'muel ben Chofni). Cf. Tzava'ath Yessachar 3:1, 5:5.].

Orthodox Jewish Bible

Yissakhar is a strong chamor (donkey) lying down between two saddlebags;
 And he saw that a menuchah (resting place) was tov, and haaretz that it was pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became oved (submitting, enslaved) at forced labor.

The Scriptures 1998

.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible
 The Expanded Bible

.
 "Issachar is like a strong donkey
 who lies down while carrying his load [or between the pack saddles].
 When he sees his resting place [camp] is good
 and how pleasant his land is,
 he will put his back [^lshoulder] to the load
 and become a slave [^lat forced labor].

The Geneva Bible
 Kretzmann's Commentary

.
 Issachar is a strong ass, literally, an ass of bone, one with a very strong bony frame, couching down between two burdens;
 and he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute, he willingly bowed down under a heavy load and served with hard labor. The territory of Issachar was in the fruitful plain of Jezreel, a fact which imposed upon the people the double burden of agriculture and pasturage, a hard, but beautiful service.

NET Bible®

Issachar is a strong-boned donkey
 lying down between two saddlebags.
 When he sees a good resting place,
 and the pleasant land,
 he will bend his shoulder to the burden

Syndein/Thieme	<p>and become a slave laborer. {9th Son of Jacob-5th Son of Leah-Listed Last of the Sons of Leah} Issachar {name means 'he will bring reward'}. . . {is} a strong ass reclining between two burdens {an good animal would carry baggage on each side of him. This is a strong animal with the ability to carry, but refuses to. So this is an idiom meaning Issachar and his descendents will be able and powerful people but will not help with the work}.</p> <p>He perceived that prosperity/rest/relaxation {m@nuwchah} . . . {was} good {false scale of values - eyes on details of life}, and the land that it was pleasant/prosperous {na`em} {the land of Issachar was very fertile land and they were a very prosperous agricultural tribe when the time to fight came they refused - they said make a deal with invaders rather than fight}</p> <p>He bowed his shoulder to bear {idiom meaning to become a slave}, having become a slave/laborer/servant {`abad} unto tribute {to conquering neighbors - they paid tribute instead of fighting for freedom - wrong scales of values}.</p> <p>{Note: Issachar is a picture of a person with strong potential power but does not use it. This is a picture of a person with no sense of responsibility. They are prosperous in peace time and lose the concept that freedom is worth fighting for. So, warring neighbors come in and they 'work out a peace treaty' where they pay them instead of fighting them. That makes them workers or slaves of that warring tribe! Indicates little understanding of bible doctrine and God's laws of divine establishment.}</p>
The Voice	<p>Issachar is a strong donkey, lying down between its saddlebags. He saw a good place to rest and a land that seemed pleasant, So he bent down to shoulder <i>another</i> load and embraced a life of hard labor.</p>

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Benner's Mechanical Trans.	<p>...Yis'sas'kar ^[He will lift up the wage] is a donkey of cartilage, stretching out between the saddlebags, and he saw the place of rest given that it was functional and the land given that she is sweet and he will stretch his shoulder to carry and he will exist for the task work of the server,...</p>
Concordant Literal Version	<p>Issachar covets pleasantness, recline will he between the hearthstones, an. see a resting place that is good, and a land that is pleasant, yet stretch out will he his shoulder for a burden, and become will he a servant under a labor levy.</p>
Context Group Version	.
Darby Translation	<p>Issachar is a bony ass, Crouching down between two hurdles. And he saw the rest that it was good, And the land that it was pleasant; And he bowed his shoulder to bear, And was a tributary servant.</p>
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	<p>Issachar, an ass of strength,—couching between the pens; Then beholdeth he rest, that it is good, And the ground that it is pleasant,—So he bendeth his shoulder to bear, And becometh a tributary servant.</p>
English Standard Version	<p>“Issachar is a strong donkey, crouching between the sheepfolds. He saw that a resting-place was good, and that the land was pleasant, so he bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant at forced labour.</p>
English Standard V. – UK	.
Evidence Bible	.
Green's Literal Translation	.
H. C. Leupold	.

Jack Ballinger's translation
Modern English Version .
Issachar is a strong donkey,
lying down between two burdens;
he saw that a resting place was good,
and that the land was pleasant;
so he bowed his shoulder to bear the burden
and became a slave to forced labor.

Modern KJV .
NASB .
New European Version .
Issachar is a strong donkey, lying down between the saddlebags. He saw a resting place, that it was good, the land, that it was pleasant. He bows his shoulder to the burden, and becomes a servant doing forced labour.

New King James Version .
"Issachar is a strong donkey,
Lying down between two burdens;
He saw that rest was good,
And that the land was pleasant;
He bowed his shoulder to bear a burden,
And became a band of slaves.

Owen's Translation .
Stuart Wolf .
Third Millennium Bible .
"Issachar is a strong ass, couching down between two burdens. And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant, and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant to tribute.

Updated Bible Version 2.11 .
A Voice in the Wilderness .
Webster's Bible Translation .
World English Bible .
Young's Literal Translation .
Young's Updated LT .
Issacher is a strong ass, Crouching between the two folds; And he sees rest that it is good, And the land that it is pleasant, And he inclines his shoulder to bear, And is to tribute a servant.

The gist of this passage: Issachar appears to begin as a very strong tribe, but it appears to become complacent, to a point where they become enslaved.

14-15

Genesis 49:14			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Yis ^e sâkâr (יִסַּחַר) [pronounced yis ^e -saw-AWR]	he will bring a reward; there is recompense; transliterated Issachar	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3485 BDB #441
<i>Issachar comes from the word sâkâr (שָׂכָר) [pronounced saw-KAWR], which means remuneration, hire, wages. (Strong's #7939 BDB #969).</i>			
châmôwr (חֹמֶר) [pronounced khuh-MOHR]	ass, male donkey, he-ass, burrow	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2543 BDB #331
gerem (גֵּרֶם) [pronounced GHEH-rehm]	bone, strength, self	masculine singular noun:	Strong's #1634 BDB #175

Genesis 49:14

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
râbats (רָבַט) [pronounced raw ^b -VAHTS]	<i>is lying down, lying in wait; reclines, is stretching out, settles upon; sitting</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #7257 DB #918
bêyn (בֵּינַי) [pronounced bane]	<i>in the of midst, between, among; when found twice, it means between</i>	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107
mishpâth (מִשְׁפָּת) [pronounced mish ^e -PATH]	<i>fire-places, ash-heaps; sheepfolds; saddlebags</i>	masculine dual noun with the definite article	Strong's #4942 BDB #1046

Translation: Issachar [is] a strong ass reclining in the midst of the sheepfolds.

The final word in this sentence is unknown; and some of the meaning would be derived from that word.

I think the picture here is of a strong tribe which becomes a strong ass which finds out that taking a rest can be quite delightful; perhaps to the point of becoming lazy and non productive (as donkeys were beasts of burden).

Genesis 49:14 Issachar is a strong ass crouching down between the sheepfolds.

Genesis 49:14–15 Issachar [is] a strong ass reclining in the midst of the sheepfolds. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The word translated *sheepfolds* is mishpâth (מִשְׁפָּת) [pronounced mish^e-PATH], which means *fire-places, ash-heaps; sheepfolds; saddlebags*. Strong's #4942 BDB #1046. Because of the disparate meanings, this verse is given two sets of interpretations.

Genesis 49:14 Issachar is a strong ass crouching down between the sheepfolds.

Commentators on Crouching Down Between the Sheepfolds

Clarke: *The two burdens literally mean the two sacks or panniers, one on each side of the animal's body; and crouching down between these refers to the well-known propensity of the ass, whenever wearied or overloaded, to lie down even with its burden on its back.*⁷⁰

Barnes: *"Crouching between the hurdles" - the pens or stalls in which the cattle were lodged.*⁷¹

Benson: *The men of that tribe shall be strong and industrious, fit for and inclined to labour, particularly the toil of husbandry; like the ass that patiently carries his burden. Issachar submitted to two burdens, tillage and tribute.*⁷²

⁷⁰ Adam Clarke, *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:14.

⁷¹ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:14–15.

⁷² Rev. Joseph Benson, *Commentary of the Old and New Testaments*; 1857; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:14.

Commentators on Crouching Down Between the Sheepfolds

Whedon: *Issachar's characteristic was a disposition to look for a reward or hire rather than liberty and honour. Like a beast of burden, he loves to lie down and rest between the double sheepfolds; that is the inclosures made of hurdles, and open at the top. The word is dual, probably because these folds were generally divided into two parts.*⁷³

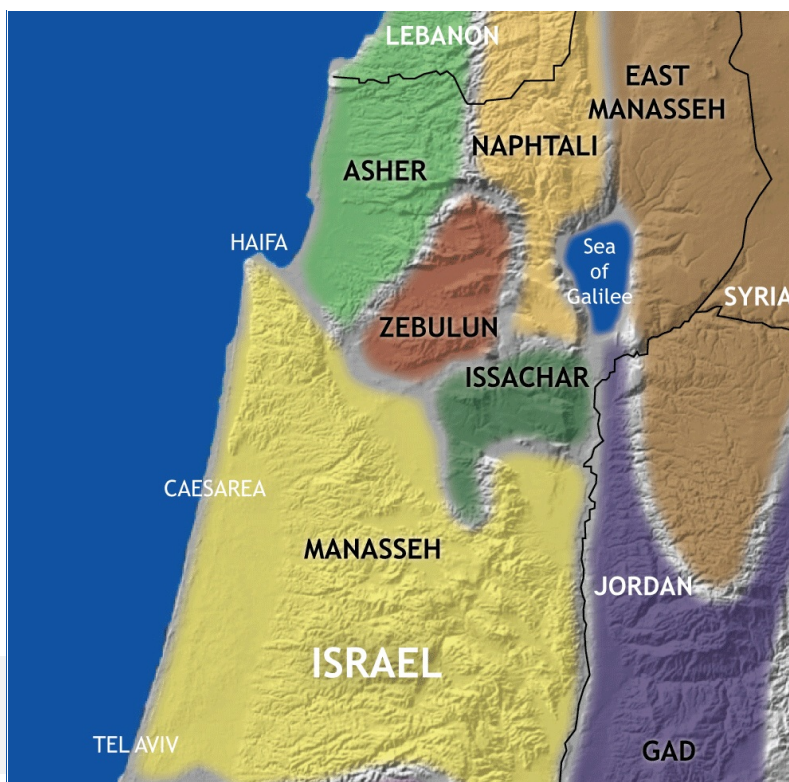
The Cambridge Bible: *Issachar is compared, not to the wild ass, high spirited and swift, but to the strong domestic beast of burden...Issachar is represented as lying contentedly among his flocks, regardless of his brethren.*⁷⁴ This observation ties vv. 14 & 15 together.

We might understand this to mean that, Issachar would lie between the boundaries of the other tribes and not attempt to distinguish herself, to work too hard, or to stand out. In war, Issachar might attempt to bow out or to participate is little as possible.

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Map of Issachar; from [Zion Oil & Gas](#); accessed September 6, 2017. I have seen several maps of Issachar where it is bordered by as few as 2 other tribes and by as many as 4. I don't think that the dual of *burdens, sheepfolds* necessarily refers to how many nations Issachar sits between, but that this visual applies to the donkey who crouches down to rest. The donkey has a pair of sacks, one on each side, and it kneels down to rest. Or, it is in the enclosures and resting, which describes Issachar's modus operandi. Perhaps we are speaking of a people who work then rest, work then rest.



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Genesis 49:15a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (i) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

⁷³ Whedon's *Commentary on the Old and New Testaments*; Editor: Daniel D. Whedon, D.D. L.L.D.; ©1874–1909; from E-sword; Genesis 49:14.

⁷⁴ *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*; 1882-1921; by Cambridge University Press; General Editor J. J. S. Perowne, from e-sword, Genesis 49:14.

Genesis 49:15a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
The NET Bible: <i>The verb forms in this verse ("sees," "will bend," and "[will] become") are preterite; they is used in a rhetorical manner, describing the future as if it had already transpired.⁷⁵</i>			
m ^e nûwchâh (מְנוּחָה) [pronounced m ^e -noo-KHAH]	<i>rest, a condition of rest; a resting place, place of rest; quietness; an habitation</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4496 BDB #629
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
ṭôwb (טוֹב) [pronounced toh ^b v]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i>	masculine feminine singular adjective which can act like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373

Translation: He sees a place of rest that [is] good...

Issachar looks out and sees a place of rest that seems good.

Genesis 49:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	Indicates next word is the object of the verb; sometimes translated <i>to</i>	untranslated mark of a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
nâ'êm (נָעִם) [pronounced naw-GAME]	<i>to be pleasant, to be delightful, to be attractive; to be lovely</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5276 BDB #653

Translation: ...and the land that is pleasant.

The land that Issachar looks out to is pleasant.

⁷⁵ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 12, 2017.

The area that the tribe of Issachar dwelt in was the very fertile plain of Esdraelon, but they never quite took this completely from the Canaanites. It was located between the Mediterranean and the Sea of Galilee, next to Zebulun, close enough to trade in that which is related to the seas (See Deut. 33:19, quoted below).

Genesis 49:15c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâṭâh (נָטָה) [pronounced <i>naw-TAWH</i>]	<i>to stretch out, to spread out, to reach out; to pitch [a tent]; to bow, to extend, to incline, to turn; to veer off</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5186 BDB #639
sh ^e kem (שָׁכֵם) [pronounced <i>shek-EHM</i>]	<i>shoulder; upper part of back below neck; back; [elevated] track of land</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7926 BDB #1014
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
çâbal (צָבַל) [pronounced <i>saw-BAHL</i>]	<i>to bear [a heavy load]</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #5445 BDB #687

Translation: [Consequently, he bows his shoulder to bear \[burdens\]...](#)

But Issachar finds itself in slavery.

In this verse, the implication is that Issachar is strong, but not exceptionally brilliant. Issachar will find a place where life is pleasant, a place of general rest, and Issachar will first become complacent, and then become enslaved. In 732 B.C., Tiglath-pileser III overran Assyria and Samaria and turned its inhabitants into slaves (2Kings 15:29 Isaiah 9:1). This is the long view on Issachar.

On the other hand, in Deut. 33, Moses looked into the near future. He groups Zebulun and Issachar together and wrote [They shall call peoples to the mountain; there they shall offer righteous sacrifices, for they will take out of the abundance of the seas](#) (Deut. 33:19). During the time of the judges, Deborah and Barak both came from the tribe of Issachar (Judges 4:12). Judges 4:12 pictures the charge of Deborah and Barak down Mount Tabor, putting the enemies of Israel, the armies of Jabin and Sisera, to flight.

Genesis 49:15d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224

Genesis 49:15d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
When the object of this verb is preceded by the lâmed preposition, hâyâh often means <i>to become [something that it was not before]</i> .			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
maç (מַעַ) [pronounced mahç]	<i>tribute, tribute rendered by labor or servile work; laborers, task-workers, labor-group, serfdom; to be liable for servile work [to be pressed into servitude]</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4522 BDB #586
Gesenius is fairly dogmatic that this simply refers to tribute; BDB lists <i>servile work, laborer</i> as its primary meaning. Bear in mind that when a country was conquered, sometimes they simply paid the conquering country a yearly fee, and this is tribute. So, in this way, they are slaves to the victorious country.			
‘âbad (עָבַד) [pronounced gaw ^b -VAHD]	<i>working, serving, laboring; being a slave to</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #5647 BDB #712

Translation: ...and he becomes a slave worker.

Issachar ends up being enslaved. The 10 northern tribes were expelled from the land and many of them became slaves.

The NET Bible: *The oracle shows that the tribe of Issachar will be willing to trade liberty for the material things of life. Issachar would work (become a slave laborer) for the Canaanites, a reversal of the oracle on Canaan. See C. M. Carmichael, "Some Sayings in Genesis 49," JBL 88 (1969): 435-44; and S. Gevirtz, "The Issachar Oracle in the Testament of Jacob," Erlsr 12 (1975): 104-12.*⁷⁶

Genesis 49:15 And he saw that rest was good and that the land was pleasant. And he bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a tribute-slave.

Genesis 49:15 He sees a place of rest that [is] good and the land that is pleasant. Consequently, he bows his shoulder to bear [burdens] and he becomes a slave worker. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

In general, Issachar was not interested in fighting but in enjoying their land. This is one of the reasons that the northern kingdom was eventually beaten and removed from the Land of Promise.

In both ancient and modern history, a people occupy a land which they are willing and able to defend. If they are not willing to defend their borders, either militarily or politically, their enemies will come across their borders and take their land from them. This could be in a military campaign, as we saw with Hitler (as an example) in WWII; or it can be more subtle (and far more effective) as we have millions of Muslims settling into Europe. It is rather a sad irony that Muslims flee to escape the wars in their own country (by far, the majority of wars today are occurring in nations which embrace the *religion of peace*); which new nations they will turn into war zones in a few decades. Their invasion of Europe, over the past few decades, by means of immigration, is going to prove to be the most successful invasion by Islam in world history.

⁷⁶ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 12, 2017.

The land which Issachar occupied is said to, even today, be some of the richest farmland in all of Israel.⁷⁷

Genesis 49:14–15 Issachar [is] a strong ass reclining in the midst of the sheepfolds. He sees a place of rest that [is] good and the land that is pleasant. Consequently, he bows his shoulder to bear [burdens] and he becomes a slave worker. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:14–15 Issachar is a strong ass lying in wait among the sheepfolds. He sees a place of rest that appears to be good. He observes the land which seems to be pleasant. However, he bows his shoulder to bear burdens, as he has become enslaved. (Kukis paraphrase)

From the Cyclopedia: *The image of the “sturdy he-ass” (סִיחָר רִמָּה) —the large animal used for burdens and field- work, not the lighter and swifter she-ass for riding “couching down between the two stalls,” chewing the fodder of stolid ease and quiet-is very applicable, not only to the tendencies and habits, but to the very size and air of a rural agrarian people.*⁷⁸

Genesis 49:15 And he saw that rest was good and that the land was pleasant. And he bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a tribute-slave.

Issachar Enjoys Resting in the Land (Various Commentators)

Dr. Peter Pett: *Jacob recognises in Issachar (‘man of wages’) someone who enjoys his pleasures and lacks initiative. He would always be a servant to others rather than taking the mastery. He would always prefer to be paid rather than being an entrepreneur.*⁷⁹

Barnes: *Rest in a pleasant land he [Issachar] felt to be good; and hence, rather than undertake the struggle for liberty and independence, he became like the strong ass a bearer of burdens, and a payer of tribute. He is thus a hireling by disposition as well as by name.*⁸⁰

The Cambridge Bible: *Issachar was ready to kneel, and bear any heavy burden, for the sake of a quiet life in a fertile land.*⁸¹

From Bible Query:

Q: In Gen 49:14-15, why did Jacob prophesy slavery for Issachar, but in Deut 33:18-19 prophesy blessing?

A: Issachar had great blessing in their fertile land. However, in the time of the Assyrians, they became slaves and their tribe remained that way. God’s blessings, when we take them for granted, can tend to make us be lazy and prone to submit to sin.⁸²

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Issachar, as part of the northern kingdom, was removed from the land and enslaved by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.

The Tribe of Issachar — a Summary Table

⁷⁷ *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*; Prepared by the Rev John M'clintock, D.D., and James Strong, S.T.D.; New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, Franklin Square 1895; from E-sword; topic: Issachar.

⁷⁸ *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*; Prepared by the Rev John M'clintock, D.D., and James Strong, S.T.D.; New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, Franklin Square 1895; from E-sword; topic: Issachar.

⁷⁹ Dr. Peter Pett; *Commentary Series on the Bible*; from e-sword, Genesis 49:14.

⁸⁰ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:14–15.

⁸¹ *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*; 1882-1921; by Cambridge University Press; General Editor J. J. S. Perowne, from e-sword, Genesis 49:15.

⁸² *Bible Query*; March 2006 version. Copyright (c) Christian Debater(tm) 1997-2006.; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:14 (slightly edited).

Mother:	Leah	Meaning of name:	Reward
Order of birth to mother:	5 th	Order of birth to Jacob:	9 th
Order of blessing from Jacob:	6 th	Order of blessing from Moses:	9 th
On the mountain of Gerizim, the mountain of blessing	Aligned with Ephraim in the divided kingdom		
First census:	54,400 men able to fight	Second census:	64,300
Famous supergrace heroes:	Tola is the only judge from Issachar and perhaps the best known person from the tribe of Issachar. Possibly Amasia (2Chronicles 17:16), but that is iffy.		
Unusual facts:	In the time of Deborah, the victory of Sisera takes place in Issachar. Also, Issachar seems to have been estranged from the faith for a very long time prior to the time of Hezekiah, but they return to the worship of Y ^e howah (but apparently forgetting various rites of purification).		
Moses' blessing of Issachar:	Deut. 33:18–19 And of Zebulun he said, "Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out, and Issachar, in your tents. They shall call peoples to their mountain; there they offer right sacrifices; for they draw from the abundance of the seas and the hidden treasures of the sand." (ESV)		
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The Complete Jewish Bible gives us a good sense of this passage:

Complete Jewish Bible “Yissakhar is a strong donkey lying down in the sheep sheds. On seeing how good is settled life and how pleasant the country, he will bend his back to the burden, and submit to forced labor.

Issachar would become complacent; if not lazy, at least too self-satisfied with his life. In the end, he had no protection from outside forces, and Issachar would be enslaved. There was no reason for Issachar to become enslaved, as he begins as a strong and vigorous tribe.

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Dan

Jacob continues to bless his sons, and to speak of their futures in the land of promise (remember, they are all living in Egypt at this time).

Many translations treated this final line as separate from the rest of the text, as being a new paragraph, rather than as simply a continuation of the prophetic text on Dan.

Dan will judge his people as one of tribes of Israel. Will be Dan a serpent along the way; a horned adder upon the path, the one biting heels of a horse and so will fall his rider backwards. For Your salvation I have waited, O Y^ehowah.

Genesis
49:16–18

Dan will judge [or, rule] his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan will be a serpent along the way, a horned adder on the path; the one biting the horse's heels so that the rider falls off backwards. I have waited, O Y^ehowah, for Your salvation.

Dan will judge and rule over his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan will be a serpent along the way, a horned adder on the path, the one biting the horse's heels so that the rider falls off backwards. I have waited, O Jehovah, for Your salvation.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Dan will judge his people as one of tribes of Israel. Will be Dan a serpent along the way; a horned adder upon the path, the one biting heels of a horse and so will fall his rider backwards. For Your salvation I have waited, O Y ^e howah.
Dead Sea Scrolls Targum of Onkelos Jerusalem targum	. . (Of DAN) He will be the deliverer who is to arise, strong will he be and elevated above all kingdoms. And he will be like the serpent that lieth in the way, and the basilisk which lurketh at the dividing of the road, which striketh the horse in his heel, and thinketh by the terror of him to throw his rider backward. He is Shimshon bar Manovach, who will be a terror upon his adversaries, and a fear upon them that hate him, and who will slay kings with princes. Our father Jakob said, My soul hath not waited for the redemption of Gideon bar Joash which is for an hour, nor for the redemption of Shimshon which is a creature redemption, but for the Redemption which Thou hast said in Thy Word shall come for Thy people the sons of Israel, for this Thy Redemption my soul hath waited.
Targum (Onkelos)	From the house of Dan will be chosen and will arise a man in whose days his people shall be delivered, and in whose years the tribes of Israel have rest together. A chosen man will arise from the house of Dan, the terror of whom shall fall upon the peoples; (a man) who will smite the Philistines' with strength, as the serpent, the deadly serpent [Churman: "species serpentis as cujus morsum nulla est medicina." --Castel. Root, charem, "to devote to destruction."], lurking [Sam. Vers. "erecting itself."] by the way, he will slay the mighty of the Philistines host, the horsemen with the foot; he will weaken (loosen) the horses and chariots, and throw their riders backward. For thy salvation have I waited, O Lord!
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	From the house of Dan there is to arise a man who will judge his people with the judgment of truth. All the tribes of Israel will hearken to him together. A chosen man shall arise from the house of Dan, like the basilisk which lieth at the dividing of the way, and the serpent's head which lurketh by the way, that biteth the horse in his heel, and the master from his terror is thrown backward. Even thus will Shimshon bar Manovach slay all the heroes of Philistia, the horsemen and the foot; he will hamstring their horses and hurl their riders backwards. When Jakob saw Gideon bar Joash and Shimshon bar Manovach, who were established to be deliverers, he said, I expect not the salvation of Gideon, nor look I for the salvation of Shimshon; for their salvation will be the salvation of an hour; but for Thy salvation have I waited, and will look for, O Lord; for Thy salvation is the salvation of eternity.
Revised Douay-Rheims Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)	. Dan shall judge his people like another tribe in Israel. Let Dan be a snake in the way, a serpent in the path, that biteth the horse's heels that his rider may fall backward. I will look for thy salvation, O Lord.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"Dan will judge his people, as one of the tribes of Yisrael. Dan will be a serpent in the way, an adder in the path, That bites the horse's heels, so that his rider falls backward. I have waited for your salvation, Mar-Yah.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	.

Peshitta (Syriac)	Dan shall judge his people as if the tribes of Israel were one. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the paths, that bites the horses heel and causes its rider to fall backward. I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD.
Septuagint (Greek)	Dan shall judge his people, as one tribe too in Israel. And let Dan be a serpent in the way, besetting the path, biting the heel of the horse (and the rider shall fall backward), waiting for the salvation of the Lord.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Dan will be the judge of his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. May Dan be a snake in the way, a horned snake by the road, biting the horse's foot so that the horseman has a fall. I have been waiting for your salvation, O Lord.
Easy English	'Dan will be a ruler for his people. His descendants will be like other tribes of Israel. They are a small tribe. But they will still be like the other tribes. He will be as dangerous as a snake on the road. He will be like a snake that bites the feet of horses. Then the person falls off the horse. I look to you to keep me safe Lord.'
<i>God's Word™</i>	Verse 18 Jacob says a small prayer, then he continues.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	Dan "Dan will rule his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan will be like a snake at the side of the road. He will be like a dangerous snake lying near the path. That snake bites a horse's foot, and the rider falls to the ground. "LORD, I am waiting for your salvation. "Dan will be a ruler for his people. They will be like the other tribes of Israel. Dan will be a snake at the side of the road, A poisonous snake beside the path, That strikes at the horse's heel, So that the rider is thrown off backward. "I wait for your deliverance, LORD. The GNB treats this sentence as a separate paragraph.
Good News Bible (TEV)	
International Children's B.	"Dan will rule his own people like the other tribes in Israel. Dan will be like a snake by the side of the road. He will be like a dangerous snake lying near the path. That snake bites a horse's leg. And the rider is thrown off backward. "Lord, I wait for your salvation.
<i>The Message</i>	Dan will handle matters of justice for his people; he will hold his own just fine among the tribes of Israel. Dan is only a small snake in the grass, a lethal serpent in ambush by the road When he strikes a horse in the heel, and brings its huge rider crashing down.

	I wait in hope for your salvation, GOD. The Message treats this sentence as a separate paragraph.
Names of God Bible	“Dan will hand down decisions for his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan will be a snake on a road, a viper on a path, that bites a horse’s heels so that its rider falls off backwards.
NIRV	“I wait with hope for you to rescue me, O Yahweh . “Dan will do what is fair for his people. He will do it as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan will be a snake by the side of the road. He will be a poisonous snake along the path. It bites the horse’s heels so that the rider falls off backward. “Lord, I look to you to save me. The NIRV treats this sentence as a separate paragraph.
New Simplified Bible	.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Dan will settle disputes for his people, as one of Israel’s tribes. Dan will be a snake on the road, a serpent on the path, biting a horse’s heels, so its rider falls backward. I long for your victory, Lord.
Contemporary English V.	Dan, you are the tribe that will bring justice to Israel. You are a snake that bites the heel of a horse, making its rider fall. Our LORD, I am waiting for you to save us.
The Living Bible	.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	“Dan will rule his own people like the other tribes in Israel. Dan will be like a snake by the side of the road, a dangerous snake lying near the path. That snake bites a horse’s leg, and the rider is thrown off backward. “LORD, I wait for your salvation. The NCV treats this sentence as a new paragraph.
New Life Version	“Dan will judge his people, as one of the families of Israel. Dan will be a snake in the way, a snake in the road, that bites the horse’s heels so that the man falls off. I wait for Your saving power, O Lord.
New Living Translation	“Dan will govern his people, like any other tribe in Israel. Dan will be a snake beside the road, a poisonous viper along the path that bites the horse’s hooves so its rider is thrown off. I trust in you for salvation, O LORD!

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Dan will judge his people as a single tribe in IsraEl. So let Dan be a snake on the road that blocks the path and bites at the hooves of horses, causing their riders to fall, while he awaits Jehovah's salvation.
Beck's American Translation International Standard V	On the Future of Dan "Dan will judge [The Heb. name <i>Dan</i> means <i>judge</i>] his people as one of Israel's tribes. Dan will be a snake on the path, a viper on the road that snaps at the heels of horses, causing their riders to fall off. "LORD, I'm waiting for your salvation." The ISV treats this sentence as a separate paragraph.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	But Dan shall administer his own laws, like any other tribe of Israel; Dan is like a snake by the road side, an adder on the path, to bite the horse's heels, and make him throw the rider backwards. I will wait patiently, Lord, for the deliverance thou canst bring me. No plausible explanation has been given of the sudden interruption introduced by this verse.
Revised Knox Bible Translation for Translators	. Your descendants will be like snakes at the side of a road, like poisonous snakes lying beside a path. They will strike the heels of horses that pass by, causing the riders to fall backwards as the horses rear up on their hind legs." Then Jacob prayed, "Yahweh, I am waiting for you to rescue me <i>from my enemies.</i> "

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible Awful Scroll Bible	. Dan was to govern his people, as one of the branches of Isra-eternal life. Dan's manner is as a serpent, as the manner of an adder, that bites the horses' heel, and he riding it was to fall backward. You is to have waited for the salvation of Jehovah.
Conservapedia	"Dan will adjudicate his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall become a serpent by the road, a horned snake on the path, one that bites the horse's heels, so that its rider falls backward. I have waited for Your salvation, O LORD."
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	To Dan Dan shall govern his people, As a sceptred Prince of Israel ! Dan is a snake in the path, — An adder laid in the road, — He will bite the heels of the horses, Who will throw their riders backwards. For your victory trust on the Lord !
God's Truth (Tyndale)	Dan shall be a serpent in the way, and an adder in the path, and bite the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. After your saving look I, Lord.
HCSB Jubilee Bible 2000 H. C. Leupold Lexham English Bible H. C. Leupold Dan shall administer justice for his people As any other of the tribes of Israel. May Dan be a serpent in the way, A horned serpent in the path,

NIV, ©2011	<p>One that bites the horse's heel So that his rider falls off backward. For thy salvation do I wait, O Yahweh. Leupold treats this as a separate paragraph. "Dan will provide justice for his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan will be a snake by the roadside, a viper along the path, that bites the horse's heels so that its rider tumbles backward. "I look for your deliverance, Lord. The NIV treats this as separate from the rest of the text.</p>
NIV – UK Tree of Life Version Urim-Thummim Version Wikipedia Bible Project	<p>. . . Dan will judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. And Dan will be a snake on the road, a horned-snake on the way which bites the heels of horses, and his carriage will fall backward. I have hoped for your salvation, to Yahweh.</p>

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	<p>Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent in the way, a viper on the path, that bites the horse's heels, making the rider fall backwards! In your salvation, I hope, O Yahweh!</p>
The Heritage Bible	<p>Dan shall judge his people with a straight line, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the well trod way, that strikes the heels of the horse, and his rider falls backward. I am bound together with your salvation [yeshuw, from yasha, to be open or free, therefore, saved. The verb appears first in Exo 2:17 This is the first place the noun form appears in the Bible.], Oh Jehovah!</p>
New American Bible (2002)	<p>"Dan shall achieve justice [In Hebrew the verb for achieve justice is from the same root as the name Dan.] for his kindred like any other tribe of Israel. Let Dan be a serpent by the roadside, a horned viper by the path, That bites the horse's heel, so that the rider tumbles backward. "(I long for your deliverance, O LORD!)</p>
New American Bible (2011)	<p>"Dan shall achieve justice [In Hebrew the verb for "achieve justice" is from the same root as the name Dan.] for his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Let Dan be a serpent by the roadside, a horned viper by the path, That bites the horse's heel, so that the rider tumbles backward. "I long for your deliverance, O LORD! This short plea for divine mercy has been inserted into the middle of Jacob's testament.</p>
New Jerusalem Bible	<p>Dan will govern his people like any other of the tribes of Israel. May Dan be a snake on the road, a viper on the path, who bites the horse on the hock so that its rider falls off backwards! I long for your deliverance, Yahweh!</p>
New RSV	<p>'Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a snake by the roadside, a viper along the path, that bites the horse's heels</p>

so that its rider falls backwards.
 'I wait for your salvation, O Lord. [This sentence is treated as a separate paragraph.]
 "Dan -- his people will be strong as any tribe in Israel!
 Let Dan be a viper on the road, a horned snake on the path, that bites the horse's fetlock so that the rider is thrown off backwards.
 "I wait in hope for salvation from you, LORD.

Revised English Bible

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible

"Dan will judge his people
 as one of the tribes of Isra'el.
 Dan will be a viper on the road,
 a horned snake in the path
 that bites the horse's heels
 so its rider falls off backward.
 I wait for your deliverance, *ADONAI*.

exeGeses companion Bible

Dan:
 he pleads the cause of his people,
 as one of the scions of Yisra El:
 Dan becomes a serpent by the way
 - an adder in the path who bites the horse heels,
 so that his rider falls backward.
 I await your salvation, O Yah Veh.

Hebraic Roots Bible

Israeli Authorized Version

JPS (Tanakh—1985)

Kaplan Translation

Dan
 'Dan shall fight for (dan) [Or 'avenge' (Rashi), or 'judge' (Radak).] his people, like any one of the tribes of Israel [Although he was the son of a handmaid (Radak). Others, 'like the unique tribe of Israel' (Rashi); or 'the tribes of Israel will be united' (Rashi).].

Let Dan be a snake on the road, a viper [Sheffion in Hebrew, occurring only here. The Septuagint and Vulgate render it as Cerastes. On the basis of Semitic cognates, it is most probably the black and red horned viper, *Pseudocerastes fieldi*, that lives in the Holy Land. The Hebrew name comes from its rustling of scales. This snake digs into the sand with only his long thin horns protruding (cf. Yerushalmi, Terumah 8:3), and when birds take these horns for worms and peck at them, the snake kills them. Hence, this is seen as an indication that Dan will engage in guerilla warfare. In Talmudic tradition, this is seen as a prediction of Samson's career.] on the path, biting the horse's heel, so the rider falls backward.

I pray that God will help you [(Chizzkuni; HaKethav VeHaKabbalah). Or, 'I hope for your deliverance, O God' (Ramban).].

Orthodox Jewish Bible

Dan yadin (shall judge) his people, as one of the Shivtei Yisrael.
 Dan shall be a nachash beside the derech, a viper along the orach (path) that biteth the ikkvei sus (the horse heels), so that its rider shall fall backward.
 I have waited for Thy Yeshuah (Salvation), Hashem.

The Scriptures 1998

"Dan rightly rules his people as one of the tribes of Yisra'el.
 "Dan is a serpent by the way, an adder by the path, that bites the horse's heels so that its rider falls backward.
 "I have waited for your deliverance, O יהוה!

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible
The Expanded Bible

“Dan will rule [judge; or contend for; ^cthe Hebrew verb for “judge” sounds like the name Dan] his own people
like the other [^Lone of the] tribes in Israel.
Dan will be like a snake by the side of the road,
a dangerous snake [viper] lying near the path.
That snake bites a horse’s leg [heel; hoof],
and the rider is thrown off backward.

Kretzmann’s Commentary

“Lord, I wait for your salvation [or victory]. Treated as a new paragraph.
Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Although the son of a handmaid, he still shall have a full inheritance with the other sons, and, moreover, an amount of independence, which occasionally gave him the leadership, as in the days of Samson, and which caused a part of the tribe to migrate to the extreme northern boundary of Canaan and there to establish themselves. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder, a dangerous viper, in the path, that biteth the horse-heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. Although this is here not spoken in a reproachful sense, yet it characterizes the Danites, especially in their expedition against the peaceful city of Laish, Judges 18.

I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord. This is Jacob's longing cry in the midst of his prophecy, for he asks not only the assistance of the Lord for his descendants in this prayer, but he also confesses that his own longing to see the Messiah, like that of Eve, had not been fulfilled, and he realizes, in view of the future as disclosed in his own inspired words, that it will be some time before the Messiah would come to His people. Not for the salvation of Samson, but for that of the Messiah, who should save His people from their sins, his soul was longing.

NET Bible®

Dan will judge [Or “govern.”] his people
as one of the tribes of Israel.

May Dan be a snake beside the road,
a viper by the path,
that bites the heels of the horse
so that its rider falls backward.

I wait for your deliverance, O Lord.

Syndein/Thieme

{Sons of Bilhah-Dan-One of Worst of All the Tribes and Last in Merit}

Dan shall rule his people {this is referring to the Tribulation when a false prophet will rise from the tribe of Dan to work in conjunction with Satan and try and mislead the people. He will rule as Satan's stooge}, as one of the tribes of Israel.

Dan shall be a serpent by the way {the tribe of Dan was the first to go into idolatry in Judges 18:30 it always held up the rear (Numbers 10:25) and was the last to receive an inheritance in Joshua 19:47-49},

an 'puff adder snake' in the path, that bites the horse heels {the horse is Israel in the Tribulation},

so that his rider shall fall backward {the rider of the horse is all believers in Israel in the Tribulation that the false dictator will try to mislead and cause to fall back from God (Revelation 13)}.

{Note: Dan is omitted from the genealogies of I Chronicles Chapters 2:10 and is omitted from the tribes that send out evangelists in the Tribulation (Revelation 2:4-8)}

{Waiting for the 2nd Advent of Christ}

I {believing remnant in Israel -Tribulation- make this prayer} have waited for your deliverance, O Jehovah/God.

The Voice

Dan will judge his people,
as one of the tribes of Israel.

Yet Dan will also be a snake by the road,
a viper along the path

That strikes at the horse's heels *as it goes by*
so that its rider falls backward.

I wait *patiently* for Your salvation, Eternal One! The Voice treats this sentence as a separate paragraph.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Benner's Mechanical Trans.	...Dan ^[Moderator] will moderate his people like one of the staffs of Yisra'el ^[He turns E] , Dan ^[Moderator] will exist as a serpent upon the road, an adder upon the path, the one biting the heels of a horse and his rider will fall back, YHWH ^[He Exists] , I was bound up for your rescue,...
Benner's Mechanical Trans. Concordant Literal Version Dan shall adjudicate his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Become shall Dan a serpent on a way, a horned snake on a path, that bites the heels of a horse, and fall shall its rider backward. For Your salvation I expect, Yahweh!"
Context Group Version Darby Translation <i>Emphasized Bible</i>	. . . Dan, shall vindicate his people,—as one of the tribes of Israel; It cometh to pass that, Dan, is a serpent upon the way, A horned viper, upon the path,—That biteth the heels of the horse, And his rider falleth backwards:— For thy salvation, have I waited O Yahweh!
English Standard Version Evidence Bible Green's Literal Translation Jack Ballinger's translation Modern English Version Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the road, a viper on the path, that bites the horse's heels so that its rider will fall backward. I wait for Your salvation, O Lord! The MEV treats this sentence as a new paragraph.
Modern KJV NASB	. "Dan shall judge his people, As one of the tribes of Israel. "Dan shall be a serpent in the way, A horned snake in the path, That bites the horse's heels, So that his rider falls backward. "For Your salvation I wait, O LORD.
New European Version New King James Version	. "Dan shall judge his people As one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, A viper by the path, That bites the horse's heels So that its rider shall fall backward. I have waited for your salvation, O LORD!
Owen's Translation Ron Snider's Translation Stuart Wolf's Translation Third Millennium Bible

Updated Bible Version 2.11 .
 A Voice in the Wilderness .
 Webster's Bible Translation .
 World English Bible .
 Young's Literal Translation .
 Young's Updated LT

Dan does judge his people, As one of the tribes of Israel; Dan is a serpent by the way, An adder by the path, Which is biting the horse's heels, And its rider falls backward. For Your salvation I have waited, Jehovah!.

The gist of this passage: Dan would judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel; but he would become like a serpent in the road, who bites the hoof of the horse and throw him off. Then Jacob adds, "I have waited for Your salvation, O Y^ehowah!"

16-18

Genesis 49:16

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Dân (דן) [pronounced dawn]	judge and is transliterated Dan	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1835 BDB #192
The NET Bible: <i>The name Dan (דן, dan) means "judge" and forms a wordplay with the following verb.</i> ⁸³			
dîyn (דין) [pronounced deen]	to judge, to correctly evaluate, to evaluate, to condemn, to vindicate; to defend [the right of anyone]; to rule, to regulate; to contend with	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1777 BDB #192
‘am (עם) [pronounced gahm]	people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]	masculine singular collective noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
’echâd (אחד) [pronounced eh-KHAWD]	one, first, certain, only; each, every; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone; same	numeral adjective construct	Strong's #259 BDB #25
shêbeṭ (שֵׁבֶט) [pronounced SHAY ^B -vef]	rod, staff, club; spear; scepter and figuratively for a tribe, subdivision of a tribe or family and for a ruler (scepter-bearer), governor	masculine plural construct	Strong's #7626 BDB #986

⁸³ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 13, 2017.

Genesis 49:16

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: Dan will judge [or, rule] his people as one of the tribes of Israel.

The name *Dan* means *to judge*, although it is not clear to me how Dan will judge the tribes of Israel. In the Old Testament economy, the word *to judge* could mean *to rule over*; the idea being, the highest judge of the land ruled over the land. Therefore, the judge is the defacto ruler.

The name *Dan* means *to judge*. I have heard that the Antichrist will come from the tribe of Dan (or will this be the false prophet?), but I cannot find documentation for that at this time. This is in part because the tribe of Dan is not mentioned in the twelve tribes of Israel in Revelation 7. It is possibly even this verse which implies that.

R. B. Thieme, Jr.: *[T]his is referring to the Tribulation when a false prophet will rise from the tribe of Dan to work in conjunction with Satan and try and mislead the people. He will rule as Satan's stooge, as one of the tribes of Israel the rear (Numbers 10:25) and was the last to receive an inheritance in Joshua 19:47-49.*⁸⁴

Genesis 49:16 Dan will judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel.

Genesis 49:16 Dan will judge [or, rule] his people as one of the tribes of Israel. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The name *Dan* is based upon the word for *judge*. Some believe this to be a reference to Samson, who would be a very famous judge of the people, yet a man often beset with his sin nature. The reason that it is important and notable that any leader would come out of Dan is this: Dan is the son of a concubine (in this case, the maidservant of Rachel, a wife of Jacob) and, as such, comes with a lower status. There are 4 sons of Jacob born of servants, and their status and expectations tend to be lower.

The second verse about Dan was considerably different.

Genesis 49:17a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; apocopated	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Dân (דָּן) [pronounced <i>dawn</i>]	<i>judge and is transliterated Dan</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1835 BDB #192
nâchâsh (נָחָשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-KHAWSH</i>]	<i>serpent, snake; image (of serpent); fleeing serpent (mythological)</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5175 BDB #638

⁸⁴ From http://syndein.com/Genesis_49.html accessed January 13, 2017.

Genesis 49:17a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
‘al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
derek ^e (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced <i>DEH-rek^e</i>]	<i>way, distance, road, path; journey, course; direction, towards; manner, habit, way [of life]; of moral character</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1870 BDB #202

Translation: Dan will be a serpent along the way,...

Whereas Dan would be judging (ruling) his people, he is also a serpent along the way (on the path or along the road).

Genesis 49:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
sh ^e phîyphôn (שִׁפְיָפֹן) [pronounced <i>shehf-ee-FONE</i>]	<i>a horned snake; possibly an adder, a horned adder</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8207 BDB #1051
‘al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
’ôrach (אֹרַח) [pronounced <i>OH-rahkh</i>]	<i>a [well-trodden] road; way, path; metonyms: traveler; traveling company, caravan; metaphorically: a course [way] of living [or action]; mode, manner, way; a path of life</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #734 BDB #73

Translation: ...a horned adder on the path;...

This image is repeated, but with a different snake being named.

Genesis 49:17c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
nâshak ^e (נָשַׁק) [pronounced <i>naw-SHAHK^e</i>]	<i>the one biting [off]</i>	Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #5391 BDB #675
This verb has a completely different meaning in Deut. 23:19–20, where it means <i>to charge interest</i> or <i>to charge usury (unusually high interest)</i> .			
‘âqêb (עֲקֵב) [pronounced <i>gaw-KA^{BV}</i>]	<i>heel, footprint, hinderpart, and therefore figuratively for a rear guard, troops in the rear</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #6119 (and #6120) BDB #784

Genesis 49:17c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
שׁוֹס (סוּס) [pronounced soos]	horse, chariot horse; swallow, swift	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5483 BDB #692
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâphal (לָפַג) [pronounced naw-FAHL]	to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply; to desert	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5307 BDB #656
râkab (בָּכַר) [pronounced raw-KAH ^B V]	the one riding, rider; horsemen	Qal active participle with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7392 BDB #938
'âchôwr (אַחֲוֹר) [pronounced aw-KHOHR]	the hinder side, the back part; behind back, backwards [generally found in poetry]	masculine singular substantive; adverb	Strong's #268 BDB #30

Translation: ...the one biting the horse's heels so that the rider falls off backwards.

The snake strikes the heels of the horse and the horse throws off her rider.

The NET Bible: *The comparison of the tribe of Dan to a venomous serpent is meant to say that Dan, though small, would be potent, gaining victory through its skill and shrewdness. Jewish commentators have linked the image in part with Samson. That link at least illustrates the point: Though a minority tribe, Dan would gain the upper hand over others.*⁸⁵

Dan as a serpent and a viper waiting to bite at the horse's heels tells us that he does not directly attack God but attacks Israel. It is Israel which awaits the deliverance of Yahweh, not the tribe of Dan (in fact, this sentence may be separate from the direct statements about Dan).

This verse sets up a history of the tribe of Dan. He first vindicates his people by their conquering northern territory previously unoccupied by any tribe of Israel (Judges 18). However, it is likely that the tribe of Dan became less and less populous as time went on, its influence dwindling, its idolatry increasing (2Kings 10:29). Although Dan does not appear as one of the tribes in Revelation 7, Dan does have future in the millennium, according to Ezekiel's vision in Ezekiel 48:1.

Like many prophecies in the Bible, there are two takes on the same prophecy—the near and the far view. This can also be seen as a specific prophecy of Sampson, the most famous Danite and perhaps the most famous of the judges. One take of Dan as a serpent is its small size and insignificance compared to the harm it can cause. Sampson, but one man, killed 1000 Philistines with the jawbone of an ass (Judges 15:14–17). Later, when he had been enslaved and his eyes gouged out, he was also deemed insignificant, a person to amuse royalty (Judges 16:27)—yet he pulled two pillars together and caused the palace (or mansion) to fall upon 3000 of the occupants who had enslaved him and were amused by him (Judges 16:27–30).

As the serpent did not directly attack the rider of the horse, Sampson did not directly attack the people of the mansion. Both Sampson and the serpent appeared insignificant compared to the damage that they caused.

⁸⁵ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 13, 2017.

R. B. Thieme, Jr.: *[T]he tribe of Dan was the first to go into idolatry in Judges 18:30 it always held up the rear (Numbers 10:25) and was the last to receive an inheritance in Joshua 19:47-49.*⁸⁶

Genesis 49:17 Dan will be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that bites the horse's heels, so that its rider will fall backward.

Genesis 49:17 Dan will be a serpent along the way, a horned adder on the path; the one biting the horse's heels so that the rider falls off backwards. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

This is quite an indictment of the tribe of Dan, and some believe that the antichrist will come from this tribe, based upon this passage and a few others.

The tribe of Dan will not be mentioned in the New Testament; and although some claim that the antichrist will come from that tribe, the Scripture primarily responsible for this view is what we are studying here.

Gen 49:17 Dan shall be a serpent in the way, a viper by the path, that bites the horse's heels so that his rider falls backward. (ESV)

Dan, as a serpent in the way (various interpretations)

Benson: *[Dan will be a] kind of horned serpent, of a subtle nature, which, according to Pliny, hides its whole body in the sand, showing only its horns to catch birds. This is intended to signify the subtlety of that tribe, which should conquer its enemies more by craft than by strength or force of arms, and by art, and policy, and surprise, gain advantages against them, like a serpent suddenly biting the heels of a traveler...[In] the house of Israel, [the people of Dan] were in general a stubborn and disobedient people, "yet it was the peculiar infamy of the tribe of Dan, to be the ringleaders in idolatry, the first who erected publicly a molten image in the land of promise, and, by their example and perseverance in this iniquity, infected all the tribes of Israel. This idolatry began soon after the days of Joshua, and continued till the day of the captivity of the land (Judges 18:30).*⁸⁷

The Cambridge Bible: *The horned snake, or κεράστης, is a small, dangerous, and venomous serpent. The simile is that of a small serpent disturbed, and suddenly with deadly fangs striking a horse from behind. Dan is dangerous to his foes by ambushes, secret raids, and guerilla warfare; cf. Judges 18:27. The mention of the horse and horseman indicates the more wealthy, warrior class of the enemy.*⁸⁸

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown: *A serpent, an adder, implies subtlety and stratagem; such was pre-eminently the character of Samson, the most illustrious of its judges.*⁸⁹

Whedon: *Dan...shall subtly set upon his enemies, and suddenly surprise them: as they did the men of Laish; and as Samson, of this tribe, did the Philistines.*⁹⁰

Perhaps the most notable thing about the tribe of Dan is, they will leave the place where they had been assigned to live and go looking for another area to live in. The tribe of Dan looks for more suitable land in Judges 18:1; and they eventually go up north where they took away the territory of a peaceful people Laish (Judges 18:7–10, 27–29). Interestingly enough, the narrative in Judges appears to be quite sympathetic to the people of Laish.

⁸⁶ From http://syndein.com/Genesis_49.html accessed January 13, 2017.

⁸⁷ Rev. Joseph Benson, *Commentary of the Old and New Testaments*; 1857; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:17 (slightly edited).

⁸⁸ *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*; 1882-1921; by Cambridge University Press; General Editor J. J. S. Perowne, from e-sword, Genesis 49:17.

⁸⁹ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, Genesis 49:17.

⁹⁰ *Whedon's Commentary on the Old and New Testaments*; Editor: Daniel D. Whedon, D.D. L.L.D.; ©1874–1909; from E-sword; Genesis 49:17.

The Tribe of Dan — a Summary Table			
Mother:	Bilhah	Meaning of name:	Judge
Order of birth to mother:	1 st	Order of birth to Jacob:	5 th son
Order of blessing from Jacob:	7 th	Order of blessing from Moses:	11 th
On the mountain of Ebal, the mountain of cursing		Aligned with Ephraim in the divided kingdom	
First census:	62,700	Second census:	64,400
Famous supergrace heroes: Samson			
General facts:	Dan did not help Barak or Deborah in their fight against Sisera. Although Dan was assigned a particular geographical area by Joshua, they moved northward and established their property at the far north end of Israel. Dan is not named among the tribes of Israel in Revelation 7, and some believe that because of this, the Antichrist comes from him. Dan's genealogy is not found in 1Chronicles 2–12. They are associated with idolatry in 1Kings 12:28-29 Amos 8:14		
Moses' blessing of Dan: Deut. 33:22 And of Dan he said, "Dan is a lion's cub that leaps from Bashan." (ESV)			
Chapter Outline		Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines	

At the beginning, Dan will be a tribe which initially shows great promise (Exodus 31:6 35:34 38:23); but later takes the land of a peaceful people (Judges 18) and after that, engages in widespread idolatry (Judges 18:30 2Kings 10:29).

As Dan will eventually occupy a territory in the far north, the phrase *from Dan to Beersheba* is often used to take in all of Israel (Beersheba is one of the southernmost cities of Judah). Judges 20:1 1Samuel 3:20 2Samuel 3:10 17:19 24:2

Chapter Outline	Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines
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A call for God's salvation

This seems to be something which Jacob says, separate from the tribe of Dan or any of the other tribes.

Genesis 49:18			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
y ^e shûw'âh (יְשׁוּׁוֹ) [pronounced <i>y^eshoo-GAW</i>]	<i>deliverance, salvation</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3444 BDB #447
qâvâh (קָוָה) [pronounced <i>kaw-VAW</i>]	<i>to wait for, to wait expectantly for, to look for, to lie in wait for</i>	1 st person singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #6960 BDB #876

Genesis 49:18

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as Jehovah, Yahweh, Y ^e howah	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: I have waited, O Y^ehowah, for Your salvation.

In this section on Dan, we have, "I have waited for Your salvation, O Lord." Not sure how to put that all together.

The NET Bible: *As Jacob sees the conflicts that lie ahead for Dan and Gad (see v. 19), he offers a brief prayer for their security.*⁹¹

Kretzmann's Commentary: *This is Jacob's longing cry in the midst of his prophecy, for he asks not only the assistance of the Lord for his descendants in this prayer, but he also confesses that his own longing to see the Messiah, like that of Eve, had not been fulfilled, and he realizes, in view of the future as disclosed in his own inspired words, that it will be some time before the Messiah would come to His people. Not for the salvation of Samson, but for that of the Messiah, who should save His people from their sins, his soul was longing.*⁹²

We then have a rather unusual statement:

Genesis 49:18 I have waited for Your salvation, O Jehovah.

Genesis 49:18 I have waited, O Y^ehowah, for Your salvation. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

It is very difficult to square v. 18 with the previous verse. Will there be a contingent of those from the tribe of Dan who turn to the Lord? Or is this, instead, a plaintive cry from Jacob, in the midst of giving these blessings, speaking for all Israel?

Genesis 49:18 from Stephanie Middaugh (a graphic); from **Pinterest**; accessed June 5, 2017.

Chapter Outline
Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Genesis 49:16–18 Dan will judge [or, rule] his people as one of the tribes of Israel.



⁹¹ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 13, 2017.

⁹² From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/kpc/genesis-49.html> accessed January 13, 2017.

Dan will be a serpent along the way, a horned adder on the path; the one biting the horse's heels so that the rider falls off backwards. I have waited, O Y^ehowah, for Your salvation. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:16–18 Dan will judge and rule over his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan will be a serpent along the way, a horned adder on the path, the one biting the horse's heels so that the rider falls off backwards. I have waited, O Jehovah, for Your salvation. (Kukis paraphrase)

"I have waited for Your deliverance, O יהוה!" (The Scriptures 1998+; capitalized)

"I have waited for Your salvation, O Y^ehowah" (various commentators)

This exclamation may be seen as a separate thought, apart from the tribe of Dan.

Barnes: *The patriarch, contemplating the power of the adversaries of his future people, breaks forth into the expression of his longing desire and hope of that salvation of the Almighty by which alone they can be delivered. That salvation is commensurate with the utmost extent and diversity of these adversaries.*⁹³

Whedon: *What occasioned this abrupt exclamation at this point, or what connection it has with the context, is not clear. Probably the wars and dangers that awaited the chosen people were vividly presented to the patriarch's soul as he mentioned the traits of Dan...But if no such relation to the context be allowed, we may suppose that Jacob here breaks out with these words as a refrain, or pause, in the midst of exciting prophecy, and conflicting emotions within.*⁹⁴

The Cambridge Bible: *This parenthetical exclamation of prayer is thought by many scholars to be a gloss. But all authorities contain the verse. There is no obvious reason for inserting such a gloss at this particular point...it has been explained as a cry of physical weakness by Jacob. It is very possible that the verse is intended to mark the point at which the song is half finished.*⁹⁵

A gloss means that this verse may have been added after the fact; but as the Cambridge Bible reasonably points out, there is no call for such an insertion into the given text.

Or, verse is seen by others as connected to vv. 16–17:

The Cambridge Bible: *The exclamation has by some been thought to show that, at the time of the composition of this song, Dan was engaged in a long conflict with his foes, and the issue was still doubtful.*⁹⁶

Benson: *These words may be...connected with the preceding prophecy concerning Dan, according to the explanation given in the last note. Under a foresight of their dishonourable, perfidious, and serpent-like conduct, and the general idolatry which should be introduced among his descendants through their means, Jacob says, I have waited for, expected and desired, Your help, O Lord, to save my posterity from the manifold sins and temporal calamities which I foresee are coming upon them, and especially from spiritual and eternal miseries, by that Messiah whom thou hast promised, that seed of the woman which is to bruise the head of him that bruises the heel of Your people.*⁹⁷

Bear in mind, Jacob himself is at the end of his life and he apparently knows this. So this would be a reasonable thing for him to say.

⁹³ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:16–18.

⁹⁴ *Whedon's Commentary on the Old and New Testaments*; Editor: Daniel D. Whedon, D.D. L.L.D.; ©1874–1909; from E-sword; Genesis 49:18 (slightly edited).

⁹⁵ *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*; 1882-1921; by Cambridge University Press; General Editor J. J. S. Perowne, from e-sword, Genesis 49:18 (slightly edited).

⁹⁶ *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*; 1882-1921; by Cambridge University Press; General Editor J. J. S. Perowne, from e-sword, Genesis 49:18 (slightly edited).

⁹⁷ Rev. Joseph Benson, *Commentary of the Old and New Testaments*; 1857; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:18 (slightly edited).

The entire passage on Dan reads as follows: “Dan will judge and rule over his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan will be a serpent along the way, a horned adder on the path, the one biting the horse’s heels so that the rider falls off backwards. I have waited, O Jehovah, for Your salvation.” Whether the final sentence is independent of the tribe of Dan is difficult to ascertain. It seems so removed in tenor from the words spoken about Dan that I would treat it as a separate thought as well, perhaps as some sort of a plaintive cry to God by Jacob.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Gad, Asher and Naphtali

Gad, Asher and Naphtali will all be given one sentence each. Gad and Asher are both sons of Leah’s maidservant; and Dan and Naphtali were sons of Rachel’s maidservant. The expectations for their lives is somewhat lower than the expectations for the other sons.

Barnes: Gad and Asher are placed before Naphtali, the second son of Bilhah. We cannot tell whether they were older, or for what other reason they occupy this place. It may be that Naphtali was of a less decisive or self-reliant character.⁹⁸

Gad [is] a troop; he will raid him and he [even] he will raid heels.	Genesis 49:19	Gad [is] a troop; he will attack him but he [even] he will raid [their] heels.
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Gad is a troop, and after being attacked, they will counterattack, coming from behind.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Gad [is] a troop; he will raid him and he [even] he will raid heels.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum of Onkelos	.
Jerusalem targum	From the house of GAD will go forth hosts arrayed in arms. They will bring Israel over Jardena put them in possession of the land of Kenaan, and afterwards return in peace to their tabernacles.
Targum (Onkelos)	From the house of Gad will armed hosts go over the Jardena before their brethren to the battle ; and with much substance will they return unto their land.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	The tribe of Gad with the rest of the tribes will, armed, pass over the streams of Arnona and subdue before them the pillars of the earth, and armed will they return into their limits with much substance and dwell in peace beyond the passage of Jardena; for so will they choose, and it shall be to them to receive their inheritance.
Revised Douay-Rheims	.
Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)	Gad, being girded, shall fight before him: and he himself shall be girded backward.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"A troop will press on Gad, but he will press on their heel.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Gad shall go out to raid, and shall pursue at the heels of his enemies.
Septuagint (Greek)	Gad, a plundering troop shall plunder him; but he shall plunder him, <i>pursuing him</i> closely.
Brenton’s Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

⁹⁸ Albert Barnes, *Barnes’ Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:20.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Gad, an army will come against him, but he will come down on them in their flight.
Easy English	'People will attack Gad, but he will attack them.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	Gad "A group of robbers will attack Gad, but Gad will chase them away.
<i>God's Word</i> TM	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	"Gad will be attacked by a band of robbers, But he will turn and pursue them.
International Children's B.	"Robbers will attack Gad. But he will defeat them and drive them away.
<i>The Message</i>	Gad will be attacked by bandits, but he will trip them up.
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	"Gad will be attacked by a group of robbers. But he will attack them as they run away.
New Simplified Bible	»Gad will be attacked by a band of raiders. He will strike back at their heels.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Gad will be attacked by attackers, but he'll attack their back.
Contemporary English V.	Gad, you will be attacked, then attack your attackers.
The Living Bible	"A marauding band shall stamp upon Gad, but he shall rob and pursue them!
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	"Robbers will attack Gad, but he will defeat them and drive them away.
New Life Version	"A group of soldiers will go against Gad. But he will go against them at their heels.
New Living Translation	"Gad will be attacked by marauding bands, but he will attack them when they retreat.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'A group of plunderers will plunder Gad. However, he will also follow and plunder them.
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard V	<i>On the Future of Gad</i> "Bandits will raid Gad, but Gad will raid them back [Lit. <i>raid the heel</i>]." Gad shall be at the mercy of armed men, till he goes armed in his turn.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	.
Revised Knox Bible	.
Translation for Translators	<i>Then Jacob continued telling his sons what would happen in the future. He said,</i> "Gad, your tribe/descendants will be attacked by a group of bandits, but your tribe/descendants will pursue and attack them [MTY]."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible	Gad, a raiding band was to invade you, and you was to invade them, to their rear.
Awful Scroll Bible	.
Conservapedia	"Gad: a raiding party will raid him, but he will win in the end." Literally, "he will raid the heels of the raiders."
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	To Gad Gad, — A troop! — He shall troop, —

God's Truth (Tyndale) HCSB	But a troop shall deceive him ! Gad, men of war shall invade him. And he shall turn them to flight.
Jubilee Bible 2000 H. C. Leupold	. Gad, an army shall invade him, but he shall invade at the last.
Lexham English Bible H. C. Leupold	. Bandits shall attack Gad, but he shall attack [their] heels. As for Gad, troops troop against him But he presses upon their heel.
NIV, ©2011 NIV – UK Tree of Life Version	. . . Gad—attackers will attack him, but he will attack their heels.
Urim-Thummim Version Wikipedia Bible Project	. Gad, a troop will gather, and he shall march on his heel.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988) The Heritage Bible	. Gad, an army shall crowd upon him, and he shall crowd upon them at their rear.
New American Bible (2002) New American Bible (2011)	. "Gad shall be raided by raiders, but he shall raid at their heels. In Hebrew there is assonance between the name Gad and the words for "raided," "raiders," and "raid."
New Jerusalem Bible New RSV Revised English Bible	. . . "Gad is raided by raiders, and he will raid them from the rear.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	(v) "Gad [troop]— a troop will troop on him, but he will troop on their heel.
exeGesés companion Bible	Gad: a troop troops against him: but he troops against the heel. cp Genesis 3:15
Hebraic Roots Bible Israeli Authorized Version JPS (Tanakh—1985) Kaplan Translation	. Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last. . . Gad 'Raiders (gad) shall raid Gad, but he will raid at [their] heel. (Ibn Ezra; Radak; Ralbag; Yerushalmi, Sotah 8:10; cf. Sh'muel ben Chofni). Literally, 'Gad, a troop (gedud) shall raid him (ye-gud-enu), and he shall raid (ya-gud) heel.' Others have, 'Gad shall provide a raiding troop, and his troop shall return on his path' (Rashi; Lekach Tov); 'Troops shall follow Gad, and then he shall bring up the rear' (Targum; Rashbam); 'Gad shall go forward and attack (in contrast to Dan), and he shall attack [the enemy's] heel' (Sforno); 'Gad shall constantly be attacked, but he will pursue his foes' (Ramban); 'Raiders will attack Gad, but he will cut off their heel' (Sh'muel ben Chofni; Bachya; Tur); 'Plunderers shall cut at Gad, but he will cut at their heel' (Hirsch); 'Gad shall overflow with troops...' (Lekach Tov); '...and he will have the final victory' (Tanchuma 12; Abarbanel); 'Gad's masses will come together, and he will remain together in the end' (Abarbanel); 'Gad will attack head-on, and he will [also] attack from the rear' (Malbim); or 'Good fortune will pursue Gad, and he will have good fortune in the end' (cf. Genesis 30:10).
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Gad, gedud (raider) shall raid him; but he shall raid akev ([at] the heel).

The Scriptures 1998 .

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible	“As for Gad—a raiding troop shall raid him, But he shall raid at their heels and assault them [victoriously].
The Expanded Bible	“Robbers [or Raiders] will attack [raid] Gad [^c the Hebrew word for “raiders” sounds like the name Gad], but he will defeat them and drive them away [raid them at their heels].
Kretzmann’s Commentary	Verses 19-28 The Prophecy upon Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Joseph, and Benjamin Gad, a troop shall overcome him; but he shall overcome at the last. The picture is that of a person crowded by malicious hordes, who nevertheless manages not only to hold his own, but even to turn upon the masses and drive them away. The tribe of Gad, living on the eastern side of the Jordan, was harassed more or less by the desert hordes, but managed to hold its own very successfully, 1Chronicles 5:18; 1Chronicles 12:8-15.
NET Bible®	Gad will be raided by marauding bands, but he will attack them at their heels [<i>Heb</i> “heel.” The MT has suffered from misdivision at this point. The initial mem on the first word in the next verse should probably be taken as a plural ending on the word “heel.”].
Syndein/Thieme	{Verses 19-20: Two Sons of Zilpah} {Gad Lost the Battle but Never Lost the War} Gad {name means 'good luck'/troop} . . . a troop shall overcome him {Gad would be whipped in battle the first time} but he shall overcome at the last. {Note: The tribe of Gad was a picture of a believer who uses rebound. They fail, but they never give up! They never lost the war! Confess sins, forget them and advance spiritually.}
The Voice	Gad will be raided by thieves, but he will raid them in return.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Benner’s Mechanical Trans.
Benner’s Mechanical Trans.	...Gad [^{Fortune}] is a band, he will invade us and he will invade the heel,...
Concordant Literal Version	Gad--a raiding party shall `raid' him, yet he shall raid their heels,...
Context Group Version	.
Darby Translation	Gad -- troops will rush upon him; But he will rush upon the heel [Or 'rush [on them] at the end.' Paronomasia; Gad gedud yegudennu; Gad and troops.].
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	Gad! a troop shall troop on him,—But, he, shall troop on the rear.
English Standard Version	"Raiders shall raid Gad, but he shall raid at their heels.
Evidence Bible	.
Green’s Literal Translation	Gad, a raiding band shall attack him, and he shall attack <i>their</i> heel.
Jack Ballinger’s translation	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern KJV	.
NASB	.
New European Version	A troop will press on Gad, but he will press on their heel.
New King James Version	“Gad, a troop shall tramp upon him, But he shall triumph at last.
Owen's Translation	.
Ron Snider’s Translation	.
Stuart Wolf’s Translation	.
Third Millennium Bible	.

Updated Bible Version 2.11	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster's Bible Translation	Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last.
World English Bible	"A troop will press on Gad, but he will press on their heel.
Young's Literal Translation	.
Young's Updated LT	Gad! a troop assaults him, But he assaults last.

The gist of this passage: Troops will assault Gad; but this tribe will fight back.

Genesis 49:19

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Gâd (גַּד) [pronounced gawd]	<i>invader; troop; fortune; transliterated Gad</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1410 BDB #151
g ^e dûwd (גִּדּוּד) [pronounced g ^e DOOD]	<i>troop, band [of soldiers], division, detachment; marauding or raiding band of men; an incision, cutting [of the skin]; furrow [of a field]</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1416 (& #1417–1418) BDB #151
gûwd (גִּדַּד) [pronounced gewd,good]	<i>to invade, to attack; to raid</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1464 BDB #156
The NET Bible: <i>In Hebrew the name Gad (גַּד, gad) sounds like the words translated "raided" (גִּדְּנוּ; g^egudennu) and "marauding bands" (גִּדּוּד, g^edud).⁹⁹</i>			
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûw' (אוּהוּ) [pronounced hoo]	<i>he, it; him, himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one); same</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> , is implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
gûwd (גִּדַּד) [pronounced gewd,good]	<i>to invade, to attack; to raid</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1464 BDB #156
'âqêb (בְּקַעַב) [pronounced gaw-KA ^{BV}]	<i>heel, footprint, hinderpart, and therefore figuratively for a rear guard, troops in the rear</i>	masculine singular/plural noun (see comment below)	Strong's #6119 (and #6120) BDB #784

The min preposition is simply a single letter and a vowel point; and many think that this letter should have been the final letter of the word *heel*, rather than a preposition beginning v. 20 (thus making it plural: *heels*). Recall that there are no verse or chapter divisions in the original Hebrew—it is just one letter followed by another.

If this is the case, then the next verse does not begin with *from*.

Translation: Gad [is] a troop; he will attack him but he [even] he will raid [their] heels.

⁹⁹ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 13, 2017.

The name *Gad* means *troop, division, detachment*. What appears to be the case is, one will invade Dan, but Dan will counterattack, nipping at their heels (indicating that they are counterattacking as the attackers are leaving).

There is a play on words here with Gad (see p. 308 in Bullinger). Obviously, Gad has the least amount of time devoted to him. Outside of this verse and the references to Jacob's sons as a whole, we know nothing about the personal life of Gad, save his family line.

As Jacob has done throughout this poem, he has made plays on words—Gad and raiders are very similar in the Hebrew. It means that Gad would be subjected to raids from other countries but that he would return the fight.

The Gadites possessed the land east of the Jordan between the two seas (Num. 32:1–5 Joshua 13:24–28) and were quite prominent as supporters of David during his day (1Chronicles 12:8 26:29–32). They later lost this inheritance, being deported by Tiglath-Pileser III (1Chron. 5:26) and Ammonites moved into this land (Jer. 49:1). This land will be restored to them, according to Ezekiel 48:27.

Kretzmann's Commentary: The picture is that of a person crowded by malicious hordes, who nevertheless manages not only to hold his own, but even to turn upon the masses and drive them away. The tribe of Gad, living on the eastern side of the Jordan, was harassed more or less by the desert hordes, but managed to hold its own very successfully, 1Chronicles 5:18; 1Chronicles 12:8-15.¹⁰⁰

A minor linguistic note: languages used certain words in the plural and in the singular differently than other languages do. It would be our natural inclination to write *but he will raid at their heels*. On the other hand, it would not seem unusual for someone to talk about the thinking of the conservative element today. There are millions of conservatives and they all believe very different things. Furthermore, they have thoughts about more than one thing. However, we are not concerned with that when we speak of the *thinking* of the conservative party. We are taking the many different issues, the main threads of thought, and gathering these into a complete whole and speaking of that in the singular. That is what is done here and quite a number of other passages. It isn't that we are missing something in the translation when he see a singular and expect a plural; it is simply a different way of viewing the situation.

However, what appears to be the case is, the min preposition associated with v. 20, should actually have been placed at the end of v. 19, making *heel* into *heels*. However, the min preposition in v. 20 seems to make sense.

Genesis 49:19 Gad, raiders will attack him, and he will attack their heel.

Genesis 49:19 Gad [is] a troop; he will attack him but he [even] he will raid [their] heels. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:19 Gad is a troop, and after being attacked, they will counterattack, coming from behind. (Kukis paraphrase)

Gad is one of the tribes east of the Jordan River, and therefore, they will have enemies right at their borders. So raiders would come into Gad and raid them, but they would strike back—this is based more upon their location in the land than any specific history recorded about them in Scripture.

The warriors of Gad during the time of David would be so described in 1Chron. 12:8–15 **From the Gadites there went over to David at the stronghold in the wilderness mighty and experienced warriors, expert with shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions and who were swift as gazelles upon the mountains: Ezer the chief, Obadiah second, Eliab third, Mishmannah fourth, Jeremiah fifth, Attai sixth, Eliel seventh, Johanan eighth, Elzabad ninth, Jeremiah tenth, Machbannai eleventh. These Gadites were officers of the army; the least was a match for a hundred men and the greatest for a thousand. These are the men who crossed the Jordan in the first month,**

¹⁰⁰ From <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/kpc/genesis-49.html> accessed January 13, 2017.

when it was overflowing all its banks, and put to flight all those in the valleys, to the east and to the west. So, much of their time, they would be known for their ferocity in battle.

The Tribe of Gad — a Summary Table

Mother:	Zilpah	Meaning of name:	Fortune
Order of birth to mother:	1 st	Order of birth to Jacob:	7 th
Order of blessing from Jacob:	8 th	Order of blessing from Moses:	10 th
On the mountain of Ebal, the mountain of cursing	Aligned with Ephraim in the divided kingdom		
First census:	45,650 men able to fight	Second census:	40,500
Famous supergrace heroes:	It is possible that the prophet Gad (who ministered to David and recorded some of the history of Israel) came from the tribe of Gad. I could not find enough on his background to confirm this theory. ¹⁰¹		
Unusual facts:	Their land inheritance would be beyond the Jordan River (Joshua 18:7), which is the land which they wanted (Num. 32:1–5). Moses would speak to the leaders of Reuben and Gad about the sin of pacifism in Num. 32. Moses told them that they could not allow their brothers to go to war without joining them. In Joshua 22, the people of Gad, Reuben and the half-tribe of Manasseh built a second altar east of the Jordan River, which caused a great deal of concern from the other side. However, the 2½ tribes presented this altar as a monument to their connection to the God of all Israel and not as a rival altar.		
Moses' blessing of Gad:	Deut. 33:20 And of Gad he said, "Blessed be he who enlarges Gad! Gad crouches like a lion; he tears off arm and scalp. He chose the best of the land for himself, for there a commander's portion was reserved; and he came with the heads of the people, with Israel he executed the justice of the LORD, and his judgments for Israel." (ESV)		

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Jacob continues his end-of-life blessing to his sons.

Asher is the second son born to Zilpah, Leah's maid.

From Asher plentiful [is] his bread; and he [even] he will give delights [to the] king.	Genesis 49:20	Plentiful bread [will come] from Asher; and he will give delights [to] the king.
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Bread will come out from Asher; he will provide the king with great delights.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	From Asher plentiful [is] his bread; and he [even] he will give delights [to the] king.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum of Onkelos	.

¹⁰¹ Many Old Testament prophets appear to come out of nowhere.

Jerusalem targum	Of happy Asher how fertile is the land! His land shall satisfy with dainties the kings of the sons of Israel.
Targum (Onkelos)	The land of Asher will be good; and he shall be nourished with the dainties of kings.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	Happy is Asher whose fruitage is plenteous, and whose land aboundeth in balsams and costly perfumes.
Revised Douay-Rheims	.
Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)	Aser, his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield dainties to kings.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"Asher's food will be rich. He will yield royal dainties.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	.
Peshitta (Syriac)	As for Asher, his land is good, and he shall supply kings with food.
Septuagint (Greek)	Aser, his bread <i>shall be fat</i> ; and he shall yield dainties to princes.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Asher's bread is fat; he gives delicate food for kings.
Easy English	Asher will have good food. It will be good enough for kings to eat. The land where Asher lives will be good land. And he will grow very good food. The food will be so good that kings will buy it to eat.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	Asher "Asher's land will grow much good food. He will have food fit for a king!
God's Word™	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
International Children's B.	.
<i>The Message</i>	Asher will become famous for rich foods, candies and sweets fit for kings.
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	"Asher's food will be rich and sweet. He will provide food that even a king would enjoy.
New Simplified Bible	.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Asher grows fine foods, and he will supply the king's delicacies.
Contemporary English V.	Asher, you will eat food fancy enough for a king.
The Living Bible	.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	"Asher's land will grow much good food; he will grow food fit for a king.
New Life Version	"Asher's food will be rich. He will give pleasing food to kings.
New Living Translation	"Asher will dine on rich foods and produce food fit for kings.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'Asher will have plenty of bread, and he will provide delicious things to princes.
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard V	<i>On the Future of Asher</i> "Asher's food will be delicious;

New Advent (Knox) Bible	he will be a provider of delicacies fit for royalty.” Rich in wheat shall Aser’s lands be; he shall send out delicacies for the tables of kings.
Revised Knox Bible	.
Translation for Translators	Asher, your descendants will eat good-tasting food; they will produce food that is delicious enough for kings to eat.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible	.
Awful Scroll Bible	Asher, your bread is to be fat, even was you to set before king's delicacies.
Conservapedia	"From Asher, his bread will be nutritious, and he will yield luxuries fit for a king."
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	To Asher For Asher, his food shall be rich, And his are the royal pleasures.
God’s Truth (Tyndale)	Of Asser comes fat bread, and he shall give pleasures for a king.
HCSB	Asher’s food will be rich, and he will produce royal delicacies.
Jubilee Bible 2000	Out of Asher his bread <i>shall be</i> fat, and he shall yield delight unto the king.
H. C. Leupold	.
Lexham English Bible	.
H. C. Leupold	As for Asher, his food is rich, And he provides royal delicacies.
NIV, ©2011	.
NIV – UK	.
Tree of Life Version	.
Urim-Thummim Version	Out of Asher his food will be rich, and he bestows foods to kings.
Wikipedia Bible Project	Since his bread will be fattened, and he will give, kingly delicacies.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	.
The Heritage Bible	Out of Asher his food <i>shall be</i> robust, and he shall give delicacies of a king.
New American Bible (2002)	.
New American Bible (2011)	“Asher’s produce is rich, and he shall furnish delicacies for kings.
New Jerusalem Bible	Rich the food produced by Asher: he will furnish food fit for kings.
New RSV	.
Revised English Bible	“Asher will feast every day, and provide dishes fit for a king.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	“Asher’s food is rich — he will provide food fit for a king.
exeGesés companion Bible	Asher: his bread fattens and he gives delicacies to the sovereign.
Hebraic Roots Bible	.
Israeli Authorized Version	.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	.
Kaplan Translation	<i>Asher</i> ‘From Asher shall come the richest foods; he shall provide the king's delights [Or 'sweetmeats fit for a king.'].’
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Out of Asher his lechem shall be rich, and he shall yield royal dainties.

The Scriptures 1998 "Bread from Ashēr is rich, and he gives delicacies of a sovereign.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	"Asher's food [supply] shall be rich and bountiful, And he shall yield <i>and</i> deliver royal delights.
The Expanded Bible	"Asher's land will grow much ·good [or rich] food; he will grow ·food fit for a king [kingly delicacies].
Kretzmann's Commentary	Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties, shall produce pleasant foods. The fat which he would bring forth on his very fertile land in the plains toward Phenicia, would be his bread, for the country was noted for the excellence of its wheat and of its olive-oil.
NET Bible®	Asher's food will be rich, and he will provide delicacies to royalty.
Syndein/Thieme	Out of Asher his bread . . . wealthy/fat/rich/prosperous {shamen -'fat' in the ancient world meant someone who ate well because he was prosperous everything they touch turns to Gold - great business sense}, and he shall yield royal/kingly {melek} dainties/delights {ma`adan} {refers to the dessert - everyone usually likes the dessert of the meal - some believers who walk so well with the Lord, that God generates wonderfully delicious production through them}. {Note: Asher is a picture of divine production of God through faithful believers. Gad is a picture of using rebound to continue in spiritual growth. Now Asher is a picture of the divine good production that God can generate through a mature believer. And, since in the Church Age, all believers are royal priests, this is a picture of production in the Church Age.}
The Voice	Asher's food will be rich <i>and delicious</i> , and he will produce royal delicacies.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Benner's Mechanical Trans.	...from Asher ^[Happy] is oil of his bread and he will give tasty food of the king,...
Benner's Mechanical Trans.
Concordant Literal Version	Asher--stout shall be his bread, and he will provide royal luxuries.
Context Group Version	.
Darby Translation	.
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	Out of Asher, fatness, is his feed,—So, he, setteth forth dainties for a king.
English Standard Version	.
Evidence Bible	.
Green's Literal Translation	Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall give a king's delicacies.
Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern KJV	.
NASB	.
New European Version	.
New King James Version	.
Owen's Translation	.
Ron Snider's Translation	.
Stuart Wolf's Translation	.
Third Millennium Bible	"Out of Asher, his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster's Bible Translation	.
World English Bible	"Asher's food will be rich. He will produce royal dainties.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	.

Young's Updated LT Out of Asher his bread is fat; And he gives dainties of a king.

The gist of this passage: The tribe of Asher appears to be related to very good food.

Genesis 49:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

The NET Bible: *Heb "from Asher," but the initial mem (מ) of the MT should probably be moved to the end of the preceding verse and taken as a plural ending on "heel."*¹⁰²

The min preposition is simply a single letter and a vowel point; and many think that this letter should have been the final letter on the previous word (thus making it plural: *heels*). If that is the case, then this verse begins with the word *Asher*.

ʾĀshêr (אֲשֵׁר) [pronounced <i>aw-SHARE</i>]	<i>happiness; transliterated Asher</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #836 BDB #81
shâmên (שָׂמֵן) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAYN</i>]	<i>fat; fertile, plentiful, opulent, bountiful; stout, robust; well-fed</i>	masculine singular adjective used as a noun	Strong's #8082 BDB #1032

This word is used primarily to describe land as being fertile; however, the verb cognate means *to be fat, to make fat*. I don't think that we can apply this to men to mean *brave, ferocious* or anything like that; but *well-fed, stout, big*. This is not an insult, nor does this mean that these men are slow and weak (give what follows). Given how this word is used to describe the land (Num. 13:20 1Chronicles 4:40 Nehemiah 9:25, 35 Ezekiel 34:14), we must take this as a complimentary term. These are big men who had become prosperous on the backs of the Israelis.

The NET Bible: *The Hebrew word translated "rich," when applied to products of the ground, means abundant in quantity and quality.*¹⁰³

lechem (לֶחֶם) [pronounced <i>LEH-khem</i>]	literally means <i>bread</i> ; used more generally for <i>food</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3899 BDB #536
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Keil and Delitzsch: *לחם is the most common, all-comprehensive name for nourishment.*¹⁰⁴

Translation: Plentiful bread [will come] from Asher;...

This suggests that Asher will be quite successful for a time.

¹⁰² From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 13, 2017.

¹⁰³ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 13, 2017.

¹⁰⁴ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Proverbs 9:4–6.

Genesis 49:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûw' (אוּה) [pronounced <i>hoo</i>]	<i>he, it; him, himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one); same</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> , is implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i>]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
ma'ădân (מַעְדָּן) [pronounced <i>mah-ġuh-DAWN</i>]	<i>dainty food, a delight, delightful</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #4574 BDB #726
The NET Bible: <i>The word translated "delicacies" refers to foods that were delightful, the kind fit for a king.</i> ¹⁰⁵			
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince; royal, royalty</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: ...and he will give delights [to] the king.

Asher's provisions will be so good that they will go to the king. Another interpretation here is, the food produced in Asher will be food fit for a king.

Several translations, including the KJV, NASB, *The Emphasized Bible* and Owen tell us that Asher *shall yield royal dainties*. *Shall yield* is the Qal imperfect, 3rd masculine singular of the very common verb nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced *naw-THAN*] and it means *to place, to set, to put, to give, to appoint* and even *to make*.

Royal is melek^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced *MEH-lek*] and it simply means *king*. *Dainties* (which had me thinking a number of things having nothing to do with this passage) is the noun ma'ădân (מַעְדָּן) [pronounced *mah-ad-AWN*] which means *delight, delicacy* and is only found here and in 1Samuel 15:32¹⁰⁶ Proverbs 29:17 and Lam. 4:5. We have almost the exact same phrase in Proverbs 29:17, except that ma'ădan is in the the construct in Genesis. The construct means that the noun is closely related to another noun in the sentence (in this case *king*) and often the other noun is translated in the possessive in the English to convey this. That passage reads *discipline your son and he will give delight(s) to your heart*. Obviously, the kid is not giving *dainties* to his father's heart. Lam. 4:5 reads *those who feasted in delights (or, on delicacies) perish in the streets*. This does not help us a great deal in this translation or its meaning.

What makes it harder to interpret is that Asher is one of the least distinguished tribes of Israel. However, Moses says of Asher: "*Blessed above sons be Asher; let him be the favorite of his brothers and let him dip his foot in oil.*" (Deut. 33:24). The area occupied by Asher was known for its olive trees and even today for its olive industry; so Asher did produce a great deal of olive oil and they were prosperous for that reason. Perhaps the reference to rich food could be the supplement of olive oil to their food. Deut. 33 and this passage taken together certainly imply that Asher enjoyed a great deal of prosperity, but beyond these prophecies, we have very little information about Asher. In any case, their relationship to any king is uncertain (to me).

¹⁰⁵ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 13, 2017.

¹⁰⁶ This is disputed, however, and the difference in meaning in this passage is great. One view is that Agag comes to Samuel *cheerfully* and the other is that he comes to Samuel *in bonds*; the former view being our word and the latter view believing it to be another word entirely

Genesis 49:20 Out of Asher his bread will be fat, and he will yield royal dainties.

Genesis 49:20 **Plentiful bread [will come] from Asher; and he will give delights [to] the king.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:20 **Bread will come out from Asher; he will provide the king with great delights.** (Kukis paraphrase)

Both Gad and Asher were born from Leah's maidservant. Therefore, as tribes, they will be considered lesser tribes.

It would be best if we first examined some translations of Genesis 49:20:

Understanding the Asher Prophecy (translations/commentators)

First, some translations of this passage:

NIRV	"Asher's food will be rich and sweet. He will provide food that even a king would enjoy.
Contemporary English V. New Century Version	Asher, you will eat food fancy enough for a king. "Asher's land will grow much good food; he will grow food fit for a king.
New Living Translation	"Asher will dine on rich foods and produce food fit for kings.
The Expanded Bible	"Asher's land will grow much ·good [or rich] food; he will grow ·food fit for a king [kingly delicacies].
NET Bible®	Asher's food will be rich, and he will provide delicacies to royalty.
Kukis nearly literal	Plentiful bread [will come] from Asher; and he will give delights [to] the king.

Here is how others have interpreted these words:

Barnes: *Asher shall have a soil abounding in wheat and oil. He occupies the low lands along the coast north of Karmel. Hence, the products of his country are fit to furnish the table of kings.*¹⁰⁷

Benson: *The God of nature has provided for us not only necessaries but dainties, that we might call him a bountiful benefactor; yet, whereas all places are competently furnished with necessaries, only some places afford dainties. Corn is more common than spices. Were the supports of luxury as universal as the supports of life, the world, in consequence of the wickedness of man, would be worse than it is, and surely it is bad enough.*¹⁰⁸

Dr. Peter Pett: *It would appear that Asher has ventured into catering. He may even have been given a position in Pharaoh's palace. He is thus eating excessively well and providing royal dainties. There are no suggestions anywhere that this interest was carried into the future.*¹⁰⁹

Dr. Thomas Constable: *Asher (Genesis 49:20) would enjoy very fruitful soil, namely, the lowlands of the Carmel (lit. vineyard) range north along the Mediterranean coast. This area contained some of the most fertile land in Canaan.*¹¹⁰

Jacob did not have much to say about Asher.

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¹⁰⁷ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:20.

¹⁰⁸ Rev. Joseph Benson, *Commentary of the Old and New Testaments*; 1857; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:20.

¹⁰⁹ Dr. Peter Pett; *Commentary Series on the Bible*; from e-sword, Genesis 49:20.

¹¹⁰ Dr. John Constable *The Expository Notes of Dr. Constable*; ©2012; from e-sword, Genesis 49:13–21.

The Tribe of Asher — a Summary Table

Mother:	Zilpah	Meaning of name:	Happy
Order of birth to mother:	2 nd	Order of birth to Jacob:	8 th
Order of blessing from Jacob:	9 th	Order of blessing from Moses:	13 th
On the mountain of Ebal, the mountain of cursing	Aligned with Ephraim in the divided kingdom		
First census:	41,500 men able to fight	Second census:	53,400
Famous supergrace heroes: Fausset: <i>Asher and Simeon are the only tribes west of Jordan which produced no hero or judge.</i> ¹¹¹			
Unusual facts:	Smith: <i>They possessed the maritime portion of the rich plain of Esdraelon; probably for a distance of 8 or 10 miles from the shore. This territory contained some of the richest soil in all Palestine.</i> ¹¹² When Asher should have joined his brothers in war, he did not (Judges 5:17–18). Fausset: <i>Asher's self indulging inertness acted injuriously on his own people. Selfishness and faint heartedness in the Lord's cause became their own punishment. From being more numerous at mount Sinai than Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin, in David's time they had become so few that Asher's name is omitted from the chief rulers (1Chronicles 27:16-22).</i> ¹¹³		
ISBE (paraphrased): <i>The tribe [of Asher] seems to have taken no important part in the subsequent history. It raised no hero, and gave no deliverer to the nation. In the time of David it was of so little consequence that the name is not [even] found in the list of chief rulers (1Chronicles 27:16).</i> ¹¹⁴ We might understand them to be a very nearly inconsequential tribe.			
Moses' blessing of Asher: Deut. 33:24–25 And of Asher he said, "Most blessed of sons be Asher; let him be the favorite of his brothers, and let him dip his foot in oil. Your bars shall be iron and bronze, and as your days, so shall your strength be. (ESV)			

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Deborah and Barak, when celebrating a great victory, sang these words: **Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan; and Dan, why did he stay with the ships? Asher sat still at the coast of the sea, staying by his landings.** (Judges 5:17; ESV) They fought to deliver Israel from the Canaanite ruler Jacob and his general Sisera; but Asher remained in his territory.

Naphtali is the second son born to Bilhah, Rachel's personal maid. He is Dan's full brother. You may recall the Rachel, Jacob's favorite wife, was not giving him any sons, whereas Leah had given him 4 sons. Rachel was beside herself and offered her personal maid Bilhah as her surrogate. Bilhah produced 2 sons, Dan and Naphtali.

¹¹¹ Andrew Robert Fausset, *Fausset's Bible Dictionary*; from e-Sword, topic: Asher.

¹¹² Dr. William Smith, *Smith's Bible Dictionary*; 1894; from e-Sword, topic: Asher.

¹¹³ Andrew Robert Fausset, *Fausset's Bible Dictionary*; from e-Sword, topic: Asher.

¹¹⁴ *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Asher.

Naphtali [is] a hind being sent away; the giver of words of beauty.	Genesis 49:21	Naphtali [is] a wild she-goat having been sent away; [he is] the one giving out the beautiful words.
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Naphtali is a wild she-goat, having been sent away; Naphtali gives out beautiful words.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Naphtali [is] a hind being sent away; the giver of words of beauty.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum of Onkelos	.
Jerusalem targum	Naphtali is a swift messenger declaring good tidings. He first declared to our father Jakob that Joseph was yet in life, and he went down to Mizraim in a little time, and brought the contract of the Double Field from the palace of Joseph. And when he openeth his mouth in the congregation of Jakob, his tongue is sweet as honey.
Targum (Onkelos)	In a good land will the lot of Naphtali be cast, and his inheritance be fruitful; over them will they give praise and benediction. Sam. Vers. "Naphatali is a hind sent forth, giving words of freedom."
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	Naphatalis a swift messenger, like a hind that runneth on the tops of the mountains, bringing good tidings: he it was who announced that Joseph was living; he it was who hasteneth to go into Mizraim, and bring the contract of the double field in which Esau had no portion [See the next chapter]; and when he shall open his mouth in the congregation of Israel to give praise, he shall be the chosen of all tongues.
Revised Douay-Rheims	.
Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)	Nephtali, a hart let loose, and giving words of beauty.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"Naphtali is a doe set free, who bears beautiful fawns.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Naphtali is a swift messenger; he gives goodly words.
Septuagint (Greek)	Nephtalim is a spreading stem, bestowing beauty on its fruit.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Naphtali is a roe let loose, giving fair young ones.
Easy English	'Naphtali is like a wild animal. He runs free and has many young ones.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	.
God's Word™	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
International Children's B.	.
<i>The Message</i>	Naphtali is a deer running free that gives birth to lovely fawns.
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	.
New Simplified Bible	»Naphtali is a deer set free with beautiful fawns (words).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Naphtali is a wild doe that gives birth to beautiful fawns.
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Contemporary English V. The Living Bible	Naphtali, you are a wild deer with lovely fawns. "Naphtali is a deer let loose, producing lovely fawns.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	.
New Life Version	"Naphtali is a female deer let loose who gives beautiful young ones.
New Living Translation	.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'NaphTali is a spreading vine [that will bear] beautiful fruit.
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard V	<i>On the Future of Naphtali</i> "Naphtali is a free running deer who produces eloquent literature."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Nephthali is like a roe-deer that goes free, bringing a message of gladness. The reference, and sometimes the meaning, of the shorter blessings contained in verses 13-21 is difficult to establish with certainty; but they probably allude to the future, not to the past. Those given to Dan and Gad involve a play upon words.
Revised Knox Bible	.
Translation for Translators	Naphtali, your descendants will be like deer [MET] that are <free to/not tied down and can> run wherever they wish. They will give birth to children who are good-looking like <fawns/baby deer> [MET].

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible	.
Awful Scroll Bible	Naphtali, you is a deer, sending out a publishing of goodly utterances.
Conservapedia	"Naphtali is a hind set free: he gives seemly sayings."
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	To Naphthali Naphthali is a nimble stag, Has the gift of eloquent speech !
God's Truth (Tyndale)	.
HCSB	.
Jubilee Bible 2000	Naphtali is a hind let loose, who shall give forth a good word.
H. C. Leupold	Naphtali is a liberated deer, He also is wont to use clever speech.
Lexham English Bible	Naphtali [is] a doe running free that puts forth beautiful words.
H. C. Leupold	.
NIV, ©2011	.
NIV – UK	.
Tree of Life Version	Naphtali is a doe let loose, who offers words of beauty.
Urim-Thummim Version	Naphtali is a deer sent away, he gives elegant words.
Wikipedia Bible Project	Naphthali, sent of a doe, he gives good words.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	.
The Heritage Bible	Naphtali is a deer sent out; he gives beautiful words.
New American Bible (2002)	.
New American Bible (2011)	"Naphtali is a hind let loose, which brings forth lovely fawns.
New Jerusalem Bible	Naphtali is a swift hind bearing lovely fawns.

New RSV
Revised English Bible "Naphtali is a spreading terebinth putting forth lovely boughs.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible
exeGesés companion Bible Naphtali:
a hind sent away:
he gives glorious sayings.
Naphtali is a deer let loose giving one beautiful answers.

Hebraic Roots Bible
Israeli Authorized Version
JPS (Tanakh—1985) Naphtali is a hind let loose,
Which yields lovely fawns.

Kaplan Translation
Naphtali
Naphtali is a deer running free; he delivers [(Rashi; Rashbam). Or, 'which delivers' (Ramban).] words of beauty [(Rashi; Ibn Ezra; Radak). Or, 'words of victory' (Rashbam). Others translate this verse, 'Naphtali is a spreading tree, that puts out beautiful branches (Baaley Tosafoth; Malbim); or 'Naphtali is a full-bearing field, that bears beautiful trees (Chizzkuni; HaKethav VeHaKabbalah; cf. Targum). Possibly, 'beautiful foals' (cf. Targum on Genesis 30:32; Eruvin 53b)].

Orthodox Jewish Bible
The Scriptures 1998 Naphtali is a doe let loose; he giveth goodly sayings.
"Naphtali is a deer let loose, he gives words of elegance.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible "Naphtali is a doe let loose, [a swift warrior,
Which yields branched antlers (eloquent words).

The Expanded Bible "Naphtali is like a female deer that runs free,
that has beautiful fawns [or beautiful words].

Kretzmann's Commentary Naphtali is a hind let loose; he giveth goodly words. In comparing Naphtali to a gazelle, Jacob predicts that he will be both a handsome and an active warrior. The fine words probably include such poems as that sung by Deborah, Judges 4, 5.

NET Bible® Naphtali is a free running doe [Heb "a doe set free."],
he speaks delightful words [Heb "the one who gives words of beauty."].

Syndein/Thieme Naphtali {name means my wrestling - a reference to Jacob's wrestling with the Lord}
{is} a 'young deer'/hind let loose {picture of a fast young deer released from a trap and moving quickly out of danger a prophecy of one biblical event at least - in Judges 4:6 Barak (name means lightening) was from tribe of Naphtali - Deborah encouraged him and he delivered Israel}.
He gives goodly/beautiful {shepher} words {refers to the 12,000 evangelists from the tribe of Naphtali in the tribulation - effective communicators of the Word in Tribulation}.

The Voice Naphtali is a beautiful doe, wild and free,
that bears lovely fawns.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Benner's Mechanical Trans. ...Naphtali [Wrestling] is a doe sent, the giver of bright statements,...

Benner's Mechanical Trans.

Concordant Literal Version Naphtali is a oak stretched out, the giver of products that are seemly.

Context Group Version .

Darby Translation .

Emphasized Bible

Naphtali, is a slender hind,—That putteth forth antlers of beauty. A fruitful bough, is Joseph,... Not sure why this part of the next verse is placed with v. 21; perhaps that is a typo.

English Standard Version .

Evidence Bible .

Green’s Literal Translation Naphtali is a deer let loose giving one beautiful sayings.

Jack Ballinger’s translation .

Modern English Version .

Modern KJV .

NASB .

New European Version .

New King James Version “Naphtali is a deer let loose; He uses beautiful words.

Owen’s Translation .

Ron Snider’s Translation .

Stuart Wolf’s Translation .

Third Millennium Bible .

Updated Bible Version 2.11 .

A Voice in the Wilderness .

Webster’s Bible Translation .

World English Bible “Naphtali is a doe set free, who bears beautiful fawns.

Young’s Literal Translation Naphtali is a hind sent away, Who is giving beauteous young ones.

The gist of this passage:

Naphtali will be like a deer set free. This tribe will either produce beautiful fawns or beautiful words.

Genesis 49:21a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
Naph ^{et} tâlîy (נִלְתָּפִי) [pronounced nahf ^{ee} -taw-EE]	wrestling; possibly cord, thread; twisted; transliterated Naphtali	masculine singular proper noun	Strong’s #5321 BDB #836
’ayyâlâh (אֵילָה) [pronounced ahy-yaw-LAW]	hind, doe; wild she-goat; mountain ram	feminine singular noun	Strong’s #355 BDB #19
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced shaw-LAKH]	being sent [for, forth, away], being dismissed, being deployed, being put forth, being stretched out	feminine singular, Qal passive participle	Strong’s #7971 BDB #1018

Translation: Naphtali [is] a wild she-goat having been sent away;...

Again, the interpretation is difficult. Who is sending Naphtali out? What does it mean for Naphtali to be a wild she-goat (or a deer)?

Genesis 49:21a Naphtali is a deer let loose.

Concerning Naphtali, Barnes writes: *Naphtali is a hind let loose. The hind or “gazelle” is agile and nimble. When free on its native hills, it roams with instinctive confidence and delight. It is timid and irresolute in confinement. This is probably the character of Naphtali.*¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ Albert Barnes, *Barnes’ Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:21.

The Cambridge Bible: *[This doe or hind is] an image of swiftness and grace in movement, associated with the thought of open and extensive country. For the idea of freedom expressed in "let loose," cf. Job 39:5, "who hath sent out the wild ass free, or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?"*¹¹⁶

Genesis 49:21b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>the giver, the one granting [placing, putting, setting]; the maker</i>	Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
ʾāmârîym (אִמְרֵימ) [pronounced uh-maw-REEM]	<i>words, commands, mandates; speech, that which proceeds from the mouth</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #561 (& #562) BDB #56
shepher (שֹׁפֵר) [pronounced SHEH-fehr]	<i>beauty, goodness, goodliness</i>	masculine singular noun; pausal form	Strong's #8233 BDB #1051

The NET Bible: *The deer imagery probably does not continue into this line; Naphtali is the likely antecedent of the substantival participle, which is masculine, not feminine, in form. If the animal imagery is retained from the preceding line, the image of a talking deer is preposterous. For this reason some read the second line "the one who bears beautiful fawns," interpreting אִמְרֵימ ('imre) as a reference to young animals, not words (see HALOT 67 s.v. *אִמְרֵימ).*¹¹⁷

Translation: ...[he is] the one giving out the beautiful words.

This would suggest that men from Naphtali were good writers or orators. Do we have any examples of this?

Here is where we find no dearth of translations. Owen: *Naphtali is a hind let loose that bears comely fawns (or, beautiful words).* NASB: *Naphtali is a doe let loose; he gives beautiful words.* *The Emphasized Bible:* *Naphtali is a slender hind that putteth forth antlers of beauty.* *The New English Bible:* *Naphtali is a spreading terebinth putting forth lovely boughs.* *The Modern Reader's Bible:* *Naphtali is a hind let loose: He giveth goodly words.* The English translation of the Septuagint: *Nephthalim is a spreading stem, bestowing beauty on its fruit.* Obviously the only thing that the translators seem to agree upon is *Naphtali*.

The NET Bible: *Almost every word in the verse is difficult. Some take the imagery to mean that Naphtali will be swift and agile (like a doe), and be used to take good messages (reading "words of beauty"). Others argue that the tribe was free-spirited (free running), but then settled down with young children.*¹¹⁸

At the outset, I am not very certain as to what any of this means in any of the translations, but let's just try to get through the translation itself first. Naphtali means *to twist, to wrestle*. Normally, Jacob has made a play on words with the meaning of the sons' names; however, here, he does not seem to. There is no verb for *is*, just Naphtali and then the feminine singular of ʾayâlâh (אֵילָה) [pronounced ah-yaw-LAW] and it does mean *hind or doe*. It can be related to being surefooted and secure. Of the eight times that it occurs in Scripture, three refer to the *feet* of the doe, referring to its speed and surefootedness. Twice in Song of Solomon it refers to an animal of grace and beauty (yet surefootedness, in the sense of self-confidence, could be implied). Terebinth is spelled almost the same way in the Hebrew as *doe* except that it lacks the yod (י) and the vowel points are not exactly the same (I mention this so you can see where some of the other translations came from). A translator's dream is to

¹¹⁶ *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges; 1882-1921; by Cambridge University Press; General Editor J. J. S. Perowne, from e-sword, Genesis 49:21.*

¹¹⁷ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 14, 2017.

¹¹⁸ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 14, 2017.

accurately translate the Hebrew into English which is readable and makes sense. This is the intention of these various translators (as well as myself).

The third of the six short words in this verse is the feminine singular, Qal passive participle of *shâlach* (שָׁלַח) [pronounced *shaw-LAHK*] and its basic meaning is *to send out, to send for, to send away*. It has a variety of translations. The participle means this acts as a verbal adjective or as an adjectival noun; the passive means that the subject receives the action of the verb, allowing us to translate this *sent (out)* or *sent (away)*, which is the way this verb form is translated everywhere else that it occurs.

This is followed by a definite article and the Qal active participle of *nâthan* (נָתַן) [pronounced *naw-THAN*], a verb which we have covered with much greater application than the previous verb. It can mean *to place, to put, to set*. This form of the verb is most often translated *giving, sending, delivering*. When a participle acts as a verb, it does **not** take the definite article. We could translate this as *the sending* or *the one sending* or *the giver of*.

The next word in this verse is the masculine plural noun construct of (and this is disputed) *'êmer* (אָמַר) [pronounced *AY-mer*] and it means *words, speech, utterances*. This is followed by the masculine singular noun (in the pausal form) of shepherd (שֹׁפֵר) [pronounced *SHEH-fer*] and it means *good, beautiful*.

Now the even more difficult task of making sense out of these words: Naphtali was sent out or away, inasmuch as Naphtali occupied the northernmost portion of Israel. My guess is that Naphtali was a man who always had something to say, something which sounded good. He was very self-confident (surefooted). Perhaps it was he who put together most of the story about Joseph's death. However, since he only sounded good, God the Holy Spirit did not see fit to record any of these wonderful speeches of which Naphtali was so proud.

As a tribe, they are never mentioned separately in the Torah. Even throughout the rest of the Bible, Naphtali is rarely mentioned alone, other than in some battles mentioned in conjunction with Barak and Deborah, and with Gideon. It is certain that they, like the tribe of Naphtali, enjoyed a great deal of material prosperity as Deut. 33:24–25 points out: *Of Asher he said, "More blessed than son is Asher; may he be favored by his brothers and may he dip his foot in oil. Your lock shall be iron and bronze, and, according to your days, so shall your leisurely walk be."*

The last word in this verse was in the pausal form, meaning that Jacob took a breath before continuing with his poem. Jacob is about to speak concerning his two sons by Rachel.

Genesis 49:21b He gives goodly words.

Barnes on the second half of this verse: *Here we pass from the figure to the reality. Eloquence in prose and verse was characteristic of this particular tribe. The only important historical event in which they are concerned is the defeat of Jabin's host, which is celebrated in the song of Deborah and Barak Judges 4:5. In this passage we may study the character of the tribe.*¹¹⁹

The Cambridge Bible: *A sudden change in the description, referring apparently to the tribe's reputation for eloquence; but the transition to such a subject seems scarcely probable. The rendering "goodly lambs" is suggested, but the translation "lambs" cannot be supported from the O. T., and gives, at the best, a very prosaic sense.*¹²⁰

International Standard Version: "Naphtali is a free running deer who produces eloquent literature."

The Scriptures 1998+ provide a very similar translation: "Naphtali is a deer let loose, he gives words of elegance. I believe that this translation is the primary one given.

¹¹⁹ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Genesis 49:21.

¹²⁰ *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*; 1882-1921; by Cambridge University Press; General Editor J. J. S. Perowne, from e-sword, Genesis 49:21.

Kukis nearly literal translation reads: **Naphtali [is] a wild she-goat having been sent away; [he is] the one giving out the beautiful words.**

Genesis 49:21 **Naphtali [is] a wild she-goat having been sent away; [he is] the one giving out the beautiful words.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:21 **Naphtali is a wild she-goat, having been sent away; Naphtali gives out beautiful words.** (Kukis paraphrase)

Dr. Thomas Constable suggests this understanding: *Naphtali (Genesis 49:21) evidently would enjoy the admiration and appreciation of the other tribes in a special way (cf. Judges 4, 5). Jacob could have meant that Naphtali would exchange his freedom for a more sedentary domesticated lifestyle in the land, or that he would accommodate to the Canaanites.*¹²¹

Dr. Peter Pett gives this interpretation: *Naphtali has clearly been the surprise among the brothers. He is like a trapped hind which has been let loose, in that he has moved from being merely the quiet one to becoming a teacher of wisdom (see Proverbs 15:26 16:24). Wisdom teaching was well established in Egypt.*¹²²

The ESV gives a completely difference sense of the words: **"Naphtali is a doe let loose that bears beautiful fawns.**

The CLV is more obscure: **Naphtali is a oak stretched out, the giver of products that are seemly.**

The Cambridge Bible on an alternative translation: *By a different vocalization an entirely different turn is given to the verse. "Naphtali is a tall shoot of terebinth, one that putteth forth goodly topmost branches." "Topmost branches" would then be metaphorical for "leaders" like Barak (Judges 4:5), but this rendering is very questionable; though it may explain LXX.*¹²³ The LXX reads: **Nephtalim is a spreading stem, bestowing beauty on its fruit.**

Apparently, some have said that Naphtali was a terebinth tree. The Cambridge Bible speaks to this: *It is doubtful whether the simile applied to this tribe is that of "a hind" or "a terebinth tree." The comparisons in the song are for the most part taken from animals, e.g. the lion of Judah, the ass of Issachar, the serpent of Dan, the wolf of Benjamin. On the other hand, Joseph is compared to a vine.*¹²⁴

The Tribe of Naphtali — a Summary Table

Mother:	Bilhah	Meaning of name:	My wrestling
Order of birth to mother:	2 nd	Order of birth to Jacob:	6 th
Order of blessing from Jacob:	10 th	Order of blessing from Moses:	12 th
On the mountain of Ebal, the mountain of cursing		Aligned with Ephraim in the divided kingdom	
First census:	53,400 men able to fight	Second census:	45,400

¹²¹ Dr. John Constable *The Expository Notes of Dr. Constable*; ©2012; from e-sword, Genesis 49:13–21.

¹²² Dr. Peter Pett; *Commentary Series on the Bible*; from e-sword, Genesis 49:21.

¹²³ *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*; 1882-1921; by Cambridge University Press; General Editor J. J. S. Perowne, from e-sword, Genesis 49:21.

¹²⁴ *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*; 1882-1921; by Cambridge University Press; General Editor J. J. S. Perowne, from e-sword, Genesis 49:21.

Famous supergrace heroes: Barak, of Judges 4–5, appears to be a man of Naphtali (although he is specifically referred as living in Naphtali, but he is not called a man of Naphtali (Judges 4:6). Barak asked Deborah to come with him when going to war with Sisera.

Unusual facts: Fausset: *Barak with 10,000 men of Naphtali, at Deborah's call, fought and delivered Israel from Jabin of Canaan. His war-like energy and his and Deborah's joint song are specimens of the prowess and the eloquence of Naphtali (Judges 4–5); Naphtali and Zebulun "jeopardied their lives unto the death in the high places of the field" (Judges 5:18). So they helped Gideon against Midian (Judges 6:35; Judges 7:23).*¹²⁵

ISBE on Naphtali: *According to Josephus, who knew them well (BJ, III, iii, 2), the country never lacked multitudes of men of courage ready to give a good account of themselves on all occasions of war. Its history, as far as we know it, afforded ample opportunity for the development of warlike qualities. In the struggle with Sisera, Naphtali was found on the high places of the field (Judges 5:18). To David's forces at Hebron, Naphtali contributed a thousand captains "and with them with shield and spear thirty and seven thousand" (1Chronicles 12:34).*¹²⁶ So Naphtali was much more than just talk.

Moses' blessing of Naphtali: Deut. 33:23 *And of Naphtali he said, "O Naphtali, sated with favor, and full of the blessing of the LORD, possess the lake and the south."*

[Chapter Outline](#)

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Despite the obscurity and difficulties of some of these verses, we may reasonably suppose that these are prophecies from God, that they were fulfilled; and we likely do not fully appreciate their understanding or their fulfillment. Some of these verses may have even seen their fulfillment during the time that this tribes found themselves enslaved to Egypt.

Throughout the Old Testament, there are a great many prophecies which have been clearly fulfilled, so when we come up against a handful of prophecies which may be obscure to begin with and difficult to match with a Scriptural fulfillment, this does not negate these words as prophetic, nor does this indicate to us that the Bible is simply the scribblings of bored, uneducated shepherds. Let me suggest that these fulfillments were clearly observed and understood either by the Israelites of that era and/or by the angels which God has observing us.

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Joseph

Jacob has give his son Judah the most extensive blessing (so far—5 verses). Joseph will receive the same attention from Jacob (also 5 verses). Actually, only 18 phrases are applied to Judah while 20 phrases are applied to Joseph.

The Cambridge Bible gives an overview of Jacob's blessing of Joseph: *The blessing of Joseph extends over Genesis 49:22–26. Its subject matter falls into four divisions: (1) Joseph's prosperity under the simile of a vine (Genesis 49:22) (2) his contest with bitter foes (Genesis 49:23) (3) the invocation for aid from the God of Jacob (Genesis 49:24–25 a) (4) the blessing from heaven, sea, and earth, pronounced upon Joseph (25b, 26).*

¹²⁵ Andrew Robert Fausset, *Fausset's Bible Dictionary*; from e-Sword, topic: Naphtali.

¹²⁶ *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Naphtali.

*The elaborate eulogy pronounced on Joseph reflects the predominance of Ephraim and Manasseh among the tribes of Israel, in virtue both of their central position in Canaan and of their power and wealth. The impression we derive from this description of Joseph is that of 1Chronicles 5:1–2, “his (Reuben’s) birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph ... Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the prince; but the birthright was Joseph’s.”*¹²⁷

The Cambridge Bible does not quite state this properly. The double portion, which usually goes to the firstborn, is herein given to Joseph; and the leadership position, which would usually belong to the firstborn, went to Judah.

It was difficult to determine how to break this passage down; I did not want to include vv. 22–26 together, as being a very long passage to hold together. However, many translations flow from v. 25 to 26. I separated them the way that I did primarily because most passages flowed from v. 22 at least through v. 25. I finally gave in, and placed all 5 verses together. The problem with grouping so many verses together is, I tend to have an overabundance of translations, as I will try to include any translation which has any sort of difference between itself and the rest of them. So, a one-word difference can end up including a translation which I would not have normally included.

Basically, the problem is between, breaking this passage up into its component parts, in order to better examine each verse; or place all of these verses together, so that the continuity can be maintained.

A son of one bearing fruit [is] Joseph; a son of one bearing fruit beside a spring; his daughters slowly go out over a wall. And so they make him bitter and they have shot at him; and so they hate him lords of an arrow. And so remains in permanence his bow. And so they are agile an arm of his [two] hands from [two] hands of a Mighty One of Jacob (from there, a Shepherd, a Rock of Israel; from ʾĒl of your father). And He helps you and with an Almighty One; and He blesses you, blessings of the [two] heavens from above [and] blessings of [the] depth, she is lying in wait beneath—blessings of [two] breasts and a womb. Blessings of your father have prevailed over blessings of my forefathers as far as a boundary of hills of antiquity; [for] they are to a head of Joseph and to a crown of the separated one of his brothers.

Genesis
49:22–26

Joseph [is] the son of one bearing fruit; a son of one bearing fruit beside a spring. His branches [lit., daughters] go out over the wall. Master archers will provoke him—they have shot at him and they hate him. Therefore, his bow remains [ever] constant. Consequently, the arm of his hands is agile, [having been given strength] from the Mighty One of Jacob. [This is] because the name of the Shepherd [is] the Rock of Israel [and He is] from the ʾĒl of your father. He helps you along with the Almighty One, and He blesses you [with] blessings from above [and with] blessings [from] the depths. [In fact, these blessings] are lying in wait beneath [the surface]—the blessings from the breasts and the womb. The blessings of your father are greater than the blessings of my forefathers [going] as far [back] as the limit of the ancient hills; [for these blessings] are for the head of Joseph and for the crown of the one separated from his brothers.

¹²⁷ *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*; 1882-1921; by Cambridge University Press; General Editor J. J. S. Perowne, from e-sword, Genesis 49:22.

Joseph will be a fruitful bough, who bears fruit growing beside a spring. His branches stretch out over the wall. Master archers will provoke him—they have shot at him and they hate him. Therefore, his own bow remains ever constant at hand. Consequently, his arms are strong and agile, and he is strengthened by the Mighty One of Jacob, because the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel, and from the God of your fathers. He helps you along with the Almighty One; and He blesses you—blessings from the heavens above and from the depths below—these blessings are lying in wait for you, just beneath the surface—blessings of the breasts and womb. The blessings of your father are even greater than the blessings of my forefathers, going far back into time to the ancient hills; for these blessings are designed for your head, Joseph; and these blessings are for the crown of the one who is separated out from his brothers.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

A son of one bearing fruit [is] Joseph; a son of one bearing fruit beside a spring; his daughters slowly go out over a wall. And so they make him bitter and they have shot at him; and so they hate him lords of an arrow. And so remains in permanence his bow. And so they are agile an arm of his [two] hands from [two] hands of a Mighty One of Jacob (from there, a Shepherd, a Rock of Israel); from 'Él of your father). And He helps you and with an Almighty One; and He blesses you, blessings of the [two] heavens from above [and] blessings of [the] depth, she is lying in wait beneath—blessings of [two] breasts and a womb. Blessings of your father have prevailed over blessings of my forefathers as far as a boundary of hills of antiquity; [for] they are to a head of Joseph and to a crown of the separated one of his brothers.

Dead Sea Scrolls Targum of Onkelos Jerusalem targum

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My son who hast become great, JOSEPH, my son, who hast become great, and waxed mighty, that thou wouldst become mighty was foreseen. Thee, Joseph, my son, will I liken to a vine planted by fountains of water, which sendeth her roots into the depth and striketh the ridges of the rocks, uplifting herself on high and surmounting all the trees. So hast thou, O Joseph my son, risen by thy wisdom above all magicians of Mizraim, and all the wise men who were there, what time thou didst ride in the second chariot of Pharoh, and they proclaimed before thee and said, This is the father of the king, Long live the, father of the king Great in wisdom, though few in years. And the daughters of kings and of princes danced before thee at the windows, and beheld thee from the balconies, and scattered before thee bracelets rings collars, necklaces, and all ornaments of gold, in hope thou wouldst uplift thine eyes and regard one of them. But thou my son Joseph wast far from lifting thine eyes on any one of them, though the daughters of kings and of princes spake one to another, This is the holy man Joseph, who walks not after the sight of his eyes nor after the imagination of his heart; because the sight of the eyes and the imagination of his heart make the son of woman to perish from the world. Therefore will arise from thee the two tribes Menasheh and Ephraim, who shall receive portion and inheritance with their brethren in the dividing of the land. The magicians of Mizraim and all the wise men spake against him, but could not prevail over him; they spake evil of him before his lord, they accused him before Pharoh king of Mizraim, to bring him down from his dignity; they spake against him in the palace of Pharoh with a slanderous tongue severe as arrows. But the strength of his confidence [Or, "fidelity."] remained in both his hands and his arms, and he sought mercy from the strength of his father Jakob, under the arms of whose power the tribes of Israel are led, and do come. Blessed are the breasts that suckled thee,

and the womb in which thou didst lie. The blessing of thy father be added upon thee, upon the blessings wherewith thy fathers Abraham and Izhak who are like mountains blessed thee, and upon the blessing of the four mothers' Sarah, Rivekah, Rahel, and Leah, who are like hills; let all these blessings come, and make a diadem of majesty upon the head of Joseph, and upon the crown of the man who became a chief and ruler in the land of Mizraim, and the brightness of the glory of his brethren.

Targum (Onkelos)

Joseph is my son who shall increase, my son who shall be blessed, as a vine planted by a fountain of waters. Two tribes will come forth from his sons, and they shall receive a portion and inheritance. The mighty men, the men of division, were bitter against him; they afflicted him and sorely grieved him and his prophecy shall be fulfilled in them, because he was faithful to the law in secret, and set his confidence firmly. Therefore was gold laid upon his arm, and the kingdom was strengthened and confirmed. This was to him from the mighty God of Jacob, who by His Word pastureth the fathers and the children of the seed of Israel. The Word of the God of thy father shall be thy Helper, and the All Sufficient shall bless thee, with the blessings of the dew that descends from the heavens above, with the blessings that spring from the depths of the earth beneath, with the blessings of thy father and of thy mother. The blessing of thy father shall be added upon the blessing with which my fathers blessed me; which the princes who are of the world have desired: all of them shall be upon the head of Joseph, and upon the man who was separated from his brethren.

Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)

Joseph, my son, thou hast become great; Joseph, my son, thou hast become great and mighty; the end (determined) on thee was (that thou shouldst) be mighty, because thou didst subdue thy inclination in the matter of thy mistress, and in the work of thy brethren. Thee will I liken to a vine planted by fountains of water, which sendeth forth her roots, and overrunneth the ridges of stone, and covereth by her branches all unfruitful trees; even so didst thou my son Joseph subject by thy wisdom and thy good works all the magicians of Mizraim; and when, celebrating thy praises, the daughters of princes walking on the high places cast before thee bracelets and chains of gold, that thou shouldst lift up thine eyes upon them, thine eyes thou wouldst not lift up on one of them, to become guilty in the great day of judgment. And all the magicians of Mizraim were bitter and angry against him, and brought accusations against him before Pharaoh, expecting to bring him down from his honour. They spake against him with the slanderous tongue ["With triple tongue." Compare the Targum on Psalm ci. 5; Psalm exl. 11; Eccles. x. 11; and our introduction pg. 12] which is severe as arrows. But he returned to abide in his early strength, and would not yield himself unto sin, and subdued his inclinations by the strong discipline he had received from Jakob, and thence became worthy of being a ruler, and of being joined in the engraving of the names upon the stones of Israel. From the Word of the Lord shall be thy help; and He who is called the All Sufficient shall bless thee with the blessings which descend with the dew of heaven from above, and with the good blessing of the fountains of the deep which ascend and clothe the herbage from beneath. The breasts are blessed at which thou wast suckled, and the womb in which thou didst lie, The blessings of thy father be added to the blessings wherewith my fathers Abraham and Izhak have blessed me, and which the princes of the world Ishmael and Esau and all the sons of Keturah have desired: let all these blessings be united, and form a diadem of majesty for the head of Joseph, and for the brow of the man who became chief and ruler in Mizraim, and the brightness of the glory of his brethren.

Revised Douay-Rheims

Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)

Joseph is a growing son, a growing son and comely to behold; the daughters run to and fro upon the wall.

But they that held darts provoked him, and quarrelled with him, and envied him.

His bow rested upon the strong, and the bands of his arms and his hands were loosed, by the hands of the mighty one of Jacob: thence he came forth a pastor, the stone of Israel.

The God of thy father shall be thy helper, and the Almighty shall bless thee with the blessings of heaven above, with the blessings of the deep that lieth beneath, with the blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

The blessings of thy father are strengthened with the blessings of his fathers: until the desire of the everlasting hills should come; may they be upon the head of Joseph, and upon the crown of the Nazarite among his brethren.

Aramaic ESV of Peshitta
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta

"Yoseph is a fruitful vine, a fruitful vine by a spring. His branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, shot at him, and persecute him:

But his bow remained strong. The arms of his hands were made strong, by the hands of the Mighty One of Ya'aqub, (from there is the shepherd, the stone of Yisrael),

even by God of your father, who will help you; by the Almighty, who will bless you, with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies below, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb.

The blessings of your father have prevailed above the blessings of your ancestors, above the boundaries of the ancient hills. They will be on the head of Yoseph, on the crown of the head of him who is separated from his brothers.

Peshitta (Syriac)

Joseph is a disciplined son, an educated son; a fruitful bough by a spring, whose branches run over the wall. A company of men quarreled with him, and being great in numbers, envied him; But in strength he bent his bow, and his arms were made strong by the hands of the mighty One of Jacob; (by the name of the Shepherd, the Strength of Israel:) May the God of your father help you and the Almighty bless you with the blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep beneath, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb; The blessings of your father have prevailed above the blessings of my forbears to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills; they shall be on the head of Joseph, on the crown of the head of him who is the prince of his brothers.

Septuagint (Greek)

Joseph is a son increased;
my dearly loved son is increased;
my youngest son, turn to me.

Against whom men taking evil counsel reproached him,
and the archers pressed hard upon him.

But their bow and arrows were mightily consumed,
and the sinews of their arms were slackened by the hand of the mighty one of Jacob;

thence is he that strengthened Israel from the God of your father;
and my God helped you,

and he blessed the with the blessing of heaven from above,
and the blessing of the earth possessing all things,

because of the blessing of the breasts and of the womb,
the blessings of your father and your mother -

it has prevailed above the blessing of the lasting mountains,
and beyond the blessings of the everlasting hills;

they shall be upon the head of Joseph,

and upon the head of the brothers of whom he took the lead.

Brenton's Septuagint

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English

Joseph is a young ox, whose steps are turned to the fountain; He was troubled by the archers; they sent out their arrows against him, cruelly wounding him: But their bows were broken by a strong one, and the cords of their arms were cut by the Strength of Jacob, by the name of the Stone of Israel: Even by the God of your father, who will be your help, and by the Ruler of all, who will make you full with blessings from heaven on high, blessings of the deep stretched out under the earth, blessings of the breasts and of the fertile body: Blessings of sons, old and young, to the father: blessings of the oldest mountains and the fruit of the eternal hills: let them come on the head of Joseph, on the crown of him who was separate from his brothers.

Easy English

Joseph is like a vine that has lots of fruit. It grows by a well and the branches go over a wall.'

Jacob means that Joseph's descendants will go and live all over the land.

'His enemies hated him. And they attacked him.

But he stayed strong and beat them. That was because the hand of the Mighty One of Jacob (the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel) helped him.'

Mighty One is another name for God. It means that God is very strong.

Shepherd is also a name for God (see 48:15). Rock of Israel, means that God is strong and does not change. Jacob is showing this. He knows that God has helped Joseph. He also knows that he is still helping him.

'The Almighty (the God of Jacob) blesses you. So he gives you the blessings of the heaven above and the blessings of the deep that lies below. And he gives you the blessings of the breasts and womb.'

'Blessings of heaven above' and 'blessings of the deep' mean that God will give Joseph's descendants good land and water to put on the land.

'Blessings of the breasts and womb' means that Joseph's descendants, and their animals will have many young ones.

'The blessings of your father are greater than the blessing of my ancestors. They go up to the top of the mountains that last for ever. They are for Joseph, who was separate from his brothers.

Easy-to-Read Version–2006

Joseph

"Joseph is like a wild donkey,

like a young donkey by a spring,

like colts grazing in a pasture.

People attacked him and made life hard for him.

Men with arrows became his enemies.

But he won the fight

with his mighty bow and his skillful arms.

He gets power from the Mighty One of Jacob,

from the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,

the God of your father who helps you.

May God All-Powerful bless you

and give you blessings

from the sky above and from the deep below.

May he give you blessings

from breast and womb.

My parents had many good things happen to them.

And I, your father, was blessed even more.

Your brothers left you with nothing.

But now I pile all my blessings on you,

as high as a mountain.

God's Word™

Good News Bible (TEV)

“Joseph is like a wild donkey by a spring,
A wild colt on a hillside.

His enemies attack him fiercely
 And pursue him with their bows and arrows.
 But his bow remains steady,
 And his arms are made strong
 By the power of the Mighty God of Jacob,
 By the Shepherd, the Protector of Israel.
 It is your father's God who helps you,
 The Almighty God who blesses you
 With blessings of rain from above
 And of deep waters from beneath the ground,
 Blessings of many cattle and children,
 Blessings of grain and flowers,
 Blessings of ancient mountains,
 Delightful things from everlasting hills.
 May these blessings rest on the head of Joseph,
 On the brow of the one set apart from his brothers.

International Children's B.
The Message

Joseph is a wild donkey,
 a wild donkey by a spring,
 spirited donkeys on a hill.
 The archers with malice attacked,
 shooting their hate-tipped arrows;
 But he held steady under fire,
 his bow firm, his arms limber,
 With the backing of the Champion of Jacob,
 the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel.
 The God of your father—may he help you!
 And may The Strong God—may he give you his blessings,
 Blessings tumbling out of the skies,
 blessings bursting up from the Earth—
 blessings of breasts and womb.
 May the blessings of your father
 exceed the blessings of the ancient mountains,
 surpass the delights of the eternal hills;
 May they rest on the head of Joseph,
 on the brow of the one consecrated among his brothers.

Names of God Bible

“Joseph is a fruitful tree,
 a fruitful tree by a spring,
 with branches climbing over a wall.
 Archers provoked him,
 shot at him,
 and attacked him.
 But his bow stayed steady, and his arms remained limber
 because of the help of the Mighty One of Jacob,
 because of the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,
 because of the **EI** of your father who helps you,
 because of the **Shadday** who gives you
 blessings from the heavens above,
 blessings from the deep springs below the ground,
 blessings from breasts and womb.
 The blessings of your father are greater than
 the blessings of the oldest mountains
 and the riches of the ancient hills.
 May these blessings rest on the head of Joseph,

on the crown of the prince among his brothers.
 “Joseph is a vine that grows a lot of fruit.
 It grows close by a spring.
 Its branches climb over a wall.
 Mean people shot arrows at him.
 They shot at him because they were angry.
 But his bow remained steady.
 His strong arms moved freely.
 The hand of the Mighty God of Jacob was with him.
 The Shepherd, the Rock of Israel, stood by him.
 Joseph, your father’s God helps you.
 The Mighty God blesses you.
 He gives you blessings from the sky above.
 He gives you blessings from the deep springs below.
 He blesses you with children and with a mother’s milk.
 Your father’s blessings are great.
 They are greater than the blessings from the age-old mountains.
 They are greater than the gifts from the ancient hills.
 Let all those blessings rest on the head of Joseph.
 Let them rest on the head of the one who is prince among his brothers.

New Simplified Bible .

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible Joseph is a young bull,
 a young bull by a spring,
 who strides with oxen.
 They attacked him fiercely and fired arrows;
 the archers attacked him furiously.
 But his bow stayed strong,
 and his forearms were nimble,
 by the hands of the strong one of Jacob,
 by the name of the shepherd, the rock of Israel,
 by God, your father, who supports you,
 by the Almighty who blesses you
 with blessings from the skies above
 and blessings from the deep sea below,
 blessings from breasts and womb.
 The blessings of your father exceed
 the blessings of the eternal mountains,
 the wealth of the everlasting hills.
 May they all rest on Joseph’s head,
 on the forehead of the one set apart from his brothers.

Contemporary English V. Joseph, you are a fruitful vine growing near a stream and climbing a wall.
 Enemies attacked with arrows, refusing to show mercy.
 But you stood your ground, swiftly shooting back with the help of Jacob's God, the All-Powerful One-- his name is the Shepherd, Israel's mighty rock.
 Your help came from the God your father worshiped, from God All-Powerful. God will bless you with rain and streams from the earth; he will bless you with many descendants.
 My son, the blessings I give are better than the promise of ancient mountains or eternal hills. Joseph, I pray these blessings will come to you, because you are the leader of your brothers.

The Living Bible

“Joseph is a fruitful tree beside a fountain. His branches shade the wall. He has been severely injured by those who shot at him and persecuted him, but their weapons were shattered by the Mighty One of Jacob, the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel. May the God of your fathers, the Almighty, bless you with blessings of heaven above and of the earth beneath—blessings of the breasts and of the womb, blessings of the grain and flowers, blessings reaching to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills. These shall be the blessings upon the head of Joseph who was exiled from his brothers.

New Berkeley Version
New Century Version

“Joseph is like a grapevine that produces much fruit,
a healthy vine watered by a spring,
whose branches grow over the wall.
Archers attack him violently
and shoot at him angrily,
but he aims his bow well.
His arms are made strong.
He gets his power from the Mighty God of Jacob
and his strength from the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel.
Your father’s God helps you.
God Almighty blesses you.
He blesses you with rain from above,
with water from springs below,
with many babies born to your wives,
and many young ones born to your animals.
The blessings of your father are greater
than the blessings of the oldest mountains,
greater than the good things of the long-lasting hills.
May these blessings rest on the head of Joseph,
on the forehead of the one who was separated from his brothers.

New Life Version

"Joseph is a branch with much fruit, a branch with much fruit by a well. It grows over the wall. The men fought against him with their bows. They sent arrows toward him and made it hard for him. But his bow did not shake. His arms were made strong by the hands of the Powerful One of Jacob, by the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel, by the God of your father Who helps you, and by the All-powerful Who brings good to you. He brings good from heaven above, and from the deep that lies below, and from the body of a mother. More good has come to your father than to my fathers before me, as lasting as the hills that last forever. May this good be on the head of Joseph, on the crown of him who was divided from his brothers.

New Living Translation

“Joseph is the foal of a wild donkey,
the foal of a wild donkey at a spring—
one of the wild donkeys on the ridge.
Archers attacked him savagely;
they shot at him and harassed him.
But his bow remained taut,
and his arms were strengthened
by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob,
by the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel.
May the God of your father help you;
may the Almighty bless you
with the blessings of the heavens above,
and blessings of the watery depths below,
and blessings of the breasts and womb.
May my fatherly blessings on you
surpass the blessings of my ancestors,

reaching to the heights of the eternal hills.
 May these blessings rest on the head of Joseph,
 who is a prince among his brothers.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible 'JoSeeph is a son that has grown...
 My dearly-loved son has now grown.
 You've returned to me, my younger son...
 You whom the evil have spoken against...
 The one who was plotted against,
 And whom archers [have tried to shoot down].
 But their bows and arrows were quickly destroyed,
 And the hand of Jacob's Great Mighty One,
 Weakened the power of their arms,
 Because he's the one who brought the strength
 Of the God of IsraEl, his father.
 'My God has helped you and blest you
 With the blessings that come from above.
 They're the blessings of the ground that owns all...
 They're the blessings of the breasts and the womb.
 They're the blessings of your father and mother,
 Which last longer than the blessings of the mountains,
 And [longer than] the hills of the ages.
 'These [blessings] will be upon JoSeeph's head,
 And on the heads of the brothers,
 Over whom he has taken the lead.

Beck's American Translation .
 International Standard V

On the Future of Joseph

"Joseph is descended from a fruitful vine,
 a fruitful vine planted near springs of water.
 His branches climb over walls.
 Even though enemies [The Heb. lacks *enemies*] attacked him,
 shooting at him
 and pursuing him viciously,
 nevertheless his bow remained steady
 and his arms kept in shape
 by the strength of Jacob's Mighty One,
 in the name of the Shepherd,
 Israel's Rock,
 by your father's God
 who helps you,
 by the Almighty
 who will keep on blessing you
 with blessings from heaven above,
 with blessings from the deepest ocean,
 with blessing from the breasts and the womb.
 Your father's blessings will prove to be stronger
 than blessings from the eternal mountains
 or bounties from the everlasting hills.
 May they come to rest on Joseph's head,
 May they be set upon the brow of the one
 who was separated from his own brothers."

New Advent (Knox) Bible

Joseph grows upward, upward still, fair to view; see how the maidens pass to and fro on the city walls [Some think that Joseph is compared to a fruitful tree, whose branches (though the word 'daughters' never has this meaning elsewhere) spread along a garden wall. The blessing of Joseph is very uncertain in its interpretation throughout. It has been supposed that the reference is to the later prominence of Ephraim among the ten tribes that were separated from Juda (cf. e.g. Ps. 77.67).]! Sorely his enemies harass him with the darts they throw, unrelenting in their hatred, but his bow rests in the strength that does not fail him; the power of the God who rules in Jacob gives free play to hand and arm. From Joseph one shall arise, who will be the shepherd and the corner-stone of Israel. The God of thy father shall bring thee aid; the Almighty shall bless thee with all the blessings that lie stored in heaven above, or in the depth beneath us, all the blessings that enrich breast and womb. This blessing which thy father gives thee draws strength from all the blessings which his own fathers bequeathed; they shall not cease till he comes, whom the everlasting hills await. May they all rest on Joseph's head, rest on his brow, who is separated, like a Nazirite, from his brethren.

Revised Knox Bible
Translation for Translators

Joseph, you will have many descendants [MET].
 Their children will be as many as the fruit on a vine near a spring of water, whose branches extend over a wall.
 Their enemies will attack them fiercely, and shoot at them with bows and arrows and pursue them.
 But they will hold their bows steady and their arms will remain strong, because of the power [MTY] of my mighty God, because of Yahweh who guides and provides for me [MET] like a shepherd guides and provides for his sheep.
 The people of Israel will ask *Yahweh to protect them, like people hide under a huge rock to be protected.*
 God, the one whom I worship, will help your descendants.
 God Almighty will bless them by sending them rain from the sky and by giving them water from deep/far below the ground.
 He will give them many cattle and children [MET] (OR, and their cattle will have many offspring).
 The blessings that I want God to give you are great ones. They are greater than the blessings that come from the eternal mountains, than the ones that come from the everlasting hills.
 Joseph, I pray that these blessings will «be given to you/come upon your head», because you are the leader of your *older brothers and younger brother.*

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):Awful Scroll Bible
Awful Scroll Bible

Joseph, you is being a fruitful son, being a fruitful son of perspicacity; being established, you is to have marched on your walls.
 The masters of the arrow were to make you bitter, and are to have shot at you, and were to hate you.
 But your bow was to remain enduringly, and your arms and hands were to be made agile, by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob, the shepherding Stone of Israel-eternal life.
 The God of your father was to help you, and together with the Devastating One, was you to be approved of with the favors of the expanse above, and the favors of the depths being stretched out, even the favors of the breasts and womb.

Conservapedia	<p>The favors of my fathers, are to have prevailed over the favors of my progenitors, to the limits of the ancient hills; even on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of they consecrated of your brothers.</p> <p>"Joseph is a fruitful son, fruitful by a spring; his daughters run over the barricade. The archers, being many, have been bitter toward him and begrudged him. But his bow was located in the perennial stream, and the weapons in his hands were made supple by the hands of the Sturdy One [The Sturdy One is God.] of Jacob; from there comes the shepherding stone of Israel. By the God of your father, and he will help you, and the All-Sufficient One will bless you with blessings from the skies above, and with blessings from the abyss that lies beneath, and the blessings of the breasts and the womb. The blessings of your father have won over even the blessings of my ancestors to the farthest boundary of the hills forever. They shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the scalp of the one who was sequestered from his brothers." All this is a reference to the bitter, and finally sweet, life of Joseph.</p>
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	<p>To Joseph</p> <p>Joseph! a fruitful plant! A fruitful plant by a well, — With branches spread on the wall ! But the master of arrows provoked, And shot, and pierced him ; But he turned to his powerful bow, And the hands of his arms were quick By the hands of the mighty God of Jacob, From Whom is Israel's guardian stone. May the God of your father guard you ; — And the Almighty bless you ! With blessings from the sky above, With blessings below of dancing water, With the bliss of the breasts, and love ! May the blessings of your father strengthen, With the bliss of the fertile vales. — May the wealth of the ancient hills Be heaped on the head of Joseph ; — More nobly crowned than his brothers !</p>
God's Truth (Tyndale)	<p>That flourishing child Joseph, that flourishing child and goodly unto the eye: the daughters ran upon the wall. The shooters have envied him and chide with him and hated him, and yet his bow bode fast, and his arms and his hands were strong, by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob: out of him shall come an herdsman, a stone in Israel. your father s God shall help you, and the almighty shall bless you with blessings from heaven above, and with blessings of the water that lies under, and with blessings of the breasts and of the womb. The blessings of your father were strong: even as the blessings of my elders, after the desire of the highest in the world, and these blessings shall fall on the head of Joseph, and on the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren.</p>
<p>HCSB Jubilee Bible 2000 H. C. Leupold</p>	<p>. .</p> <p>Joseph is a shoot of a fruitful branch, A shoot of a fruitful branch by the side of a fountain, Whose branches have already climbed up on the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, shot at him and persecuted him, But his bow stayed firm,</p>

And the arms of his hands remained supple.
 As a result of the work of the Strong One of
 Jacob
 From there where the Shepherd, the Stone of
 Israel, is.
 From the God of thy father—and may
 He help thee—
 And with the help of the Almighty—and may
 He bless thee—
 With blessings of the heavens above,
 With blessings of the deep that coucheth beneath,
 With blessings of breasts and womb.
 The blessings of thy father have prevailed
 Above the blessings of my progenitors,
 Even unto the border of the everlasting hills;
 May they be upon the head of Joseph,
 Upon the crown of the head of the choice one
 among his brethren.

Lexham English Bible

Joseph [is] the bough of a fruitful vine, a fruitful bough by a spring. His branches climb over the wall. {The archers} fiercely attacked him. They shot arrows [at him] and were hostile to him. But his bow remained in a steady position; {his arms} were made agile by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob. From there [is] the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel. Because of the God of your father he will help you and [by] Shaddai he will bless you with the blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that crouches beneath, blessings of the breasts and the womb. The blessings of your father are superior to the blessings of my ancestors, to the bounty of the everlasting hills. May they be on the head of Joseph, and on the forehead of the prince of his brothers.

H. C. Leupold
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 Tree of Life Version
 Urim-Thummim Version

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 .
 Joseph is a fruitful son, even a fruitful son by a spring whose daughters run over the wall.
 The archers have bitterly grieved him and shot at him, and opposed him.
 But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the Mighty Elohim of Jacob; (from there comes the Shepherd with the Urim-Thummim stone of Israel!)
 Even by the Elohim of your father who shall help you, and by the Shaddai, who shall bless you with blessings of the cosmos above, blessings from the deep places where buried stones are mined, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb.
 The blessings of your father have eclipsed the blessings of my ancestors. Up to the utmost bound of the age- lasting hills. May they be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of (the consecrated) one among his brothers.

Wikipedia Bible Project

Son Joseph is a fruitful vine, a fruitful fountain vine, its tendrils wind upon the wall. And the arrow men will embitter him and shoot at him and hate him. And will settle in the bend of his bow, and his hand are limber, from the hands of the grandest of Jacob, from him will be the shephard, the rock of Israel. The god of your fathers, will seed aid, and a blessing on the breasts, a blessing of the skies above, blessing of the abyss squatting below, blessed breasts and womb. The blessing of your father have superseded the blessing of my ancestors, unto the proudest hills of the world; you will be a head Joseph, and a crown on the head of your brothers' princes.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

- Christian Community (1988) .
The Heritage Bible Joseph is a fruitful son, a fruitful son by a fountain; his daughters march over the wall;
The lords of arrows have made him bitter, and shot at him, and persecuted him;
And his bow sits in permanence, and the hands of his arms are strong by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob; from there is the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,
From the God of your father, and he shall help you; and *the* Almighty, he will kneel down to you with the goodness of the heavens above, blessings of the deep lying under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb;
The blessings of your father prevail over all; they are mightier than the blessings of the everlasting hills: let them be on the head of Joseph, and for the crown of him who was separate from his brothers.
- New American Bible (2002) .
New American Bible (2011) “Joseph is a wild colt,
a wild colt by a spring,
wild colts on a hillside.
Harrying him and shooting,
the archers opposed him;
But his bow remained taut,
and his arms were nimble,
By the power of the Mighty One of Jacob,
because of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,
The God of your father, who helps you,*
God Almighty, who blesses you,
With the blessings of the heavens above,
the blessings of the abyss that crouches below,
The blessings of breasts and womb,
the blessings of fresh grain and blossoms,
the blessings of the everlasting mountains,
the delights of the eternal hills.
May they rest on the head of Joseph,
on the brow of the prince among his brothers.
[49:25–26] A very similar description of the agricultural riches of the tribal land of Joseph is given in Dt 33:13–16.
- New Jerusalem Bible .
New Jerusalem Bible Joseph is a fruitful plant near a spring whose tendrils reach over the wall.
Archers in their hostility drew their bows and attacked him.
But their bows were broken by a mighty One, the sinews of their arms were snapped by the power of the Mighty One of Jacob, by the Name of the Stone of Israel,
the God of your father who assists you, El Shaddai who blesses you: blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep lying below, blessings of the breasts and womb,
blessings of the grain and flowers, blessings of the eternal mountains, bounty of the everlasting hills -- may they descend on Joseph's head, on the crown of the one dedicated from among his brothers!
- New RSV .
Revised English Bible “Joseph is a fruitful tree by a spring, whose branches climb over the wall.
The archers savagely attacked him, shooting and assailing him fiercely,
but Joseph's bow remained unflinching and his arms were tireless by the power of the Strong One of Jacob, by the name of the Shepherd of Israel,

by the God of your father -- so may he help you! By God Almighty -- so may he bless you with the blessings of heaven above, and the blessings of the deep that lies below! The blessings of breast and womb and the blessings of your father are stronger than the blessings of the eternal mountains and the bounty of the everlasting hills. May they rest on the head of Joseph, on the brow of him who was prince among his brothers.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible

exeGesés companion Bible

.
Yoseph:
a fruitful son - a fruitful son by a fountain;
whose daughters pace over the wall:
the masters of arrows embitter him
and shoot and oppose him:
and his bow settles perennial
and the arms of his hands solidify
by the hands of the Almighty of Yaaqov
- from there is he who tends,
the stone of Yisra El:
by El of your father, who helps you;
and by Shadday, who blesses you
with blessings of the heavens most high
- blessings of the abyss that crouch under
- blessings of the breasts and of the womb:
the blessings of your father prevail mightily
above the blessings of those whom I conceived
to the limits of the eternal hills:
they be on the head of Yoseph
and on his scalp who is a Separatist of his brothers.

Hebraic Roots Bible

Joseph is a fruitful son, a fruitful son by a spring; his daughters run over a wall. And the masters of arrows harass him, and shoot, and an archer lurks for him. His bow abides in strength, and the hands of his arms are made agile by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob, from the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel. From the El of your father, may He help you. And may the Almighty bless you with blessings of Heaven from above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and womb. The blessings of your father are above the blessings of my offspring, to the limit of everlasting hills; may they be for the head of Joseph and for the crown of the one separated (nazeer) of his brothers.

Israeli Authorized Version
JPS (Tanakh—1985)

.
Joseph is a wild ass,
A wild ass by a spring
—Wild colts on a hillside.
Archers bitterly assailed him;
They shot at him and harried him.
Yet his bow stayed taut,
And his arms were made firm
By the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob—
There, the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel—
The God of your father who helps you,
And Shaddai who blesses you
With blessings of heaven above,
Blessings of the deep that couches below,

Blessings of the breast and womb.
 The blessings of your father
 Surpass the blessings of my ancestors,
 To the utmost bounds of the eternal hills.
 May they rest on the head of Joseph,
 On the brow of the elect of his brothers.

Kaplan Translation

Joseph

'Joseph is a fruitful son [Although in Hebrew the phrase ben porath is used twice, the first time it is translated as 'fruitful son,' and the second time, 'a fruitful vine' (Targum; Saadia Gaon; Sh'muel ben Chofni). Others see it as a repetition (Rashbam; Ibn Ezra).], [like] a fruitful vine [Or 'branch' or 'bough' (Targum; Saadia Gaon; Ibn Ezra; Ramban; Sforno; cf. Psalms 80:16). Or, 'a handsome son' (Rashi); 'a noble, distinguished son' (Hirsch); 'a vine sending forth shoots' (Ibn Ezra); 'a young bull' (Bereshith Rabbah 98; cf. Deuteronomy 33:17); 'a son of cows' (referring to Pharaoh's dream; Genesis 41:2; Bereshith Rabbah 98); 'a young interpreter [of dreams]' (Aggadath Bereshith 73; Midrash Aggadah); 'a son suffering from treachery' (Bereshith Rabbah 78); or, 'a royal son' (Tzeror HaMor). In ancient Egyptian, porath or pereth is grain.] by the fountain [Or 'well' or 'spring' (Targum). Or 'like a fountain' (Lekach Tov); 'to the eye' (Rashi); 'away from the eye' (Berakhoth 20a)], with branches [(Ibn Ezra). Or 'daughters' (see note on Genesis 49:22, 'running').] running [Literally, 'striding' or 'strutting.' Some translate the two words as 'running branches' (Ibn Ezra). On the basis of Semitic cognates, some translate these two words as 'a wild colt,' but there is no traditional basis for this.] over the wall [(Rashi). Or, 'to see' (Rashi).] [The verse can thus be rendered, 'Joseph is a handsome son, a son handsome to the eye; girls strode out to see him' (Bereshith Rabbah 98; Rashi); or 'young girls strode out on the wall [to see him]' (Targum Yonathan; Pirkey Rabbi Eliezer 39). Or, '[Your] daughters will walk the boundaries [of their own lands]' (Tanchuma, Pinchas 9; BaMidbar Rabbah 14:7, 21:12; alluding to the fact that among Joseph's descendants, women will be the first to inherit land; see Numbers 27:1, Joshua 17:6).].

'[People] made his life bitter [(Rashi). Or, 'made him their target' (Ibn Ezra); or 'were treacherous to him' (Bereshith Rabbah 98).] and attacked [Or 'quarreled' (Targum; Rashi). Or, 'shot at him' (Sekhel Tov; Ibn Ezra).] him; masters of strife [(Targum; Rashi; cf. Rashbam). Cf. Jeremiah 9:7, Proverbs 26:18,19. Or, 'expert bowmen' or 'masters of arrows' (Ibn Ezra).] made him their target [(Hirsch). Or 'attacked him' or 'were furious at him' (cf. Genesis 27:41). The verse can also be translated, 'Master bowmen hated him, they made him their target and shot at him' (Ibn Ezra); or 'Archers bitterly attacked him, they shot him and harassed him.'].]

But his resolution [Or 'power' (Targum; Rashi). Or, 'his bow' (Sekhel Tov; Ibn Ezra; Radak).] remained firm [(Targum; Rashi). Or, 'he drew his bow with strength' (Rashbam); 'his strength returned as before' (Targum Yonathan; Sotah 36b); or, 'He held back his desires' (referring to Potiphar's wife, Genesis 39:8; Rashi; see note on Genesis 49:24, 'his arms were bedecked...').], and his arms were [eventually] bedecked with gold [(Targum; Rashi; cf. 41:42); Or, 'he bent his arm' (Rashbam), 'his arm was strong' (Ibn Ezra; Radak); 'his arm conquered' (Sh'muel ben Chofni). Others render this phrase, 'his sperm-ducts were let loose' (Yerushalmi, Horayoth 2:5; Pirkey Rabbi Eliezer 39; Rashi); and hence, the entire verse is translated, 'He held back his desires [with Potiphar's wife], but his seed was spilled' (Ibid.).]. This was from Jacob's Champion, and from then on, he became a shepherd [(Targum Yonathan; Rashi); referring to Joseph. Others have, 'This was from Jacob's Champion, from the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel' (cf. Septuagint). Or, 'from there was shepherded....' (Hirsch).], a builder [(cf. Targum; Rashi; Rashbam). Literally, 'stone' or 'rock.' (Radak). Some translate it as 'essence' (Saadia Gaon; Sh'muel ben Chofni). Some say that this is an allusion to the Messiah coming from Joseph

(Sh'muel ben Chofni; Ralbag; Tzeror HaMor; cf. Midrash Aggadah; Sukkah 52b; Torah Sh'lemah 330).] of Israel.

[This was] from your father's God, who will [still] help you, and [from] the Almighty [(Ibn Ezra). Or, 'and [you were] with the Almighty (Targum Yonathan; Rashi).], who will bless you. [Yours will be] the blessings of heaven above, the blessing of the water lying beneath [Literally, 'the abyss (subterranean water) crouching below' (cf. Radak).], the blessing of breast [Literally, 'breasts' (Rashbam). Or, 'blessings of father and mother' (Targum; Rashi); or, 'blessings of food and children' (Lekach Tov).] and womb.

'May your father's blessing add to [Or, 'be in addition to' (Targum; Rashi). Or, 'stronger than' (Sekhel Tov).] the blessing of my parents, lasting as long as the eternal hills [(Rashi). Or, 'until the heights of the eternal hills' (Ibn Ezra). More literally, 'desires' (Saadia; Bereshith Rabbah 98). Some interpret the phrase, 'as long as the eternal mountains exist' (Radak).]. May they be for Joseph's head, for the brow [More accurately, the top of the head, the place where an infant's head is soft (Radak, Sherashim). See Deuteronomy 28:35, 2 Samuel 14:25, Job 2:7. Cf. Targum.] of the elect [Cf. Deuteronomy 33:16. This can mean 'one set apart' (Targum; Rashi; Bereshith Rabbah 98); 'most consecrated' (Sforno); 'king' (Rashbam; Radak); or 'crown' (Ibn Ezra; Radak, Sherashim). The Hebrew word, nazir, here also denotes a Nazirite (Numbers 6:2), and some sources state that Joseph actually took a Nazirite vow (Bereshith Rabbah 98).] of his brothers.

Orthodox Jewish Bible

Yosef is a ben of a fruittree, even ben of a fruit-tree near an ayin (spring, well); its daughters (i.e., branches) run over the wall;

The ba'alei khitzim (archers) provoke him, and shoot at him, and hate him;

But his keshet (bow) remained steady, and the arms of his hands remain strong, from the hands of the Avir Ya'akov, from there, from the Ro'eh, Even Yisrael;

And from El Avicha, who shall help thee; and Shaddai, who shall make brocha over thee with Birkat Shomayim above, Birkat Tehom that lieth beneath, Birkat Shadayim and of Rekhem.

Birkat Avicha surpass the Birkat of my progenitors unto the utmost border of the giveot olam (everlasting hills); they shall come on the rosh Yosef, and on the brow of the Prince among his achim.

The Scriptures 1998

“Yosēph is an offshoot of a fruit-bearing tree, an offshoot of a fruit-bearing tree by a fountain, his branches run over a wall.

“And the archers have bitterly grieved him, shot at him and hated him.

“But his bow remained in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the Mighty One of Ya'aqob – from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Yisra'el –

from the El of your father who helps you, and by the Almighty who blesses you with blessings of the heavens above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

“The blessings of your father have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, up to the limit of the everlasting hills. They are on the head of Yosēph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separated from his brothers.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible

“Joseph is a fruitful bough (a main branch of the vine),

A fruitful bough by a spring (a well, a fountain);

Its branches run over the wall [influencing others].

“The [skilled] archers have bitterly attacked and provoked him;

They have shot [at him] and harassed him.

“But his bow remained firm and steady [in the Strength that does not fail],

For his arms were made strong and agile

By the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob,
 (By the name of the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel),
 By the God of your father who will help you,
 And by the Almighty who blesses you
 With blessings of the heavens above,
 Blessings lying in the deep that couches beneath,
 Blessings of the [nursing] breasts and of the [fertile] womb.
 “The blessings of your father
 Are greater than the blessings of my ancestors [Abraham and Isaac]
 Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills;
 They shall be on the head of Joseph,
 Even on the crown of the head of him who was the distinguished one and the one
 who is prince among (separate from) his brothers.
 “Joseph is like a ·grapevine that produces much fruit [or fruitful bough/tree; or foal
 of a wild donkey]
 a ·healthy vine [or fruitful bough/tree; or foal of a wild donkey] ·watered by
 [[†]by] a spring,
 ·whose branches grow over the wall [or a wild donkey on a hillside].
 Archers attack him violently
 and shoot at him angrily,
 but ·he aims his bow well [[†]his bow remains taut].
 His arms ·are made strong [or were snapped].
 ·He gets his power from [[†]...by the hands of] the Mighty God of Jacob
 ·and his strength from [or by the name of] the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel.
 Your father’s God helps you.
 God Almighty blesses you.
 He blesses you with ·rain [[†]blessings] from above,
 with ·water from springs below [[†]the blessings of the deep that crouches
 below],
 with ·many babies born to your wives
 and many young ones born to your animals [[†]the blessings of breasts and
 womb].
 The blessings of your father are greater
 than the blessings of the ·oldest [or eternal] mountains,
 greater than the ·good things [delight] of the long-lasting hills.
 May these blessings rest on the head of Joseph,
 on the forehead of the one who was ·separated from [or prince among] his
 brothers [[†]Ephraim would become the dominant tribe in northern Israel].

The Expanded Bible

Kretzmann’s Commentary

Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall. Here the prophetic song of Jacob rises to a solemn exultation. The descendants of Joseph would increase so rapidly in their territory that they would soon extend beyond their own boundaries into the neighboring tribes. The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him; but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob (from thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel). Here the powerful and victorious growth of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh is pictured, in consequence of which all enemies would be overcome. This result, however, would not come about by their own power, but through the help of the mighty God of Jacob, by virtue of the assisting hands of God, who is both the Shepherd and the Rock of Israel. Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. Rains from heaven above and sufficient water from springs and brooks to give the necessary moisture to the soil and the greatest fertility for all his herds, that is the blessing which Jacob

begs from the Lord for his beloved son. The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills; they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren. The blessings of Jacob upon Joseph exceeded in extent and compass those of his fathers before him, rising higher than the eternal hills and surpassing them in beauty. Such a rich outward unfolding was to come upon him who excelled his brethren in dignity and power, on account of which he was separated from them by a wide gulf.

NET Bible®

Joseph is a fruitful bough [The Hebrew text appears to mean “[is] a son of fruitfulness.”],

a fruitful bough near a spring

whose branches [*Heb* “daughters.”] climb over the wall.

The archers will attack him,

they will shoot at him and oppose him.

But his bow will remain steady,

and his hands [*Heb* “the arms of his hands.”] will be skillful;

because of the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob,

because of [*Heb* “from there,” but the phrase should be revocalized and read “from

[i.e., because of] the name of.”] the Shepherd, the Rock [Or “Stone.”] of Israel,

because of the God of your father,

who will help you [*Heb* “and he will help you.”],

because of the sovereign God [*Heb* “Shaddai.” See the note on the title “sovereign God” in Gen 17:1.],

who will bless you [*Heb* “and he will bless you.”]

with blessings from the sky above,

blessings from the deep that lies below,

and blessings of the breasts and womb.

The blessings of your father are greater

than [*Heb* “have prevailed over.”] the blessings of the eternal mountains

or the desirable things of the age-old hills.

They will be on the head of Joseph

and on the brow of the prince of his brothers.

Syndein/Thieme

{Verses 22-26 Joseph}

Joseph . . . {is} a fruitful tree,

even a fruitful bough by a well . . . {see Psalm 1 a tree planted by water is very fruitful - the water is the Water of the Word Joseph concentrated on God and His Word}

whose branches run over the wall {picture a flowing of blessings over the 'wall of Israel' - he had an impact in Egypt also - he reached an entire generation of Egyptians on the other side of the wall}.

The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him. {Joseph was the object of jealousy and envy and many tried to hurt him. They only hurt themselves in the end. God used the evil for good - to promote Joseph}

But his bow abode in strength {made stronger through bending back over and over}, and the arms of his hands were made strong

by the hands of the Mighty One {God} of Jacob {this means that Joseph as the bow was bent and bent and bent but he always sprung back via his reliance on the Lord}

. . . {The Mighty One} Who is the shepherd . . . the rock of Israel. {Jesus - the Great Shepherd of the Jewish Race and is the founder and foundation or rock of Israel -the savior of those who believe}

Even by the 'El/God of your father,

Who shall help you {reference to the 2nd Advent of Christ} . . .

and by the Almighty/'The Omnipotent One' {Shadday},

Who shall bless you with blessings of heaven above,

The Voice

blessings of the deep that lies under,
 blessings of the breasts, and of the womb.
 The blessings of your father have prevailed
 above the blessings of my progenitors
 unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills.
 They shall be on the head of Joseph,
 and on the crown of the head of him {Joseph}
 that was separate from his brethren {declaration of the double portion going to
 Joseph - Ephraim became the largest tribe and also Manasseh was blessed} .
 Joseph is a fruitful plant that grows beside a spring,
 its *fruitful* branches reaching over the wall.
 The archers fiercely attacked him,
 shot at him, and pressed hard against him.
 But his bow remained taut and strong,
 his arms *firm and agile*.
They were made so by the strong hands of God—
 by the Mighty One of Jacob, by the Shepherd of the Rock of Israel,
 By the God of your father, who will come to your aid,
 by the All-Powerful One who will bless you
 With the blessings from heaven above,
 blessings of the deep that lie beneath,
 and blessings of the breasts and womb.
 May the blessings of your father be more potent
 than the blessings of the ancient mountains.
May they extend to the heights of the everlasting hills,
 and may these blessings now rest on the head of Joseph,
 on the brow of him who was set apart from his brothers.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Benner's Mechanical Trans. ...a son being fruitful is Yoseph ^[Adding], a son being fruitful upon the eye, daughters
 had marched upon the ox, and the masters of the arrows were bitter of him and they
 increased in number and they held a grudge of him, and his bow settled in
 consistency and they refined the arms of his hands, from the hands of the valiant
 of Ya'aqov ^[He restrains], from there are the feeders, the stone of Yisra'el ^[He turns El], from
 the mighty one of your father, he will help you, and with Shaddai ^[My breasts] he will
 respect you, presents of the sky from upon the presents of the deep sea stretching
 out underneath, presents of the breasts and bowels, presents of your father will
 overcome upon the presents of my conceivers until the yearning of the knolls of a
 distant time, they will exist for a head of Yoseph ^[Adding] and to the top of the head,
 dedicated of his brothers,...

Benner's Mechanical Trans.
 Concordant Literal Version A fruitful son is Joseph, a fruitful son, joy of my eye, my son, inferior, to me has
 returned,
 and bitter were they with him, and contended and begrudging him were the archers,
 yet broken in virility is their bow, and slack are the arms of their hands. From the
 hands of the Sturdy One of Jacob, thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel,
 from the El of your father, and your Helper, and He Who-Suffices, and your Blessor,
 blessings of the heavens from above, blessings of the submerged chaos reclining
 beneath, blessings of the breasts and the womb,
 blessings of your father and your mother. Master are they over the blessings of my
 mountains, unto the yearning of the eonian hills, coming are they on the head of
 Joseph, and on the crown of the governor of his brothers.

Context Group Version	<p>Joseph is a fruitful bough, A fruitful bough by a fountain; His branches run over the wall.</p> <p>The archers have intensely grieved him because they shot at him, and persecuted him:</p> <p>But his bow remained firm, and the arms of his hands were agile, by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob, Israel's shepherd and rock,</p> <p>Even by the God of your father, who shall help you, And by the Almighty, who shall esteem you with the esteem (pl) of the skies above, the esteem (pl) of the deep that crouches beneath, the esteem (pl) of the breasts, and of the womb.</p> <p>The esteem (pl) of your father have prevailed above the esteem (pl) of my ancestors To the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: They shall be on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers.</p>
Darby Translation <i>Emphasized Bible</i>	<p>.</p> <p>A fruitful bough, is Joseph, A fruitful bough over a fountain,—Branches creeping over a wail. So they attack him and have shot,—So they enclose him, do the masters of arrows.</p> <p>But abideth, as an enduring one, his bow, And supple are the arms of his hands,—From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob, From thence, is the Shepherd the Stone of Israel: From the GOD of thy father who doth help thee And GOD Almighty who doth bless thee, Blessings of the heavens, above, Blessings of the abyss, couching beneath,—Blessings of breasts and womb: The blessings of thy father, have prevailed, Over the blessings of the perpetual mountains, The charm of the age-abiding hills,—They turn out to be, for the head of Joseph, And for the crown of the head of him who was set apart from his brethren. For some reason, the e-sword version of the Emphasized Bible has the beginning of v. 22 placed back in v. 21. Not sure if Rotherham did that or if this is a typo.</p>
English Standard Version	<p>“Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a spring; his branches run over the wall.</p> <p>The archers bitterly attacked him, shot at him, and harassed him severely, yet his bow remained unmoved; his arms were made agile by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), by the God of your father who will help you, by the Almighty who will bless you with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that crouches beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb.</p> <p>The blessings of your father are mighty beyond the blessings of my parents, up to the bounties of the everlasting hills. May they be on the head of Joseph, and on the brow of him who was set apart from his brothers.</p>
Evidence Bible	.
Green’s Literal Translation	.
Jack Ballinger’s translation	.
Modern English Version	Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a spring,

whose branches run over the wall.
 The archers bitterly attacked him,
 they shot at him and hated him.
 But his bow remained firm.
 His arms were agile
 because of the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob,
 because of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,
 because of the God of your father who will help you,
 and by the Almighty who will bless you
 with blessings from heaven above,
 blessings from the deep that lies beneath,
 the blessings of the breasts and the womb.
 The blessings of your father have surpassed
 the blessings of my fathers,
 up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills.
 They will be on the head of Joseph,
 and on the crown of the head of him who was set apart from his brothers.

Modern KJV
 NASB
 New European Version
 New King James Version

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 .
 "Joseph is a fruitful bough,
 A fruitful bough by a well;
 His branches run over the wall.
 The archers have bitterly grieved him,
 Shot at him and hated him.
 But his bow remained in strength,
 And the arms of his hands were made strong
 By the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob
 (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel),
 By the God of your father who will help you,
 And by the Almighty who will bless you
 With blessings of heaven above,
 Blessings of the deep that lies beneath,
 Blessings of the breasts and of the womb.
 The blessings of your father
 Have excelled the blessings of my ancestors,
 Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills.
 They shall be on the head of Joseph,
 And on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers.

Owen's Translation
 Ron Snider's Translation
 Stuart Wolf's Translation
 Third Millennium Bible
 Updated Bible Version 2.11
 A Voice in the Wilderness

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 .
 .
 .
 .
 Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a spring; his branches have run over the wall.
 The archers have bitterly grieved him, shot at him and carried animosity against him.
 But his bow remained steadfast, and the arms of his hands were made nimble by the hand of the Mighty One of Jacob; from the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel, by the Mighty God of your father who will help you, and by the Almighty who will bless you with blessings of the heavens above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

The blessings of your father have prevailed above the blessings of my ancestors, to the bounds of the enduring hills. They shall be upon the head of Joseph, and upon the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers.

- Webster's Bible Translation .
- World English Bible .
- Young's Literal Translation .
- Young's Updated LT

Joseph is a fruitful son; A fruitful son by a fountain, Daughters step over the wall; And embitter him—yea, they have striven, Yea, hate him do archers; And his bow abides in strength, And strengthened are the arms of his hands By the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob, Whence is a shepherd, a son of Israel. By the God of your father who helps you, And the Mighty One who blesses you, Blessings of the heavens from above, Blessings of the deep lying under, Blessings of breasts and womb; —Your father's blessings have been mighty Above the blessings of my progenitors, Unto the limit of the heights age-during They are for the head of Joseph, And for the crown of the one Separate from his brothers.

The gist of this passage: Joseph has grown to adulthood and he would have many descendants. Like a tree which sends out roots and branches, so it would be for Joseph. However, he has faced great opposition in the past, which have resulted in deliverance by God, as well as numerous blessings from God. These blessings would endure with Joseph and his descendants throughout time.

22-26

In the previous chapter, Jacob blessed each of Joseph's sons. His words to Joseph are all about Joseph's descendants—so these things would apply to the children of Ephraim and Manasseh. Or, another possible way to see this is to understand these things to apply to Joseph's *spiritual children*; those of the seed of Jacob who grow to spiritual maturity. Given the text which follows, this would make a great deal of sense.

Genesis 49:22a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
bên (בן) [pronounced bane]	son, descendant	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
pârâh (פָּרָה) [pronounced paw-RAW]	bearing fruit, being fruitful; bearing young, having lots of children	feminine singular, Qal active participle	Strong's #6509 (& #6500) BDB #826
<p>The NET Bible: <i>The second word is an active participle, feminine singular, from the verb פָּרָה (parah, "to be fruitful"). The translation "bough" is employed for בן (ben, elsewhere typically "son") because Joseph is pictured as a healthy and fruitful vine growing by the wall. But there are difficulties with this interpretation. The word "son" nowhere else refers to a plant and the noun translated "branches" (Heb "daughters") in the third line is a plural form whereas its verb is singular. In the other oracles of Gen 49 an animal is used for comparison and not a plant, leading some to translate the opening phrase בן פָּרָה (ben parah, "fruitful bough") as "wild donkey" (JPS, NAB). Various other interpretations involving more radical emendation of the text have also been offered.¹²⁸</i></p>			
Yôwçêph (יוֹצֵף) [pronounced yoh-SAYF]	he adds, he increases; transliterated Joseph	proper masculine noun	Strong's #3130 BDB #415

Translation: Joseph [is] the son of one bearing fruit;...

¹²⁸ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 14, 2017.

When we find this phrase, *a son of*, it does not necessarily refer to *a son of*. This is often used when referring to a person's age (*a son of sixty years*). This is variously translated *a fruitful bough* (Owens, ESV, Webster); *a fruitful vine* (WEB); *a fruitful son* (Green); and *an offshoot of a fruit-bearing tree* (The Scriptures 1998+). Essentially, it is having the characteristics of whatever it is that a person is said to be the son of.

There are also problems with this passage; however, not as many as with the previous. The first word in this verse, the one often translated *bough* is the masculine singular noun *bên* (בן) [pronounced *bane*] and it is the word we all know as *son*. The KJV of the Bible has a very pervasive influence over the centuries so its translation is still held to in many Bibles, although there does not appear to be a disputed reading here.

Ben is followed by the Qal active participle, feminine singular of *pârâh* (הִרְפָּה) [pronounced *paw-RAW*] and it means *to bear fruit, to be fruitful*. Rather than reading *a fruitful bough* this should read: *A son, bearing [fruit], Joseph! A son, bearing [fruit] by a spring*.

We could take this very literally, where Joseph is the son of a very fruitful father (Jacob has 12 adult sons); and we can take this spiritually, where Joseph is the son of one who bears fruit; and Joseph himself bears spiritual fruit.

Genesis 49:22b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
<i>bên</i> (בן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
<i>pârâh</i> (הִרְפָּה) [pronounced <i>paw-RAW</i>]	<i>bearing fruit, being fruitful; bearing young, having lots of children</i>	feminine singular, Qal active participle	Strong's #6509 (& #6500) BDB #826
<i>‘al</i> (עַל) [pronounced <i>‘ah]</i>	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
<i>‘ayin</i> (עַיִן) [pronounced <i>‘AH-yin</i>]	<i>spring, fountain; eye, spiritual eyes</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744

All BDB definitions: *eye; of physical eye; as showing mental qualities; of mental and spiritual faculties (figuratively); spring, fountain*. Gesenius adds the meaning *face*. Neither source offers *well* as a translation (and there are words for *well* in the Hebrew).

Translation: ...a son of one bearing fruit beside a spring.

Joseph would be like a fruit bearing tree beside a stream. It is the water which feeds the tree (along with the nutrients of the ground); and which make this tree fruitful.

So it is for we believers, who grow spiritually and produce spiritual fruit from the water of the Word.

Genesis 49:22c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
<i>bath</i> (בַּת) [pronounced <i>bath]</i>	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1323 BDB #123

Owens translates this *branches* here.

Genesis 49:22c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
tsā'ad (צָעַד) [pronounced tzaw-ĠAHD]	<i>to step, to go on slowly; to march; to mount up [slowly]; to cause to go up</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6805 BDB #857
Preacher's Complete Homiletical Commentary: <i>went, moved leisurely, sauntered.</i> ¹²⁹			
The subject appears to be a feminine plural noun, but the verb is a feminine singular noun. I should confirm this.			
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ġah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
shûwr (שׁוּר) [pronounced sher]	<i>a wall</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7791 BDB #1004
Back in v. 7, this was an alternate reading.			

Translation: His branches [lit., daughters] go out over the wall.

Just as there are no *boughs* in this verse, there are no branches. The Hebrew word is the feminine plural of the noun *bath* (תֵּבַת) [pronounced *bath*] and it means *daughters* in the wider relationships inferred when the word *son* is used. Then we have a strange thing—the verb is the Qal perfect, feminine singular of *tsā'ad* (צָעַד) [pronounced *tsaw-AD*] and it means *to march, to step*. Here the word is dubious (BDB p. 857) and the preferred translation is *have climbed over*. The object of the preposition is *wall*.

If we stay with the imagery, the branches of this fruit-bearing tree spread out in all directions, going out beyond any confined space. Let me suggest that Joseph's spiritual production is not confined by his life—and many of us see our life as confining what we do. That is, once we are dead, we no longer produce anything. But, what we have done in the spiritual realm continues beyond our lives. As of this writing, Billy Graham is an aged man, but his crusades, held over 50 years ago, continue with their influence, as so many people came to the LORD from these events; and since then, their children and even grandchildren have been affected by the spiritual growth and production of those who heard the message of the Holy Spirit through Billy Graham over 50 years ago and responded with positive volition.

Billy Graham's branches have gone out in all directions. There were tens of thousands—possibly millions—of people saved through Billy Graham's ministry. If we simply look at Graham's son, Franklin Graham, who, in his organization, sends out thousands of Christmas presents every year to children around the world. So children all over the world are evangelized, hearing the good news of Jesus Christ, through these presents. These branches of Billy Graham spread out all over the world, into hundreds of countries.

Joseph's spiritual production will continue to live on, past my lifetime, and past yours. Here we are, 4000 years later, still studying and still learning from Joseph's life, as countless generations have done before us.

One of the earliest things that I learned was a series of lessons on the life of Joseph from R. B. Thieme, Jr.; which I found to be memorable and inspiring.

¹²⁹ From <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/phc/view.cgi?bk=19&ch=7> accessed October 22, 2015.

Jacob Blessing His Sons (Jacob Blessing Joseph), by Harry Anderson (a graphic); from **Cathedral Church of the Advent**; accessed January 24, 2018.



Genesis 49:22 Joseph is a fruitful son, a fruitful son by a well, whose branches run over the wall.

First of all, *fruitful* is a play on the proper name *Ephraim* (Genesis 41:52), one of Joseph’s sons (Manasseh was his other son).

Joseph, as a fruitful son, has produced that which has kept his brothers and his father alive. This does not mean that he had a farm and ranch; but, in his high position as the Egyptian prime minister, he had provided for his family by means of the grain which had been stored over the 7 years of prosperity.

This suggests that, in the future, the same would continue, with the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, who were located in the *breadbasket* of Israel.

The branches running over the wall is prosperity which is not confined to Joseph (that is, confined to Ephraim and Manasseh).

Genesis 49:22 Joseph [is] the son of one bearing fruit; a son of one bearing fruit beside a spring. His branches [lit., daughters] go out over the wall. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:23a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
mârar (רָרַם) [pronounced maw-RAHR]	to show bitterness, to make bitter, to embitter, to irritate, to provoke [anyone]	3 rd person masculine plural, Piel imperfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #4843 BDB #600
Owens translates this, <i>fiercely attacked him</i> .			
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
râbab (רָבַב) [pronounced raw ^b -VAH ^b V]	to shoot	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect	Strong’s #7231 BDB #912
This verb is also translated <i>to become many, to become great in number, to be great in number, to increase</i> . Strong’s #7231 BDB #912.			

Genesis 49:23a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
The NET Bible: <i>The verb forms in vv. 23-24 are used in a rhetorical manner, describing future events as if they had already taken place.</i> ¹³⁰			
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88

Translation: Master archers will provoke him—they have shot at him...

The subject of this series of 3 phrases is taken from v. 23b. Literally, these are *lords of the arrow, master archers*. These would be Joseph's enemies. This is interesting because, despite Joseph's history, after he has become prime minister, we do not hear anything about Joseph's enemies. However, the mature believer will always have enemies.

Here, his enemies are said to *embitter him*, but this can also be translated, *they have provoked him*. Continually, there will be provocations of our enemies. Sometimes God gives us rest, and sometimes they keep coming.

Because we have the illustration of archers, we have *they have shot at him*. This is a rare use of this particular verb (perhaps because this is poetry?). We might also translate this, *his enemies increase against him*; indicating that Joseph's enemies will increase over him.

This will be true over all Israel, where Egyptians will increase in size and eventually enslave the sons of Jacob (which also increase in size).

Jacob reveals his love of Joseph, speaking of his beauty, fragrance and production. His influence extended far beyond his land and family. The archers, obviously, are his brothers.

Genesis 49:23b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
sâṭam (שׂטַם) [pronounced saw-TAHM]	<i>to hate; to oppose; to bear a grudge, to retain [or, cherish] animosity, to be against; to lay snares [for someone], to lay a trap, to follow with hostility</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7852 BDB #966
Owens translates this, <i>harassed [him] sorely</i> .			
ba'ălêy (בְּאֵלַי) [pronounced bah-ġuh-LAY]	<i>aristocracy, leaders, baal's, lords, masters; landowners, movers and shakers, supervisors, administrators, citizens, inhabitants; owners</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1181 (plural of Strong's #1167 & 1168) BDB #127

¹³⁰ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 14, 2017.

Genesis 49:23b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
chêts (ny) [pronounced khayts]	arrow; a wound [inflicted by an arrow]; a spear shaft	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2671 BDB #346

The first and only occurrence in Genesis of this fairly common word.

Translation: ...and they hate him.

We have the subject of these 3 phrases here, which is covered above. The motivation of Joseph's enemies is their hatred for him.

All this is present time and Jacob is telling his sons that he knows what has been occurring. Jacob had been a very wealthy man and human viewpoint would think that if you cut Joseph off from this wealth and have his loved ones place him into slavery, his environment will shape him into a self-pitying, useless poor slave with no self-esteem. However, on the contrary, operating under divine viewpoint in God's will, Joseph prospered beyond anyone's wildest dreams. This is why it does not matter what your environment dictates—we belong to God who overrules all circumstances, all heartaches, all troubles and difficulties. Note what Joseph never did: he never wallowed in self-pity and he never held onto bitterness toward his brothers. He picked up where he was, where God put him, and moved on, without rancor, without hatred and without destructive self-pity.

The far view of this prophecy is that the archers are the Canaanites of the coast and those who centered in Bethshean (Joshua 17:15–18); of the men in Bethel that the Ephraimites fought against in Judges 1:22–25, and of the invading Egyptian troops who controlled many of the more important trade routes and strategic areas circa 1400–1200 B.C.. We have historical documents of the Canaanite kings asking Egypt to provide them with archers.

As a side-note, it has been asserted by some that Genesis was written after the reign of Solomon. This is one passage which would be incongruous with such a viewpoint, seeing that at that time, the Ephraimites and the Judæan had become enemies and it would be highly unlikely for a Judæan to speak of Joseph (and therefore, his two half-tribes) in such glowing terms.

Genesis 49:23 The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and an archer lurks for him.

Genesis 49:23 Master archers will provoke him—they have shot at him and they hate him. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The prosperity of Joseph would draw detractors, who would want to come in and take away their wealth and their land. We could understand this to look back on the persecution that Joseph felt from his brothers; but it also looks forward into time.

The Cambridge Bible: *The enemies of Ephraim and Manasseh may have been the Canaanites (Joshua 17:16), or the Midianites (Judges 1:6), or the nomad Arab tribes (1Chronicles 5:19).*¹³¹

¹³¹ *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*; 1882-1921; by Cambridge University Press; General Editor J. J. S. Perowne, from e-sword, Genesis 49:23.

Genesis 49:24a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâshab (יָשַׁב) [pronounced yaw-SHAH ^{AV}]	<i>to remain, to stay; to dwell, to live, to inhabit, to reside; to sit</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'êthân (אֶתָּן) [pronounced â-thawn]	<i>perennial, ever-flowing, permanent, constant; well-established</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #386 (#388?) BDB #450

This is a word used primarily of water; however, in reference to a nation or a person, this is one which has been around for a long time in a position of importance.

First and only occurrence of this word in Genesis.

qesheth (קֶשֶׁת) [pronounced KEH-sheth]	<i>bow; bowmen, archers; rainbow; [used figuratively for] might, strength</i>	feminine singular noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7198 BDB #905
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Translation: Therefore, his bow remains [ever] constant.

I think that the phrase *in constant*, can be understood to mean *ever constant, a permanent condition*. Joseph and his descendants will have to be at a state of readiness in case of sudden attacks by his enemies. The ESV understands this similarly, translating it, *remained unmoved*. Also *remained steadfast* (VW); *remained firm* (CGV); although most translate this *abides in strength* (Green, MLV, the Scriptures).

Joseph was always prepared for his enemies.

Genesis 49:24a Therefore, his bow remains [ever] constant. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:24b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
pâzaz (פָּזַז) [pronounced paw-ZAHZ]	<i>to be supple, to be agile, to be light on one's feet</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6339 BDB #808
z ^e rôwâ' (רֹאשׁ) [pronounced z ^e ROH-ahg']	<i>arm, shoulder and figuratively means strength</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #2220 BDB #283

Elsewhere, this is identified as a feminine noun.

Genesis 49:24b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
This is the first and only occurrence of this noun in Genesis.			
yâdayim (יָדַיִם) [pronounced yaw-dah-YIHM]	[two] hands; both hands figuratively for strength, power, control of a particular person	feminine dual noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yâdayim (יָדַיִם) [pronounced yaw-dah-YIHM]	[two] hands; both hands figuratively for strength, power, control of a particular person	feminine plural construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
'abîyr (רִבְּאָ) [pronounced aw-BEER]	strong, mighty, a Mighty One	masculine singular adjective; also used as a substantive; construct form	Strong's #46 BDB #7

This is the first and only occurrence of this word in Genesis.

Ya'ăqôb (בְּקָעִי) [pronounced yah-ġuh-KOH ^{BV}]	supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent; heel; and is transliterated Jacob	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3290 BDB #784
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Translation: Consequently, the arm of his hands is agile, [having been given strength] from the Mighty One of Jacob.

Because Joseph is pictured as holding the bow at the ready, his arms are strong and agile; and this is from *the Mighty One of Jacob*, a reference to the God of Jacob.

The idea is, Joseph, being spiritual maturity, is ready for a variety of circumstances and situations; and he has quite obviously made the best of those circumstances. This is the spiritual heritage for all people who grow to spiritual maturity.

Genesis 49:24c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
shâm (שָׁמָּ) [pronounced shawm]	there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
Owens suggests that this might be the word...			
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027

The only difference between the words is the vowel point.

Genesis 49:24c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
The NET Bible concurs with this change: <i>Heb "from there," but the phrase should be revocalized and read "from [i.e., because of] the name of."</i> ¹³²			
râ'âh (רֹאֵה) [pronounced raw-ĠAWH]	<i>shepherding, tending [a flock]; a shepherd, herdsman, one who tends sheep</i>	masculine singular, Qal active participle	Strong's #7462 BDB #944
Although Owens lists this simply as a Qal active participle, there is actually no difference between that and the masculine singular, Qal active participle.			
'eben (אֶבֶן) [pronounced EH ^B -ven]	<i>a stone [large or small] [in its natural state, as a building material]; stone ore; used of tablets, marble, cut stone; used of a tool or weapon; a precious stone, gem; rock; a weight of the balance</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #68 BDB #6
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: ...[This is] because the name of the Shepherd [is] the Rock of Israel....

This final phrase is somewhat up in the air—should it be *by a name* or *from there*? Nearly all of the translations have some form of *from there*; Owens is the one who suggested *from a name*.

In any case, we are given two more names of God: *the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel*.

Genesis 49:24 But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob (from the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel);

This would suggest that Ephraim and Manasseh were able to resist their attackers and to defeat them.

The reference here is to the God of Israel, Jesus Christ; the same is *the Mighty God of Jacob, the Shepherd and the Rock of Israel*. There would be divine help for their difficulties.

The ESV translation is: ...yet his bow remained unmoved; his arms were made agile by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel),...

There is some disagreement about the words *from there* (which possibly could be the words, *because of the name of*). An alternate rendering of this verse: **Consequently, the arm of his hands is agile, [having been given strength] from the Mighty One of Jacob. because of the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel, [and He is] from the 'Ēl of your father.** (This includes the first phrase of v. 25). So the strength of Joseph comes from the Might One of Jacob,

¹³² From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 14, 2017.

In the Masoretic text, we have the words *from there a Shepherd*. The word *there* is almost identical to the word *name*; they differ in the primary vowel (one is *shâm* and the other is *shêm*). In the original text, there were no vowels. They were remembered from previous readings and repeated. In the original Hebrew, there was absolutely no difference between these two words because there are no vowels in the original Hebrew. Vowels were added by the Masoretes around the 7th century A.D. This comes from material in Genesis written around 2000 B.C. So, it stands to reason that there might be some problems in the text (a number of commentators suggest that textual problems with this passage are more extensive than the possible mix-up of these two words). Now, although we do not have enough information from the Dead Sea Scrolls on this particular chapter, we have also the ancient text in Greek, Latin, Syriac, Arabic; and 3 separate targums (a targum is somewhat of a paraphrase and a commentary of the text of the first 5 books of the Bible (where the commentary is not separated in any way from the text of Scripture). The Latin and Syriac have *by the hand of the Mighty One...* The Greek, however, has the word *there*.

The point being, there are a lot of problems with this particular passage. However, for the most part, the differences between the Hebrew text and the other ancient translations is generally unimportant. I have translated word-by-word much of the Old Testament, starting with Genesis and going into 1Kings—I have only run into a few dozen times where I was unsure of the translation; and therefore, of the interpretation. This would be one of those times. I am not sure that there are any difficult passages where an important doctrine stands or falls upon the translation.

This is one of the few verses where Young comes to a halt, but many translations continue into v. 25:

Genesis 49:25a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
’Ēl (אֱל) [pronounced <i>ALE</i>]	<i>God, god, mighty one, strong, hero; transliterated El</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #410 BDB #42
’âb (אָב) [pronounced <i>aw^bv</i>]	<i>father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; ancestor, grandfather; founder, civil leader, military leader; master, teacher</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

Translation: ...[and He is] from the ’Ēl of your father.

Rather than a new verse, this seems to be the continuation of the previous verse. This empowerment comes from the God of Joseph's father, the Creator of all things.

Genesis 49:24b–25a **Consequently, the arm of his hands is agile, [having been given strength] from the Mighty One of Jacob. [This is] because the name of the Shepherd [is] the Rock of Israel [and He is] from the ’Ēl of your father.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:25b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Genesis 49:25b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾāzar (אָזַר) [pronounced <i>gaw-ZAHR</i>]	<i>to help, to aid</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5826 BDB #740
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾēth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
Shadday (שַׁדַּי) [pronounced <i>shahd-DAH-ee</i>]	<i>the many-breasted one; and is generally translated Almighty, the Almighty One</i>	proper noun	Strong's #7706 BDB #994

The NET Bible: *The preposition אֶת ('et) in the Hebrew text should probably be emended to אֱל ('el, "God").*¹³³

Translation: He helps you along with the Almighty One,...

The God of Joseph's fathers will help him, along with the Almighty One, which would be Jesus Christ.

Jacob attests to Joseph's strength and his stability. The Mighty One of Jacob is certainly God the Father. From Him (*from thence*) is the Shepherd, Jesus Christ, who is the Rock of Ages, the Rock of Israel, later to be known as the huge stone (from which Peter was a chip) and then known as the chief cornerstone that the builder's rejected. Joseph has been blessed by the supergrace blessings from God, above and beyond anything that he could deserve; blessings from the earth (temporal prosperity); and blessings from the breasts and the womb, which represent life and sustenance. God the Father is the Father of Jesus, who helps Him; and Mary will be the mother of Jesus, who gives birth to Him and provides Him with earthly sustenance.

Jacob is at once blessing Joseph, and speaking of the blessings to Jesus as well, as Joseph is a type of Christ.

Genesis 49:25c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bârak ^e (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced <i>baw-RAHK^e</i>]	<i>to invoke God, to praise, to celebrate, to adore, to bless [God]; to bless [men], to invoke blessings; to bless [as God, man and other created things], therefore to cause to prosper, to make happy; to salute anyone [with a blessing]; to curse</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1288 BDB #138

¹³³ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 14, 2017.

Genesis 49:25c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b ^e râkâh (הִכְרָב) [pronounced <i>braw-KAW</i>]	<i>blessing, benediction, invocation of good; extremely fortunate and happy; a gift, a present; peace, prosperity</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #1293 BDB #139
shâmayîm (שָׁמַיִם) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAH-yim</i>]	<i>heaven, heavens, skies; the visible heavens, as in as abode of the stars or as the visible universe, the sky, atmosphere, etc.; Heaven (as the abode of God)</i>	masculine dual noun	Strong's #8064 BDB #1029
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'al (לְעַל) [pronounced <i>gah]</i>	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752

Together, they mean *from upon, from over, from by, from beside, from attachment to, from companionship with, from accompanying [in a protective manner], from adhesion to, from*. Some translators rendered this *away from*. Some translate this *from above, above* in Genesis 49:25.

b ^e râkâh (הִכְרָב) [pronounced <i>braw-KAW</i>]	<i>blessing, benediction, invocation of good; extremely fortunate and happy; a gift, a present; peace, prosperity</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #1293 BDB #139
t ^e hôm (תְּהוֹמ) [pronounced <i>t^e-HOHM</i>]	<i>ocean depths, a surging mass of water, deep waters, a sea, a subterranean water-supply, abyss, primeval oceans, the vast depths</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8415 BDB #1062

Translation: ...and He blesses you [with] blessings from above [and with] blessings [from] the depths.

God sheds his blessings from above and from below. Let me suggest that the blessings from above, we clearly understand as having come from God; and those from below also come from God, but we do not see them quite that obviously.

Genesis 49:25b-c He helps you along with the Almighty One, and He blesses you [with] blessings from above [and with] blessings [from] the depths. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:25d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
râbat (רָבַת) [pronounced <i>raw^b-VAHTS</i>]	<i>is lying down, lying in wait; reclines, is stretching out, settles upon; sitting</i>	feminine singular, Qal active participle	Strong's #7257 DB #918

Genesis 49:25d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
tachath (תַּחַת) [pronounced TAH-khahth]	<i>underneath, below, under, beneath; instead of, in lieu of; in the place [in which one stands]; in exchange for; on the basis of</i>	preposition of location or foundation	Strong's #8478 BDB #1065
Owens lists this as an adverb here, as it has no object.			
b ^e râkâh (בְּרַכָּה) [pronounced brow-KAW]	<i>blessing, benediction, invocation of good; extremely fortunate and happy; a gift, a present; peace, prosperity</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #1293 BDB #139
shâdayim (שֵׁדַיִם) [pronounced shaw-dah-YIHM]	<i>female breasts, bosom, teats</i>	masculine dual noun	Strong's #7699 BDB #993 & #994
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
racham (רַחֵם) [pronounced RAHK-ahm]	<i>womb, bowels, inner parts</i>	masculine singular noun; pausal form	Strong's #7356 BDB #933

Translation: [In fact, these blessings] are lying in wait beneath [the surface]—the blessings from the breasts and the womb.

In fact, at all times, there are blessings lying in wait, just below the surface, blessings for Joseph.

The NET Bible: *Jacob envisions God imparting both agricultural (blessings from the sky above, blessings from the deep that lies below) and human fertility (blessings of the breasts and womb) to Joseph and his family.*¹³⁴

Speaking of these as blessings from the breasts and womb suggests the blessings of marriage and reproduction.

Genesis 49:25d [In fact, these blessings] are lying in wait beneath [the surface]—the blessings from the breasts and the womb. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:25 ...by the God of your father, who will help you. And may the Almighty bless you with blessings of Heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

The blessings from the deep that lies beneath is somewhat difficult to explain; so let's look at the ESV translation:

Gen. 49:25 ...by the God of your father who will help you, by the Almighty who will bless you with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that crouches beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

The Cambridge Bible sums this up into 3 sets of blessings: *those of the sky, the waters, and the human race, as three sources of fruitfulness.*¹³⁵ Many see the *blessings of the deep which crouches beneath* to simply be a reference to underground waters, some of which come to the surface of the ground through natural means; but

¹³⁴ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 14, 2017.

¹³⁵ *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*; 1882-1921; by Cambridge University Press; General Editor J. J. S. Perowne, from e-sword, Genesis 49:25.

seemingly coming out of nowhere (there is an artesian well not far from where I live; first time I saw it, I wondered, *why don't they fix this pipe that is leaking?*).

The blessings of the womb would refer to children being born (seen in that era as a blessing; and seen by God as a blessing); and the blessings of the breasts would simply refer to the successful raising of the infants into childhood.

Blessings from the heaven above would possibly be spiritual blessings and possibly rain and the right kind of weather. If it is the latter, the rain is thought to come from God, to be a measure of blessing from God, so that it can be a metaphor for spiritual blessings.

Genesis 49:26a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b ^ə rākâh (בְּרָכָה) [pronounced <i>braw-KAW</i>]	<i>blessing, benediction, invocation of good; extremely fortunate and happy; a gift, a present; peace, prosperity</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #1293 BDB #139
'âb (אָב) [pronounced <i>aw^bv</i>]	<i>father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; ancestor, grandfather; founder, civil leader, military leader; master, teacher</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
gâbar (גָּבַר) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>to be strong, to be mighty, to exhibit greater strength than, to be stronger than, to prevail over</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #1396 BDB #149
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752
b ^ə rākâh (בְּרָכָה) [pronounced <i>braw-KAW</i>]	<i>blessing, benediction, invocation of good; extremely fortunate and happy; a gift, a present; peace, prosperity</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #1293 BDB #139
hârâh (הָרָה) [pronounced <i>haw-RAW</i>]	<i>progenitors, ancestors, forefathers; conceiver</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #2029 BDB #247
These meanings were taken from a variety of translations.			
The NET Bible: <i>One could interpret the phrase יָרוּהַ (horay) to mean "my progenitors" (literally, "the ones who conceived me"), but the masculine form argues against this. It is better to emend the text to יָרָהַ (harare, "mountains of") because it forms a better parallel with the next clause. In this case the final yod (י) on the form is a construct plural marker, not a pronominal suffix.</i> ¹³⁶			
'ad (עַד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i>]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until; while, so long as; to, even to [some certain limit]; even to [unto], unto</i>	preposition of duration or of limits	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
Some understand this word to be...			

¹³⁶ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 14, 2017.

Genesis 49:26a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
‘ad (עד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i>]	<i>forever, perpetuity, eternity</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5703 BDB #723
There is no difference in the Hebrew.			
ta'āvâh (תֵּאוּבָה) [pronounced <i>tah-uh-VAW</i>]	<i>boundary, limit</i> (meaning is uncertain)	feminine singular construct	Strong's #8379 BDB #16
This is equivalent to Strong's #8378 BDB #16, which means <i>desire, wish, longing, lust; the thing desired, the object of lust; delight; delicate; honor; ornament</i> .			
This word is not generally used in this way; however, this is poetry, where many of the rules and meanings of Hebrew are switched.			
gib ^{ec} âh (גִּבְעָה) [pronounced <i>gi^bv^e-GAW</i>]	<i>hill</i> ; this same word is transliterated <i>Gibeah</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #1389 BDB #148
This is the first and only occurrence of this noun in the book of Genesis.			
‘ōwlām (עוֹלָם) [pronounced <i>go-LAWM</i>]	<i>properly what is hidden [time]; of [in] times past, from ancient time, old, antiquity, long duration, everlasting, eternal, forever, perpetuity; for future time, futurity; of the world, worldly</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5769 BDB #761

Translation: The blessings of your father are greater than the blessings of my forefathers [going] as far [back] as the limit of the ancient hills;...

The blessings of Joseph's father (who is Jacob, the man giving the blessing to him right now) have been even greater than the blessings of any of Jacob's forefathers.

The first verb is the Qal perfect of *gābar* (גָּבַר) [pronounced *gaw-BAR*] and it means *to be strong or mighty*, but in the perfect voice it means *to prevail*. This is followed by the preposition *‘al* (עַל) [pronounced *al*] which means *over, above, upon*. Then we have a word sometimes translated *mountains*: *hârâh* (הָרָה) [pronounced *haw-RAW*] and it means *to conceive, to become pregnant*. It is found here in the Qal active participle masculine plural, first person singular suffix. The participle means this is a verb acting as a noun; rather than calling these which are in the masculine plural *the ones bearing* it might be more apropos to call them *the ones fathering or siring*. The easiest English translation which approximates the Qal active participle is *progenitors*. The first singular suffix is translated *my*.

The next phrase begins with *‘al* again (above, beyond, upon) and a word with two very different meanings. This should not cause us any grief to encounter this now and again. There are hundreds of English words which are spelled and even pronounced the same, but means very different things and their meaning must be inferred by context. One simple example is the word *charge*. This can mean vastly different things, depending upon whether the subject is a woman in a department store, a civil war general leading his troops, a near dead car battery or an old English father giving responsibility to a son. The word here is *ta'āvâh* (תֵּאוּבָה) [pronounced *tah-av-AW*] and it can mean *limit, utmost bound* or *desire, wish, longing* and it can refer to that which is *desired, longed for* and in this way imply *beauty, charm*.

Jacob, in this moment of great clarity, recognizes that he has been blessed even more than his forefathers, going back as far into history as they want to go.

As a growing believer in Jesus Christ, you should feel the same way about the blessings which God has given to you.

Genesis 49:26b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
We would expect a wâw consecutive here if this were narrative; but it is poetry,			
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person feminine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
rô'sh (שָׂרָס אוּ שָׂרָס) [pronounced rohsh]	<i>head [of a man, city, state, nation, place, family, priest], top [of a mountain]; chief, prince, officer; front, choicest, best; first; height [of stars]; sum</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7218 BDB #910
Yôwçêph (יָסַף) [pronounced yoh-SAYF]	<i>he adds, he increases; transliterated Joseph</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #3130 BDB #415
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
qod ^e qôd (דִּוְקָדָק) [pronounced kod ^e -KOHD]	<i>head, crown of head, top of one's head, hairy part of head</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6936 BDB #869
This is the first and only occurrence of this word in the book of Genesis.			
nâzîyr (נִזְיָר) [pronounced naw-ZEER]	<i>consecrated one; devoted one, transliterated Nazirite; also: untrimmed (vine), separated, set apart from; distinguished</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5139 BDB #634

There is a connection between these various renderings. It is a crown which separates one man entirely from every other man; the crown is on the head and the Nazirites crown is his hair, which is untrimmed, like the vines during the Sabbath Year.

In Genesis 49:26, we are given the renderings *distinguished* (NASB), *him that was separate* (KJV), *who was set apart from* (NRSV), and *separate* (Young's); and it is almost ignored, but footnoted as *the one separated from* in the NIV. Whereas most translations transliterate this word, the Septuagint translated it *to separate* (obviously, that is the English translation of the Greek). In Leviticus 25:5, 11, this word is translated *untrimmed vines* (NASB), *separated thing* (Young's) *undressed vine* (KJV), *untended vines* (NIV), and *unpruned vine* (NRSV). The connection here is that this is like a Nazirite with unshorn hair.

Genesis 49:26b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
This is the first and only use of this word in Genesis.			
'achîym (אחִיִּים) [pronounced <i>awhk-EEM</i>]	<i>brothers, kinsmen, close relatives; tribesmen; fellow-countrymen</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26
Note the change from the 2 nd person to the 3 rd . Vv. 22–24 (3 rd person); v. 25–26a (2 nd person); v. 26b (3 rd person).			

Translation: ...[for these blessings] are for the head of Joseph and for the crown of the one separated from his brothers.

These great blessings which Jacob has enjoyed, they are the blessings which will fall upon the head of Joseph. Such blessings are designed for the one who is separated from his brothers.

This verse ends with the noun *nâzîyr* (נָזִיר) [pronounced *naw-ZEER*] and it means *separated from, consecrated to*. It can refer to a prince, a Nazarite. It is often used of someone who has been separated out from the human race and consecrated to God. As a prince, Joseph was separated from his brothers and from the human race in general, and he was consecrated to Pharaoh and to Egypt. God had directed this amazing chain of events, so he was consecrated or dedicated to God.

The word is a double-edged sword; it automatically carries the thought of being separated from one thing and dedicated to another. Joseph was separated from his brothers in order to be dedicated to God and to Egypt. Like any translation, this is difficult to do with just one word. I went with the footnoted translation of *The Emphasized Bible; the consecrated one from among his brothers*.

Obviously, in this verse, Jacob, in having his son Joseph back, has been blessed beyond the blessings of his predecessors. He is living in Egypt as a guest of royalty with all of his sons and his sons' wives and their children; having just come out of poverty which threatened his very existence. He asks that these great blessings promised to him and to those who came before him to be given to Joseph, the man separated from his brothers to achieve this high position in Egypt.

This complete separation from his brothers in this way further suggests that we are looking at the spiritual blessings which would come upon those who follow Joseph's spiritual example.

Genesis 49:26 The blessings of your father are above the blessings of my ancestors, to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They will be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him, the ruler, the leader of his brothers.

Your father is a reference to Jacob, the man speaking these words; and the greatest blessing is that which has come from him and from his ancestors (his ancestors being Abraham and Isaac).

Hills and mountains were seen to be permanent (we know that they are not); but blessings related to the everlasting hills are blessings related to eternity.

At this point in time, Joseph is the leader of his brothers; but note that Jacob saved his blessing for the second-to-the-last and he blessed Judah first.

It may be helpful to look at the ESV translation at this point:

Gen. 49:26 The blessings of your father are mighty beyond the blessings of my parents, up to the bounties of the everlasting hills. May they be on the head of Joseph, and on the brow of him who was set apart from his brothers.

Genesis 49:26 The blessings of your father are greater than the blessings of my forefathers [going] as far [back] as the limit of the ancient hills; [for these blessings] are for the head of Joseph and for the crown of the one separated from his brothers. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:22–26 Joseph [is] the son of one bearing fruit; a son of one bearing fruit beside a spring. His branches [lit., *daughters*] go out over the wall. Master archers will provoke him—they have shot at him and they hate him. Therefore, his bow remains [ever] constant. Consequently, the arm of his hands is agile, [having been given strength] from the Mighty One of Jacob. [This is] because the name of the Shepherd [is] the Rock of Israel [and He is] from the 'Êl of your father. He helps you along with the Almighty One, and He blesses you [with] blessings from above [and with] blessings [from] the depths. [In fact, these blessings] are lying in wait beneath [the surface]—the blessings from the breasts and the womb. The blessings of your father are greater than the blessings of my forefathers [going] as far [back] as the limit of the ancient hills; [for these blessings] are for the head of Joseph and for the crown of the one separated from his brothers. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:22–26 Joseph will be a fruitful bough, who bears fruit growing beside a spring. His branches stretch out over the wall. Master archers will provoke him—they have shot at him and they hate him. Therefore, his own bow remains ever constant at hand. Consequently, his arms are strong and agile, and he is strengthened by the Mighty One of Jacob, because the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel, and from the God of your fathers. He helps you along with the Almighty One; and He blesses you—blessings from the heavens above and from the depths below—these blessings are lying in wait for you, just beneath the surface—blessings of the breasts and womb. The blessings of your father are even greater than the blessings of my forefathers, going far back into time to the ancient hills; for these blessings are designed for your head, Joseph; and these blessings are for the crown of the one who is separated out from his brothers. (Kukis paraphrase)

You may notice some very serious differences between the two translations in the final sentence. These slight changes make quite a difference in terms of interpretation. The great differences are a result of there being two words in this verse which are used only in the book of Genesis in this one verse (these words are found elsewhere in Scripture, but this is the first and only time they are found in Genesis).

Jacob calls for blessings to be upon Joseph, who was set apart from his brothers. When the northern and southern kingdom divide, the northern kingdom would often be called *Ephraim* (the son of Joseph).

The Tribe of Joseph — a Summary Table

Mother:	Rachel	Meaning of name:	To add, increase
Order of birth to mother:	1 st	Order of birth to Jacob:	11 th
Order of blessing from Jacob:	11 th	Order of blessing from Moses:	5 th
On the mountain of Gerizim, the mountain of blessing	Aligned with Ephraim in the divided kingdom		
First census:	40,500+32,200	Second census:	32,500+52,700
Famous supergrace heroes:	Joshua was from the tribe of Ephraim, as were Samuel and Jeroboam I. Two famous judges, Gideon and Jephthah, belonged to the tribe of Manasseh.		
Unusual facts:	Joseph’s two sons would be understood to be two tribes in Israel (Ephraim and Manasseh), thus, Joseph receives the double blessing, often reserved for the firstborn. Joseph enthusiastically accepted Saul as king over Israel; in part because of Joseph’s close ties to Benjamin.		

Moses' blessing of Joseph: Deut. 33:13–17 And of Joseph he said, "Blessed by the LORD be his land, with the choicest gifts of heaven above, and of the deep that crouches beneath, with the choicest fruits of the sun and the rich yield of the months, with the finest produce of the ancient mountains and the abundance of the everlasting hills, with the best gifts of the earth and its fullness and the favor of him who dwells in the bush. May these rest on the head of Joseph, on the pate of him who is prince among his brothers. A firstborn bull—he has majesty, and his horns are the horns of a wild ox; with them he shall gore the peoples, all of them, to the ends of the earth; they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh." (ESV)

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When speaking of the people of Israel, we generally do not speak of a tribe of Joseph, but of the tribes of his two sons. Joseph received the double portion blessing. So, Ephraim and Manasseh are sons of Joseph who were adopted by Jacob (meaning that they were considered actual tribes of Israel). Jacob has already blessed these boys in the previous chapter.

The Tribe of Ephraim — a Summary Table

Mother:	Asenath	Meaning of name:	
Order of birth to mother:	2 nd	Order of birth to Jacob:	"13 th "
Order of blessing from Jacob:	(1 st)	Order of blessing from Moses:	6 th
On the mountain of Gerizim, the mountain of blessing (as a part of Joseph)	Aligned with Ephraim in the divided kingdom		
First census:	40,500 men able to fight	Second census:	32,500
Famous supergrace heroes: Joshua was from the tribe of Ephraim, as were Samuel and Jeroboam I.			
Unusual facts:	Although Ephraim was the second born son to Joseph, Jacob gave him preeminence when he blessed him. Later on, after the norther and souther kingdom split, we read in many passages that Ephraim had become apostate, worshiping other gods. I believe in most, if not all of these passages, <i>Ephraim</i> refers to the northern kingdom.		
Moses' blessing of Ephraim: See Joseph above.			

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The Tribe of Manasseh — a Summary Table

Mother:	Asenath	Meaning of name:	
Order of birth to mother:	1 st	Order of birth to Jacob:	"14 th "
Order of blessing from Jacob:	(2 nd)	Order of blessing from Moses:	7 th
On the mountain of Gerizim, the mountain of blessing (as a part of Joseph)	Aligned with Ephraim in the divided kingdom		
First census:	32,200 men able to fight	Second census:	52,700
Famous supergrace heroes: Two famous judges, Gideon and Jephthah, belonged to the tribe of Manasseh.			

Unusual facts: Manasseh means *causing to forget*; as his birth helped Joseph to forget all of the difficulties that he had been through. Although Manasseh was the firstborn to Joseph, Jacob when blessing the two sons, subordinated Manasseh to Ephraim. Manasseh is the only tribe to live on both sides of the Jordan River.

Moses' blessing of Manasseh: See Joseph above.

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Benjamin

With this verse, we will conclude the blessings of Jacob given to his sons.

The final son listed is Benjamin, who was Jacob's youngest son, whose birth ended with his mother's death.

Benjamin [is] a wolf; he tears into pieces in the morning—he will eat [his] prey; and towards the evening he is dividing his spoil."

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49:27

Benjamin [will be like] a wolf: he tears apart [his prey] in the morning, eating it [lit., prey]. He divides up his plunder in the evening."

Benjamin will be like the wolf, who tears his prey apart and then eats it in the morning. Then at night, he divides up his plunder to continue eating it."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Benjamin [is] a wolf; he tears into pieces in the morning—he will eat [his] prey; and towards the evening he is dividing his spoil.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum of Onkelos	.
Jerusalem targum	(Of BENJAMIN) I will liken him to a ravening wolf. In his limits will the sanctuary be builded, and in his inheritance the glory of the Shekina of the Lord will dwell. In the morning will the priests offer the continual lamb and its oblations, and at the going down of the sun will the priests offer the continual lamb and its oblations, and at evening divide the offerings of the sons of Israel.
Targum (Onkelos)	Benjamin: in his land will dwell the Shekina, and in his possession will the sanctuary be builded. In the morning and evening [Pania. Conf. the Ethiopic in Castel, under panu, col. 3021] will the priests offer the oblation, and at eventime divide the remaining portions of the residue of the sacred things.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	Benjamin is a strong tribe, (like) the wolf (with) his prey. In his land will dwell the Shekina of the Lord of the world, and the house of the sanctuary be builded in his inheritance. In the morning will the priests offer the lamb continually until the fourth hour, and between the evenings the second lamb, and at eventide will they divide the residue remaining of the offering, and eat, every man, his portion.
Revised Douay-Rheims	.
Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)	Benjamin a ravenous wolf, in the morning shall eat the prey, and in the evening shall divide the spoil.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"Benjamin is a ravenous wolf. In the morning he will devour the prey. At evening he will divide the spoil."

Peshitta (Syriac)	Benjamin is a plundering wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and in the evening he shall divide the spoil.
Septuagint (Greek)	Benjamin, as a ravening wolf, shall eat still in the morning, and at evening he gives food.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Benjamin is a wolf, searching for meat: in the morning he takes his food, and in the evening he makes division of what he has taken.
Easy English	Benjamin is like a hungry wild animal. He kills an animal and eats it in the morning. In the evening, he gives what remains to his people. Jacob is saying that Benjamin will go out and kill his enemies in the morning. And he will return in the evening. In the evening, he will give what he has taken from his enemies to his people.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	Benjamin "Benjamin is like a hungry wolf. In the morning he kills and eats. In the evening he shares what is left."
God's Word™	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	"Benjamin is like a vicious wolf. Morning and evening he kills and devours."
International Children's B. <i>The Message</i>	. Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; all morning he gorges on his kill, at evening divides up what's left over.
Names of God Bible NIRV	. "Benjamin is a hungry wolf. In the morning he eats what he has killed. In the evening he shares what he has stolen."
New Simplified Bible	»Benjamin is a ravenous wolf. In the morning and evening he destroys his enemies.«

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Benjamin is a wolf who hunts: in the morning he devours the prey; in the evening he divides the plunder."
Contemporary English V. The Living Bible	Benjamin, you are a fierce wolf, destroying your enemies morning and evening. "Benjamin is a wolf that prowls. He devours his enemies in the morning, and in the evening divides the loot."
New Berkeley Version New Century Version	. "Benjamin is like a hungry wolf. In the morning he eats what he has caught, and in the evening he divides what he has taken."
New Life Version	"Benjamin is a hungry wolf. In the morning he eats the animals he has caught. And in the evening he divides what he has taken."
New Living Translation	.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'Benjamin is a hungry wolf that eats throughout the morning and provides food in the evening.'
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard V	<i>On the Future of Benjamin</i> "Benjamin is vicious like a wolf; what he kills in the morning he devours in the evening."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	As for Benjamin, he is like a ravening wolf, that must devour his own prey in the morning, and have plunder still to divide at nightfall.
Revised Knox Bible	.
Translation for Translators	Benjamin, your descendants will be like [MET] vicious/fierce wolves: In the morning they will kill their enemies like a wolf devours its prey/the animals that it has killed, and in the evening they will divide among their warriors the spoils that they seized from their enemies."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible	Ben-jamin was to rend as a wolf. In the morning was you to devour your prey, and at the evening was you to divide the spoil."
Awful Scroll Bible	.
Conservapedia	Benjamin is a ravening wolf. He devours the prey in the morning, and at night he apportions the loot." This could be a reference to an episode in the interjudicial period between Judges Joshua and Othniel.
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	To Benjamin. Benjamin ! a wolf, shall eat plunder at morn, And at night shall divide his spoil."
God's Truth (Tyndale)	Ben Jamin is a ravishing wolf. In the morning he shall devour his prey, and at night he shall divide his spoil.
HCSB	.
Jubilee Bible 2000	.
H. C. Leupold	.
Lexham English Bible	Benjamin [is] a devouring wolf, devouring the prey in the morning, and dividing the plunder in the evening.
H. C. Leupold	.
NIV, ©2011	.
NIV – UK	.
Tree of Life Version	.
Urim-Thummim Version	Benjamin will tear in pieces as a wolf: at sunrise he will devour the booty, and at night he will divide the plunder.
Wikipedia Bible Project	Benjamin, is a preying wolf, in the morning he will eat sated, and in the evening will divide the spoils.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	.
The Heritage Bible	Benjamin is a wolf that tears to pieces. In the dawn he devours the prey, and at dusk he allots the spoil.
New American Bible (2002)	"Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; mornings he devours the prey, and evenings he distributes the spoils."
New American Bible (2011)	.
New Jerusalem Bible	Benjamin is a ravening wolf, in the morning he devours the prey, in the evening he is still sharing out the spoil.'
New RSV	.

Revised English Bible "Benjamin is a ravening wolf: in the morning he devours the prey, in the evening he snatches a share of the spoil."

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible .
 exeGesés companion Bible Ben Yamin:
 he tears as a wolf:
 in the morning he devours the prey
 and at evening he allots the loot.

Hebraic Roots Bible .
 Israeli Authorized Version .
 JPS (Tanakh—1985) Benjamin is a ravenous wolf;
 In the morning he consumes the foe,
 And in the evening he divides the spoil."

Kaplan Translation *Benjamin; Conclusion*
 'Benjamin is a vicious wolf. He eats a portion in the morning, and divides his prey
 in the evening.'

Orthodox Jewish Bible Binyamin—a ze'ev (wolf) which tears in pieces; in the boker he shall devour the
 prey, and at erev he shall divide the plunder.

The Scriptures 1998 .

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible .
 The Expanded Bible "Benjamin is like a hungry wolf.
 In the morning he eats ·what he has caught [prey],
 and in the evening he divides ·what he has taken [the plunder]."

Kretzmann's Commentary Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night
 he shall divide the spoil. There would be no end to the successful raids of this
 warlike tribe, such men as Ehud, Saul, and Jonathan being members of it. At the
 same time, however, there would be ever present that nobility which would be willing
 to divide the spoil with the others.

NET Bible® .
 Syndein/Thieme Benjamin {name means 'son of the right hand' - 'the favorite'} shall be
 rough/tough/'to take/'tear in pieces' {taraph} as a wolf.
 In the morning he shall devour the prey,
 and at night he shall divide the spoil.
 {Note: Means this tribe is fierce and tough. They attack in the morning and are still
 feasting and dividing the spoil into the night. Fiercest soldiers in Israel.}
 {Note: Personally Benjamin himself was more of the 'spoiled brat' type per RBT.
 When Jacob thought Joseph was dead, Benjamin became his favorite and he
 spoiled him rotten. King Saul was also of the tribe of Benjamin - I Samuel 22:17-20.
 And, so did the worst sinner of all times - Saul of Tarsus (who became possibly the
 greatest believer of all times - the Apostle Paul). And, since Paul was given the
 privilege of putting in writing all that being a mature believer in the Church Age is
 all about, being one of God's favorites.}

The Voice Benjamin is a ravenous wolf,
 devouring prey by morning
 and dividing spoil in the evening.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Benner's Mechanical Trans.	...Binyamin ^[Son of the right hand] is a wolf, he will tear into pieces, in the morning he will eat again and to the evening he will apportion the spoil,...
Benner's Mechanical Trans. Concordant Literal Version Benjamin is a wolf, tearing to pieces. In the morning he'll devour further, and in the evening he'll apportion the loot.
Context Group Version	.
Darby Translation	.
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	.
English Standard Version	.
Evidence Bible	.
Green's Literal Translation	Benjamin is a wolf that tears. In the morning he devours the prey, and at evening he divides the spoil.
Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern KJV	.
NASB	.
New European Version	.
New King James Version	.
Owen's Translation	.
Ron Snider's Translation	.
Stuart Wolf's Translation	.
Third Millennium Bible	.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster's Bible Translation	.
World English Bible	"Benjamin is a ravenous wolf. In the morning he will devour the prey. At evening he will divide the plunder."
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	.
Young's Updated LT	Benjamin! a wolf tears; In the morning he eats prey, And at evening he apportions spoil."

The gist of this passage: Benjamin will acts as a ravenous wolf, which eats his prey in the morning and distributes the spoil at night.

What is fascinating about this final verse of Jacob's blessing is, remember that, Benjamin became Jacob's favorite son, after he believed Joseph to have been killed.

Jacob spent a great deal of time blessing Joseph's children; and Joseph above is given a great deal of time as well. We would expect more about Benjamin, but all we have is this single verse.

Genesis 49:27a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Bin ^e yâmîyn (בִּנְיָמִין) [pronounced bin-yaw- MEEN]	transliterated <i>Benjamin</i> , it means <i>son of [my] right hand</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1144 BDB #122
Spelled here Bin ^e yâmîn (בִּנְיָמִן) [pronounced bin-yaw-MIN].			
z ^e êb (זֶבֶד) [pronounced zeh-ABE]	<i>wolf</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2061 BDB #255

This is the first and only appearance of this word in Genesis.

Translation: Benjamin [will be like] a wolf:...

The remainder of this verse will tell us what it means.

Genesis 49:27b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
târaph (טַרַף) [pronounced <i>taw-RAHF</i>]	<i>to pull, to tear, to tear in pieces [like a wild animal]; to rend, to pluck off</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2963 BDB #382
Owens translates this <i>ravenous</i> .			
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
bôqer (בֹּקֶר) [pronounced <i>BOH-ker</i>]	<i>morning, daybreak, dawn; the next morning</i>	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #1242 BDB #133
'âkal (אָכַל) [pronounced <i>aw-KAHL</i>]	<i>to eat; to dine; to devour, to consume, to destroy</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #398 BDB #37
'ad (אֲדָ) [pronounced <i>gahd</i>],	<i>booty, prey</i>	masculine singular noun2	Strong's #5706 BDB #723

We have seen this same word used in 3 different ways in this chapter.

Translation: ...he tears apart [his prey] in the morning, eating it [lit., prey].

Benjamin finds and attacked his prey in the morning, and eats it. Many understand this to mean, Benjamin would be vicious and aggressive.

Genesis 49:27c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'ereb (עֶרֶב) [pronounced <i>GEH-re^bv</i>]	<i>evening, sunset</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6153 BDB #787
châlaq (חָלַק) [pronounced <i>chaw-LAHK</i>]	<i>to divide, to apportion, to allot; to distribute, to disperse</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #2505 BDB #323
shâlal (שָׁלַל) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAWL</i>]	<i>booty, spoil, plunder, recompense, reward; wealth [taken as spoil]</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7998 BDB #1021

This is the first and only use of this word in Genesis.

Translation: He divides up his plunder in the evening.”

In the evening, he divides the prey up. It is not clear with whom the prey is divided. It would seem that a wolf would divide his prey up among his pups.

This is interesting; we know that Jacob has always played favorites when it comes to his own children and, when Joseph was thought dead, he placed Benjamin above all the rest. Now, here it is a few years later; Benjamin is still the youngest and still Jacob's favorite or second favorite and Jacob only says a few words about him and what he has to say is not clearly favorable—it appears to be a someone negative message. This is because Jacob is speaking by God the Holy Spirit and there is nothing in the tribe of Benjamin which is all that favorable.

Benjamin has its high and low points. When men attacked a Levite's concubine, the tribe of Benjamin gave them safe harbor, almost igniting a civil war (Judges 20:3–48). From the tribe of Benjamin comes Saul, Israel's first king, who began as a wonderful king and then degenerated due to lack of character and inordinate competition. However, the Benjamites never really warmed up to David, feeling some of the same inordinate competition which King Saul had (2Samuel 2:15 3:17 16:5, 11 20:1). The boundaries for Benjamin are not entirely clear, placing them somewhere between Judah and Joseph; therefore, when the revolt against Rehoboam occurred, it is unclear whether they supported him (1Kings 12:21–23 2Chronicles 11:10, 12, 23 14:8 15:2) or opposed him (1Kings 12:20). Quite likely, they were divided on this, entering in onto both sides of the civil war. Since Jerusalem was a part of Benjamite territory, it is certain that a portion of Benjamin remained with Judah.

The tribe of Benjamin was known for its great abilities in war. Most of their men of war were ambidextrous (Judges 20:16 1Chronicles 8:40 12:2). They are remembered for several of the battles that they fought in (Judges 5:14 20:20). We will cover the **Doctrine of the Tribe of Benjamin** in Judges 20:48.

Finally, the greatest man of the church age, the Apostle Paul, was from the tribe of Benjamin (Rom 11:1 Phil. 3:5). We will go into greater detail on this tribe in Judges 20:48.

Genesis 49:27 Benjamin is a wolf that tears [his prey] in[to] pieces. In the morning he will devour the prey, and at night he will divide the spoil.”

Genesis 49:27 Benjamin [will be like] a wolf: he tears apart [his prey] in the morning, eating it [lit., prey]. He divides up his plunder in the evening.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:27 Benjamin will be like the wolf, who tears his prey apart and then eats it in the morning. Then at night, he divides up his plunder to continue eating it.” (Kukis paraphrase)

Even though Benjamin was also born of Rachel, he did not receive the same upbringing as Joseph did. Their mother died when Benjamin was being born, so Benjamin may have been raised by a rather bitter Jacob or by Rachel's maidservant who survived her. .

That the tribe of Benjamin would turn out to be fierce and warlike is also found in Judges 5:14, 19 20:21–25.

The Tribe of Benjamin — a Summary Table

Mother:	Rachel	Meaning of name:	
Order of birth to mother:	2 nd	Order of birth to Jacob:	12 th
Order of blessing from Jacob:	12 th	Order of blessing from Moses:	4 th
On the mountain of Gerizim, the mountain of blessing.		Aligned with Ephraim in the divided kingdom	
First census:	35,400 men able to fight	Second census:	45,600

Famous supergrace heroes: King Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin. The Apostle Paul.

Unusual facts: Although Jacob's wives named 11 of his sons, he named Benjamin himself. King Saul came from the tribe of Benjamin. Saul of Tarsus, renamed Paul, came from the tribe of Benjamin.

Moses' blessing of Benjamin: Deut. 33:12 Of Benjamin he said, "The beloved of the LORD dwells in safety. The High God surrounds him all day long, and dwells between his shoulders." (ESV)

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Although the northern tribes of Israel are often referred to as the *ten lost tribes*, they seemed not to be lost at the beginning of the New Testament era, as Paul knew that he was from the tribe of Benjamin (Acts 13:21 Romans 11:1 Philip. 3:5).

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Closing

Jacob has just given his end-of-life blessing to his children. Unlike his father Isaac, who gave his end-of-life blessing to Jacob about 60 years early (originally thinking the disguised Jacob to be Esau), Jacob has given his blessing to his sons from his actual deathbed.

All these [are] tribes of Israel—two-teen. And this [is] what spoke to them their father. And so he blesses them a man, which his blessing as he blessed him.

Genesis
49:28

All these [are] the 12 tribes of Israel and this [is] what their father said to them. He blessed each man with an appropriate blessing [lit., blessing him as his blessing].

These were the 12 tribes of Israel and what their father said to them. He blessed each man as was appropriate.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	All these [are] tribes of Israel—two-teen. And this [is] what spoke to them their father. And so he blesses them a man, which his blessing as he blessed him.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum of Onkelos	.
Jerusalem targum	.
Targum (Onkelos)	All these the tribes of Israel are twelve; and this it is which their father spake to them, and blessed them; according to the blessing of each man, blessed he them.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	All these Tribes of Israel are twelve: they are all righteous together, and this it is which their father spake to them, and blessed them; according to his blessing blessed be each man.
Revised Douay-Rheims	.
Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)	All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: these things their father spoke to them, and he blessed every one, with their proper blessings.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	All these are the twelve tribes of Yisrael, and this is what their father spoke to them and blessed them. He blessed everyone according to his blessing.

Peshitta (Syriac)	All these are the twelve tribes of Israel; and this is what their father Jacob said to them; he addressed them, then he blessed them, according to his blessing, he blessed every one of them.
Septuagint (Greek)	All these are the twelve sons of Jacob; and their father spoke these words to them, and he blessed them; he blessed each of them according to his blessing.

Brenton's Septuagint .

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	These are the twelve tribes of Israel: and these are the words their father said to them, blessing them; to every one he gave his blessing.
Easy English	All these are the 12 tribes of Israel. And this is what their father told them. He told them when he blessed them. He told each son what would happen to his descendants. Verse 28 'the 12 tribes of Israel' – the descendants of each son would become a separate group of people.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	These are the twelve families of Israel. And this is what their father said to them. He gave each son a blessing that was right for him.
God's Word™	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	These are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said as he spoke a suitable word of farewell to each son.
International Children's B. <i>The Message</i>	. All these are the tribes of Israel, the twelve tribes. And this is what their father said to them as he blessed them, blessing each one with his own special farewell blessing.
Names of God Bible NIRV	. All these are the 12 tribes of Israel. That's what their father said to them when he blessed them. He gave each one the blessing that was just right for him.
New Simplified Bible	These are the twelve tribes of Israel. This is how Jacob blessed each of them.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	These are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is how Jacob gave each of them their proper blessings.
The Living Bible	So these are the blessings that Israel, their father, blessed his twelve sons with.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	These are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them. He gave each son the blessing that was right for him.
New Life Version	All these are the twelve family groups of Israel. This is what their father said to them when he prayed that good would come to them. He prayed for each of them to receive the good they should have.
New Living Translation	These are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said as he told his sons good-bye. He blessed each one with an appropriate message.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	All these are the twelve sons of Jacob, and that's what their father said to them. He blest them... he blest each of them by the blessings that they would receive.
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard V	<i>Jacob Dies and is Buried</i>

	That's how Israel blessed these [Lit. <i>All these are the</i>] twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father told them when he pronounced his blessing for them, blessing each one with a blessing suitable for them.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	All these names are perpetuated in the twelve tribes of Israel; and these are the words in which their father blessed them one by one, giving each the blessing that was due to him.
Revised Knox Bible Translation for Translators	. Those twelve sons are the ancestors of the twelve tribes of Israel. That is what their father said to them as he blessed them, telling to each one words that were appropriate for him.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible	.
Awful Scroll Bible	Ten and two branches of Isra-el, their father is to have declared and was to approve of, that which each ones approval is, he is to have approved them.
Conservapedia	All of these are the twelve Tribes of Israel. This is what their father spoke to them, and he blessed each man with a particular blessing.
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	All the offshoots of Israel were twelve. And their father said this to them, and blessed each with his blessing : with blessings adapted to each.
God's Truth (Tyndale)	All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is that which their father spoke unto them when he blessed them, every man with a several blessing.
HCSB	.
Jubilee Bible 2000	.
H. C. Leupold	.
Lexham English Bible	.
H. C. Leupold	Jacob's Last Charge and His Death (v. 2049:28-33) All these constitute the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father spoke to them; and he blessed them, individually he blessed them with what was in conformity with each man's blessing.
NIV, ©2011	.
NIV – UK	.
Tree of Life Version	.
Urim-Thummim Version	All these are the 12 tribes of Israel, and this is what their father had spoken to them, and he blessed them; each according to the blessing he had bestowed on them.
Wikipedia Bible Project	.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	The death and funeral of Jacob These are all the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what his father said when he blessed them, giving each one a special and appropriate blessing.
The Heritage Bible	.
New American Bible (2002)	All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said about them, as he bade them farewell and gave to each of them an appropriate message.
New American Bible (2011)	<i>Farewell and Death.</i> All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said about them, as he blessed them. To each he gave a suitable blessing.
New Jerusalem Bible	All these make up the tribes of Israel, twelve in number, and this is what their father said to them as he bade them farewell, giving each an appropriate blessing.
New RSV	.
Revised English Bible	These are the tribes of Israel, twelve in all, and this was what their father said to them, when he blessed them each in turn.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	All these are the twelve tribes of Isra'el, and this is how their father spoke to them and blessed them, giving each his own individual blessing.
exeGeses companion Bible	All these: the twelve scions of Yisra El: and this is it what their father words to them; and he blesses them - every man according to his blessing he blesses them.
Hebraic Roots Bible	.
Israeli Authorized Version	.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	All these were the tribes of Israel, twelve in number, and this is what their father said to them as he bade them farewell, addressing to each a parting word appropriate to him.
Kaplan Translation	All these are the tribes of Israel, twelve in all, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them. He gave each one his own special blessing.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	All these are the Shivtei Yisroel; and this is it that Avichem spoke unto them, and made a brocha on them; every one according to his brocha he blessed them.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	All these are the [beginnings of the] twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them as he blessed them, blessing each one according to the blessing appropriate to him.
The Expanded Bible	These are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them. He gave each son the blessing that was ·right [suitable; appropriate] for him.
Kretzmann's Commentary	All these are the twelve tribes of Israel; and this is it that their father spake unto them and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them. Not one was omitted in the blessing, although there was a big difference in the form and in the nature of the blessings.
NET Bible®	These [<i>Heb</i> "All these."] are the twelve tribes of Israel. This is what their father said to them when he blessed them. He gave each of them an appropriate blessing [<i>Heb</i> "and he blessed them, each of whom according to his blessing, he blessed them."].
Syndein/Thieme	{Prophecy Prepares All Believers for the Future} All these . . . {are} the twelve tribes of Israel. And this is it that their father spoke unto them, and blessed them . . every one according to his blessing he blessed them. {Note: The more you know about the future, the more you can fight the trends of your Old Sin Nature. So, by prophesying to the sons what they are like and their descendents will be like, Jacob is truly blessing his sons. Now they can be believers and use doctrine to counteract the trends of their Old Sin Natures. This gives them all stability in time.}
The Voice	Now all these are <i>the heads of</i> the twelve tribes of Israel. This is how their father described them when he blessed them—blessing each one with a blessing that suited each son.

When Israel's inheritance of the land is divided, Levi is not included; but Joseph's two sons become the leaders of two tribes descended from Joseph. Manasseh and Ephraim take Joseph's and Levi's places, filling out the twelve tribes.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Benner's Mechanical Trans.

Benner’s Mechanical Trans.	...all these staffs of Yisra'el ^[He turns E] are twelve, and this which their father spoke to them, and he respected them, each who is like his present, he respected them,...
Concordant Literal Version	All these are the twelve tribes of Israel. And this is what their father speaks to them, when he is blessing them. Each man according to his blessing he blesses them.
Context Group Version	All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this is it that their father spoke to them and esteemed them; each one, according to the esteeming suitable to him, he esteemed them.
Darby Translation <i>Emphasized Bible</i>	. All these, are the twelve tribes of Israel,—And this, is that which their father spake to them when he blessed them, Each man severally according to the blessing wherewith he blessed them.
English Standard Version	All these are the twelve tribes of Israel. This is what their father said to them as he blessed them, blessing each with the blessing suitable to him.
Evidence Bible	.
Green’s Literal Translation	.
Jack Ballinger’s translation	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern KJV	.
NASB	All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them. He blessed them, every one with the blessing appropriate to him.
New European Version	Jacob’s Burial Wishes All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father spoke to them and blessed them. He blessed everyone according to his blessing.
New King James Version	.
Owen’s Translation	.
Ron Snider’s Translation	.
Stuart Wolf’s Translation	.
Third Millennium Bible	.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster’s Bible Translation	.
World English Bible	All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father spoke to them, and blessed them. He blessed everyone according to his own blessing.
<i>Young’s Literal Translation</i>	.
Young’s Updated LT	All these <i>are</i> the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is that which their father has spoken unto them, and he blesses them; each according to his blessing he has blessed them.

The gist of this passage: This concludes the end-of-life blessing which Jacob gave to each of his sons, the appropriate blessing directed toward each son.

Genesis 49:28a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong’s #3605 BDB #481
’êlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced ALE-leh]	<i>these, these things; they</i>	demonstrative plural adjective with the definite article (often the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	Strong’s #428 BDB #41

Genesis 49:28a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
shêbeṭ (שִׁבְט) [pronounced SHAY ^B -vef]	<i>rod, staff, club; spear; scepter and figuratively for a tribe, subdivision of a tribe or family and for a ruler (scepter-bearer), governor</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #7626 BDB #986
Yis ^e rā'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
sh ^e nêym (שְׁנַיִם) [pronounced sh ^e -NĀM]	<i>two, two of, a pair of, a duo of; both of</i>	dual numeral construct	Strong's #8147 BDB #1040
'âsâr (עָשָׂר) [pronounced ġaw-SAWR]	<i>ten; –teen [resulting in numbers 11–19]</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6240 BDB #797

Translation: All these [are] the 12 tribes of Israel...

This is a summary statement. These men represent the 12 tribes of Israel.

Quite a number of translations place this with the next section. Normally, I don't say much about the paragraph divisions (as they were added after the fact), but this clearly is a concluding statement, belonging with the blessings given.

Genesis 49:28b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced daw ^B -VAHR]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Genesis 49:28b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'āb (אָב) [pronounced aw ^b v]	<i>father</i> , both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; <i>ancestor, grandfather; founder, civil leader, military leader; master, teacher</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

Translation: ...and this [is] what their father said to them.

We have just studied what their father said to them.

Genesis 49:28c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bârak ^e (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced baw-RAHK ^e]	<i>to invoke God, to praise, to celebrate, to adore, to bless [God]; to bless [men], to invoke blessings; to bless [as God, man and other created things], therefore to cause to prosper, to make happy; to salute anyone [with a blessing]; to curse</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #1288 BDB #138
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>them; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to them, toward them</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, each man, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
'āsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
b ^e rākâh (בְּרָכָה) [pronounced brow-KAW]	<i>blessing, benediction, invocation of good; extremely fortunate and happy; a gift, a present; peace, prosperity</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1293 BDB #139

Genesis 49:28c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
bârak ^e (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced <i>baw-RAHK^e</i>]	<i>to invoke God, to praise, to celebrate, to adore, to bless [God]; to bless [men], to invoke blessings; to bless [as God, man and other created things], therefore to cause to prosper, to make happy; to salute anyone [with a blessing]; to curse</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #1288 BDB #138
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>them; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to them, toward them</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Translation: He blessed each man with an appropriate blessing [lit., *blessing him as his blessing*].

It was very difficult to put together a literal translation of the above so that it made some sort of sense. However, the gist appears to be that Jacob gave each man the proper or appropriate blessing.

Jacob Dying (a graphic; artist unknown); from [The Daily Office](#); accessed January 24, 2018.

Genesis 49:28 All these were the twelve tribes of Israel. And this is what their father spoke to them, and blessed them; everyone according to his blessing he blessed them.

Each of Jacob's 12 sons were given a blessing in this chapter; individual blessings for Ephraim and Manasseh were given in the previous chapter.

This chapter and the previous chapter are a testament to Jacob's spiritual maturity (which was not at all evident in previous chapters). It was a long time in coming, it seemed to occur while Jacob was in Egypt, but he seemed to finally latch onto the words of God (which words I believe he knew and recited for much of his life¹³⁷). That Jacob begins to consider and believe the Word of God will become even more apparent in the remainder of this chapter.



Genesis 49:28 All these [are] the 12 tribes of Israel and this [is] what their father said to them. He blessed each man with an appropriate blessing [lit., *blessing him as his blessing*]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:28 These were the 12 tribes of Israel and what their father said to them. He blessed each man as was appropriate. (Kukis paraphrase)

¹³⁷ I believe that Jacob knew from memory the first 36 chapters of Genesis and would recite them at appropriate times during spiritual celebrations with his family.

Interestingly enough, the phrase *the twelve tribes of Israel* is only found here, and in Exodus 24:4 Ezekiel 47:13 Matthew 19:28 Luke 22:30; and the phrase *the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel* is found in Revelation 21:12. Similar phrasing can be found in Exodus 28:21 39:14 Joshua 3:12 4:8 1Kings 18:31. *Tribes* is the word *shêbeṭ* (שִׁבְט) [pronounced *SHAY^B-vef*], which means, *rod, staff, club; spear; scepter* and figuratively for a *tribe, subdivision of a tribe or family* and for a *ruler (scepter-bearer), governor*. Strong's #7626 BDB #986.

Dr. Peter Pett: *These are his twelve offshoots (or 'rods'), twelve leaders, the representatives of the twelve sub-groups under their father Israel himself. They represent in their persons their 'sub-tribes', and in embryo the future tribes. It is then emphasised immediately that the above words are words spoken to them as persons and blessings as befitted each one. Even the warnings are blessings for they can be acted on and even responded to.*¹³⁸

Pett also suggests that this verse may have even been a gloss by Moses (or by whichever son or grandson who read these words publically).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Jacob's Burial Instructions Followed by His Death

There appears to be some repetition in the following passage; perhaps due to Jacob being on his deathbed.

Hajime Murai's Literary Structure of Genesis 49:29-50:13

- A (49:29-33) Bury me with my fathers in the cave that lies in the field of Ephron the Hittite (49:29) (וּרְפַע)
 B (50:1-3) The Egyptians mourned him for seventy days (50:3) (מִיעַב)
 C (50:4-5) Jacob begged for permission to bury Jacob
 D (50:6) Pharaoh's permission
 C' (50:7-9) Jacob went to bury Jacob
 B' (50:10-11) Joseph observed seven days of mourning for his father. (50:10) (תַּעַב)
 A' (50:12-14) The field that Abraham had bought for a burial ground from Ephron the Hittite (50:13) (וּרְפַע)

A: The land brought by Ephron. B: Period of seven. C: To bury Jacob. D: Pharaoh's permission.

From [Hajime Murai's Literary Structures of Genesis](#); accessed January 24, 2017.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Jacob is now going to speak to his sons about his impending death (he will die while laying on the bed before them).

¹³⁸ Dr. Peter Pett; *Commentary Series on the Bible*; from e-sword, Genesis 49:28 (slightly edited).

And so he charges them and so he says unto them, “I am gathered unto my people. Bury me with my fathers unto the cave which [is] in a field of Ephron the Hittite. In the cave which [is] in a field of the Machpelah, which is upon faces of Mamre in a land of Canaan; which [cave] bought Abraham unto the field from with Ephron the Hittite to possess a burying place. There-ward they buried Abraham and Sarah his woman; there-ward they buried Isaac and Rebekah, his woman; and there-ward I buried Leah. A purchase of the field and the cave which [is] to him from with sons of Heth.”

Genesis
49:29–32

Jacob [lit., *he*] charged them, saying to them, “I am [about to be] gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave which [is] in the field of Ephron the Hittite. [Bury me in] the cave which [is] in the field of Machpelah, which is east of Mamre in the land of Canaan. [This is the cave] that Abraham purchased in the field [that came] from Ephron the Hittite, to posses [as] a burial site. They buried Abraham and his wife Sarah there; they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah there; and I buried Leah there. The field and cave [were] a possession belonging to Abraham [lit., *him*] from the sons of Heth.”

Jacob charged them as follows: “Since I am about to be gathered to my people, I want you to bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Machpelah, which is east of Mamre in the land of Canaan. This is the field which Abraham purchased from Ephron the Hittite, which he bought as a burial site. Abraham and Sarah are buried there; Isaac and Rebekah are buried there; and I buried my wife Leah there. The field and cave are a possession which belong to Abraham, which he purchased from the sons of Heth.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so he charges them and so he says unto them, “I am gathered unto my people. Bury me with my fathers unto the cave which [is] in a field of Ephron the Hittite. In the cave which [is] in a field of the Machpelah, which is upon faces of Mamre in a land of Canaan; which [cave] bought Abraham unto the field from with Ephron the Hittite to possess a burying place. There-ward they buried Abraham and Sarah his woman; there-ward they buried Isaac and Rebekah, his woman; and there-ward I buried Leah. A purchase of the field and the cave which [is] to him from with sons of Heth.”
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum of Onkelos	.
Jerusalem targum	.
Targum (Onkelos)	And he commanded them, and said to them, I am to be gathered unto my people; bury me with my fathers in the cavern which is in the field of Ephron the Hitaah; in the cavern which is in the double field over against Mamre, in the land of Kenaan, which field Abraham bought of Ephron the Hitaah for an inheritancesepulchre. There buried they Abraham and Sarah his wife; there buried they Izhak and Revekah his wife; and there buried I Leah. The field, and the cavern that is in it, purchased of the sons of Hitaah.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And be commanded them and said to them, I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cavern which is in the field of Ephron the Hitah, in the cave that is in the Double Field over against Mamre in the land of Kenaan; for Abraham bought the field of Ephron the Hitah for an inheritance of burial. There they buried Abraham, and Sarah his wife; there they buried Izhak , and Rivekah his wife; and there I buried Leah: the purchase of the field, and the cave that it is in, of the sons of Hitah.
Revised Douay-Rheims	.
Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)	And he charged them, saying: I am now going to be gathered to my people: bury me with my fathers in the double cave, which is in the field of Ephron the Hethite,

Over against Mambre in the land of Chanaan, which Abraham bought together with the field of Ephron the Hethite for a possession to bury in.

There they buried him, and Sara his wife: there was Isaac buried with Rebecca his wife: there also Lia doth lie buried. This appears to be short a verse.

Aramaic ESV of Peshitta

He instructed them, and said to them, "I am to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite as a burial place. There they buried Abraham and Sarah, his wife. There they buried Isaac and Rivkah, his wife, and there I buried Leah: the field and the cave that is therein, which was purchased from the children of Heth."

Aramaic ESV of Peshitta
Peshitta (Syriac)

.
Then their father blessed them, and charged them, and said to them, I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, In the cave which is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the double cave which is in the field, before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, the field which Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite as a possession for a burial ground. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah. The field and the cave which is in it were purchased from the children of Heth.

Septuagint (Greek)

Jacob's death, embalming, burial at Machpelah. Gn.49.29-50.14

And he said to them, I am added to my people; you shall bury me with my fathers in the cave, which is in the field of Ephron the Chettite in the double cave which is opposite Mambre, in the land of Chanaan, the cave which Abraam bought of Ephron the Chettite, for a possession of a sepulcher. There they buried Abraam and Sarrha his wife; there they buried Isaac, and Rebecca his wife; there they buried Lea; in the portion of the field, and of the cave that was in it, purchased of the sons of Chet.

Brenton's Septuagint

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English

And he gave orders to them, saying, Put me to rest with my people and with my fathers, in the hollow of the rock in the field of Ephron the Hittite, In the rock in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham got from Ephron the Hittite, to be his resting-place. There Abraham and Sarah his wife were put to rest, and there they put Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I put Leah to rest. In the rock in the field which was got for a price from the people of Heth.

Easy English

Then Jacob said to his 12 sons, 'I am about to die. So take my body from here. Take my body to Canaan. Bury me with my ancestors, in the grave in the field that belonged to Ephron the Hittite. The grave is in the field of Machpelah. That is near Mamre in Canaan. Abraham bought this as a place to bury people. He bought it from Ephron the Hittite. Abraham bought the grave with the field. That is where they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah. And it is where they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah. And this is where I buried Leah. Abraham bought the field and the grave from the Hittites.'

Easy-to-Read Version–2006

Then Israel gave them a command. He said, "When I die, I want to be with my people. I want to be buried with my ancestors in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite. That cave is in the field of Machpelah near Mamre in the land of Canaan. Abraham bought that field from Ephron so that he could have a burying place. Abraham and his wife Sarah are buried in that cave. Isaac and his wife Rebekah are buried in that cave. I buried my wife Leah in that cave. That cave is in the field that was bought from the Hittites."

God's Word™

Good News Bible (TEV)

The Death and Burial of Jacob

Then Jacob commanded his sons, "Now that I am going to join my people in death, bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, at Machpelah east of Mamre in the land of Canaan. Abraham bought this cave and field from Ephron for a burial ground. That is where they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah; that is where they buried Isaac and his wife Rebecca; and that is where I buried Leah. The field and the cave in it were bought from the Hittites. Bury me there."

International Children's B.

Then Israel gave them a command. He said, "I am about to die. Bury me with my ancestors in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite. That cave is in the field of Machpelah east of Mamre. It is in the land of Canaan. Abraham bought that field from Ephron the Hittite for a burying place. Abraham and Sarah his wife are buried there. Isaac and Rebekah his wife are buried there. I buried my wife Leah there. The field and the cave in it were bought from the Hittite people."

The Message

Names of God Bible

NIRV

Jacob Dies

Then Jacob gave directions to his sons. He said, "I'm about to join the members of my family who have already died. Bury me with them in the cave in the field of Ephron, the Hittite. The cave is in the field of Machpelah near Mamre in Canaan. Abraham had bought it as a place where he could bury his wife's body. He had bought the cave and the field from Ephron, the Hittite. The bodies of Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried there. So were the bodies of Isaac and his wife Rebekah. I also buried Leah's body there. Abraham bought the field and the cave from the Hittites."

New Simplified Bible

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible

Jacob's death and burial

Jacob ordered them, "I am soon to join my people. Bury me with my ancestors in the cave that's in the field of Ephron the Hittite; in the cave that's in the field of Machpelah near Mamre in the land of Canaan that Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite as a burial property. That is where Abraham and his wife Sarah are buried, and where Isaac and his wife Rebekah are buried, and where I buried Leah. It is the field and the cave in it that belonged to the Hittites."

Contemporary English V.

Jacob told his sons: Soon I will die, and I want you to bury me in Machpelah Cave. Abraham bought this cave as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite, and it is near the town of Mamre in Canaan. Abraham and Sarah are buried there, and so are Isaac and Rebekah. I buried Leah there too. Both the cave and the land that goes with it were bought from the Hittites.

The Living Bible

New Berkeley Version

New Century Version

New Life Version

Then he told them, "I will soon be with my people who have died before me. Bury me with my fathers in the grave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the grave that is in the field of Machpelah, east of Mamre, in the land of Canaan. Abraham bought this grave and the field from Ephron the Hittite for a burying place. There they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah. There they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah. And there I buried Leah. The field and the grave that is in it were bought from the sons of Heth."

New Living Translation

Jacob's Death and Burial

Then Jacob instructed them, "Soon I will die and join my ancestors. Bury me with my father and grandfather in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite. This is the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre in Canaan, that Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite as a permanent burial site. There Abraham and his wife Sarah are buried. There Isaac and his wife, Rebekah, are buried. And there I buried Leah. It is the plot of land and the cave that my grandfather Abraham bought from the Hittites."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible . Then he said to them: 'Now I'm going to my people; so bury me with my ancestors in the cave that is in the field of EphRon the Chettite. It's the double cave across from MamRe in the land of CanaAn.'
AbraHam bought the cave as a tomb from EphRon the Chettite, and it's where they buried AbraHam and his woman SarAh, IsaAc and his women Rebecka and LeAh, in that part of the field where the cave of the sons of Chet is located.

Beck's American Translation .
International Standard V . In his last words, Jacobn issued this set of instructions to them all: "I'm about to joino our ancestors. Bury me alongside my ancestors in the cave in the field that used to belong to Ephron the Hittite. It's the cave in the field near Mamre at Machpelah in the land of Canaan that Abraham bought to serve as a cemetery. It's where Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried, where Isaac and his wife Rebekah were buried, and where I buried Leah. Both the field and the cave that's in it were purchased from the Hittites."

New Advent (Knox) Bible . Then he laid a charge upon them; I must die, he said, and become a part of my people; bury me with my fathers in the double cave on the land that belonged once to Ephron the Hethite, the cave that looks towards Mambre, in the land of Chanaan. It was this cave that Abraham bought, with the ground it stands in, from Ephron the Hethite, to make his tomb there. There they buried him, and his wife Sara with him; there, too, Isaac lies buried with his wife Rebecca; there Lia, too, was laid. So he made an end of giving the directions he would have his sons observe; then lay his full length on the bed, and died, and became a part of his people.

Revised Knox Bible .
Translation for Translators .

Jacob died

Then Jacob said to his sons, "I will soon die and join my ancestors [EUP] who have already died. Bury my body where some of my ancestors are buried, in the cave that is in the field that was bought from Ephron, who belonged to the Heth people-group. That field is in the Machpelah area, east of Mamre town, in Canaan land. My grandfather Abraham bought it from Ephron to use as a burial place. That is where they buried him and his wife Sarah. That is where they buried my father Isaac and his wife Rebekah. And that is where I buried my wife Leah. That field and the cave in it were bought from the Heth people-group; so that is where I want you to bury me."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible . He was to lay charge, and was to say, "I am to be gathering to my people. Be burying me with my fathers, in the cave of the field of Ephron, the Hittite, in the cave of the field of Machpelah, turned towards Mamre, on the solid grounds of Canaan which Abraham is to have acquired, with the field from Ephron, the Hittite, he taking hold of it for a grave; they are to have buried Abraham and Sarah, his wife there, and they are to have buried Isaac and Rebekah, his wife, even I am to have buried Leah there; the purchase of the field and the cave in it, from the sons of Heth.

Awful Scroll Bible .

Conservapedia

Then he gave them these instructions: "I want to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my ancestors in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite. In the cave in the field of Machpelah, which fronts Mamre, in the land of Canaan, the one that Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite as a landholding for a tomb There they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah, and there they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah, and there I buried Leah [This must have happened during the twenty-two-year absence of Joseph from his family: he was 17 years old when he was sold as a slave, and was 30 years old when he accepted his viceroyalty (13 years later), and after that came the 7 years of surplus and 2 of the years of famine.], in the acquisition of the field and of the cave within it from the sons of Heth [That is, the Hittites]."

Ferrar-Fenton Bible

Then he addressed them and said ; —" I shall be added to my people. Bury me with my fathers, in the cave which is in the field of Ephron the Hitite ; in the cave which is in the field of Makphelah, which is near Mamra in the land of Canan, which field Abraham bought from Ephron the Hitite for a place of burial. Abraham is buried there, and Sarah his wife. Isaac is buried there, and Rebekka his wife, and there I buried Leah. The field was bought, and the cave in it, from the sons of Heth."

God's Truth (Tyndale)

And he charged them and said unto them. I shall be put unto my people: see that you bury me with my fathers, in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hethite, in the double cave that is in the field before Mare in the land of Canaan. Which field Abraham bought of Ephron the Hethite for a possession to bury in. There they buried Abraham and Sara his wife, there they buried Isaac and Rebecca his wife. And there I buried Lea: which field and the cave that is therein, was bought of the children of Heth.

HCSB

Jacob's Burial Instructions

Then he commanded them: "I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite. The cave is in the field of Machpelah near Mamre, in the land of Canaan. This is the field Abraham purchased from Ephron the Hittite as a burial site. Abraham and his wife Sarah are buried there, Isaac and his wife Rebekah are buried there, and I buried Leah there. The field and the cave in it were purchased from the Hittites."

Jubilee Bible 2000

H. C. Leupold

And he laid a charge upon them and said: I for my part am now being gathered unto my people. Bury me together with my fathers in the cave which is in the field of Ephron, the Hittite, namely in the cave which is in the field of Machpelah which is over against Mamre in the land of Canaan, which field Abraham bought from Ephron, the Hittite, for a burial place of his own possession. There they buried Abraham and Sarah, his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah, his wife; and there I buried Leah—the property consisting of the field and the cave which is in it, bought of the sons of Heth.

Lexham English Bible

H. C. Leupold

NIV, ©2011

The Death of Jacob

Then he gave them these instructions: "I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite, the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre in Canaan, which Abraham bought along with the field as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite. There Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried, there Isaac and his wife Rebekah were buried, and there I buried Leah. The field and the cave in it were bought from the Hittites."

NIV – UK

Tree of Life Version

Urim-Thummim Version

Wikipedia Bible Project

And he commanded them, and said to them:

I am gathering upon my people-- bury me with my fathers: in the cave that is in

Ephron the Hittite's field In the cave which is in the field of Machpelah, on the face of Mamre--- in the land of Canaan, for which Abraham bought the field from Ephron the Hittite, to use as a catacomb. There they buried Abraham, and Sarah his wife, there they buried Isaac, and Rebecca his wife, and there I buried Leah. In the field and the cave which is in it, which were bought from the sons of Het.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988) .

The Heritage Bible

And he commanded them, and said to them, I will be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron, the Hittite, In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is against the face of Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham set up with the field of Ephron, the Hittite, for a possession of a sepulcher. There they buried Abraham and Sarah, his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah, his wife; and there I buried Leah. The purchase of the field and of the cave that is in it was from the children of Heth.

New American Bible (2002)

Then he gave them this charge: "Since I am about to be taken to my kindred, bury me with my fathers in the cave that lies in the field of Ephron the Hittite, the cave in the field of Machpelah, facing on Mamre, in the land of Canaan, the field that Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite for a burial ground. There Abraham and his wife Sarah are buried, and so are Isaac and his wife Rebekah, and there, too, I buried Leah - the field and the cave in it that had been purchased from the Hittites."

New American Bible (2011)

New Jerusalem Bible

Then he gave them these instructions, 'I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my ancestors, in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave in the field at Machpelah, facing Mamre, in Canaan, which Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite as a burial site of his own. There Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried. There Isaac and his wife Rebekah were buried; and there I buried Leah—the field and the cave in it which were bought from the Hittites.'

New RSV

Revised English Bible

Then he gave them his last charge and said, "I am about to be gathered to my ancestors; bury me with my forefathers in the cave on the plot of land which belonged to Ephron the Hittite, that is the cave on the plot of land at Machpelah east of Mamre in Canaan, the field which Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite for a burial-place. There Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah; there Isaac and his wife Rebecca were buried; and that is where I buried Leah. The land and the cave there were bought from the Hittites."

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible

Then he charged them as follows: "I am to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my ancestors in the cave that is in the field of 'Efron the Hitti, the cave in the field of Makhpelah, by Mamre, in the land of Kena'an, which Avraham bought together with the field from 'Efron the Hitti as a burial-place belonging to him — there they buried Avraham and his wife Sarah, there they buried Yitz'chak and his wife Rivkah, and there I buried Le'ah — the field and the cave in it, which was purchased from the sons of Het."

exeGesés companion Bible

And he misvahs them, and says to them,
I gather unto my people:
entomb me with my fathers in the cave
in the field of Ephron the Hethiy
- in the cave in the field of Machpelah
at the face of Mamre in the land of Kenaan;

which Abraham chatteded
with the field of Ephron the Hethiy
for a possession of a tomb.
There they entombed Abraham
and Sarah his woman;
there they entombed Yischaq
and Ribqah his woman;
and there I entombed Leah
- in the chattel of the field and of the cave therein
of the sons of Heth.

Hebraic Roots Bible
Israeli Authorized Version
JPS (Tanakh—1985)

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Then he instructed them, saying to them, "I am about to be gathered to my kin. Bury me with my fathers in the cave which is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, the cave which is in the field of Machpelah, facing Mamre, in the land of Canaan, the field that Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite for a burial site—there Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried; there Isaac and his wife Rebekah were buried; and there I buried Leah—the field and the cave in it, bought from the Hittites."

Kaplan Translation

[Jacob] then gave [his sons] his final instructions. 'I am going to join my people [in death],' he said. 'Bring me to my fathers, to be buried in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite. [This is] the cave in Makhpelah Field [See Genesis 23:9.], bordering Mamre, in the land of Canaan. Abraham bought it along with the field from Ephron the Hittite as burial property. This is where Abraham and his wife Sarah are buried [See Genesis 23:19, 25:9.]; this is where Isaac and his wife Rebecca are buried [Genesis 35:29. There, however, it does not mention that Isaac was buried in Makhpelah.]; and this is where I buried Leah [The burial of Rebecca and Leah is not mentioned previously. An ancient source states that Leah was buried 'near Rebecca, to the left of Sarah' (Yov'loth 36:21). For a discussion of how the graves were arranged, see MeAm Lo'ez/The Torah Anthology 3:549.]. The purchase of the field and its cave from the children of Heth [is still recognized].'

Orthodox Jewish Bible

And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people; bury me with Avotai in the me'arah (cave) that is in the sadeh of Ephron the Chitti, In the me'arah that is in the sadeh of Machpelah, which is near Mamre, in Eretz Kena'an, which Avraham bought with the sadeh of Ephron the Chitti for an achuzzat kever (burial estate).

There they buried Avraham and Sarah his isha; there they buried Yitzchak and Rivkah his isha; and there I buried Leah.

The purchase of the sadeh and of the me'arah (cave) that is therein was from the Bnei Chet (Heth).

The Scriptures 1998

And he commanded them, and said to them, "I am to be gathered to my people, bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Makpēlah, which is before Mamrē in the land of Kena'an, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite as a possession for a burial site. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, there they buried Yitshaq and Ribqah his wife, and there I buried Lě'ah – the field purchased, and the cave which is in it, from the sons of Hěth."

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible
The Expanded Bible

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Then Israel gave them a command and said, "I am about to ·die [·be gathered to my people/relatives; 25:8]. Bury me with my ·ancestors [fathers] in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite [23:7–20; 25:9]. That cave is in the field of Machpelah east of Mamre in the land of Canaan. Abraham bought the field and cave from Ephron

the Hittite for a burying place [burial site]. Abraham and Sarah his wife are buried there. Isaac and Rebekah his wife are buried there, and I buried my wife Leah there. The field and the cave in it were bought from the Hittite people.”

Kretzmann's Commentary

Verses 29-33

The Death of Jacob

And he charged them and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people, the time when his soul was to be added to those of his fathers was at hand; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron, the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron, the Hittite, for a possession of a burying-place. There they buried Abraham and Sarah, his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah, his wife; and there I buried Leah. The purchase of the field and of the cave that is therein was from the children of Heth. Cf Genesis 23. What Jacob had charged Joseph to do in the event of his death, Genesis 47:30-31, he here repeated to all his sons, giving them explicit directions regarding the burial-ground, lest they make any mistake about it or neglect the speedy execution of his dying wish.

NET Bible®

Then he instructed them [The Hebrew text adds “and he said to them,” which is not included in the translation because it is redundant in English.], “I am about to go [Heb “I am about to be gathered” The participle is used here to describe what is imminent.] to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite. It is the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought for a burial plot from Ephron the Hittite. There they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah; there they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah; and there I buried Leah. The field and the cave in it were acquired from the sons of Heth.”

Syndein/Thieme

And he {Jacob/Israel} charged them, and kept on saying unto them, "I am to be gathered unto my people. Bury me with my fathers {Abraham and Isaac} {he wants to be resurrected where his fathers are} in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite. In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burying place."

There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I {Jacob/Israel} buried Leah. The purchase of the field and of the cave that is therein was from the children of Heth. This is somewhat confusing, as in the other translations, all of this is Jacob's final charge to his sons. I think not including the final paragraph within the quote was a mistake.

The Voice

Jacob (*charging his sons*): I am about to join my ancestors *in death*. Please do as I ask, and bury me with my ancestors in the cave at Machpelah, near Mamre in the land of Canaan. It is located at the edge of a field owned by Ephron the Hittite. Abraham acquired the field from Ephron as a burial site *for his family*. This is where Abraham and his wife Sarah are buried, also Isaac and his wife Rebekah. I buried Leah there myself. The field and cave were purchased from the Hittites *long ago*.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Benner's Mechanical Trans.

...and he directed them and he said to them, I am being gathered to my people, bury me to my fathers, to the cave which is in the field of Ephron ^[Powdery] the one of Hhet ^[Shattered], in the cave which is in the field of Makhpelah ^[Double] which is upon the face of Mamre ^[Bitter place] in the land of Kena'an ^[Lowered] which Avraham ^[Father lifted] purchased with the field from Ephron ^[Powdery] the one of Hhet ^[Shattered] for a holdings of a grave, unto there they buried Avraham ^[Father lifted] and Sarah ^[Noblewoman] his woman, unto there they buried Yits'hhaq ^[He laughs] and Rivqah ^[Ensnarer] his woman and unto

there I buried Le'ah ^[Weary], the livestock of the field and the cave which is in him from the sons of Hhet ^[Shattered],...

Benner's Mechanical Trans.
Concordant Literal Version

.....
And instructing them is he, and saying to them, "I am being gathered to my people. Entomb me with my forefathers in the cave which is in the field of Ephron, the Hittite, in the double cave which is in the field adjoining Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron, the Hittite, for a freehold for a tomb. And there they entombed Isaac and Rebecca, his wife. "And there I entombed Leah. Bought was the field and the cave which is in it from the sons of Heth.

Context Group Version

And he charged them, and said to them, I am to be gathered to my relatives: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burying-place. there they buried Abraham and Sarah his woman; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his woman; and there I buried Leah: the field and the cave that is in it, which was purchased from the sons of Heth.

Darby Translation

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Emphasized Bible

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English Standard Version

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Evidence Bible

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Green's Literal Translation

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Jack Ballinger's translation

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Modern English Version

The Death of Jacob

Then he charged them and said to them, "I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought along with the field from Ephron the Hittite as a burial place. They buried Abraham and Sarah his wife there. They buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife there, and I buried Leah there. The field and the cave that is there were purchased from the children of Heth."

Modern KJV

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NASB

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New European Version

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New King James Version

Jacob's Death and Burial

Then he charged them and said to them: "I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite as a possession for a burial place. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah. The field and the cave that is there were purchased from the sons of Heth."

Owen's Translation

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Ron Snider's Translation

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Stuart Wolf's Translation

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Third Millennium Bible

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Updated Bible Version 2.11

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A Voice in the Wilderness

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Webster's Bible Translation

And he charged them, and said to them, I am to be gathered to my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite. In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burying-place. (There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and

World English Bible
 Young's Literal Translation
 Young's Updated LT

Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah,) The purchase of the field and of the cave that is in it, was from the children of Heth.

And he commands them, and says unto them, "I am being gathered unto my people; bury me by my fathers, at the cave which is in the field of Ephron the Hittite; in the cave which is in the field of Machpelah, which is on the front of Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burying-place; (there they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah); the purchase of the field and of the cave which is in it, is from Sons of Heth."

The gist of this passage: Jacob commands his sons to bury him in the cave that Abraham purchased as a burial place for Sarah. It would be larger to have many patriarchs placed there.

29-32

Genesis 49:29a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
tsâvâh (צוה) [pronounced <i>tsaw-VAW</i>]	<i>to commission, to mandate, to appoint; to ordain; to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge [command, order]; to instruct [as in, giving an order]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #6680 BDB #845
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>them; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to them, toward them</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Translation: Jacob [lit., *he*] charged them,...

Jacob and all of his family is in Egypt. However, he was not to be buried there. Egypt was where the family lived now; but God gave them Canaan, not Egypt.

Genesis 49:29b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

Genesis 49:29b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'ânîy (אני) [pronounced aw-NEE]	<i>I, me; in answer to a question, it means I am, it is I</i>	1 st person singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #589 BDB #58
'âçaph (אסף) [pronounced aw-SAHF]	<i>assembled, gathered, assembling, gathering</i>	Niphal participle	Strong's #622 BDB #62
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'am (אם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: ...saying to them, "I am [about to be] gathered to my people.

Jacob tells all of his sons that he is about to die. He sounds very lucid in this final quotation; albeit somewhat repetitive.

Genesis 49:29c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
qâbar (קבר) [pronounced kaw-BAHR]	<i>bury, heap up a mound</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #6912 BDB #868
'êth (את) [pronounced ayth]	<i>me; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to me, toward me</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'êth (את) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
'âbôwth (אבות) [pronounced aw ^b -VOOTH]	<i>fathers, ancestors, both as the heads of households, clans or tribes; founders, civil leaders, military leaders</i>	masculine plural noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39

Genesis 49:29c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
m ^e ârah (מַרְעָמָה) [pronounced m ^e -ġaw-RAW]	cave, den, hole	feminine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #4631 BDB #792
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	that, which, when, who, whom; where	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
sâdeh (שָׂדֵה) [pronounced saw-DEH]	field, land, country, open field, open country; an unpopulated area	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7704 BDB #961
ʿEph ^e rôwn (עֹפְרוֹן) [pronounced ġef-ROHN]	fawn-like; transliterated Ephron	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6085 BDB #780
Chittîy (חִתִּי) [pronounced khiht-TEE]	a descendant of Heth; transliterated Hittite	gentilic adjective; with the definite article	Strong's #2850 BDB #366

Translation: Bury me with my fathers in the cave which [is] in the field of Ephron the Hittite.

He asks to be buried in the cave where his father and grandfather are buried.

Although we find the word *to bury* throughout; a person was not necessarily buried, but placed within a tomb that you could walk into. Whether there is some kind of a stone slab or something one was left upon, I do not know.

Genesis 49:29 And he charged them and said to them, "I am to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite,...

Genesis 49:29 Jacob [lit., he] charged them, saying to them, "I am [about to be] gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave which [is] in the field of Ephron the Hittite. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Being *gathered to his people* is an idiom for death. Jacob is giving his sons charge of what to do with his body after he dies. Jacob wants to be buried in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite. Abraham purchased a cave sometime back for the body of his wife Sarah (Genesis 23:9, 17). Those who are explicitly said to have been buried there are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with the wives Sarah, Rebekah and Leah (Genesis 23:19 25:9 49:29–31). Rachel was buried elsewhere (but within the borders of Canaan). There is actually a very simple reason why Rachel was not laid to rest there, which we will discuss later.

Jacob is requesting that he be buried in the family burial cave as well. The idea is, at the resurrection, they will all rise up together on the land that God had given them.

Notice that Jacob's focus is upon the promises of God and his legacy. Many years prior, he had been tricked by his Uncle Laban into marrying Leah prior to marrying Rachel, the woman whom he most loved. And, perhaps two or three decades ago, Jacob would have requested that he be buried next to his wife Rachel. But now, he better understands his place in the plan of God. I think that there is a good chance that he understood that he was the exclusive father of the Jewish people; that the promises of God will fall upon his 12 sons and their descendants. Although Abraham is known as the father of the Jewish race, he also sired many other sons besides Isaac, which

sons became fathers of the Arabs. But every one of Jacob's sons were Hebrews. His 12 sons were the patriarchs of the 12 tribes of Israel.¹³⁹

When Jacob rises from the dead, it will be with his father Isaac and grandfather Abraham. Jacob now appreciates who he is and all that God has done for him. This is a much different man than we have studied for most of these final chapters of Genesis. He is far more oriented to the plan of God and less concerned with his own interests.

Genesis 49:30a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
m ^e ârâh (מַעְרָה) [pronounced m ^e -âraw- RAW]	<i>cave, den, hole</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4631 BDB #792
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
sâdeh (שָׂדֵה) [pronounced saw-DEH]	<i>field, land, country, open field, open country; an unpopulated area</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7704 BDB #961
Mak ^e phêlâh (מַכְפֵּלָה) [pronounced mahk-pay- LAW]	<i>double portion, the double; transliterated Machpelah</i>	proper singular noun/location	Strong's #4375 BDB #495
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
'al (עַל) [pronounced gah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw- NEEM]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, 'al and pânîym mean <i>upon the face of, towards the face of, facing, in front of, before (as in preference to), in addition to, overlooking; before; east of; on [upon, over] the surface of; above; besides; over-against</i> . Literally, they would be translated <i>upon faces of</i> .			
Mam ^e rê' (מַמְרֵעַ) [pronounced mahm- RAY]	<i>strength; fatness; transliterated Mamre</i>	proper singular noun/location	Strong's #4471 BDB #577
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88

¹³⁹ There are actually 13 tribes and 12 sons, which we have discussed previously.

Genesis 49:30a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #776 BDB #75
K ^e na'an (כְּנָעַן) [pronounced k ^e NAH-gahn]	which possibly means <i>merchant</i> and is transliterated <i>Canaan</i>	masculine proper noun; territory	Strong's #3667 BDB #488

Translation: [Bury me in] the cave which [is] in the field of Machpelah, which is east of Mamre in the land of Canaan.

Jacob gives a very good description of where this cave is. It would be many hundreds of years until he is buried; but this is recorded in Scripture so that, at some point in time, his descendants would know exactly where this is.

Genesis 49:30b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'āsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
qānâh (קָנָה) [pronounced kaw-NAWH]	<i>to get, acquire, obtain; [of God] to found, to originate, to create; to possess; to redeem [His people]; [of Eve] to acquire; to acquire [knowledge, wisdom]; to buy [purchase, redeem]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7069 BDB #888

There is a far greater emphasis on this verb in the realm of *possessing, buying or purchasing* than there is in the realm of *creating*. There are some scholars who would eliminate the meanings *to found, to originate, to create*. However, the NET Bible believes this to be simply another set of meanings (not unheard of in the Hebrew).

'Ab ^e râhâm (אֲבִרְחָם) [pronounced ahb ^{ve} -raw-HAWM]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
sâdeh (שָׂדֶה) [pronounced saw-DEH]	<i>field, land, country, open field, open country; an unpopulated area</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7704 BDB #961
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

Genesis 49:30b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
Together, min 'êth mean <i>from proximity with, from with, from close proximity to, to proceed from someone</i> . A good up-to-date rendering might be <i>directly from</i> . The idea is, the person that these prepositions refer to is supposed to directly be involved in the action or in whatever is being requested.			
'Eph ^e rôwn (עֲפְרָוֹן) [pronounced <i>éf-ROHM</i>]	<i>fawn-like; transliterated Ephron</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6085 BDB #780
Chittîy (חִיטִּי) [pronounced <i>khiht-TEE</i>]	a descendant of Heth; transliterated <i>Hittite</i>	gentilic adjective; with the definite article	Strong's #2850 BDB #366

Translation: [This is the cave] that Abraham purchased in the field [that came] from Ephron the Hittite,...

Abraham was the purchaser of this cave, which he bought from Ephron the Hittite. For sometime, this was the only dirt owned by the Jews in Canaan.

Genesis 49:30c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âchûzzâh (אֲחֻזָּזָה) [pronounced <i>uh-khooz-ZAW</i>]	<i>possession [of land, slaves, etc.], land possession; inheritance</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #272 BDB #28
qeber (קֶבֶר) [pronounced <i>KEH^p-VEHR</i>]	<i>grave, sepulcher, tomb; burial place</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6913 BDB #868

Translation: ...to posses [as] a burial site.

Abraham purchased this piece of land as a burial site.

Genesis 49:30 ...in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, the field which Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite for a burying-place.

One of the few pieces of land purchased by the Hebrews in the land God promised them. Jacob would be buried with his father and grandfather, and all of their wives, save Rachel. This is a very significant request by Jacob; and it indicates that he better understands his relationship with God and his place in the plan of God.

Genesis 49:30 [Bury me in] the cave which [is] in the field of Machpelah, which is east of Mamre in the land of Canaan. [This is the cave] that Abraham purchased in the field [that came] from Ephron the Hittite, to posses [as] a burial site. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:31a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb with the directional hê	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
This simply means <i>there</i> ; hê acts almost like a demonstrative.			
qâbar (קָבַר) [pronounced kaw-BAHR]	<i>to bury, to heap up a mound</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #6912 BDB #868
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	Indicates next word is the object of the verb; sometimes translated <i>to</i>	untranslated mark of a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'Ab ^e râhâm (אֲבִרְאָהֳמ) [pronounced ahb ^{ve} -raw-HAWM]	<i>father of a multitude, chief of a multitude; transliterated Abraham</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #85 BDB #4
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	Indicates next word is the object of the verb; sometimes translated <i>to</i>	untranslated mark of a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Sârâh (שָׂרָה) [pronounced saw-RAW]	<i>princess, noble woman; transliterated Sarah</i>	proper noun; feminine singular	Strong's #8283 BDB #979
'îshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAW]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #802 BDB #61

Translation: They buried Abraham and his wife Sarah there;...

Abraham was buried there, along with his wife Sarah.

Genesis 49:31b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb with the directional hê	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
This simply means <i>there</i> ; hê acts almost like a demonstrative.			
qâbar (קָבַר) [pronounced kaw-BAHR]	<i>to bury, to heap up a mound</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #6912 BDB #868
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	Indicates next word is the object of the verb; sometimes translated <i>to</i>	untranslated mark of a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Yis ^e châq (יִשְׁחַק) [pronounced yihse ^e -KHAWK]	<i>he laughs; laughing; transliterated Isaac</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3327 & #3446 BDB #850

Genesis 49:31b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	Indicates next word is the object of the verb; sometimes translated <i>to</i>	untranslated mark of a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Rib ^e qâh (רִיבְקָה) [pronounced <i>rihb-KAW</i>]	<i>ensnarer; a noose; fat, fattened; a quarrel appeased; which is transliterated Rebekah, Rebekkah, Rebecca</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #7259 BDB #918
'îshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAW</i>]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #802 BDB #61

Translation: ...they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah there;...

Isaac and his wife Rebekah are buried in this cave.

Genesis 49:31c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced <i>shawm</i>]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb with the directional hê	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
This simply means <i>there</i> ; hê acts almost like a demonstrative.			
qâbar (קָבַר) [pronounced <i>kaw-BAHR</i>]	<i>to bury, to heap up a mound</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6912 BDB #868
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	Indicates next word is the object of the verb; sometimes translated <i>to</i>	untranslated mark of a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Lê'âh (לֵאָה) [pronounced <i>lay-AW</i>]	<i>weary; transliterated Leah</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #3812 BDB #521

Translation: ...and I buried Leah there.

Jacob also buried Leah there. He does not call her *his wife*.

We have never been told what happened to all of Jacob's wives. Rachel died in childbirth and here we find out that Leah died back in the land and was buried in Abraham's burial plot. We do not know about their personal maids.

Genesis 49:31 They buried Abraham and his wife Sarah there, and they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah. And I buried Leah there;

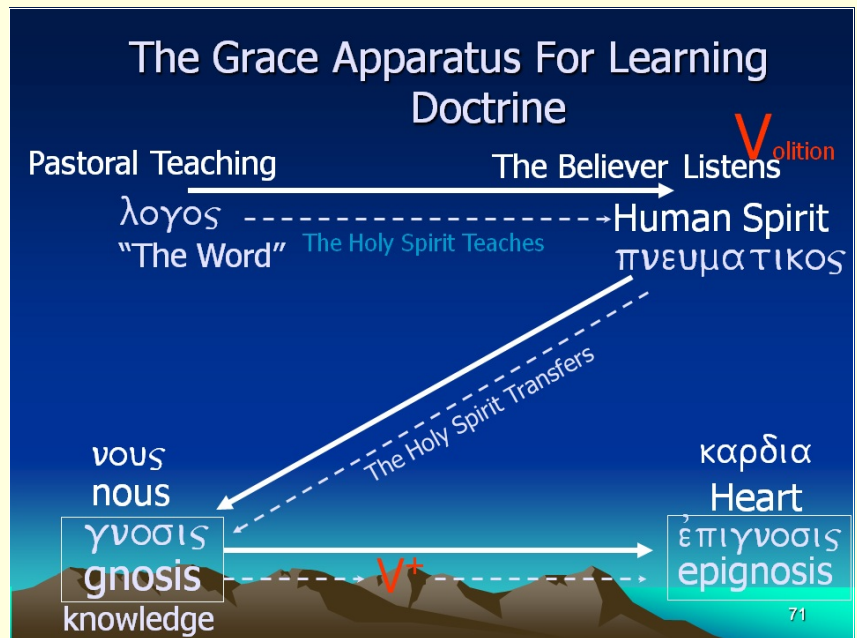
Jacob wants to be buried with his family. It is interesting that, despite his relationship with Rachel, he wants to be buried with the bulk of his family members. This little fact is evidence that Jacob has become more spiritually mature by this time. Previously, had he fully appreciated the importance of the land and that he would rise up again in it, it is possible that he would have buried Rachel in this cave as well (there are practical reasons as well as spiritual reasons why she was not). He did not fully understand then what he does now. Or he would have requested to be buried next to his *favoured* wife, rather than in the family burial cave. This argues in favor of my view that Jacob, at the end of his life, while living in Egypt, experienced great spiritual growth.

Now, how did Jacob experience spiritual growth? My thinking is this: Jacob, like Abraham and Isaac before him, would speak from memory the first 36 chapters of Genesis. Then Joseph would recite Genesis 37 and Jacob would stand and recite Genesis 38. Then Joseph and Judah would stand and give the final 10 chapters (final, meaning *up to that point*), trading off as appropriate. Hearing these words altogether, Jacob began to understand and appreciate all that God had done in his life; and in the lives of his family—all of whom were the *people of Israel*. At some point, Jacob got it; he understood his place in the plan of God; and he began to appreciate God's grace (as few people are less deserving of blessing than Jacob). In other words, *he believed the words of God; he trusted in the promises of God*.

Operation Z—the Concept: Let's take a look at Operation Z, an illustration developed by R. B. Thieme, Jr.

Operation Z (a graphic); from [Jim Oliver at WordPress](#)¹⁴⁰; accessed February 14, 2018.

God has designed the local church as the classroom in which spiritual growth occurs. A qualified pastor-teacher teaches the Word of God accurately, using ICE principles (isagogics, categories and exegesis). This information is *knowledge* or *gnosis* (γνῶσις) and, as such, has only *potential* impact on one's spiritual growth. When that information is transferred by faith into the human spirit, then it becomes a part of spiritual growth. Spiritual truth, when believed, become epignosis (ἐπιγνῶσις) in our human spirit, which truth, we exhale from our hearts (kardia or καρδιά). The inhale of Bible doctrine is taking in by faith spiritual truth; the exhale of Bible doctrine is the application of Bible doctrine to our lives. You must imprint the doctrine that you learn on your human spirit; and that only occurs when you believe what you are being taught. No exercise of faith means no spiritual growth.



You might be out in the open air, but unless you actually inhale air into your lungs, utilizing the oxygen in the air, it is of no use to you. Our perpetuated life requires the inhale and exhale of O₂. Similarly, we can attend church all of our lives, be well acquainted with 3 or 4 evangelists, but unless we personally believe in Jesus Christ, we are not saved. We must apprehend Jesus Christ by faith in order to be saved.

There are some alternatives to the local church when it comes to spiritual growth, such as accessing the teaching of a well-qualified pastor-teacher either online or on discs (CD's or DVD's); but that is when you do not have a choice. I have known people who had other options (the option to gather and be taught by a well-qualified pastor-

¹⁴⁰ I don't think the graphic is original with him, but I am unsure about that.

teacher), and they chose to listen at home as they pleased, apart from any sort of real discipline—and the end result was clear in their spiritual lives.

I am fully aware that there are some cities where no good local church exists; and if that is the case, you either gather with like-minded believers around the teaching of a well-qualified pastor who teaches in another city; or you physically move to where Bible doctrine is being taught, using ICE principles. Listening to a well-qualified teacher online by yourself ought to be your last choice, when there are no other choices. And, if that is your only option, then you need to impose the proper academic discipline upon yourself.

Back to the exegesis of this chapter:

What Jacob says in this chapter and how he is treated at his death suggests a marvelously transformed man from the self-centered, self-pitying man that we knew back in the chapters prior to his moving to Egypt.

As an aside, it appears that most of those who are buried in Abraham's cave also died there (or very close to there). In a warm and primitive country, it would have been important to take the body to its final resting place as quickly as possible. Therefore, when death was near, those in the line of Abraham, including wives, went to Hebron to die.

We read that Isaac was very close to there when Jacob came to him:

Gen. 35:27 **And Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned. (ESV)**

Isaac then died (Genesis 35:28–29).

Similarly, that is where Sarah was when she died:

Gen 23:2 **And Sarah died at Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went in to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. (ESV)**

That two people were apparently staying there at the time of their deaths is more than simply a coincidence and suggests some pre-planning on their part. Abraham was buried there (Genesis 25:9) as were Rebekah and Leah (Genesis 49:31). It is reasonable to suppose that Abraham, Rebekah and Leah all went there when their lives were coming to a close. This would also explain why Rachel was not buried there, as she died unexpectedly when giving birth to her second child (Genesis 35:16–19 48:7). There was no way to preserve her body long enough to get her to the cave. Putrefaction would have set in. That the others made provision at the end of their lives to be in Mamre is the implication of these verses.¹⁴¹

However, it will be different for Jacob because Jacob is in Egypt and Egypt was famous for preserving the bodies of the dead to keep them from putrefying and stinking. The same would be true of Joseph when he dies. His bones will be preserved in a casket of sorts, which would be later moved to the land of Canaan where he is laid to his final rest there, perhaps 450 years after his death.

Genesis 49:31 **They buried Abraham and his wife Sarah there; they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah there; and I buried Leah there. (Kukis mostly literal translation)**

¹⁴¹ Mostly taken from Dr. Peter Pett; *Commentary Series on the Bible*; from e-sword, Genesis 49:29–32.

Genesis 49:32

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
mîq ^e neh (מִקְנֵה) [pronounced mik-NEH]	<i>cattle, livestock</i> (specifically <i>sheep, cows and goats</i>); <i>herds, flocks</i>	masculine singular (collective) construct	Strong's #4735 BDB #889
The word which ought to be found here is...			
miq ^e nâh (מִקְנָה) [pronounced mihk-NAW]	<i>a purchase, a buying; a document of purchase; cost, price, a purchase-price; that which is purchased; a possession [gained by purchase]</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #4736 BDB #889
In the alternative, the masculine form has the secondary meaning of <i>a possession, a purchase</i> .			
sâdeh (שָׂדֵה) [pronounced saw-DEH]	<i>field, land, country, open field, open country; an unpopulated area</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7704 BDB #961
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
m ^e ârâh (מַעְרָה) [pronounced m ^e -gaw-RAW]	<i>cave, den, hole</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4631 BDB #792
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
b ^e (בּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
Together, min 'êth mean <i>from proximity with, from with, from close proximity to, to proceed from someone</i> . A good up-to-date rendering might be <i>directly from</i> . The idea is, the person that these prepositions refer to is supposed to directly be involved in the action or in whatever is being requested.			
bânîym (בָּנִים) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Cheth (חֵת) [pronounced khayth]	transliterated <i>Heth; Hittite</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #2845 BDB #366

Genesis 49:32

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
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The NET Bible: *Some translate the Hebrew term "Heth" as "Hittites" here (see also Gen 23:3), but this gives the impression that these people were the classical Hittites of Anatolia. However, there is no known connection between these sons of Heth, apparently a Canaanite group (see Gen 10:15), and the Hittites of Asia Minor. See H. A. Hoffner, Jr., "Hittites," Peoples of the Old Testament World, 152-53.¹⁴²*

Translation: The field and cave [were] a possession belonging to Abraham [lit., *him*] from the sons of Heth."

Jacob repeats that this was a possession of Abraham's in the land of Canaan.

Jacob is going into great detail about this cave for a couple of reasons. He is making it clear that this is where he wants to be buried so there can be no mistaking his deathbed wishes. It is obvious that his sons do not fully grasp the history of their people, so Jacob is filling in information for them. As you will recall, we studied this in Genesis 23:16–20.

Genesis 49:32 The field and cave [were] a possession belonging to Abraham [lit., *him*] from the sons of Heth." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:31 They buried Abraham and his wife Sarah there, and they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah. And I buried Leah there;...

Genesis 49:32 ...the purchase of the field and the cave in it, from the sons of Heth."

Sons of Heth means *the Hittites*. Abraham had purchased this cave and this land still belong to Abraham and his family.

The MKJV is rather stilted here. The Unlocked Dynamic Bible helps at this point:

Genesis 49:31–32 [Jacob is speaking to his sons:] "That is where they buried him and his wife Sarah. That is where they buried my father Isaac and his wife Rebekah. And that is where I buried my wife Leah. That field and the cave in it were bought from the Heth people group; so that is where I want you to bury me." (UDB)

Genesis 49:29–32 Jacob [lit., *he*] charged them, saying to them, "I am [about to be] gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave which [is] in the field of Ephron the Hittite. [Bury me in] the cave which [is] in the field of Machpelah, which is east of Mamre in the land of Canaan. [This is the cave] that Abraham purchased in the field [that came] from Ephron the Hittite, to possess [as] a burial site. They buried Abraham and his wife Sarah there; they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah there; and I buried Leah there. The field and cave [were] a possession belonging to Abraham [lit., *him*] from the sons of Heth." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 49:29–32 Jacob charged them as follows: "Since I am about to be gathered to my people, I want you to bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Machpelah, which is east of Mamre in the land of Canaan. This is the field which Abraham purchased from Ephron the Hittite, which he bought as a burial site. Abraham and Sarah are buried there; Isaac and Rebekah are buried there; and I buried my wife Leah there. The field and cave are a possession which belong to Abraham, which he purchased from the sons of Heth." (Kukis paraphrase)

Jacob, the man who has experienced some spiritual growth, wants to be buried with his father and grandfather; their wives, and his wife Leah; so that they will all stand up together in the last days in the land that God promised them.

¹⁴² From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen44.htm> (footnote); accessed January 15, 2017.

And so comes to an end Jacob to charging his sons and so he draws up his [two] feet unto the bed and so he expires and so he is gathered unto his people.

Genesis
49:33

Then Jacob finished charging his sons. He drew up his feet into bed and breathed his last. He was gathered up to his people.

Jacob finished telling his sons what to do with his body after death; and then drew his feet and died. And so he was gathered to his people.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so comes to an end Jacob to charging his sons and so he draws up his [two] feet unto the bed and so he expires and so he is gathered unto his people.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum of Onkelos	.
Jerusalem targum	.
Targum (Onkelos)	And Jakob ceased to instruct his sons, and drew his feet together in the bed, and died, and was gathered unto his people.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And Jakob ceased to command his sons. And he gathered up his feet into the midst of the bed, and expired, and was gathered unto his people.
Revised Douay-Rheims	.
Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)	And when he had ended the commandments, wherewith he instructed his sons, he drew up his feet upon the bed, and died: and he was gathered to his people.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	When Ya'aqub made an end of charging his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the spirit, and was gathered to his people.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And when Jacob had finished charging his sons, he stretched his feet on his bed, and grew weak, and died, and was gathered to his people.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Jacob ceased giving charges to his sons; and having lifted up his feet on the bed, he died, and was gathered to his people.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And when Jacob had come to the end of these words to his sons, stretching himself on his bed, he gave up his spirit, and went the way of his people.
Easy English	Jacob finished telling his sons what he wanted them to do. And he lay on his bed. He died. And he went to be with his ancestors who had died before him.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	.
God's Word™	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	When Jacob had finished giving instructions to his sons, he lay back down and died.
International Children's B.	After Jacob finished talking to his sons, he lay down. He put his feet back on the bed, took his last breath and died.
<i>The Message</i>	.
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	When Jacob had finished telling his sons what to do, he pulled his feet up into his bed. Then he took his last breath and died. He joined the members of his family who had already died.

New Simplified Bible .

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	After he finished giving orders to his sons, he put his feet up on the bed, took his last breath, and joined his people.
Contemporary English V.	When Jacob had finished giving these instructions to his sons, he lay down on his bed and died.
The Living Bible	Then, when Jacob had finished his prophecies to his sons, he lay back in the bed, breathed his last, and died.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	After Jacob finished talking to his sons, he lay down. He put his feet back on the bed, took his last breath, and died.
New Life Version	When Jacob finished telling his sons what to do, he lay back down on his bed and died.
New Living Translation	When Jacob had finished this charge to his sons, he drew his feet into the bed, breathed his last, and joined his ancestors in death.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then Jacob stopped giving instructions to his sons, and he lifted his feet on the bed and died... and was buried with his people.
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard V	After concluding this set of instructions to his sons, Jacob [Lit. <i>he</i>] tucked his feet up into bed, quit breathing, and was gathered to his ancestors.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	There is no verse 33 in the Knox Bible, as it follows the Latin text. Nor is it placed into the next chapter.
Revised Knox Bible	.
Translation for Translators	When Jacob finished giving those instructions to his sons, he lay down on his bed again. Then he stopped breathing and died [IDI].

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible	As Jacob was to finish laying charge to his sons, he was to gather his feet into his bed, and was to expire, and was to be gathered to his people.
Awful Scroll Bible	.
Conservapedia	When Jacob had finished instructing his sons, he gathered his feet into the couch, and expired, and was gathered to his peoples.
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	Jacob thus finished instructing his sons, and stretched out his legs upon the bed, and expired, and was added to his people.
God's Truth (Tyndale)	When Jacob had commanded all that he would unto his sons, he plucked up his feet upon the bed and died, and was put unto his people, And Joseph fell upon his fathers face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. Tyndale includes Genesis 50:1 with Genesis 49.
HCSB	.
Jubilee Bible 2000	.
H. C. Leupold	And Jacob finished giving his charge to his sons and drew up his feet into his bed and expired and was gathered unto his people.
Lexham English Bible	.
NIV, ©2011	.
NIV – UK	.
Tree of Life Version	When Jacob finished commanding his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed, then breathed his last and was gathered to his peoples.

Urim-Thummim Version	And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he withdrew his feet into bed and died, perishing from his people.
Wikipedia Bible Project	And Jacob stopped commanding his sons, and picked up his legs onto the bed, and died, and gathered onto his peoples.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	.
The Heritage Bible	And Jacob finished commanding his sons, and he gathered his feet into the bed, and breathed out, and was gathered to his people.
New American Bible (2002)	When Jacob had finished giving these instructions to his sons, he drew his feet into the bed, breathed his last, and was taken to his kindred.
New American Bible (2011)	.
New Jerusalem Bible	When Jacob had finished giving his instructions to his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed, and breathing his last was gathered to his people.
New RSV	.
Revised English Bible	When Jacob had finished giving these instructions to his sons, he drew up his feet on to the bed, breathed his last, and was gathered to his ancestors.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	.
exeGesés companion Bible	And Yaaqov finishes misvahing his sons, and he gathers his feet into the bed and expires - and is gathered to his people.
Hebraic Roots Bible	.
Israeli Authorized Version	.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	.
Kaplan Translation	Jacob thus concluded his instructions to his sons. He drew his feet back onto the bed, breathed his last, and was brought back to his people.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And when Ya'akov had made an end of commanding his banim, he gathered up his raglayim into the mittah, and expired, and was gathered unto his people.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	When Jacob (Israel) had finished commanding his sons, he drew his feet into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people [who had preceded him in death].
The Expanded Bible	After Jacob finished talking to [or instructing] his sons, he lay down. He put his feet back on the bed, took his last breath, and died [was gathered to his people/relatives; 25:8].
Kretzmann's Commentary	And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet in to the bed, for he had been sitting on his couch, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people, the expression which denotes also here the hope of a final glorious resurrection unto eternal life, a resurrection which will surely come to all that have waited for, and believed in, the salvation of the Lord.
NET Bible®	When Jacob finished giving these instructions to his sons, he pulled his feet up onto the bed, breathed his last breath, and went [<i>Heb</i> "was gathered."] to his people.
Syndein/Thieme	And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and expired {gava`}, and was gathered unto his people. {Note: Jacob was sitting on the edge of bed with his feet hanging over the edge. He laid back and drew his feet onto the bed and died.}.

The Voice After Jacob finished with these instructions to his sons, he pulled his feet up onto the bed, breathed his last breath, and joined his ancestors *in death*.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

- Benner’s Mechanical Trans. ...and Ya'aqov ^[He restrains] finished directing his sons and he gathered his feet to the bed and he expired and he was gathered to his people,...
- Benner’s Mechanical Trans.
- Concordant Literal Version And finishing is Jacob instructing his sons, and gathering is he his feet into the couch and is expiring, and is being gathered to his people.
- Context Group Version .
- Darby Translation .
- Emphasized Bible So Jacob made an end of commanding his sons, and gathered up his feet into the couch,—and ceased to breathe and was gathered unto his people.
- English Standard Version When Jacob finished commanding his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to his people.
- Evidence Bible .
- Green’s Literal Translation .
- Jack Ballinger’s translation .
- Modern English Version When Jacob finished instructing his sons, he drew his feet into the bed, breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.
- Modern Literal Version And when Jacob made an end of charging his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed and yielded up the spirit and was gathered to his people.
- NASB .
- New European Version .
- New King James Version .
- Owen’s Translation .
- Ron Snider’s Translation .
- Stuart Wolf’s Translation .
- Third Millennium Bible And 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.
- Updated Bible Version 2.11 .
- A Voice in the Wilderness .
- Webster’s Bible Translation .
- World English Bible When Jacob finished charging his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, breathed his last breath, and was gathered to his people.
- Young’s Literal Translation .
- Young’s Updated LT And Jacob finishes commanding his sons, and gathers up his feet unto the bed, and expires, and is gathered unto his people.

The gist of this passage: Jacob concludes his instructions, pulls his feet up into his bed, and dies.

Genesis 49:33a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
kâlâh (כָּלָה) [pronounced <i>kaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>to complete, to finish; to prepare; to come to an end; to consume, to waste, to destroy, to annihilate; to make pine away</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong’s #3615 BDB #477

Genesis 49:33a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Ya'ăqôb (יַעֲקֹב) [pronounced yah-ġuh-KOH ^B V]	<i>supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent; heel; and is transliterated Jacob</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3290 BDB #784
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
tsâvâh (צַוָּה) [pronounced tsaw-VAW]	<i>to commission, to mandate, to appoint; to ordain; to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge [command, order]; to instruct [as in, giving an order]</i>	Piel infinitive construct	Strong's #6680 BDB #845
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	Indicates next word is the object of the verb; sometimes translated <i>to</i>	untranslated mark of a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
bânîym (בָּנָיִם) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

Translation: Then Jacob finished charging his sons.

Jacob has this amazing death bed circumstance, where all of his children are there with him; he has blessed them all, and he has told them what he wanted them to do with his body. What Jacob needed to say was said.

Genesis 49:33b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âçaph (אַצַּף) [pronounced aw-SAHF]	<i>to collect, to relocate, to transfer, to transport, to gather (together), to gather and remove, to remove</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #622 BDB #62
rag ^e layim (רַגְלָיִם) [pronounced RAHG-lah-yim]	<i>feet, [two] feet; metaphorically for steps taken in one's life</i>	feminine dual noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7272 BDB #919
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh/]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
mittâh (מִטָּה) [pronounced mit-TAW]	<i>couch, bed; an open casket, a bier, a stretcher on which the dead are carried</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4296 BDB #641

Translation: He drew up his feet into bed...

This is an odd detail; and I must say, I don't know really what to make of it. Were his feet on the ground and he brings them up into his bed? Did Jacob enter into a fetal position?

Genesis 49:33c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
gâva' (גַּוַּע) [pronounced <i>gaw-VAHĠ</i>]	<i>to expire, to perish, to die, to be about to die</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1478 BDB #157

There seems to be the sense here of taking one's last breath. The full listing of BDB meanings: *to expire, die, perish, give up the ghost, yield up the ghost, be dead, be ready to die; to be about to die. Gesenius adds to be destroyed. Zodhiates adds, to breath out one's life; saying [this word] may not always connote the precise moment of death.*

Translation: ...and breathed his last.

If you read the Hebrew exegesis, this verb properly means *to expire, to die*. However, there is a sense in which it means *to breathe one's last breath*.

Genesis 49:33d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âçaph (אָצַף) [pronounced <i>aw-SAHF</i>]	<i>to be assembled, to be gathered, to assemble, to gather</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #622 BDB #62
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'am (אָם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: He was gathered up to his people.

This is another way of saying that Jacob has died; but he has also gone to Abraham's bosom, where he is reunited with his father and grandfather.

Genesis 49:33 And Jacob finished commanding his sons, and he gathered his feet into the bed. And he expired, and was gathered to his people.

These are the final words Jacob will speak to his sons.

Jacob's final position in his bed is given. He draws up his feet into his bed and dies. Throughout these final chapters, we have observed Jacob taking various positions in his bed.

Gen 47:31 **Jacob said, "Swear to me that you will do it!" So Joseph swore to do it. Then Jacob bowed down as he worshiped God, near the head of his bed. (Unlocked Dynamic Bible)**

You may recall that, when Joseph brought his two sons and came to his father, Jacob sat up on his bed, even though this was quite difficult for him to do.

Gen 48:2 **When someone told Jacob, "Look, your son Joseph has come to see you!" Jacob, also called Israel, made an effort and sat up on the bed, even though it was difficult for him to do that. (UDB)**

Joseph brought his sons close enough to Jacob for him to kiss and hug them.

Gen. 48:9–10 **Joseph replied to his father, "They are the sons that God has given to me here in Egypt." Jacob said, "Bring them close to me so that I can bless them." Jacob was almost blind because he was very old. He could not see well. So Joseph brought his sons close to his father, and Jacob kissed them and hugged them. (UDB)**

And here at the very end:

Gen. 49:33 **When Jacob finished commanding his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to his people. (ESV)**

Genesis 49:33 **Then Jacob finished charging his sons. He drew up his feet into bed and breathed his last. He was gathered up to his people. (Kukis mostly literal translation)**

Genesis 49:33 **Jacob finished telling his sons what to do with his body after death; and then drew his feet and died. And so he was gathered to his people. (Kukis paraphrase)**

So many times in the past, we have listened to Jacob's complaints of this or that; yet we hear nothing of this in these final chapters of Genesis, where his focus is upon his sons and their futures.

For most people, there are two kinds of deaths which seem to be preferred—dying in one's sleep or dying in the midst of ones family at home. Jacob, with the shakiest of starts in his life, has finished strong, speaking some of the most amazing things recorded in Scripture at his life's end.

It is also Jacob, a man who was so self-centered and who made so many mistakes, that gives many of us hope regarding our own messy lives. If he could reach spiritual maturity late in life, then we know that we might also.

So we end Genesis 49 and we will begin the final chapter next time.

This in the end of chapter 49, although chapter 50 picks up right here.

There is no actual break between this and the final chapter of Genesis. Genesis 50:1 is Joseph's response to the death of his father: **Then Joseph fell on his father's face and wept over him and kissed him. (ESV)**

Chapter Outline		Charts, Graphics, Short Doctrines
Beginning of Document	Doctrines Covered or Alluded to	Chapters of the Bible Alluded to
Definition of Terms	Introduction and Text	Addendum
www.kukis.org		Exegetical Studies in Genesis

A Set of Summary Doctrines and Commentary

An Abbreviated Exegesis of Genesis 49:

Bible translation used: The Scriptures 2009. Unless otherwise noted, all other quotations will be taken from this translation as well.

In the Scriptures 2009, instead of *God*, we have the word *Elohim*, which is a transliteration from the Hebrew. The other name for God, YHWH (or Jehovah, Yahweh, Adonai, Lord, JHWH, Y^ehowah) is represented with the actual Hebrew יהוה. The reason for there being so many different words used here is interesting. Originally, the Hebrew was written without vowels—not just YHWH, but every single Hebrew word. Because the Hebrew Scriptures (which we know as the Old Testament) were read aloud so often, the reader could look at the Hebrew consonants and know the word that was there. In fact, the Masoretes, who preserved the Bibles' pronunciation, introduced diacritical marks in the 7th century A.D. (these are vowel points, which was added above and below the original Hebrew text). Up to that time, every word in the Bible was read aloud except for one, and that was YHWH. When the Jews came to this proper name, they said, *Adonai* (= *Lord*). As a result, the Jews preserved the pronunciation of the Biblical text for all but one word. Of the nearly 100 translations of the Old Testament to which I refer, any one of those eight forms may be found—and one of them, the Message (I believe) uses *GOD*. Furthermore, Bible translations are not necessarily consistent at this point. One place we may read *Lord*, and elsewhere we may read *Jehovah* in the same translation.

Jacob Blesses His Sons

Jacob is at the end of his life and he is going to say a few words about each son. Because this is preserved in Scripture, we would assume that much of what we read is prophetic, speaking certainly not of the individuals but of their descendants.

Jacob may certainly be taking into consideration what a son has been like and what traits he might pass down to his own descendants.

Genesis 49:1 [And Ya'aqob](#) called his sons and said, "Gather together, so that I declare to you what is to befall you in the last days:

We may understand these *last days* to mean the *latter days* or characteristic of their descendants in the future.

Genesis 49:2 ["Gather together and hear, you sons of Ya'aqob](#) [= *Jacob*], and listen to [Yisra'el](#) [= *Israel*] your father.

Recall the Jacob was known by the two names, *Jacob* and *Israel*. A rule of thumb has been, where we find Jacob's name a lot, we are often viewing Jacob as rebellious and out of phase with God. When the name *Israel* is used of him, this often refers to a man who knows many great truths and is often in fellowship.

Here, both names are used.

Genesis 49:3 ["Re'ubēn](#), you are my first-born, my power and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of exaltation and the excellency of power.

Reuben was Jacob's firstborn son and he should have been the greatest and most dependable. He was the beginning of Jacob's strength.

Genesis 49:4 ["Boiling like water, you do not excel, because you went up to your father's bed, then you defiled it – he went up to my couch.](#)

Reuben's problem was, he was unstable and as unformed as water. Water assumes the shape of whatever container it is placed in, and that was Reuben's problem. He should have been a leader, but he was not. If circumstances required him to be one way, he was that way; but if things changed and he needed to be another way, then he was another way. He was not a person to depend upon.

There was also an incident where Reuben had relations with one of Jacob's two mistresses, and there is no excuse for that.

Genesis 49:5 "Shim'on [= Simeon] and Lěwi [= Levi] are brothers, their weapons are implements of violence.

Simeon and Levi were dangerous together. They seemed to be bad influences on one another. There is one chapter with both men, and they were cruel and heartless toward an entire family. They had assumed the family deserved punishment based upon one family member and they set up an opportunity to kill them all.

Genesis 49:6 "Let my being not enter their council, let my esteem not be united to their assembly; because they killed a man in their displeasure, and they lamed an ox in pleasure.

What they did was cruel and they appeared to take pleasure in their own cruelty.

Genesis 49:7 "Cursed be their displeasure for it is fierce, and their wrath for it is cruel! I divide them in Ya'aqob and scatter them in Yisra'ěl.

These two tribes needed to be kept separate, and, for the most part, they were. Simeon lived in a portion of Judah's territory and the tribe of Levite was spread out throughout the land of Canaan, living principally in six cities (if memory serves).

Although very little was said about Reuben, Simeon or Levi, Jacob has a lot to say about Judah.

Genesis 49:8 "You, Yehudah [= Judah], your brothers praise you; your hand is on the neck of your enemies; your father's children bow down before you.

Judah is spoken up as being praised by his brothers. It is suggested that the other tribes will bow down before him and that his hand would be on the neck of his enemies. This was fulfilled by David and by all of the kings which followed him (they were all from the tribe of Judah).

Genesis 49:9 "Yehudah is a lion's cub; from the prey you have gone up, my son! He bowed down, he crouched like a lion. And like a lion, who does rouse him?

Judah will develop into a people that should not be roused. That would be dangerous to the person rousing them. You do not separate even a lion's cub from its food; and you should not separate Judah from what it wants.

Genesis 49:10 "The sceptre shall not turn aside from Yehudah, nor an Insciber from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to Him is the obedience of peoples.

We would have expected a very lengthy dissertation about Joseph, but, instead, this goes to Judah. Judah did, in previous chapters, show himself to be trustworthy to his father.

The royal family would settle upon Judah (only Saul was from a different tribe); and Shiloh is understood by many to refer to Jesus.

The scepter refers to reigning or ruling; and the second king of Israel will come from the tribe of Judah. After King David, all of the kings came from the tribe of Judah.

An *inscriber* is a reference to a lawgiver or a governor or a decree. Again, the things closely associated with ruling over a country are associated with the tribe of Judah.

Genesis 49:11 “Binding his donkey to the vine, and his donkey’s colt to the choice vine, he washed his garments in wine, and his robes in the blood of grapes.

There is the imagery of the cross, with garments being washed in wine and robes in the blood of grapes. That refers to Jesus dying for our sins.

Genesis 49:12 “His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.

The white teeth refer to the Lord being perfect in His humanity (Jesus comes from the tribe of Judah). The eyes being darker than wine is Jesus’ being associated with sin on the Roman cross.

Five verses were given to Judah. Most of his brothers will be covered by a single verse.

Genesis 49:13 “Zebulun dwells at the seashore, he is for a haven for ships, and his border is unto Tsidon.

After spending five verses on Judah, Jacob will speak of Zebulun in one. Somehow, Jacob places him near the seashore, which is a haven for ships; and then Sidon is mentioned, which is a city on the Mediterranean Sea.

Insofar as we know, this does not appear to have been fulfilled in Zebulun. He is associated with the seashore and with Sidon (a city on the Mediterranean Sea); but I am not aware of anything which ties Zebulun to the sea.

Genesis 49:14–15 “Yissaskar is a strong donkey lying down between two burdens, and he saw that a resting place was good, and that the land was pleasant, and he inclined his shoulder to bear a burden, and became a subject to slave labour.

Issachar is seen as a strong donkey who has received too heavy a burden. He rests and decides that he is fine resting and not moving on. He is potentially subject to slave labor.

Genesis 49:16 “Dan rightly rules his people as one of the tribes of Yisra’el.

Dan rule his people; and it appears in the Tribulation that there will be a great leader to come out of Dan.

Genesis 49:17 “Dan is a serpent by the way, an adder by the path, that bites the horse’s heels so that its rider falls backward.

When I say great leader, I mean powerful. He is portrayed as a serpent along the trail. He is not seen, but he will suddenly strike a horse and knock the rider off.

Genesis 49:18 “I have waited for your deliverance, O יהוי!

It is unclear whether Jacob is speaking of himself right here or whether this continues the dissertation on Dan.

Genesis 49:19 “Gad, a raiding band raids him, but he raids its heel.

Gad will be in a place where raiding bands might strike him, but he will turn around and go after them.

Genesis 49:20 “Bread from Asher is rich, and he gives delicacies of a sovereign.

Somehow, Asher seems to be connected to good bread or good pastry.

Genesis 49:21 “Naphtali is a deer let loose, he gives words of elegance.

Naphtali, as a deer let loose, may run off in an unstable manner. However, he will speak with great words of elegance.

Five verses were given to Judah and five verses will also be given to Joseph.

Genesis 49:22 “Yosëph is an offshoot of a fruit-bearing tree, an offshoot of a fruit-bearing tree by a fountain, his branches run over a wall.

Joseph, not of his own choice, strayed out of the land of Canaan, like an offshoot of a fruit-bearing tree. However, that shoot will be near a fountain and it will grow tall, and it will extend its branches back toward Canaan (giving aid to his own family from Egypt).

Genesis 49:23 “And the archers have bitterly grieved him, shot at him and hated him.

Perhaps the archers who have bitter grieved Joseph are his brothers who shot at him and hated him.

At some point, the Egyptians will become implacable toward all of the Jews, despite the history that Joseph had. However, every generation makes its own decisions and charts its own course.

Genesis 49:24–25 “But his bow remained in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the Mighty One of Ya'aqob – from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Yisra'ël – from the Ēl of your father who helps you, and by the Almighty who blesses you with blessings of the heavens from above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

In any case, Joseph will show himself as having great strength. He will be greatly blessed from Egypt.

Genesis 49:26 “The blessings of your father have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, up to the limit of the everlasting hills. They are on the head of Yosëph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separated from his brothers.

Joseph was separated from his brothers, but great blessings have come down upon him.

Genesis 49:27 “Binyamin [= *Benjamin*] is a wolf that tears, in the morning he eats prey, and at night he divides the spoil.”

Benjamin is a wolf that kills and eats his prey, but he will share what remains that night. He takes care of himself first, then he will consider the others.

Genesis 49:28 All these are the twelve tribes of Yisra'ël, and this is what their father spoke to them. And he blessed them, he blessed each one according to his own blessing.

These were the final words and end-of-life blessings of Jacob given to his sons.

Jacob's Death and Burial

Genesis 49:29–30 And he commanded them, and said to them, “I am to be gathered to my people, bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Maḳpēlah, which is before Mamrē in the land of Kena'an, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite as a possession for a burial-site.

Jacob asks for his body to be placed in the plot which Abraham purchased for his family.

Genesis 49:31–32 There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, there they buried Yitshaq and Ribqah his wife, and there I buried Lě'ah – the field purchased, and the cave which is in it, from the sons of Hēth.”

Abraham and Sarah were placed in this cave; and then Isaac and Rebecca. Jacob also buried his wife Leah there as well.

The field and cave were all legitimately purchased from the Hittites.

Genesis 49:33 *And when Ya'aqob ended commanding his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.*

After this, Jacob drew his feet up on his bed and breathed his last.

The idea here is, there are things which we find in this chapter which are extremely important.

Why Genesis 49 is in the Word of God

- 1.
- 2.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

These are things which we learn while studying this particular chapter.

What We Learn from Genesis 49

- 1.
- 2.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Carroll summarizes portions of the Genesis narrative very much like Edersheim does.

B. H. Carroll Summarizes Genesis 49

JACOB'S BLESSING ON HIS SONS (Genesis 49)

In commenting on the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis, which contains the blessings pronounced by Jacob on his twelve sons, four distinct things need to be borne in mind. First, what was in the mother's mind when the boy was named; second, what the boys turned out to be, as set forth in this chapter; third, what the tribe descending from them turned out to be, as set forth in Deuteronomy 34; fourth, the final reference to the tribes in Revelation 7. These four scriptures should be studied together. For example, I will take up what it says about Reuben first: "And Jacob called unto his sons, and said: Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the latter days." Reuben, the eldest, under usual conditions, would have had all the rights of primogeniture, the head of the family and the tribe and the priest, the one in whom the promised Messiah should come. "Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength; the pre-eminence of dignity and the pre-eminence of power. Boiling over as water, thou shalt not have the pre-eminence." That means that Reuben should not have the primogeniture. "Boiling over as water" refers to a pot on a fire, which, when it gets hot, runs over the pot and into the fire. That is the picture of one whose passions and appetites are not restrained, but when excited boil over. Because of that characteristic Reuben loses the birthright. In the common version it says, "unstable as water." The same idea is involved; that water may seem to be perfectly level, but when you put fire to it, it bubbles over. Now compare that with what Moses said in Deuteronomy 33, and you will see that for Reuben as a tribe the prospect brightens. Moses said, "Let Reuben live, and not die; nor let his men be few." You would have inferred from what Jacob said that the tribe would pass away on account of the sin and instability of the father. We go to the next case:

B. H. Carroll Summarizes Genesis 49

Simeon and Levi he puts together, because they were united in that great piece of cruelty and deception practiced upon the Shechemites, and the barbarous massacre of the men and the enslavement of the women and children and the robbing of the flocks. Jacob says:

Simeon and Levi are brethren;
 Weapons of violence are their swords.
 Here is a proverb which I have preached from:
 O my soul, come not thou into their council;
 Unto their assembly, my glory, be not thou united;
 For in their anger they slew a man,
 And in their self-will they hocked an ox.
 Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce;
 And their wrath, for it was cruel:
 I will divide them in Jacob,
 And scatter them in Israel.

One of your examination questions will be: When was that fulfilled? Ans.: When Joshua made the allotments. Simeon and Levi received no allotments. Simeon was scattered about in Judah and other territory. So, as a matter of fact, these two tribes were scattered. Now, let us see when we come to Moses what change has taken place (Deu_33:8) :

And of Levi he said,
 Thy Thummirn and thy Urim are with thy godly one,
 Whom thou didst prove at Massah,
 With whom thou didst strive at the water of Meribah;
 Who said of his father, and of his mother, I have not seen him;
 Neither did he acknowledge his brethren,
 Nor knew he his own children:
 For they have observed thy word,
 And keep thy covenant.
 They shall teach Jacob thine ordinances,
 And Israel thy law:
 They shall put incense before thee,
 And whole burnt-offering upon thine altar.
 Bless, Jehovah, his substance,
 And accept the work of his hands:

B. H. Carroll Summarizes Genesis 49

Smite through the loins of them that rise up against him,

And of them that hate him, that they rise not again.

So far as Levi is concerned, then, the prospects are very wonderfully brightened when you come to Moses. There you begin to get an idea of the answer to another one of the general questions: How were the elements of the rights of primogeniture, which Reuben lost, distributed among the others? You see Levi gets a part, and becomes the priest of the family and the tribe, and as the priest he is the religious instructor. Moses tells us by what act Levi obtained that revision of the original sentence against him. The instance is when Israel worshiped the golden calf; Levi stood by Moses when he said, "Whoever is on the Lord's side, let him come and stand over here," and the whole tribe of Levi came and stood by him. And in smiting the idolaters, they had no regard of men. In the final division of the rights of primogeniture, Levi received the priesthood, Joseph became the head of the tribe and Judah became the one through whom the promised Messiah should come.

We find that Moses does not mention Simeon at all, but he reappears in the Revelation list, and that Dan disappears from that list. Jacob says about Judah:

Judah, thee shall thy brethren praise:

Thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies;

Thy father's son shall bow down before thee.

Judah is a lion's whelp;

From the prey, my son, thou art gone up:

He stooped down, he couched as a lion,

And as a lioness; who shall rouse him up?

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,

Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,

Until Shiloh come;

And unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be.

Binding his foal unto the vine,

And his ass's colt unto the choice vine;

He hath washed his garments in wine,

And his vesture in the blood of grapes:

His eyes shall be red with wine,

And his teeth white with milk.

The first line of the above prophecy was a reference to the Messiah who shall come from him. In Gen_49:10

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is a remarkable messianic prophecy: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh come." Shiloh is the Saviour. And so we find that the kingdom remain-ed (that Judah remained a kingdom) until it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. Then, subordinated to Persia, civil government was restored under Zerubbabel of the line of David, and a hierarchy under Joshua, the high priest. The restoration was accomplished by Ezra and Nehemiah, aided by the prophets Haggai and Malachi. Under Greek rule Antiochus Epiphanes sought to destroy the whole Jewish polity and religion, but was defeated by the Maccabees, who became kings. Under Roman rule, Herod the Great, who married the last of the Maccabees) became king. Then just before Herod died Shiloh, the Messiah, came. As Herod was an Idumean, "the sceptre had departed from Judah." While Herod's descendants, at the will of Rome, ruled under some subordinate title over parts of the Holy Land, yet all semblance of autonomous government perished at the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, A.D. 70, since which time the Jews, though existing as a dispersed race, have had no settled home, nor nationality, nor temple, nor altar, nor sacrifice, nor priesthood. If therefore Shiloh has not come, He can never come.

Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea;

And he shall be for a haven of ships;

And his border shall be upon Sidon.

We find Zebulun and Sidon located that way all through their history. Moses said (Deu_33:18):

Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out;

And, Issachar, in thy tents.

They shall call the peoples unto the mountains;

There shall they offer sacrifices of righteousness.

So that brightens for Issachar and Zebulun. When we come to Judges we find some illustrious people coming out of these tribes. We shall come to Dr. Burlinson's great text: "The sons of Issachar were wise, and had understanding of what Israel ought to do." Therefore, he said, whenever you see a leader of the people, he is a son of Issachar, who knows how, in great conventions, to tell Israel what policy to adopt. Look at Issachar as Jacob describes him (Gen_49:14) :

Issachar is a strong ass,

Crouching down between the sheepfolds:

And he saw a resting place that it was good,

And the land that it was pleasant;

And he bowed his shoulder to bear,

And became a servant under taskwork.

So Issachar becomes a burden-bearing beast. Just so he could get fodder to eat and a good shed in the winter, he did not mind having a master and paying a tribute to him. But, as we have seen, it brightens for Issachar in the account by Moses. Jacob says of Dan:

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Dan shall judge his people,

As one of the tribes of Israel.

There he refers to what the name "Dan" means. I have known several boys named Dan; and their nickname in the family is always "Judge." Doubtless there was an anticipation in this case of the time when an illustrious member of the tribe of Dan should be a judge of Israel. Our friend Samson was that man. Now comes a reference not so good (Genesis 49:17):

Dan shall be a serpent in the way,

An adder in the path,

That biteth the horse's heels,

So that his rider falleth backward.

I have waited for thy salvation, O Jehovah.

That meant that Dan should not be an open enemy, but would lie in ambush. He was a snake in the grass. When we come to read the history in the book of Judges, we find that Dan got very much dissatisfied with the territory assigned to him, and slips out and steals some idols and goes up into the northern part of the country, and there becomes an idolater. There was an organization in the United States history called the Danites. After Joe Smith was killed at Nauvoo the Mormons moved to Salt Lake City, and organized this secret society to combat their enemies; and these Danites perpetrated that infamous Mountain Meadows Massacre, of which so much has been said. Just as Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's book Uncle Tom's Cabin, had much to do with stirring up the North, and Thomas Dixon's Clansman has had to do with reversing the effect of that book, so a book entitled The Danites, a dramatized story, brought such a storm of indignation that the whole United States was set on fire against the Mormons, and finally General Albert Sidney Johnston, at that time colonel, was detached there with a force to put down the Mormon Rebellion. I can just remember the indignation created in the public mind by the horrors revealed in The Danites. Dan is not mentioned in Revelation.

Gad, a troop shall press upon him;

But he shall press upon their heel.

There Jacob goes back to the name the mother had in mind. Let us see how Gad enlarges in the writings of Moses (Deut. 33:20–21):

Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad:

He dwelleth as a lioness,

And feareth the arm, yea, the crown of the head.

And he provided the first part for himself,

For there was the lawgiver's portion reserved;

And he came with the heads of the people;

He executed the righteousness of Jehovah,

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And his ordinances with Israel. We come to Asher (Genesis 49:20) :

Out of Asher his bread shall be fat,

And he shall yield royal dainties. Moses says (Deut. 33:24) :

Blessed be Asher with children;

Let him be acceptable unto his brethren,

And let him dip his foot in oil. This last clause means that he will have a prosperous time as to this world's goods. Moses says of Naphtali:

O Naphtali, satisfied with favour,

And full with the blessing of Jehovah,

Possess thou the west and the south. Whenever a boy is delivering his commencement address and scrapes star dust, we call him a "son of Naphtali." Now Jacob says (Genesis 49:21):

Naphtali is a hind let loose:

He giveth goodly words. That means that Naphtali is to furnish the orators. And we now come to the richest blessing of all, the blessing on Joseph. I read that to my little boy the other night, as the occasion of the service in the family prayer. I wanted him to see what a great thing it is when a father comes to die that he can look into the face of children sad say only good things (Genesis 49:22):

Joseph is a fruitful bough,

A fruitful bough by a fountain;

His branches run over the wall.

The archers have sorely grieved him,

And shot at him, and persecuted him:

But his bow abode in strength,

And the arms of his hands were made strong

By the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob.

From *An Interpretation of the English Bible*, by Dr. B.H. Carroll; from e-sword; Genesis Genesis 47:27-31. Updated.

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Alfred Edersheim wrote a book called *The Bible History, Old Testament*, which is very similar to Josephus, where he simply rewrites much of what is in the Bible, and adds in notes and comments as he deems to be relevant. This volume of the book is entitled *The World Before the Flood, and The History of the Patriarchs*.

This comes from chapter 23, entitled, *The Last Blessing of Jacob - Death of Jacob - Death of Joseph* (Genesis 49:1).

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THE last scene had now come, and Jacob gathered around his dying couch his twelve sons. The words which he spake to them were of mingled blessing and prediction. Before him, in prophetic vision, unrolled, as it were, pictures of the tribes of which his sons were to be the ancestors; and what he saw he sketched in grand outlines. It is utterly impossible to regard these prophetic pictures as exact representations of any one definite period or even event in the history of Israel. They are sketches of the tribes in their grand characteristics, rather than predictions, either of special events, or of the history of Israel as a whole. And to them applies especially the description which one has given of prophetic visions generally, that "they are pictures drawn without perspective," - that is, such that you cannot discern the distance from you of the various objects. Two other general remarks may be helpful to the reader. It will be observed that, generally, in the "blessing" spoken, the name of the ancestor seems to unfold the future character and history of the tribe. Secondly, as against all cavilers, it may be said deliberately, that these words of blessing must have been spoken by Jacob himself. When we attempt to imagine them as spoken at any other period in the history of Israel, we find ourselves surrounded by insuperable difficulties. For these words can only apply to the tribes as Jacob viewed them. They could not have been written at any other period, since in that case every later writer would have said something quite inapplicable to one or other of the tribes, so that he could not have used this precise language concerning them all. With these brief prefatory remarks we address ourselves to the words of "blessing:"*

* We always translate literally.

Reuben, my firstborn thou,
My might and the firstling of my strength,
Pre-eminence of dignity and pre-eminence of power -

Such should have been the position of Reuben, as the firstborn, had it not been for the "upboiling" of his passions and his consequent sin. Hence Jacob continues:

Upboiling like water,
Thou shalt not have the pre-eminence,
Because thou wentest up thy father's bed,
Then defiledst thou it -
He went up my couch!

The sons next in age to Reuben were Simeon and Levi. Their wanton cruelty at Shechem, from which Jacob recoiled with horror even on his death-bed, had made them "brethren," or companions in evil. As they had united for evil, so God would scatter them in Israel, so that they should not form independent and compact tribes. In point of fact, we know that even at the second numbering of Israel (Numbers 26:14), Simeon had sunk to be the smallest tribe. In the last blessing of Moses (Deuteronomy 33), no mention at all is made of Simeon. Nor does this tribe seem to have obtained any well-defined portion in the land, but only to have held certain cities within the possession of Judah. (Joshua 19:1-9) Lastly, we know that such of the families of Simeon as largely increased and became powerful, afterwards left the Holy Land, and settled outside its boundaries. (1 Chronicles 4:38-43) The tribe of Levi also received not any possession in Israel; only that their scattering was changed from a curse into a blessing by their election to the priesthood. This scattering of two tribes was the significant answer which God in His righteous providence made to their ancestors' attempt at vindicating the honor of their race by carnal means and weapons.

Simeon and Levi are brethren;
Instruments of violence are their swords;
Into their council come not thou, oh my soul,
Unto their assembly be not thou united, mine honor;
For in their anger they slew men,
And in their self-will they hamstrung oxen.

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Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce,
And their wrath, for it was cruel.
I will divide them in Jacob,
And scatter them in Israel.

The three older brothers being thus dispossessed, and Joseph receiving the twofold territorial portion, the other privileges of the birthright are solemnly transferred to Judah. He is to be the leader, "the lion." As the lion is king of the forest, so was Judah to have royal sway, through David onwards to the Son of David, the Shiloh, unto Whom, as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," all nations should render homage and obedience. Similarly, fullness of earthly riches was to distinguish the lot of Judah, these earthly blessings being themselves emblems of the spiritual riches dispensed in the portion of Judah. The whole description here is full of Messianic allusions, which were afterwards taken up in the prophecy of Balaam (Numbers 23:24; 24:9, 17); then applied to David (Psalm 89:20-37); and from him carried forward in prophecy, through Psalm 72, Isaiah 9, 11, to Ezekiel 21:27, and Zechariah 9:9, till they were finally realized in Jesus Christ, "sprung out of Juda," (Hebrews 7:14) "our peace, who hath made both one," (Ephesians 2:14) and who "must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet," (1 Corinthians 15:25) "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David," Who "hath prevailed." (Revelation 5:5)

In the blessing upon Judah we note, for the first time, how the prophetic significance of the name unfolds and appears:

Judah thou! Thy brethren shall praise thee!
Thy hand in the neck of thine enemies,
Thy father's sons shall bow down before thee.
A lion's whelp* is Judah;
From the prey, my son, thou art gone up:
He stoopeth down, he coucheth like a lion* ,
And like a lioness* - who shall rouse him?
The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
Until Shiloh** come,
And to Him willing obedience of the nations!
He bindeth unto the vine his foal,
And unto the choice vine his ass's colt;
He washeth his garments in wine,
And in the blood of grapes his raiment;
Sparkling his eyes from wine,
And white his teeth from milk.

* A young lion for agility and grace; a full-grown lion for strength and majesty; a lioness whose fierceness defends her offspring.

** This is not the place for critical discussion; but we state it as our deliberate conviction, that the term Shiloh can only refer to a personal designation of the Messiah, whatever the derivative meaning of the word may be.

As local illustrations of this richness of the portion of Judah, the reader will remember that the best wine in Palestine grew near Hebron and Engedi (Numbers 13:23, etc.; Song of Solomon 1:14), and that some of the best pasture-land was south of Hebron, about Tekoa and Carmel. (1 Samuel 25:2; 2 Chronicles 26:10; Amos 1:1)

The next blessing also connects itself with the name of Zebulun, or "dwelling," although it requires to be borne in mind, in further illustration of the fact that it was not intended as a literal prediction, that the possessions of the tribe of Zebulun, so far as we can judge from Joshua 19:10-16, never actually touched the Mediterranean nor the Sea of Galilee, nor yet literally bordered on Zidon:

Zebulun - by the coast of seas shall he dwell,

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And that, by the coast of ships,
And his side towards Zidon.

The name of Issachar, "reward," or "hire," is also emblematical of the character of the tribe, as, in its rich portion of Lower Galilee, it preferred labor with quietude, to power and domination:

Issachar is a bony ass,
Crouching between the folds.
He saw rest, that it was a boon,
And the land, that it was pleasant,
And he bent his shoulder to bear,
And became a tributary servant.

The allusion in the case of Dan, or "judgment," is again to the name. Although Dan was only the son of a bondmaid, he should not be behind his brethren, but "give judgment" to his people, that is, to Israel - the reference being possibly to such men as Samson, though also generally to the character of the tribe. There is another mysterious and most important allusion here, to which we shall immediately advert:

Dan shall give judgment to his people,
As one of the tribes of Israel.
Dan shall be a serpent by the way,
An adder in the path,
Which biteth the heels of the horse
So that backwards falleth his rider.

We shall not presume to offer an authoritative explanation of this comparison of Dan to a serpent, and to that kind of adder which, being of the color of the sand, remains unobserved till it has given its deadly bite. We only put it as a suggestion, whether this may not contain an allusion to apostasy or to the Antichrist* , at the same time noting that the name of Dan is omitted from the list of the tribes in Revelation 7:5-8.

* Many of the Fathers have regarded this "serpent" as referring to Antichrist.

It is also significant that, immediately after the mention of these contests in connection with Dan, Jacob bursts forth in a prayer, intended, as says Calvin, not only to express his own personal faith and hope, but his confidence for his descendants. Quite the oldest Jewish commentary, or rather paraphrase,* puts it this way: "My soul waiteth not for the deliverance of Gideon, the son of Joash, for it was only temporal; nor for that of Samson, for it was but transient; but for the redemption by the Messiah, the Son of David, which in Thy word Thou hast promised to send to Thy people, the children of Israel; for this, Thy salvation, my soul waiteth."

* The Jerusalem Targum in its most correct recension.

For Thy salvation wait I, oh Jehovah!

In reference to Gad, we have a threefold allusion to a kindred word, signifying oppression. To the prediction itself we cannot attach any definite historical fulfillment:

Gad - a press presseth upon him,
But he presseth on their heel.

In the case of Asher, the reference is evidently to the most fertile possession of that tribe, extending from Mount Carmel to the land of Tyre, the district richest in corn and oil (1 Kings 5:11):

Out of Asher fatness: his bread -
And he yieldeth royal dainties.

The allusion as to Naphtali is to the graceful agility and fleetness of the people, and also to their mental ability

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and quickness:

Naphtali is a hind let loose -
He uttereth words of beauty.

At last Jacob comes to the name of his loved son Joseph. Then it seems as if his whole heart were indeed overflowing. First, he sketches his fruitfulness, like that of a fruit-free "planted by rivers of water," (Psalm 1:3) whose boughs run over the wall (Comp. Psalm 80:8-11); then he describes his strength, as derived from God Himself; and, lastly, he pours forth richest blessings, richer far than any his ancestors had bestowed:

Son of a fruit-tree (a fruitful bough) is Joseph,
Son of a fruit-tree by a well,
Whose daughters (branches) spread over the wall.
The archers harass him,
They shoot at him, and hate him;
But his bow abideth in firmness,
And the arms of his hands remain supple
From the Hands of the Strong One of Jacob,
From thence, from the Shepherd, from the Rock of Israel,
From the God of thy father - may He help thee!
And from the Almighty -
may He bless thee!
Blessings of heaven from above!
Blessings of the deep that lieth beneath!
Blessings of the breasts and of the womb!
The blessings of thy father exceed
The blessings of my ancestors
Unto the bound of the everlasting hills* -
May they come on the head of Joseph,
And on the crown of the head of him who is separated** among
his brethren!

* That is, as far as the mountains overtop the plains, so the blessings which Joseph now receives exceed those which any of Jacob's ancestors had bestowed.

** That is, in dignity. The term in the Hebrew is Nasir.

The allusions to Benjamin will be understood by a reference to Ehud (Judges 3:15), to Judges 5:14; 20:16; 1 Chronicles 8:40; 12:2; 2 Chronicles 14:8; 17:17, and to the history of Saul and of Jonathan:

Benjamin - a wolf who ravins:
In the morning he devoureth prey,
And at even he divideth spoil!

And now, having spoken these his last blessings, Jacob once more charged his sons to bury him in the cave of Machpelah. Then he gathered up his feet into the bed, laid him peacefully down, and without sigh or struggle yielded up the ghost, and was "gathered unto his people."

From http://philologos.org/_eb-bhot/vol_1/ch23.htm accessed January 16, 2017.

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Definition of Terms	Introduction and Text	Addendum
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Addendum

The Order in Which the Sons of Jacob are Named				
	Genesis 29–30	Genesis 35	Genesis 46	Genesis 49
1.	Reuben	Reuben	Reuben	Reuben
2.	Simeon	Simeon	Simeon	Simeon
3.	Levi	Levi	Levi	Levi
4.	Judah	Judah	Judah	Judah
5.	Dan	Dan	Issachar	Zebulun
6.	Naphtali	Naphtali	Zebulun	Issachar
7.	Gad	Gad		Dan
8.	Asher	Asher		Gad
9.	Issachar	Issachar	Joseph	Asher
10.	Zebulun	Zebulun	Benjamin	Naphtali
11.	Joseph	Joseph	Dan	Joseph
12.	Benjamin	Benjamin	Naphtali	Benjamin

In Genesis 29–30 and 35, the sons are named in the order in which they are born.

In Genesis 49, this is the order in which Jacob blessed his sons—but, he had already blessed Ephraim and Manasseh in Genesis 48 (an indication of the double portion).

The original chart is from E. W. Bullinger, *Companion Bible Notes*; 1909 in the Public Domain; from e-Sword, Appendix 45.

The ancient historian Josephus seems to take the Old Testament texts at face value and uses them to record the history of this era.

Josephus' History of this Time Period

.Antiquities of the Jews - Book II

**CONTAINING THE INTERVAL OF TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY YEARS.
FROM THE DEATH OF ISAAC TO THE EXODUS OUT OF EGYPT.**

**CHAPTER 8.
OF THE DEATH OF JACOB AND JOSEPH.**

1. NOW when Jacob had lived seventeen years in Egypt, he fell into a disease, and died in the presence of his sons; but not till he made his prayers for their enjoying prosperity, and till he had foretold to them prophetically how every one of them was to dwell in the land of Canaan. But this happened many years afterward. He also enlarged upon the praises of Joseph⁽¹⁵⁾ how he had not remembered the evil doings of his brethren to their disadvantage; nay, on the contrary, was kind to them, bestowing upon them so many benefits, as seldom are bestowed on men's own benefactors. He then commanded his own sons that they should admit Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasses, into their number, and divide the land of Canaan in common with them; concerning whom we shall treat hereafter. However, he made it his request that he might be buried at Hebron. So he died, when he had lived full a hundred and fifty years, three only abated, having not been behind any of his ancestors in piety towards God, and having such a recompense for it, as it was fit those should have who were so good

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as these were. But Joseph, by the king's permission, carried his father's dead body to Hebron, and there buried it, at a great expense.

⁽¹⁵⁾ As to this encomium upon Joseph, as preparatory to Jacob's adopting Ephraim and Manasses into his own family, and to be admitted for two tribes, which Josephus here mentions, all our copies of Genesis omit it, ch. 48.; nor do we know whence he took it, or whether it be not his own embellishment only.

From: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/josephus/ant-2.htm> accessed January 16, 2017. Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews*; Book 2, Chapter 8.

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It may be helpful to see this chapter as a contiguous whole:

A Complete Translation of Genesis 49

A Reasonably Literal Translation

A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase

Jacob gathers his sons for their final blessing

Jacob called to his sons and said, "Gather [yourselves] that I may tell you (all) what will befall you (all) in the end of days. Assemble [yourselves] and hear, sons of Jacob; hear Israel, your father.

Jacob called to his sons and said, "Gather yourselves so that I may tell you all that will happen to your descendants in days to come. Assemble yourselves, O sons of Israel, and hear your father Israel.

Ruben, Simeon and Levi

Reuben, [you are] my firstborn, [and] you [are] my strength as well as the [very] beginning of my vigor; the remnant of majesty and the remnant of strength. [However, you are] unstable as water, you did not let [things] remain [as they should remain]; for you went up to your father's bed, [and] then you profaned my bed, having gone up there.

Reuben, you are my firstborn, the beginning of my strength and vigor; yet just a remnant of majesty and personal strength. You are as unstable as water, not allowing things to simply remain as they should. You went up to your father's bed and then you defiled my bed.

Simeon and Levi [are] brothers. [Their] swords [are] weapons of violence. My soul did not come into their assembly; my honor is not united with their convocation; for in their anger, they executed [many] men; [furthermore] they have chosen to hamstring oxen.

Simeon and Levi are brothers, and they are bad influences upon each other. They use their swords as weapons of violence. My soul would not enter into their assembly and my honor would not unite with their convocation, because they have executed many men and hamstringed their oxen.

Their anger is cursed for [it is] fierce; and their outburst [of anger] [is cursed], for it is fierce [and pitiless]. I will divide them up in Jacob and I will scatter them in Israel.

Their anger is cursed because it is fierce and pitiless. Their outburst of anger is cursed, also being fierce and pitiless. Therefore, I will divide up Simeon and Levi and scatter them into different regions in Israel.

Judah

You [are] Judah; your brothers will praise you; your hand [will be] on the neck of your enemies; and the brothers of your father will bow down to you.

You are Judah and your brothers will praise you. Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies and your brothers will bow down to you.

A Complete Translation of Genesis 49	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
Judah [is] a lion's cub away from [his] prey. You have gone up, my son; [yet] he has crouched down. He lies in wait [or, <i>reclines</i>] like a lion; and, as a lion, who would rouse him up?	Judah is a lion cub separated from his prey. You have gone up, my son; but he has crouched down. He is lying in wait; who would be foolish enough to rouse him up?
The scepter will not depart from Judah and the Lawgiver [will not depart] from the midst of His feet until Shiloh comes; and He has the obedience of the peoples.	The scepter of rulership will not depart from the tribe of Judah; and the Lawgiver will not depart from the midst of His feet until Shiloh comes. At that time, He will have the obedience of all the people.
Binding His donkey to the vine and [binding] a foal to a choice vine. He has washed His garment in the wine and [He has washed] His clothing in the blood of the grape.	He binds His donkey to the vine and his foal to the choice vine. He has washed His garment in the wine and His clothing in the blood of the grape.
[His] eyes are red from wine and his teeth are white from milk.	His eyes are red from the wine but His teeth are white from milk.
Zebulun, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher and Naphtali	
Zebulun dwells to the shore of the sea; and he [is] to a shore of ships. His border is Sidon.	Zebulun will have access to the seas where he dwells and and he will participate in shipping throughout the seas. Zebulun will border Sidon.
Issachar [is] a strong ass reclining in the midst of the sheepfolds. He sees a place of rest that [is] good and the land that is pleasant. Consequently, he bows his shoulder to bear [burdens] and he becomes a slave worker.	Issachar is a strong ass lying in wait among the sheepfolds. He sees a place of rest that appears to be good. He observes the land which seems to be pleasant. However, he bows his shoulder to bear burdens, as he has become enslaved.
Dan will judge [or, <i>rule</i>] his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan will be a serpent along the way, a horned adder on the path; the one biting the horse's heels so that the rider falls off backwards. I have waited, O Y ^e howah, for Your salvation.	Dan will judge and rule over his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan will be a serpent along the way, a horned adder on the path, the one biting the horse's heels so that the rider falls off backwards. I have waited, O Jehovah, for Your salvation.
Gad [is] a troop; he will attack him but he [even] he will raid [their] heels.	Gad is a troop, and after being attacked, they will counterattack, coming from behind.
Plentiful bread [will come] from Asher; and he will give delights [to] the king.	Bread will come out from Asher; he will provide the king with great delights.
Naphtali [is] a wild she-goat having been sent away; [he is] the one giving out the beautiful words.	Naphtali is a wild she-goat, having been sent away; Naphtali gives out beautiful words.
Joseph and Benjamin	
Joseph [is] the son of one bearing fruit; a son of one bearing fruit beside a spring. His branches [lit., <i>daughters</i>] go out over the wall. Master archers will provoke him—they have shot at him and they hate him. Therefore, his bow remains [ever] constant.	Joseph will be a fruitful bough, who bears fruit growing beside a spring. His branches stretch out over the wall. Master archers will provoke him—they have shot at him and they hate him. Therefore, his own bow remains ever constant at hand.

A Complete Translation of Genesis 49	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
Consequently, the arm of his hands is agile, [having been given strength] from the Mighty One of Jacob. [This is] because the name of the Shepherd [is] the Rock of Israel [and He is] from the 'Ēl of your father.	Consequently, his arms are strong and agile, and he is strengthened by the Mighty One of Jacob, because the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel, and from the God of your fathers.
He helps you along with the Almighty One, and He blesses you [with] blessings from above [and with] blessings [from] the depths. [In fact, these blessings] are lying in wait beneath [the surface]—the blessings from the breasts and the womb.	He helps you along with the Almighty One; and He blesses you—blessings from the heavens above and from the depths below—these blessings are lying in wait for you, just beneath the surface—blessings of the breasts and womb.
The blessings of your father are greater than the blessings of my forefathers [going] as far [back] as the limit of the ancient hills; [for these blessings] are for the head of Joseph and for the crown of the one separated from his brothers.	The blessings of your father are even greater than the blessings of my forefathers, going far back into time to the ancient hills; for these blessings are designed for your head, Joseph; and these blessings are for the crown of the one who is separated out from his brothers.
Benjamin [will be like] a wolf: he tears apart [his prey] in the morning, eating it [lit., <i>prey</i>]. He divides up his plunder in the evening.”	Benjamin will be like the wolf, who tears his prey apart and then eats it in the morning. Then at night, he divides up his plunder to continue eating it.”
The twelve tribes	
All these [are] the 12 tribes of Israel and this [is] what their father said to them. He blessed each man with an appropriate blessing [lit., <i>blessing him as his blessing</i>].	These were the 12 tribes of Israel and what their father said to them. He blessed each man as was appropriate.
Jacob asks his sons to buy him in the land of Canaan	
Jacob [lit., <i>he</i>] charged them, saying to them, “I am [about to be] gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave which [is] in the field of Ephron the Hittite. [Bury me in] the cave which [is] in the field of Machpelah, which is east of Mamre in the land of Canaan. [This is the cave] that Abraham purchased in the field [that came] from Ephron the Hittite, to possess [as] a burial site.	Jacob charged them as follows: “Since I am about to be gathered to my people, I want you to bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Machpelah, which is east of Mamre in the land of Canaan. This is the field which Abraham purchased from Ephron the Hittite, which he bought as a burial site.
They buried Abraham and his wife Sarah there; they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah there; and I buried Leah there.	Abraham and Sarah are buried there; Isaac and Rebekah are buried there; and I buried my wife Leah there.
The field and cave [were] a possession belonging to Abraham [lit., <i>him</i>] from the sons of Heth.”	The field and cave are a possession which belong to Abraham, which he purchased from the sons of Heth.”
Then Jacob finished charging his sons. He drew up his feet into bed and breathed his last. He was gathered up to his people.	Jacob finished telling his sons what to do with his body after death; and then drew his feet and died. And so he was gathered to his people.
Chapter Outline	Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Doctrinal Teachers* Who Have Taught Genesis 49

	Series	Lesson (s)	Passage
R. B. Thieme, Jr.	1963 Dispensations (#201)	#37–38	Genesis 49
	1972 Hebrews (#419)	#182	Genesis 49:1–29
	1979 Strong Delusions (#877)	#28	Genesis 49:16–18
Ken Reed	https://www.lakeeriebiblechurch.org/exegesis/		Genesis 38–50
Dr. Robert Dean	https://deanbible.org/old-testament-menuitem/genesis-menuitem		Genesis 1–50
Bill Wenstrom	https://www.wenstrom.org/index.php?option=com_libwritten&view=libwritten&selCat=2&Itemid=124		Genesis 1–50
Jack M. Ballinger	http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/genesisindex.html		Genesis 1–49
Ron Snider	http://www.makarios-bible-church.org/oldtest.html		Genesis 1–50

* By doctrinal teacher, I mean a man whose primary focus is the teaching of the Word of God, verse-by-verse and book by book. A believer under the teaching of such a man should fully understand the gospel and rebound after less than a month in attendance.

When it comes to teaching, I should think that a 45 minute teaching session would be the bare minimum; and that, at least 3x a week (with provisions for getting teaching in some way on the other days of the week). Although this man may interact or even learn from other teachers, he should clearly be the authority over his church; and the authority over him is the Word of God and God the Holy Spirit (Who guides the pastor in his study).

ICE teaching would also be a part of the package, ICE being an acronym standing for Isagogics (a teaching of the history of that time in order to understand the context of a passage), Categories (a study of categories of Bible doctrine), and Exegesis (a close study of each passage, word-by-word whenever necessary).

Word Cloud from a Reasonably Literal Paraphrase of Genesis 49



Word Cloud from the Exegesis of Genesis 49¹⁴³

These two graphics should be very similar; this means that the exegesis of Genesis 49 has stayed on topic and has covered the information found in this chapter of the Word of God.

Chapter Outline	Charts, Graphics, Short Doctrines
Beginning of Document	Doctrines Covered or Alluded to
Definition of Terms	Chapters of the Bible Alluded to
www.kukis.org	Addendum
	Exegetical Studies in Genesis

¹⁴³ Some words have been left out of this graphic; including *Strong*, *BDB*, and *pronounced*.