

QUESTION 6

- a) The order of prominence is a reminder of the time that the younger son (Jacob himself) was prophesied to be the prominent son over Esau the older (Genesis 25).
- b) In Romans 9 Paul refers to this in terms of God's election purposes. God chooses who he wishes.
- c) Here in verse 14, the primary blessing (the right hand) goes to the younger son Ephraim (contrary to what Joseph anticipates in verse 13).
- d) Ephraim will be greater than Manasseh.
- e) God has revealed to Jacob that Ephraim will have prominence over Manasseh among the tribes of Israel; although it will not happen until hundreds of years later.
- f) Ephraim will become the dominant tribe from the days of the Judges.
- g) Joshua, Moses' successor came from the tribe of Ephraim. Caleb, his companion was from the tribe of Judah. When the northern tribes split after Solomon's death, 'Ephraim' was used to describe the whole of the northern kingdom. 'Judah' was the name designated for the southern kingdom containing the remaining tribes.
- h) Jacob's pronouncement of the blessing on Manasseh and Ephraim was primarily a blessing on Joseph. We are reminded of this at the start of verse 15.
- i) Notice how Jacob prays that the names of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob would live on in Joseph's sons.
- j) In other words that they would know the same covenant blessings.

GROUP LEADER'S NOTES – STUDY 21

Read: Genesis 47:27-31

QUESTION 1

- a) As a result of Joseph's wisdom, the descendants of Abraham lived safely in Egypt.
- b) They also prospered.
- c) Notice the significance in the phrase 'multiplied greatly'. This was the basis of God's covenant given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- d) As we noted in our last study, being separate from the rest of Egypt they would intermarry among themselves; rather than among those who were not part of God's chosen people. Here we see the sovereignty of God over the lives of His people.
- e) It continues to point us towards God's saving intentions; and that He keeps His promises.
- f) Joseph's role as 'saviour' and as 'ruler' points forward to the ultimate purposes of God in sending one who would be both 'Saviour' and 'Ruler' (Jesus).

QUESTION 2

- a) Although Jacob is living now in luxury in a foreign land, it does not distract him from the realities of God's promises.
- b) As the end of his life approached, Jacob's thoughts were on the promises of God. *"His ultimate hope is the promise of God"* (David Wenham).
- c) To be buried with his 'fathers' (Abraham & Isaac) reveals Jacob's trust in God's faithfulness to keep His word.

- d) Back in Genesis 23, Abraham had bought a family burial plot. It was the first part of the land that became his; but was symbolic of God's promises to give him and his descendants the land.
- e) This request by Jacob serves as a reminder to Joseph that their inheritance was in Canaan, not in Egypt.

QUESTION 3

- a) We must keep our eyes fixed on the promises of God.
- b) We are to be focused on our inheritance (see **1 Peter 1:4**).
- c) We see that worldly things should not distract us from heavenly realities (see **Philippians 3:20-4:1**).
- d) Our confidence can be strengthened in that just as God was working in the lives of His people back in the days of Joseph; so He works in our lives today. He is working out His overall purposes.

Read: Genesis 48:1-13

QUESTION 4

- a) Joseph is the second most powerful man in Egypt. However, he does not consider himself an Egyptian (compare Moses in **Hebrews 11:24-26**).
- b) He wants to identify himself with the people of God; and therefore, the unfolding promises of God.
- c) Both his sons were born in Egypt; and to an Egyptian mother. What part will they have in God's covenant promise?
- d) When Joseph knows his father is dying (note in **48:2** that Jacob has to summons all his strength in order to sit up in bed) he takes his two sons to him to be blessed.

QUESTION 5

- a) There is some significance in Jacob's action of sitting up to give the blessing. He is about to speak as one who has the promises of God.
- b) Jacob, in effect, adopts Joseph's sons as his own sons. We are then given various details of the adoption process in these verses.
- c) Note how Jacob compares them to his two oldest sons in verse 5, to emphasise the important place Manasseh and Ephraim are to be given. They are treated as Jacob's first-born sons (read **1 Chronicles 5:1-2**).
- d) This is not a slur on Joseph's position in the family or the promises of the covenant. Manasseh and Ephraim become joint heirs along with their uncles of the promises made to Abraham. They become tribes in their own right, alongside the other eleven.
- e) In effect, Joseph receives a double share of the inheritance when they get to the Promised Land.
- f) When he wants to be sure that Manasseh and Ephraim are really Joseph's sons in verses 9-11, it is a reminder of the time he himself had deceived his father into thinking he was the older son (Genesis 27).

Read: Genesis 48:14-22