

All Things Work Together for Good
(Lesson 27)

Introduction:

1. The Bible contains many illustrations of the principle revealed in Romans 8:28.
2. For example, Genesis shows how all things worked together for good in the life of Joseph as well as the lives of his family members.
3. In this lesson we are examining the information presented in Genesis 49:1-12.
4. On this occasion Jacob spoke to all of his sons just before he passed away.

Discussion:

- I. (vs.1-2) JACOB CALLED HIS SONS TOGETHER
 - A. He had some important things to say to his sons.
 - B. He urged them to listen to him and to heed what he said.
 - C. (vs.1b) The things Jacob had to say also related to future generations.
 - D. As Jacob spoke to his sons he was also prophesying about future events.
 - E. We are examining Jacob's statements to Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, his first 4 sons.
- II. (vs.3-4) JACOB SPOKE TO REUBEN
 - A. As Jacob's firstborn son, Reuben was entitled to an extra blessing over his brothers.
 - B. Even though Jacob described Reuben as "*my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power*" (vs.3), he went on to say that Reuben was "*unstable as water*" and that he would "*not excel*" (vs.4a).
 - C. Jacob said this because of something Reuben had done (35:22).
 - D. Later, the tribe of Reuben did "*not excel*" -- it was not as large as some of the other tribes (Numbers 1).
 - E. To his credit, Reuben prevented his brothers from killing Joseph (37:18-22).
- III. (vs.5-7) JACOB SPOKE TO SIMEON AND LEVI
 - A. It is interesting that Jacob spoke to these two sons of his together.
 - B. Jacob mentioned their cruelty, their anger that they demonstrated by killing someone, and their wrath.
 - C. Jacob was referring to the occasion when Simeon and Levi killed the men of Shalem.
 1. (33:18-19) Jacob had bought property there.
 2. Hamor was the ruler, and his son was Shechem.
 3. Shechem assaulted Jacob's daughter, Dinah, and he wanted her for his wife.
 4. Jacob's sons convinced the men of that city to be circumcised.
 5. (34:25-26) Simeon and Levi then killed the men of Shalem.
 6. Jacob was concerned about what would happen to him (34:30).
 - D. Just as Jacob stated, these two tribes were scattered throughout Israel.
 1. Simeon was not one of the more prominent tribes -- its land came from that belonging to Judah (Joshua 19:1).
 2. Levi did not receive a portion of land -- the Levites were given 48 cities (Joshua 21:3-8).
- IV. (vs.8-12) JACOB SPOKE TO JUDAH
 - A. Judah had some good qualities.
 1. (37:26-27) He convinced his brothers to sell Joseph instead of killing him.
 2. (43:8-9) He offered to be surety for Benjamin.
 3. (44:33-34) He asked if he could be Joseph's servant in place of Benjamin.
 - B. Judah also demonstrated a weakness when he had relations with his daughter-in-law (ch.38).
 - C. Jacob pronounced some special blessings upon Judah.
 - D. Jacob also made several statements about Jesus -- He would come from the tribe of Judah.
 1. (vs.9) Jacob mentioned a "*lion*" several times -- in Revelation 5:5 Jesus is called "*the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David.*"
 2. (vs.10) Jacob mentioned "*the sceptre*" [a sign of royalty], and he mentioned a great "*lawgiver*" (Hebrews 1:1-2).
 3. (vs.11) Jacob also mentioned a donkey's colt (Matthew 21:1-9; Zechariah 9:9).