

Our Heritage

Genesis 48:1-49:33 Just recently I had the joy of discovering the genealogy of my family on the side of my maternal grandfather. I had the history of my father back to the 1600s, but I had no knowledge of the ancestry of my mother. Some people are really into their heritage, and I'm thankful for people who keep records and research genealogies, because it is rewarding to know our heritage.

In this passage in Genesis we learn our common heritage as Gentiles. It is easy to find the heritage of the Jewish people, which traces back to Abraham, but what about the Gentiles? We can trace our family line as Gentiles back to Joseph. Joseph had two sons by his Egyptian wife. Their names were Manasseh and Ephraim. Even though Joseph was Jewish, his children were considered Gentile because they had a mother who was not Jewish.

As we read this passage, we see that Ephraim, the second born, received the blessing that always was awarded to the first-born son. When Jacob laid his hands on the two sons of Joseph to bless them, his right hand crossed over his left hand and rested upon the head of Ephraim. The blessing of the first born always was transferred by using the right hand. Joseph tried to correct his father, but Jacob said he knew what he was doing. He said the younger would be greater than the older and his seed would become a multitude of nations. The word Gentile in Hebrew is goy, which means "nations."

Our forefather as Gentiles was Ephraim, and in Ezekiel 37:15-20, we see God's plan to join in the last days the two families of God (Jew and Gentile) into one. God instructs Ezekiel to write on one stick "Ephraim" and on the other stick "Judah." Then God tells Ezekiel to take the two sticks and join them together as one. Few understand this glorious plan of God, but Paul speaks of this plan clearly in Romans 9-11.

As Gentiles, we not only know our heritage, but we also know our future. God is forming one glorious church made of Jewish and Gentile believers in the Messiah Jesus Christ. God eagerly awaits that great day when all of His family will be gathered unto His Son Jesus. As a mother it gives me such pleasure to be with all three of my sons and their wives and children at one time.

Just imagine the joy our heavenly Father will have when we will be joined with our Jewish brethren and all feast at His table together. We are seeing the beginning of this in our day, which tells us the Lord is coming soon.

Thank You, Father, for your great plans for a glorious family reunion. Help me to share this good news with my Jewish brothers and sisters who do not yet know Your great plan. Amen.

**READ: Genesis 48:1-49:33; Matthew 15:29-16:12; Psalm 20:1-9;
Proverbs 4:20-27**