

(Gen. 49:8) - Before the written Word was given, God spoke to the fathers in various ways about the coming Messiah and the great work He would accomplish as the Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer of God's chosen people given to Him before the foundation of the world. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, all knew this much in the true Gospel message of God's grace, of salvation conditioned on the promised Messiah and the righteousness HE would accomplish for their justification before God. We know this from God's own testimony concerning these men. In this chapter Jacob (Israel) is dying, and he called his twelve sons together for the purpose of prophesying future things relating to the twelve tribes which descended from him and from them. He had a word for all of them, but he had a special word for Judah.

The name "*Judah*" means "praise." His mother, Leah, gave him that name when he was born and said, "*Now will I praise the Lord*" (Gen. 29:35). The name "*Jew*," which came to be the name by which the Israelites were known as recorded in the book of Esther, is a shortened form of Judah. The physical Jews as a nation typified the spiritual nation of Israel, and Paul wrote of SPIRITUAL Jews (sinners saved by grace in Christ and who had been given spiritual life from Him) (Rom. 2:28-29). Here, Jacob reveals that Judah is one whom his brothers "*shall praise*" and that Judah's "*hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee.*" The temporal fulfillment of this prophecy is found in the physical line of Judah whom God determined would be the kings of Israel until the Messiah, the King of kings, would come according to the flesh. As we know, according to God's sovereign wisdom and providence, later, Saul became the first king of Israel. He was not from the tribe of Judah but of Benjamin. He was popular among the people, and God gave Saul to be their king as a judgment against them for forsaking Him and desiring to be like other nations instead of remaining separate and a testimony to God as their King (1 Sam. 8:5,19-20; 10:19). Saul was a failure, and, again, by God's sovereign wisdom and providence, David, from the tribe of Judah, was made king over Israel. It was from Judah's line, through David, that the Messiah would come into the world according to the flesh (Rom. 1:1-4).

The spiritual and eternal fulfillment of this prophecy was in and by the Lord Jesus Christ Who is both David's Son according to the flesh and David's God according to the nature of His Deity (Matt. 1:21,23; 22:41-46). He is the one and only Lord God and Savior of sinners and is worthy to be praised. He has defeated all His enemies - sin, Satan, and the world (Heb. 1:13) - by His obedience unto death as the Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer of all His Father's children. The Lord Jesus Christ met Satan and defeated Him (John 12:31-33; Rev. 12). He took the sins of His people, which were imputed to Him, to the cross and paid their debt in full by His own suffering unto death (Heb. 1:3; 10:10-14). He faced death and conquered it because of His righteousness established on the cross by which He was raised from the dead (1 Cor. 15:55-58). He will conquer the sinful flesh of all His people by giving them life and bringing them to Himself in God-given faith and repentance. In the end, even His enemies will bow to Him (Php. 2:9-11). He is Lord by His deity, by the Father's design and decree, and He is Lord by His death and resurrection (Rom. 14:9; 10:9-10).

(Gen. 49:9) - Christ is compared to a young lion because of His strength, power, and courage. In order to be the Savior of sinners, Christ had to meet three qualifications - (1) He had to be appointed by God the Father (Eph. 1:3-11; Heb. 5:5); (2) He had to be willing to do what was required (John 10:11-13); and (3) He had to be able to do what was required - pay the sin-debt by His death and establish perfect righteousness by which God justifies the ungodly (Heb. 7:25). Christ is called "*the lion of the tribe of Judah*" (Rev. 5:5), because He is appointed, willing, and able. "*From the prey, my son, thou art gone up*" - He left heaven and

came to this earth to engage the enemy and redeem a people by His mighty arm. He has accomplished that work (*John 19:30; Rom. 10:4*) and ascended to the right hand of majesty. “*He stooped down*” - He condescended and made Himself of no reputation, took on Himself the form of a servant. He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (*Php. 2:7-8*).

“*He couched as a lion, and as an old lion, who shall rouse Him up?*” - He stooped, He conquered, He arose, He ascended, He sat down, having accomplished His pleasure and work. Who shall disturb Him? Who shall even question Him? Who shall interfere or stand against Him? Like an old lion who has killed and devoured his prey, who shall rouse Him? Nothing can hinder or stop the progress of His kingdom in the full salvation of His people who were given to Him by God before the world began.

(Gen. 49:10) - “*The sceptre shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come*” - The “*sceptre*” speaks of a kingdom. “*Shiloh*” speaks of Christ. This is the word to Judah and his descendants, first, physically as they shall occupy the earthly throne of Israel (and later, Judah the nation). But the earthly kingdom of Judah will not last. The “*sceptre*” will only last until “*Shiloh*” comes. This speaks of Christ, the Messiah, the Prince and the King of peace! In His holy humanity, He will come through the tribe of Judah, the family of Jesse (*Isa. 11:1*), and the house of David (*Isa. 9:6-7; Rom. 1:1-4*). The name “*Shiloh*” can have many connotations, all which can refer to Christ -

(1) Shiloh can mean *sent* (*John 9:7*). Some point out the likeness between Siloam and Shiloh. Christ is truly the one sent by the Father to save His people (*John 13:20; 17:19; Gal. 4:4-6*).

(2) Some say that Shiloh can mean *the son* (*Isa. 9:6-7*). He is the true Son of God, the Son of David, and the Son of man.

(3) Shiloh can mean “*the one to whom it belongs*” (*Ezek. 21:25-27*). The “*sceptre*,” the crown, the throne, and the right to be worshipped belong to Him. All others are imposters (*Col. 1:14-18*).

(4) It is more likely that Shiloh means *peace*. It is said that the word comes from the same word as “*Salem, King of Peace*.” The Lord Jesus is our peace (*Rom. 5:1*). He made peace between God and sinners by the blood of His cross (*Col. 1:19-22*).

As stated, the “*sceptre*” refers to His kingdom and His righteous rule over that kingdom. His sceptre is a “*sceptre of righteousness*” (*Psa. 45:6-7; Heb. 1:8*). By His death on the cross as the Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer of His people “*mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other*” (*Psa. 85:10*). God is just (righteous) to justify His chosen people (sinners) based on the righteousness of Christ freely imputed to them and received by God-given faith. Their sins are all forgiven by the blood of Christ. They stand before God without any charges of sin because Christ is the Lord their Righteousness (*Jer. 23:5-7; 33:15-16*). He is the King of kings and Lord of lords.

“*TO HIM shall the gathering of the people be*” - The object of His covenant, His coming to earth, His cross, and His resurrection was to redeem a people and gather them to Himself forever. They shall come! In God-given repentance, faith, and love, they shall come to HIM for all salvation, forgiveness, righteousness, peace, eternal life, and glory (*John 6:37-39; John 10:14-16; John 17:1-10*). Based on His righteousness imputed to them, He will give them spiritual life (new hearts, new spirits) in the new birth. He will give them faith to believe in Him and bring them to repentance of dead works and idolatry. He will preserve them unto the end and cause them to persevere in the faith (*Php. 1:6; 2:12-13; Jude 24-25*). He will gather them unto Himself as a mother hen gathers her chicks, and He will not let them go.