

Genesis 49 Commentary

GENESIS 49 PROPHECIES OF THE LAST DAYS

Genesis 49:1 Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, "Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what will befall you in the days to come (Hebrew - acharith; Lxx = eschatos hemera = last days [*ep eschaton ton hemeron*]).

Note: For resources related to this passage please see [Genesis Commentaries and Sermons](#)

AMPIFIED And Jacob called for his sons and said, Gather yourselves together [around me], that I may tell you what shall befall you in the latter or last days.

BBE 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.

CSB Then Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather around, and I will tell you what will happen to you in the days to come.

ESV Then Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall happen to you in days to come.

KJV And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days.

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

NKJ And Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days:

NLT 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.

YLT Genesis 49:1 And Jacob calleth unto his sons and saith, 'Be gathered together, and I declare to you that which doth happen with you in the latter end of the days.

Jacob called for his sons - He was bed-ridden so they had to come to him.

Gather yourselves together - Ge 49:2 repeats this exhortation "Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob; And listen to Israel your father." Clearly this repeat exhortation would signal that the following discourse was of considerable importance! Notice also the repetition not just to gather together but to **"hear...listen."** (Ge 49:2) These words were clearly important as they would reveal to each brother both **blessing** (Ge 49:28) and **prophecy**.

John Butler comments on the phrase "assemble yourselves" ("gather together") - This exhortation was not to a social meeting where food and fun was the theme but it was an exhortation to gather for the hearing of a Divine message. The fact that all the sons were to come meant that the message Jacob would speak was for all the sons to hear. That is, what was said about each son was to be heard by all the sons. This is the way it is at church, too. Every message needs to be heard by every member. The messages may not apply to all members equally, but all need them. The present day trend of individual counselling and the de-emphasis on public preaching is a subtle and Satanic attack on the value of public assembling for the messages from the Word of God by God's preachers.

I may tell you what will befall you in the days to come - So clearly Jacob's statement identifies this chapter as an "eschatological address" if you will. In fairness however it must be stated that while most evangelical writers interpret this chapter as prophetic, some do not see any end times implications. For example, amillennialist Utley writes

In the Massoretic Text the phrase (BDB 31 CONSTRUCT 398) is used of the end-time (cf. Nu 24:14; Isa. 2:2; Ezek. 38:16), but that time frame does not fit this context. This text addresses the thirteen tribes (Joseph becomes Ephraim and Manasseh) out of Jacob. Therefore, it must relate to the conquest (Joshua) and settlement (Judges, cf. Deut. 31:29) of Canaan. If v. 10 does address a Davidic ruler from Judea, then a period as far as an early monarchical period (1 Samuel) is possible." ([The Patriarchal](#)

[Period](#))

The phrase **the days to come** is more literally "**the latter end of the days.**" While not everyone agrees with this interpretation (as just exemplified above), Jacob's phrase appears to be very compatible with what will happen to the **12 Tribes of Israel** in the last days just before Messiah's Second Coming. Certainly the book of Revelation speaks of events which are related to the **12 Tribes** (See Rev 7:4-[note](#)) in the "last days."

AN "ESCHATOLOGICAL" WORD

Days to come ([0319](#)) (**acharith** from **achar** = to remain behind, tarry) is a feminine noun that means the "after part", the end of a period of time, the last time, the latter time. The first use is in Genesis 49:1 = "Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, "Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what will befall you in the days to **come**." In Nu 23:10 **acharith** refers to the "end" of one's life (death - cp similar use Nu 24:20, Ps 73:17, 5:11). It speaks of old or older age (Job 42:12 = "Jehovah blessed the latter days of Job") **Acharith** describes one's posterity (Ps 37:37, 38, 109:13). Here **acharith** conveys the idea of **outcome** - Da 12:8, Pr 5:4, 14:12, 16:25 (end), Eccl 7:8, Isa 41:22, 47:7. It conveys the sense of future (Pr 23:18, 24:14, 24:20, Jer 29:11, 31:17). In Ezek 23:25 **acharith** describes **survivors** (twice).

While I cannot document the source I have a note in my files regarding "days to come" ("last days," "latter days") that "The phrase according to Jewish interpreters always means the days of the Messiah."

"**In the latter days**" is an expression which often refers to the messianic times, that period which closes human history when the kingdom of God will be manifested and the Lord Himself will rule the nations, as well as the hearts and minds of men.

LAST/LATTER DAYS is common in OT & is the time when Messiah would come to set up His kingdom. That there would be two comings of Messiah, separated by a long intervening period, was not clearly understood in the OT. The two comings, however, can be inferred from the two purposes for Messiah's coming set forth in the OT. On the one hand, the OT teaches that Messiah would come as the Suffering Servant, to die for the sins of the world (Isa 53). On the other hand, it also teaches that Messiah would come in glory to set up His kingdom (Isa 9:6). The first coming of Christ ushered in the last days. 1Jn 2:18 "Children, it is the last hour." Peter writes that Christ "has appeared in these last times for the sake of you" (1Pe 1:20). Hebrews informs us that God "in these last days has spoken to us in His Son" (Heb1:2), and "now once at the consummation of the ages [Christ] has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb9:26). The last days have thus lasted nearly two thousand years. During that time, God has graciously called Gentiles to salvation and chastened Israel for her unbelief.

Acharith is used many times in a prophetic (eschatological) sense Read the following passages

Numbers 24:14 "And now behold, I am going to my people; come, and I will advise you what this people will do to your people in **the days to come.**"

Deuteronomy 4:30 "When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in **the latter days**, you will return to the LORD your God and listen to His voice.

Henry Morris ([Defender's Study Bible](#)) on distress (KJV - "tribulation") - This prophecy, given by Moses as Israel prepared to enter the promised land, apparently looks into the distant future, 3500 years or more, to "the latter days" when Israel will be in the "great tribulation" (Revelation 7:14). At that "time of trouble ... thy people shall be delivered," (Daniel 12:1), and "immediately after the tribulation of those days ... He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matthew 24:29, 31).

Deuteronomy 31:29 "For I know that after my death you will act corruptly and turn from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you **in the latter days**, for you will do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger with the work of your hands."

Isaiah 2:2 Now it will come about that In **the last days**, The mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it.

Henry Morris ([Defender's Study Bible](#)) - In such prophecies, mountains are symbolic of kingdoms. In the coming kingdom age, the Lord will be acknowledged as king over all the earth (Isaiah 9:6-7), with His throne at Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:3). See also Zechariah 14:9.

Jeremiah 23:20 The anger of the LORD will not turn back Until He has performed and carried out the purposes of His heart; In **the last days** you will clearly understand it.

Comment: The "anger" of the Lord is the result of His righteous judgment, demanded by His perfect holiness and immutable

justice.

Jeremiah 30:24 The fierce anger of the LORD will not turn back, Until He has performed, and until He has accomplished The intent of His heart; In **the latter days** you will understand this.

Jeremiah 49:39 'But it will come about in **the last days** That I shall restore the fortunes of Elam,'" Declares the LORD.

Ezekiel 38:8 "**After many days** you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword, whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel which had been a continual waste; but its people were brought out from the nations, and they are living securely, all of them.

Ezekiel 38:16 and you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud to cover the land. It will come about in **the last days** that I shall bring you against My land, in order that the nations may know Me when I shall be sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog."

Daniel 10:14 "Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in **the latter days**, for the vision pertains to the days yet future."

Ryrie on the latter days - Future days culminating in the events surrounding the second coming of Christ (cf. Da 2:28; Gen. 49:1).

MacArthur on the latter days - This refers to the future plan of God for His people, extending from Daniel's time to that of the Antichrist.

Nelson's Study Bible on the latter days - This expression is used throughout the books of prophecy to refer to the future (see Isa 2:2; Jer. 23:20; 49:39; Ezek. 38:16; Mic. 4:1). The messenger here is referring to the revelation of Daniel 11-12.

Hosea 3:5 Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king; and they will come trembling to the LORD and to His goodness in **the last days**. (Lxx = ep' [eschaton](#) ton hemeron = "in the latter days")

David their king - It is very surprising that most commentators take "David their king" to be a reference to the Messiah when a literal interpretation would be very appropriate! In fact if this is a reference to Messiah than why mention "the LORD their God" just prior? These are two individuals, one Divine and the other human. David will be resurrected and will reign over the 12 tribes of Israel (Ezekiel 37:24, 25-[note](#)) in the Millennial Kingdom. Of course Messiah will be King over King David for He alone is the "King of kings" (Rev 19:16-[note](#)). Why would Christ even need the name "**King of kings**" if there were not human kings over which He would reign supreme! As support for a literal resurrected King David Ezekiel says "And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken." (Ezekiel 34:24) The first Person is the LORD, Jehovah, Who is Jesus and He is clearly distinguished in this passage from "My servant David." David is David, not Messiah! Messiah is many times called "Son of David" but to my knowledge, He is never called only by the name "David." (Write me if you find an exception). Jeremiah 30:9-[note](#) also separates Jehovah and David and clearly states David will be resurrected in the end times to be king over believing Israel - "But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up for them." ([See another discussion of "Who is David about whom Jeremiah prophesies?"](#))

MacArthur - Cf. Hosea 1:11. This must refer to Messiah during the Millennium, as "in the last days" specifies (cf. Is 55:3, 4; Jer 30:9; Eze 34:23, 24; 37:24, 25). The Jews did not seek after Christ at His first advent. This reference has the Davidic Covenant as its background (cf. 2Sa 7:12-17; Pss 39; 132).

Micah 4:1-[note](#) And it will come about in the last days That the mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, And the peoples will stream to it.

This word **acharith** is used by Moses to describe what will happen to rebellious Israel at the end of time (during the time of the Great Tribulation) declaring:

When you are in distress (tribulation) and all these things have come upon you, in the **latter** days you will return to the Lord your God and listen to His voice. (Dt 4:30-[note](#))

Comment: Compare the use of **acharith** in Isaiah 2:20-[note](#) [Micah 4:1-[note](#)] where **acharith** is translated "last" and as in Dt 4:30-[note](#) clearly refers to the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom when the King of kings returns (Rev 19:16) and Jews repent (Zech 12:10, Ro 11:26, 27, Zech 13:7-8) and return and listen to their Messiah - a glorious day to anticipate! See a parallel description of "the **last (acharith)** days" in Hosea 3:5.

John MacArthur on Genesis 49:1 - "The key expression leading into the poetic content of Jacob's prediction for each son often signifies the last days in prophetic literature (Isa 2:2; Ezek 38:16) or points more generally to "**the latter days**" (Dt 4:30; 31:29), i.e.,

in the sense of "in subsequent days."

In another place **MacArthur** adds that "Throughout the Pentateuch, **"the latter days"** refers to the time when Messiah will establish His kingdom (see Ge 49:1, 8–12; Nu 24:14–24; Dt 32:39–43)."

King James Version Study Bible - In the last days introduces the whole prophecy, and functions in an important way in the Old Testament. It refers to Israel's future in dual perspective: the period of their occupation of Canaan, and the time of the coming of Messiah. Sometimes the expression refers to Israel at the end of the Great Tribulation (Deut. 4:30; Ezek. 38:16), sometimes to the history of Gentile nations (Dan. 2:28), and sometimes to the present church age in its entirety (Heb. 1:2) or at its conclusion (2 Tim. 3:1; James 5:3). Jacob's pronouncements in chapter 49 included both prophecy (v. 1) and blessing (v. 28).

Reformation Study Bible - Jacob's prophecies embrace the entire history of Israel from the conquest and distribution of the land to the reign of the Messiah, Jesus Christ (Ge 49:10 and [note](#)). See Num. 24:14 [Ed: [only note](#) is on Nu 24:15-19]; Deut. 31:28, 29; Is. 2:2. ([Study Bible Note](#))

John Butler observes that "Jacob says the meeting is to hear some prophetic truths about the sons' future. The "last days" covers a wide area of time from the dwelling in Canaan to the millennial kingdom. The sons needed to be interested in the future as do all people. Lack of interest in the future destiny of our soul can be devastating eternally....The fact that the message was prophetic means Jacob spoke by Divine inspiration. No man can speak so accurately about the future as Jacob did without being Divinely inspired. What he said was something more than the wishes of an aged parent for his family; it was a message from God about the family. Thus this message becomes the decrees from God, the Word of God." (Analytical Bible Expositor)

Believer's Study Bible (Criswell) - **"In the last days"** is clearly a reference not only to the future but also to the closing period of history. The author of Hebrews said the "last days" began with the coming of Christ (Heb. 1:1, 2).

Keil and Delitzsch - As Isaac in his blessing (Gen. 27) pointed out prophetically to his two sons, by virtue of divine illumination, the future history of their families; "so Jacob, while blessing the twelve, pictured in grand outlines the lineamenta of the future history of the future nation" (Ziegler). The groundwork of his prophecy was supplied partly by the natural character of his twelve sons, and partly by the divine promise which had been given by the Lord to him and to his fathers Abraham and Isaac, and that not merely in these two points, the numerous increase of their seed and the possession of Canaan, but in its entire scope, by which Israel had been appointed to be the recipient and medium of salvation for all nations. On this foundation the Spirit of God revealed to the dying patriarch Israel the future history of his seed, so that he discerned in the characters of his sons the future development of the tribes proceeding from them, and with prophetic clearness assigned to each of them its position and importance in the nation into which they were to expand in the promised inheritance. Thus he predicted to the sons what would happen to them "in the last days," lit., "at the end of the days" (π' σχατων τ ν μερ ν, LXX), and not merely at some future time. אַחֲרִית, the opposite of רֵאשִׁית, signifies the end in contrast with the beginning (Deut. 11:12; Isa. 46:10); hence אַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים in prophetic language denoted, not the future generally, but the last future (see Hengstenberg's History of Balaam, pp. 465–467, transl.), the Messianic age of consummation (Isa. 2:2; Ezek. 38:8, 16; Jer. 30:24; 48:47; 49:39, etc.: so also Num. 24:14; Deut. 4:30), like π' σχατου τ ν μερ ν (2 Pet. 3:3; Heb. 1:2), or ν τα ς σχαταις μεραις (Acts 2:17; 2 Tim. 3:1).

Charles Ryrie - **in the days to come** refers to Israel's future in dual perspective: the period of their occupation of Canaan, and the time of the coming of Messiah. Sometimes the expression refers to Israel at the end of the tribulation period (Deut. 4:30; Ezek. 38:16), sometimes to the history of Gentile nations (Da. 2:28), and sometimes to the present church age in its entirety (Heb. 1:2) or at its conclusion (2 Tim. 3:1; James 5:3). Jacob's pronouncements in Gen. 49 included both prophecy (Ge 49:1) and blessing (Ge 49:28).

NET Note (NET Bible translation = "in the future") - The expression **"in the future"** (אַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים, '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.

Armerding - Having thus surveyed the chapter (Genesis 49) as a whole we may now consider in greater detail those portions of it which have to do particularly with Messiah, namely, those parts in which Judah and Joseph are presented. That these parts do have in view the age of Messiah is quite generally held by conservative Bible scholars. It is indicated, we believe, in the expression, "the latter days" (v. 1). Commenting on this expression Keil says that this "in prophetic language denotes not the future generally but the last future, the Messianic age of consummation."⁶ According to Delitzsch the expression refers to "the future which forms the close of the course of history. The notion is eschatological, but limited by the horizon of the speaker."⁷ Gesenius refers to it as a "prophetic formula" which means "in the future time, in the last days."⁸ It occurs also in Numbers 24:14, Deuteronomy 4:30 and 31:29, and about a dozen times in the Prophets. In each case the definitions given above would suit the context well. ([The Last Words of Jacob: Genesis 49 - Carl Armerding: Bibliotheca Sacra: BSAC 112:448 Oct 1955](#))

Genesis 49:10 “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

UNTIL SHILOH COMES

ESV Study Bible - At this early point God already reveals that through Judah will come a line of kings, leading finally to Christ the great, eternal king (Matt. 1:1–16).

NET Note on Shiloh - The Hebrew form shilohis 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.

See **James Hastings** [lengthy discussion of Shiloh](#).

Spurgeon’s sermon - Read the full sermon [Shiloh on Genesis 49:10](#) - THE dying patriarch was speaking of his own son Judah; but while speaking of Judah he had a special eye to our Lord, who sprang from the tribe of Judah. Everything therefore which he says of Judah, the type, he means with regard to our greater Judah, the antitype, our Lord Jesus Christ. You will remember how Jacob gathered his twelve sons around his bed, and, addressing them individually as representatives of the twelve tribes that bear their names, uttered divers predictions, and gave to each a special blessing. After first apostrophising Reuben and Simeon and Levi, he proceeds to salute Judah in words full of majesty:—“Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise.” A happy expression; for the word “Judah” signifies “praise.” The name was given to him by his mother as expressing her gratitude to God at his birth. It is now confirmed to him by his father, who discerns in it a presage of his character and his destiny. And verily this is true of Jesus. If the virgin mother hailed his advent, how much more do his grateful brethren laud his career! Do not his brethren recognise in him a leader and commander, a Saviour and a friend? Is it not here, on earth, our sweetest employment, and will it not be in heaven our highest delight to praise his name? The praise we bestow on men is mere flattery: the praise we receive from men is fulsome. But Jesus hath a peerless name, and his brethren derive from him priceless benefits. In Jesus are fulfilled the dreams of Joseph. The sun and the moon and the eleven stars all bow before him; all the sheaves make obeisance unto his sheaf. Let him be crowned with majesty who bowed his head to death is the common verdict of all the brotherhood of the house of God. “Thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies.” As one that gets his hand upon the neck of his prey, stops its breath and destroys it; or as one who seizes his enemy by the throat and flings him down to death. How true has this been of Jesus. He has laid his hand upon the neck of his enemies. When he came to the cross, fought foot to foot with the old Serpent, and there vanquished sin and death and hell for us, it was a terrible battle, but it ended in a splendid victory, of which we shall never cease to sing. Nor do we doubt but the hand of Jesus Christ is at this moment in the neck of his enemies. They may be very rebellious, and, for a time, they may seem to get the ascendancy; but he has got the upper hand of them, and as surely as truth and righteousness must flourish and prevail, as surely as Jehovah is the living God, the kingdom of Christ will yet break in pieces all the powers that resist it. “He shall break them as with a rod of iron: he shall dash them in pieces like potters’ vessels.” “Thy father’s children shall bow down before thee.” To the descendants of Judah in the persons of David and Solomon the whole nation did fealty. But worship of a higher order, homage of deeper significance, and adoration from a wider circle pertain to him, for whom our Father in heaven demands of all his faithful children love, honour, and obedience. “Judah is a lion’s whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up.” And how does this describe the Saviour—that “Lion of the tribe of Judah”—that strong and mighty Lion who entered into conflict with the lion of the pit and overcame him. From the prey he has gone up again, up into his glory, gone up beyond the stars, up to the right hand of the infinite majesty, there to sit in perpetual peaceful triumph. “He stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion.” The lion may have been an emblem that befitted the son of Jesse. The lion couchant might have been fitly chosen for his heraldic device, when the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies and of Saul. Yet with how much more propriety may this emblem be emblazoned on the arms of Prince Emmanuel! Did he not stoop down? Was ever such a stoop as his? Let him be crowned with majesty who bowed his head to death. It is for this that he deserves to conquer, because he was willing to submit to shame and death itself for the sake of his people. How glorious is it to think that he has gone up, seeing that he once came down! Who should deserve such honours but he who laid such honours aside for a while? “Who shall rouse him up?” A grand question. Who shall

rouse up the Lion of the tribe of Judah? Who dare do it? Who can stand against him? He is a lamb, gentle and tender; "A bruised reed he will not break, and the smoking flax he will not quench," but let him be provoked, then fiercer than a lion that roareth from the forest will he be upon his foes. So shall it come to pass on that tremendous day when he will ease him of his adversaries and shake himself clear of all his enemies. Remember ye not these terrible words of his:—"Beware, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver"? "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." The sovereignty remained with Judah. It did continue to be the royal tribe till the prophetic epoch. When other tribes lost their peculiar position and their positive distinctiveness, Judah still remained, and it survives in the common appellation of the Hebrew people to this day. The Israelites are more commonly called Jews than by any other name. Jesus, of the tribe of Judah, is the King of the Jews, even though they reject him. Over his head upon the cross was written the indelible truth in letters of Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." Yea, he is King of all faithful Jews and of all believing Gentiles at this hour, with a sovereignty wider than that of emperors—yea, as wide as the dwelling places of all mankind. He is "King of kings, and Lord of lords." Of Shiloh it is the patriarch speaks when with the vision of a seer he describes the grand climax. Before the dim organs of his sight he saw all his twelve sons gathered to take leave of their dying sire. Before the beaming eyes of his faith he beheld the gathering of all their distant posterity, or peradventure of all the kindreds of the earth to greet with glad acclaim the everlasting King, of whose kingdom there shall be no end. "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Thus simply and thus pointedly does Jacob refer to the Lord Jesus Christ by the name of Shiloh. Of that name and of that prophecy I shall try to speak.

Norman Geisler - GENESIS 49:10—Who or what is "Shiloh" in this verse?

PROBLEM: The word "Shiloh" is often understood to be a reference to Jesus Christ as the coming Messiah. The word appears in a phrase which is part of the prophetic pronouncements of Jacob upon his son Judah. It is through the tribe of Judah that the Messiah will come (cf. 2 Sam. 7; Mic. 5:2), so it seems appropriate to understand this verse as a reference to the Messiah, Jesus Christ. However, the NT does not make any reference to this prophecy as being fulfilled in Christ, nor to the name Shiloh.

SOLUTION: The solution to this problem involves the vowel pointing of the Masoretic Text (MT) of the OT (see Appendix 1). The New King James Version translates this portion of verse 10 as follows: "Until Shiloh comes." This version follows the vowel pointing of the MT and translates the Hebrew word shylyh as the proper name "Shiloh." Shiloh was the name of a town situated approximately ten miles northeast of Bethel. Although some interpreters take the statement in Genesis 49:10 as a reference to this town, others have taken it to be a proper name for Messiah. However, the majority of scholars propose a different vowel pointing and understand the word to mean "to whom it belongs." This proposal has the support of ancient translations, such as the Greek and Syriac versions of the OT, and others. These ancient versions, being much older than the MT, also render the phrase, "he to whom they belong." This reading is also supported by Ezekiel 21:27 which states, "Until He comes whose right it is." When this part of verse 10 is taken this way, the passage reads, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver's staff from between his feet, Until He comes to whom it belongs, And to Him shall be the obedience of the people." In light of this, the Messianic significance of the verse is much clearer. For it is fulfilled in the NT Messiah (Christ), as indicated by such passages as Matthew 2:6, Luke 1:30–33, Revelation 5:5, and 19:11–16. (When Critics Ask)

Herbet Lockyer (All the Divine Names) - Shiloh (Genesis 49:10)

Meaning "tranquillity" or "rest," Shiloh is often mentioned in the Old Testament as a sacred place ten miles from Bethel, and is now identified as the modern Seitan (Joshua 18:1; Psalm 78:60). In Jacob's dying blessing, when he comes to his son Judah, from whose tribe Jesus was to come (Hebrews 7:14; Revelation 5:5), the patriarch has the phrase, "until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be" (Genesis 49:8-12). Sceptre, Lawgiver, Shiloh are synonymous titles of the prophesied Messiah whose reign will be one of peace and rest. This is the One whom Simeon at the coming of Shiloh said would be "the sign which shall be spoken against" (Luke 2:34).

Some writers suggest that Shiloh means "sent," and as a personal name may refer to Solomon, whose name has a similar meaning, and whose reign was one of peace. Christ, however, fulfills all Jacob declared of Judah (Isaiah 9:6). We deem Shiloh to be a fitting title of the promised Messiah who came as the Tabernacle of God among men bringing peace (Luke 2:14), making peace (Colossians 1:20), and bestowing peace (John 14:27). The Jewish Targum paraphrases Genesis 49:10 thus, "Until the time when the King Messiah comes to whom it belongeth." Thus, the whole verse foretells that Judah would retain authority until the advent of the rightful Ruler, the Messiah, to whom all peoples would gather, which they now do in Grace, and will do internationally when He returns to earth to usher in His reign of peace and tranquillity. Then, as Isaac Watts has taught us to sing—

People and realms of every tongue
Dwell on His love with sweetest song;
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on His name.

Herbert Lockyer in All the Messianic Prophecies of the Bible describes "His Descent From Judah"

Jesus came as "the Star out of Jacob" and "out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion" (Num. 24:17, 19). Jacob had twelve sons, and another choice had to be made by God. Judah is selected, and it was from the tribe bearing that name that Jesus came.

Forecast: "He... chose the tribe of Judah" (Ps. 78:67, 68).

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah... until Shiloh come" (Gen. 49:10; cf. Luke 3:33).

Fulfillment: "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah" (Heb. 7:14).

"The Lion of the tribe of Juda" (Rev. 5:5).

The tracing of Christ's descent through Judah's royal line harmonizes with the kingly aspect of Jesus Christ in Matthew's gospel. Jacob gives us the meaning of the name of his fourth son by Leah: "Thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise" (Gen. 49:8; cf. 29:35). Judah means "praise," and his wonderful Descendant, Jesus, is worthy of all praise and honor and glory. By the sceptre we are to understand, not so much a king's staff, but a tribal staff. Each tribe had its own rod or staff as an ensign of authority upon which was inscribed the name of the tribe. The tribal identity of Judah was not to pass away until Shiloh came.

Shiloh has ever been taken to be a name of the Messiah. It means "peace" or "one sent." As the Messiah, or Sent One, Jesus came before Judah lost its tribal identity. Since He came, our Shiloh has had the obedience of countless myriads as the prophetic Word said He would (Gen. 49:10).