

THE CONQUERING LION OF JUDAH – Gen 49:9

Gen 49:9 “Judah is a lion’s whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?”

The lion is a royal beast and commands our admiration and respect. From antiquity the lion has been known as .the king of beasts because of his power and fearlessness and even men have been called lion-hearted when they displayed conspicuous courage and daring.

In Scripture times the lion was common as far as Palestine and southern Asia, but as civilization pushed outward into all the world the lion has been confined, more or less, to a space in the zoo. His once vast domain has been narrowed down to a few game preserves and parks.

The Bible often refers to the lion’s strength and bravery. Thus Jacob in our text, by the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, made a remarkable prophecy concerning his fourth son Judah, and compared him to a lion, a young lion growing into full strength and calmly resisting any attempt to disturb his serenity and rule as he crouched in dignified repose. We shall see how this prophecy was fulfilled.



THE CONQUERING LION OF JUDAH

1. HE PREVAILED AS A YOUNG LION.

“Judah is a lion’s whelp,” said Jacob. A very solemn moment had arrived in the life of the patriarch as he was Hearing the end of his earthly pilgrimage, and felt the urge by the Holy Ghost to bless his sons before he departed this life. The blessing of the birthright and all that goes with it was bestowed upon Judah, from whom the promised Seed of the woman should come.

From the history of the twelve sons of Jacob we would expect the Lord to choose Joseph as the fore-father of the Promised One who would crush the serpent's head. But the Lord's ways and thoughts are often different than ours.

Judah received the lion's share in the Promised Land. As a young lion he was the first tribe to take possession of his allotted territory, which was the most valuable portion of the new land. Fighting and driving out the Canaanites from the inherited land Judah's soldiers displayed the courage and daring of lions. This tribe took the leading role in the Old Testament church history and it was highly respected and feared among the other tribes.

When the kings ruled Israel, at a time of much dissatisfaction among the people, Rehoboam uttered such words of folly to the tribes that ten of them renounced their allegiance to the king and so were lost forever to the house of David. Judah remained faithful to the king and became more and more prominent as the years rolled by. Benjamin, the other faithful tribe, assumed a minor supporting role compared to that of Judah.

Still later in history the ten tribes were taken into captivity and lost their identity as tribes of Jacob, but Judah and Benjamin were and remained intact at the time of our Lord. Judah, as a young lion, prevailed over his brethren.

Is that the end of Judah's reign? Not at all. Now he entered a new phase of rule as a grown lion. Judah is the lion of the tribes, but now we shall hear of the lion of the tribe of Judah.

2. HE RULES AS A GROWN LION

Obviously [Rev 5:5](#) refers to our text for Jesus is called "The Lion of the tribe of Judah." In fact, this is the real point of Jacob's prophecy, since from Judah should come the Savior of the world. The Seed of the woman was promised to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden long, long ago. This first promise of the Redeemer was the hope of the people of God for many centuries and sustained them in their trials and crosses. Jacob believed that first promise of the Savior and he certainly thought of Him when he gave the blessing of the birthright to Judah in these and other words, "He couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?"



Jesus came from the tribe of Judah through Joseph and Mary, for in the genealogy of Christ in St. Matthew chapter one and in St. Luke chapter three we are shown how Jesus descended Judah. "The Lion of the tribe of Judah" overcame sin, death, and hell by suffering and dying on the cross for the sins of the whole human race.

How does this Lion conquer and rule? All who accept Him by faith as the Savior have eternal life and immediately come under His rule and domain. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" [John 3:5](#). Jesus convinced many people of His day that He was indeed the promised Messiah of the tribe of Judah.

The Apostles spread the Gospel and extended our Lion's rule, and down through the ages His domain has been so enlarged that He rules in many nations and has millions and millions of people who have been conquered by Him.

"The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision," [Psalm 2](#). How often in the history of the world did not nations and kings attempt to destroy the rule and domain of the Lord's Lion? What persecutions and terrors were heaped upon the church of God to exterminate it from the face of the earth, but the Savior and His gospel grew stronger and stronger, and no power on earth can overcome Him or His church, yes, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

We also belong in the pride or family of this Lion of Judah for we have accepted Him as our own and He rules us with His wonderful gospel. In this Advent season we are looking forward to Christmas when our hearts will again rejoice in the story of His birth.

Does it not seem strange that the devil is also compared to a lion? In [1 Peter 5:8](#) we read, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil,

as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist steadfast in the faith.” But the points of comparison are very different; Satan is as a roaring lion in his devouring and destroying actions; Jesus is as a couchant or reclining lion, satisfied in his power and confident of victory. Therein lies His real greatness. Jesus is certainly not pictured as a roaring, rending, destroying and devouring lion.

Of course, only the Spirit of God could foresee and foretell all these events in the history of Judah and the world, only He could guide Jacob to utter this remarkable prophecy. The Lion of the tribe of Judah has prevailed and conquered throughout the ages. We are happy that He has convinced us to be on His side.

No matter what is in store for us in this world we are confident that the Holy Spirit will also make us lion-hearted to suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from our faith in Christ. Amen.

PRAYER. *We thank thee, O Lord, that Thou didst foretell the Advent of Thy Lion of Judah and didst send Him into this world to redeem us poor sinners. We shall be eternally grateful for Thy mercy and love to us fallen sinners. Our Savior has conquered and will continue to conquer until the final victory has been won. His victory will be our victory; His glory will be our glory. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. AMEN.*