

(Genesis) Genesis 49-50

by Joe Focht

The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith and trust in God, and the consequences of sin and disobedience, as seen in the life of Jacob and the prophecies of the tribes of Israel.

Duration: 52:23

Scripture: Genesis 49:3-7, Psalm 1:1-3, Matthew 6:33, John 4:14, Romans 8:28, Ephesians 3:20

Topics: "Genesis"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of Jacob and his sons from the Bible. He highlights the downfall of Ruben, Jacob's firstborn, who was given to lust and committed a disgraceful act. The preacher emphasizes the importance of making decisions to overcome lust, such as avoiding pornography and tempting situations. The sermon also touches on the topic of death and the importance of trusting God as we approach eternity, using Jacob's peaceful passing as an example.

Transcript

This is chapter 49, we are in the middle of a scene where Jacob is sick. Jacob has already called Joseph to his bedside and made Joseph swear an oath that he would not bury him in Egypt but back in Canaan in the cave of Mephila. Now he knew that Joseph had the political clout to make sure that would happen.

So he had already called Joseph in to swear that he would do that, thinking at that time that he was ready to die. He wasn't. Time went on.

But now Joseph has gotten word that Jacob is sick and Joseph now comes to his father with Ephraim and Manasseh. It says that when Jacob heard Joseph was coming, interesting it changes, that Israel propped himself up, his higher nature called as he stood himself up, no doubt propping himself up on his staff from Hebrews 11:21. And Joseph came in and he spoke with Joseph and he reminded Joseph of how God had first appeared to him and then spoke to Joseph how his mother Rachel had died. And no doubt if Rachel had been his first wife and that's what he intended, she may have been his only wife and Joseph may well have been his firstborn.

And because of the sins of Reuben and Simeon and Levi, now Jacob has pronounced the right of the firstborn on Joseph in that not giving a double portion to Joseph himself but taking his two sons and saying to Joseph these two now will be called by my name. Any children you have after this, Joseph, are yours. But these two, Ephraim and Manasseh, will now be called by my name.

They are now my children. Their heritage will not be as princes of Egypt and the wealth that comes to them will not be a physical wealth from this land but it will be a spiritual heritage and they will be named now amongst my sons among the tribes. So Ephraim and Manasseh now have received a blessing from Jacob.

He is blind. It says the Lord is making his hands to know as he places his right hand on Ephraim and his left hand on Manasseh. He is filled with the Spirit.

And after he blesses Ephraim and Manasseh, now he calls for all of his sons to come. Evidently the same sequence. Chapter 49 says Jacob called unto his sons and said gather yourselves together that I may tell you that which shall befall you, notice, in the last days.

Jacob, blind, 147 years old. Gather yourselves together here, notice, ye sons of Jacob, but now harken which is to obey unto Israel your father. The man now speaking from the higher calling, Israel.

Great privilege he has here. Remember that Abraham passed off the scene and we don't get many details of his death. But in Abraham the stream was narrowed to the Messianic line.

Ishmael was divided off and the blessing came strictly upon Isaac. In Isaac's life the stream was narrowed and Esau was separated off and the blessing came strictly upon Jacob. But now Jacob, now the stream is widening as it were, all 12 of his sons are there and he now is able to bless all of them and pronounce blessing on all of them as he is ready to pass off the scene.

And no doubt this is the highest point spiritually in the man's life. Now Hebrews chapter 11 verse 21 tells us that. It says, by faith Jacob when he was dying blessed Ephraim and Manasseh and worshipped upon his staff.

There it tells us that the highest manifestation of faith in the life of this man was in his passing. And again, no doubt, I think for all of us, you know Jacob, Jacob was the man of a great contradictory personality. He longed for the higher things, but he always got his own hands involved.

You know, he, he believed in God, but he trusted that God needed his help to get things done. And he always meddled. And you can't relate to that at all, I'm sure, by the blank stares on your faces.

But he believed God, but he thought he was God's little helper. And on one side there was great faith and the other side there was great mistrust. And he was the great human portrayed before us.

And we don't have any details really of Abraham's death or Isaac's death, but we're given great detail now of Jacob in his passing. And I believe that's because it's at this moment, he can't lend any of his own energies to this. He, at the end of chapter 49, it says, will yield up the ghost and willingly cast himself off into the hands of God.

And he has nothing to do with it. He cannot contribute to this experience. And yet it's in this experience that he gives the greatest glory and trust to God.

And I think in all of our lives, when that time comes, that is really the crux of our faith, isn't it? We believe that Jesus has forgiven our sins and that we will have life beyond the grave. And with all the things that we do from here, and we can say, I'm led of the Lord and the Lord really give me a burden for this. And I want to be involved in the missions field, the harvest crusade.

But there comes a point in time when we know we're going to be breathing our last. And it's at that moment, if we move into eternity with our hearts filled with faith, trusting him and cast ourselves into the hands of God, that is the greatest and clearest testimony we can give to a lost world, that we trust God as we step through the veil into eternity, that his hands will be there to receive us. And in the life of Jacob, that's what we see here in a remarkable way.

Now, again, I think this is the way I want to go. You know, I want to be, if the Lord tarries and I have to die a natural death, I'm hoping to be yanked out here at a trumpet blast. But if the Lord tarries, I would love to be there with my children gathered around my bed, filled with the Holy Ghost, prophesy, bless them all, remember to clean your room when I'm gone, you know, whatever I have to say to them.

And then, and then it says Jacob gathers up his legs into the bed and he yields up the ghost. He prophesies over all the kids, pulls his legs up, says goodbye, blasts off. And I think what dignity and what grace and what beauty.

And I know there are many people that die under very difficult circumstances. There are Christians that die suffering from cancer. And there are Christians who die at that time shaken in their faith, maybe even doubting.

And I understand that. And I don't have easy answers for them. And I don't know why God in his sovereignty allows everything that he allows.

But the assurances of his love are greater than the amount of unanswered questions I have to deal with. The demonstration of his goodness far outweighs any doubts that I can dream up about why he does what he does. And Jacob now here, filled with the Spirit, calls all of his sons and begins to prophesy.

Blind in his physical eye, but seeing further in his heart than he ever has before. Reuben is firstborn. Thou art my firstborn, my might, the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, the excellency of power.

Unstable, or boiling, your translation might say, as water. Thou shalt not excel, because thou wentest up to thy father's bed, then defilest thou it. He went up to my couch.

Remember, it was Reuben who went to bed with one of his father's concubines, Bilhah, and disgraced his father. So it's very interesting to see these men. And in each case, Jacob is taking a reflection of their historic life and projecting that onto the history of the tribe.

It's very remarkable, because as we hear Moses reiterate in Deuteronomy 33, he's saying the same things. And most remarkably, when we get to Joshua and they draw lots for the land, they fall out exactly the way Jacob said they would here way back hundreds of years earlier in Genesis 49. So this is a beautiful movement and is very powerful.

He says of Reuben, something's going to characterize the entire history of the tribe now, that they won't excel. And we know that it will be Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh that will refuse to enter into the land. They will go across to fight until there's victory.

But then they're the ones that are first defeated when the Assyrians come and other nations invade. So he says of Reuben, he won't excel. Now he says the problem with the man was he was given to lust.

He was boiling. He went up to his father's bed, did something disgraceful. I challenge you this evening, if you are given to lust, you need to make some decisions.

Some very simple ones would be, do not have pornography in your home. Do not walk past magazine racks where there is pornography. There are people who are tortured by those things.

There's a pastor that's involved with Calvary. When he goes to a hotel, he won't go into the hotel room until he has them remove the TV from the room. Because he knows his own struggles and he won't even face the temptation.

I think that's wisdom. And if you fall into sexual sin, how much will you excel after that? And the church is and I'm not saying archers, but the church by and large is filled with compromise. People that are living in sin saying that it's okay with God.

And there's a process there whereby people are self-deceived. First John says, first of all, if we say we don't have to sin, we lie to ourselves. That's hypocrisy.

And then he goes on to say that if we if we say that we don't have sin, we deceive ourselves. That's duplicity. We lie to ourselves.

And you know someone when they're in sin, they're lying to themselves. They actually start to believe their own story. And you look at them and think, what is wrong with this person? And ultimately it says, if we say we have not sinned, we make God a liar.

That's apostasy. Finally, when they're saying that God is approving of their lifestyle. And there's a process whereby we slip into that.

Is restoration possible? Yes, it is. To what degree? I don't know. Will we ever be what we would have been before we fell into sexual sin? I don't know that.

Charles Spurgeon said when a man's repentance is as far as as far known as his sin, that maybe then it's time for restoration. Alan Redpath said that David in his sin was like a bird with his wings clipped. He would fly again, but never as high.

And when we look at the life of David, we think, how great of a man might he have been if he hadn't fallen into adultery, Bathsheba and killed Uriah? Yes, God was gracious to him. But this is a definite thing that plagues the church and it plagues our society. It's demonstrated in the life of Reuben.

And Jacob says he will not excel. He was given to sexual desire. Next, he prophesies about Simeon and Levi.

Simeon and Levi are brethren. Instruments of cruelty are in their habitation. O my soul, come not thou into their secret, on to their assembly.

Mine honor be not thou united. For in their anger they slew a man and in their self will they dig down a wall or they hamstrung oxen, depending on your translation. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce.

And their wrath, for it was cruel. I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel. Now, Simeon and Levi, remember the two brothers that went in and slaughtered all the men in Shechem, and it says evidently they willfully had just hamstrung the oxen or tore down the walls of the city as they slaughtered

the men.

Again, here is this pronouncement against anger and being given to that kind of wrath and outburst. And it says because of their anger they will not all will be honored. That they'll be divided among Jacob.

The interesting thing was, of course, that Simeon was absorbed into Judah, as we look at the tribes, and Levi ends up without an inheritance. They end up being the priestly line, but they end up without. They're scattered amongst Jacob and Israel, just as he prophesies.

But the point is, again, anger. And you know what? We all have anger. Anger is a necessary thing.

Jesus had anger. He overturned the tables of the money changers. Anger is not a wrong thing.

What's wrong with anger is we do stupid things when we're angry. Punch holes in sheetrock walls. I'm talking to the guys, unless your wife's really something.

Break furniture. You know, when you get tired of getting out the Elmer's glue and the spackle, and you know, and then once you get mad, then you get madder because you got mad. If you're given to that kind of thing, you need to pray and you need to realize, look, God gave us anger.

If I see somebody molesting my kids, I'd better have anger. I'd better have anger because I don't love them if I don't. Anger is a necessary part of love.

God has anger. It's part of his nature. He's angry at sin.

He's angry at Satan destroying the world. Jesus was angry at the hypocrisy in the temple when he overturned the tables of the money changers. Anger is a good thing and a necessary thing, and without it, we'd be impotent emotionally.

But to be given to wrath in a foolish, selfish way is wrong, and he condemns it here. They also not fulfilling their potential as men. Judah now.

Now, as we go through this, Judah and Joseph are the two primary focuses in these prophecies. Judah will represent ultimately the southern tribes, and Joseph slash Ephraim, i.e. Israel. Ephraim and Israel will be interchangeable, will represent the northern ten tribes, and certainly these two prophecies are the longest around Judah and around Joseph, and they do end up to become the dominant forces amongst the tribes.

So Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise. Judah means praise. Thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies.

Thy father's children shall bow down before thee, the other tribes of Israel. 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. Of course, we will see Jesus as the lion of the tribe of Judah, and there are many reflections here of the Messiah in this prophecy. The scepter shall not depart from Judah, that is, one that will reign or a lawgiver.

The scepter shall not depart from Judah nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh, or the one to whom it belongs, seems to be what Shiloh indicates come, and unto him shall be the gathering of the

people, or the obedience of the people, and certainly a prophecy of Christ. Now, it is interesting that Moses will come to power, but of the tribe of Levi. Joshua will come to power of the tribe of Ephraim.

Gideon is from Manasseh. Samson is from Dan. Samuel is from Ephraim.

Saul is from Benjamin. It will be 640 years until David comes to the throne. He is of the tribe of Judah, and then there is a succession of kings from the tribe of Judah.

And the word Judah then becomes synonymous with the word Jew. As the northern tribes are carried away, and finally Judah is carried to Babylon as they come back to the land, and they are known as the Jews. It is about 4 to 6 A.D. when the Romans take the right away from the Jews to execute the death sentence.

They retained the right to stone those who were taken in adultery, and stoning was their means of execution, to stone those who were guilty of premeditated manslaughter. But about 4 to 6 A.D., as Rome was in power, they took the right from the Sanhedrin to execute the death sentence, and it was at that time the high priest went through Jerusalem weeping, saying that the word of God had been broken because the scepter had departed from Judah and Shiloh had not come. Of course, the high priest did not know that in a carpenter shop in Nazareth, the Messiah was making door jams ready to step onto the scene, and the word of God had been fulfilled exactly as the Scripture says.

So, it says, the scepter shall not depart from Judah nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be, binding his foal unto the vine, doesn't it sound like the triumphal entry? And his ass's coal unto the choice vine. Then, it seems to look prophetically to the last days, he washed his garments in wine, Isaiah 63, his clothes in the blood of grapes, and Judah being a very productive area as far as vineyards. And the eyes, his eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth shall be white with milk, speaking of grazing, planting, plenty, agriculturally, and certainly that is true of Judah.

Zebulun now, short prophecy, shall dwell at the haven of the sea, and he shall be for a haven of ships, and his border shall be against Zidon. So, he was adjoining Zidon, he was just several miles from the sea, Asher reached up between him and the sea, but Zebulun was enriched by the trading from the sea, he was close enough that that took place. Moses also makes mention of it.

Issachar is a strong ass, counting down between two burdens, like a donkey that is burdened down between the mountain ranges. Esraeldin, the valley of Jezreel, the valley of Armageddon, that's what we're talking about here in the inheritance of Issachar. And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant, and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant to tribute.

Through the land of Zebulun there, the Vimaræ, the way of the sea, and the valley of the kings that would travel. Israel's a land bridge between Africa, Asia, and Europe, and there was constantly struggle in that part of the world, and particularly in this inheritance of Issachar, rather, with the Vimaræ, the way of the sea, that they would travel through the land. So, he ends up in tribute to many different kings, paying taxes and being subjection.

Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path that biteth the horse's heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. Now, we're not sure everything that Jacob is seeing as he prophesies about Dan.

Dan is omitted in Revelation chapter 7. There are some who say they believe the Antichrist will come from Dan. I don't know if that's true at all. But as the 144,000 are named, Dan is not named there in God's counting the tribes in Revelation.

Dan certainly is a troubler of Israel, like an adder biting at the horse's heel and causing the horse to go up and the rider to fall backwards and stumble. Dan would be the one who would not be satisfied with their inheritance, as the lot would fall out. Dan was one of the tribe that was not agreeable to the portion that was theirs.

They moved north to finally the city of Dan. And it was there at Dan and at Bethel where the golden calves were set up during Jeroboam's reign. They become a center of idolatry in Israel and a stumbling block, like something making the horse fall backwards.

And maybe as he talks of the serpent, he sees the involvement of Satan. He sees the prophecy in Genesis 3, the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. Possibly because in verse 18, Jacob now just cries out.

There's an outburst that isn't related to any of the tribes. And he says, I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord, thy Yeshua. Interesting word when you break it down.

The word Yeshua, Jesus, is in there. I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord. Now he comes to Gad.

Gad, a troop shall overcome him. Now you have to imagine the sons are standing around the bed and they're thinking, you know, first of all, Reuben really gets it between the eyes. He must be thinking, uh oh.

And then Simeon and Levi really gives it to them. They're going, oh man, this is a bummer. Then it comes to Judah and that's a pretty good prophecy.

And some of these are better, you know. And each son must be thinking, oh, I wonder what he's going to have to say to me. I wonder if Gad is excited.

Gad, a troop shall overcome him. But he shall overcome at the last. Transjordan also.

Reuben, Gadnath, the tribe of Manasseh. Out of Asher, his bread shall be fat. He shall yield royal dainties.

Very, very productive area. When you go on the tour to Israel today and your guide tells you, this is the area of Asher. Beautiful.

Covered with olive vineyard, olive orchards in particular. And Moses will say in Duke 33 that he will dip his toe in oil. Just a very, very productive area.

Naphtali is a hind. Let loose. He giveth goodly words.

A beautiful area also. Joseph now, the longest of the prophecies. And this is his two sons through Ephraim and Manasseh.

Ephraim becoming the dominant tribe. Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well whose branches run over the wall. Speaking of his productivity.

Now look, we know the imagery here. Blessed is the man who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of the sinner, nor sit in the sea of the scornful. But he shall meditate on the law of

the Lord, someone says.

And he meditates on it day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water. Shall bear fruit in the season and his leaf also shall not wither.

You know, we have this imagery through the Old Testament of being a vine or a tree planted by a stream. That even in a time of difficulty, in the time of drought, because there is a source of refreshment, of living water as it were, of water, that even in difficult times, those trees that were planted right by a spring or by a well would flourish and would do good. Again, one of the commentaries I read in missionary mentions being in Saudi Arabia and seeing a row of palms and one palm a third higher than all of the other palm trees, and asked if that tree was older.

And they say, no, that tree hit a spring. We have a saying amongst the Arabs that the palms love to have their head in the fire and the roots in the spring. And Joseph is depicted like that, of he had this source that refreshed him and kept him.

We look at his life, a seventeen year old, a young man with a dream, and somehow some marvelous thing planted in his heart by God. And then the great difficulties of being hated by his brothers, sold to Egypt, part of his wife trying to seduce him, refusing that, then being sent to prison for rape. And the great years and years that are going by of difficulty and how he stayed true to the Lord through all of those things.

And certainly he was like a tree planted by rivers of water that somehow maintained in his own soul a current relationship with the Lord through great difficulties. And that would reflect Ephraim. They would be fruitful as a tribe.

The archers have sorely grieved him and shot at him and hated him, but his bow abode in strength and the arms of his hands were made strong. Now, literally, they remained subtle. Here's why.

By the hands of the mighty God of Jacob. From thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel, all the beautiful imagery, even by the God of thy father who shall help thee by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of the heaven above and so forth. So he says, Joseph is like a man in battle as the archer sorely grieved him.

And no doubt in those years he had great doubts as a man. But he says he's like one who in the battle and you know, in those days it was swinging a big heavy sword or pulling constantly on a bow. After a little while of doing that, your arms would tremble.

And he said, No, this is like a man who in the midst of the battle, his arms remain subtle and he's able to aim and he's focused. And it's because and there's a picture of the God of Israel reaching around Joseph, putting his hand on the bow, putting his hand on the string and pulling for him and giving him that strength so that he remained focused. And certainly through great trial, we see that the archers had wounded him.

No, no. I'm sure there were doubts that came. I'm sure he experienced the bitterness of his circumstances because he names his son Manasseh, which means forgetting, he says, because I've forgotten the bitterness of those years.

But in all of that bitterness, there was a strength that was part of the man's character that would also then become part of the tribe's character as Jacob is prophesying here. And it says it's because of his involvement, God's involvement, the mighty God of Jacob, the shepherd, the stone, even by the God of

thy father who shall help thee by the almighty who shall bless thee with the blessings of heaven above the rain, the blessings of the deep that lieth under streams and springs, the blessings of the breast and the womb productive, the blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors under the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. He says, Joseph, the blessing I'm pronouncing upon you is greater than the blessings my progenitors pronounced upon me, even as the hills are above the plains, they shall be on the head of Joseph and on the crown of the head of him.

Notice that was separate from his brethren and how God has called us to separation unto himself. Benjamin shall raven as a wolf in the morning, he shall devour the prey at night, he shall divide the spoil. Benjamin known for its warriors and a tough tribe, though it becomes part of Judah.

Now, all these are the 12 tribes of Israel, and this is that their father spake unto them and bless them. Everyone according to his blessing, he blessed them and he charged them and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephraim the Hittite in the cave that is in the field of Mephillah, which is before memory in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephraim the Hittite for a possession and a burying place.

He's making sure to let them know they own this parcel of ground. Abraham paid for it, bought it with money, and they have a right to it. There they buried Abraham and Sarah, his wife.

There they buried Isaac and Rebecca, who Jacob loved greatly, his mother Rebecca, his wife, Isaac's wife. There I buried Leah. The purchase of the field and of the cave that is therein was from the children of Hath, he reiterates again.

And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, this is amazing, he gathered up his feet into the bed and he yielded up the ghost and was gathered to his people. What a great scene. As he is done prophesying, he must lay aside the staff that he propped himself up with.

And that staff, interesting, in Genesis chapter 32, verse 10, as he had come back from Padinarum, he said, Lord, I'm not worthy of all of your mercies and of all the truth that you've made known unto me and all the goodness you've shown to me. When I passed over this river, all I had was this staff. And now you have made me two companies.

Jacob there said, Lord, I'm not worthy of any of your mercies. I remember when I fled from Esau, I had cheated my blind father. I had lied to him.

I had scheming. I had gotten the blessing away from Esau. He was pursuing me to kill me.

And Lord, all I had to my life was this staff that I'm holding on to. And as he comes back, he still has that staff. And he says, Lord, I'm not worthy of any of your mercies.

Here you've enlarged me. I'm two companies. And all I had when I left was this staff.

Now, evidently, at the very end of his life, he's still leaning on that staff. And what a life it had been. We're told in Hebrews that as he was dying, he blessed and he worshiped.

And what a way to go. Passing off the earthly scene, not worried about himself, but about his sons and God's plan in the earth. He blesses others.

And then he worships leaning on the staff. He's worshipping God. And it says he yields up the ghost.

There's no fighting. He is in complete agreement with God at this point in time. He is willingly giving himself into the hands of God.

He's not fighting for his life. There's no sign of fear. He's not saying, you know, I'm going to be part of the masses now that are swept into the darkness at the end of life.

And what will become of me? No, he yields up the ghost and he trusts himself in cooperation in the hands of God, sending aside his the staff of his pilgrimage and moving on. What a great scene. And Joseph fell upon his father's face and wept upon him and kissed him.

Back in Chapter 46, when God had told Jacob to go down to Egypt, he said, you'll see your son, Joseph, and he will close your eyes at death. And here, Joseph is the one who falls upon Jacob, weeping, no doubt praying, gently reaching out and closing his father's eyes. Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father and the physicians embalmed Israel.

And 40 days were fulfilled for him, for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed. And the Egyptian mourned for him three score and 10 days. They mourned for him 70 days.

They mourned for him during the time of his embalming, 40 days and then 30 days after that. They would mourn for a pharaoh for 72 days. So the fact that they mourned for Jacob for 70 days tells us what great regard they held Joseph in and so his father and the embalming process was a remarkable process.

They would wash them. The brains would be drawn out through the nose. They would clean out the head, a small cut in the left side.

They would take out all of the guts, but just leave the heart and the kidneys, take everything else out and stuff it with the man with spices and so forth. And then as they wrapped him, there would be certain potash and sodas from some of the marshes in the area. It was really a remarkable process.

It took 40 days. You were just about pickled when they were done with you. It was the same kind of stuff they put in some of our potato chip dip today.

You know, stuff you don't have to refrigerate it and a month later it still looks the same. Mold doesn't grow on it. You know, they had that process down too.

So possibly, by the way, I have not been to Hebron where he is there and the Abraham's burying place in this cave in Mechphila, but evidently you would be able to pick out Jacob because he would be the one that would be preserved there. The rest of them would have turned to bone, gathered their bones and put them in a pot as they disintegrated. There is one there that's in pretty good shape, and that's old Jacob.

He's the mummy there. When the days of his mourning were passed, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh saying that my father made me swear saying, Lo, I die in my grave, which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there thou shalt bury me. Now, therefore, let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father and I will come again.

So he speaks to those in Pharaoh's household. They go on behalf of Joseph and say, Joseph is asking, he had sworn to his father that he would bury him in Canaan. Pharaoh said, Go up and bury thy father according as he hath made thee swear.

And Joseph went up to bury his father and with him went up, notice this, all of the servants of Pharaoh and the elders of Pharaoh's house and all the elders of the land of Egypt and all of the house of Joseph and his brethren and his father's house. Only their little ones and their flocks and their herds left they in the land of Goshen and there went up with him both chariots and horsemen and it was a very great company. You have to imagine for the Canaanite and for those in the land seeing this incredible caravan come with chariots and soldiers and all of the royalty and elders of Egypt, all of them it says, coming with.

And Joseph in his splendor and all of them coming, bringing now this coffin up into the land of Canaan. It says, And they came to the threshing floor of Atod, which is beyond Jordan. Now they're trans-Jordan, they're on the east side of the Jordan River.

And there they mourned with a great, a very sore lamentation and he made a mourning for his father seven days. And when the inhabitants of the land of the Canaanites saw the mourning in the floor of Atod, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians. Wherefore, the name of it was called Abel Mitzarim.

Abel, the mourning Mitzarim is the Egyptians. The mourning of the Egyptians was beyond Jordan. So they called the place of the mourning of the Egyptians.

And evidently they didn't enter into Canaan across Jordan, not wanting possibly hostility with the Hittites or with some of the tribes of the land, but they come up in a peaceful mode. They stay trans-Jordan. They mourned there in a large company for seven days.

And then evidently a small contingency of Joseph and his family bring across the body of Jacob to the cave that they had purchased from Heth, the sons of Heth. And it says, And his sons did unto him according as he had commanded them. Verse 12, For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of Mephila, which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a burying place of Ephron the Hittite before memory.

And Joseph returned unto Egypt he and his brethren and all that went up with him to bury his father after he had buried his father. And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will perhaps hate us and will certainly will require us all the evil which we did unto him. And they sent a messenger to Joseph saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive I pray thee now the trespass of thy brethren and their sin, for they did unto thee evil.

And now we pray thee forgive the trespass of thy servants, of the servants of the God of thy father. Now and Joseph begins to weep. Now the brothers are still guilty after all these years.

And they're saying, Well, now that dad is dead, Joseph, maybe he was just being nice to us because dad was alive. You want to break dad's heart now that dad is dead. Maybe he's going to get us now.

You remember Esau had said, When my father dies, I'm going to kill Jacob and then all my heart will have rest. And they're thinking, You know, boy, I hope we haven't read this guy wrong all these times. Now that the father's gone, will the son really love us? And you know, I think that we all relate to that because we have the son of another father who has pledged his love to us without condition.

If we come to him by faith and we ask forgiveness of sin, judicially, heaven then has pronounced upon us that we're justified, glorified, sanctified. And yet, I think because his love is unlike any love we've ever known, even in our relationship with God's son, sometimes we struggle and think, well, maybe now he's

going to withdraw his love. Maybe now that circumstances have turned this way and I failed or I've made a mistake or I've fallen, that he will withdraw his love.

We're suspicious too, aren't we? And I think how it must break the heart of God. I believe sometimes he almost weeps as he desires to lavish his love on us and we're so slow to respond sometimes, even as Christians. You know, if one of my kids at home was always trembling when they're around me, Do you still love me today, Dad? You know, I ate cookies without asking you yesterday, you know, or I was, you know, I was playing with the television when I was supposed to be doing my homework.

Do you still love me, Dad? You know, I'm not worthy of your love. And, you know, if I had a kid that was doing it, it would break my heart. And his love is not like any human love.

There is no barometer to measure it on because it's holy like he is. It is completely separate from all else that exists. And his mercy and his love and his grace is born out of his very holiness.

And it comes to us not to be compared with any other love that's known. The ancient rabbis said God loves us because he loves us. That was the best answer they could come up with.

There's no reason to it. He loves us, not because we deserve to be loved. He loves us because of who he is.

And you see, we're used to conditional love. We're used to loving somebody. You know, if you like fishing and somebody and you meet a girl and she likes fishing and you like football and she likes football and you hate shopping and she hates shopping, you fall in love with this girl.

She's smart. She's intelligent. She's got all the same, you know, priorities you do.

I mean, you know, our love is so conditional. We, you know, someone elicits our love from us. There's something in that person that draws our love from us because there's some quality, there's something in them we appreciate.

And then they disappoint us or they do something we didn't expect them to do or were there not who we thought they were. And then there isn't so much eliciting our love anymore. You know, human love is like that.

Well, there isn't anything in us that elicited God's love. He did never love us because there was something lovable in us. He loved us solely because of who he is and because of his plan from the foundation of the world to offer up his son.

He did not love us because we were lovable. He loved us because he was a lover of men's souls. And it leaves us in a position as we hear of his love and of his grace of being suspicious.

And I think of how many that, you know, because they have learned to judge Jesus Christ by the church or by Christians. And then they take that and they and they lay that on Christ. And they think, well, that must be the way Jesus is, because that's the way Christians are.

And that's the way the church is. And they got all these rules and regulations. You have to dress this way.

You have to do this. You have to do that. And they and they get this idea of who Christ is and say, well, I don't want to be a Christian then.

No, who he is is separate from anything we've ever known. That's what holiness is. His mercy is holy.

His love is holy. His grace is holy. And it comes for a reason that we will never understand.

We just have to believe in it. We have to get out of the boat and walk on the water or we will never experience his love and grace because there is no reason that we can grasp with our logic as to why he loves us. He loves us because he loves us.

But it leaves us suspicious like these men. They're doubting. Maybe he's going to get us now.

Joseph, when he hears it again, we're told that he wept. Five or six times were told that he weeps. You know, Psalm 56 says that God keeps record of all of our tears.

We see it here in Joseph's life continually. We're told he wept when they spoke that to him. His brethren also went and fell down before his face, and they said, Behold, we are thy servants.

And Joseph said unto them, Fear not. Am I in the place of God? You know, because he knew that vengeance belongs. I'm not here to take vengeance.

You know, God is the judge. He and he's going to tell them again. You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good.

You know, sometimes when we have somebody in a situation where they're groveling a little bit, particularly if we know that for their good, they need to grovel a little bit. We can be of the mind where we can make them squeeze them just a little, you know, just while they while they're here, Lord, I'll help you help them learn their lesson. You know, vengeance belongs to you, Lord, but you get them and I'll be your instrument.

You know, Joseph, there's none of that in him. He's a remarkable character. Am I in the place of God? Romans says this.

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath. For it is written, Vengeance is mine and I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him.

If he thirst, give him the drink. For in so doing, thou shalt heap coals upon his head. You know, it says this is a divine matter.

It's not unto us to mete out vengeance upon other human beings. And I know we would like to sometimes. Am I in the place of God? As for you, you thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good to bring to pass as it is this day and to save many people alive.

Now, therefore, fear ye not. I will nourish you and your little ones. And he comforted them and spake kindly under them.

And Joseph dwelled in Egypt, he and his father's house. And Joseph lived a hundred and ten years. Now, Jacob died when Joseph was fifty six years old.

He's one hundred and ten now. This is fifty four years after his dad died. When he took his dad to bury him in Canaan, it was the first time he had been in Canaan in thirty nine years.

He had left Canaan in a caravan sold to the Midianites. He had returned in a caravan with pomp and royalty and a chariot and an army. And now, fifty four years later, it's his turn, one hundred and ten years old, to pass off the scene.

Joseph saw Ephraim's sons to the third generation, his great grandchildren, and the children also of Manasseh, the son of Manasseh. So Ephraim's, it seems, the great, great grandchildren and of Manasseh, the great grandchildren. They were brought up upon Joseph's knees.

Well, how much fun, you know, kids deserve to be around their grandparents. And if you're here, you're a grandparent. You take opportunity of the time you have with those kids because grandparents are special to kids.

And what you do and what you say weighs greatly on their little hearts. And you stand, a great opportunity stands before you to minister Christ to your grandchildren because of how much they respect you. They know that you are their dad's dad or you're their mom's mom.

So that means you have clout because they're kids and they still understand a mom and dad have clout. And if you're a mom's mom, you really have clout. So with grandchildren, there's great love.

Besides, you can spoil them and then go home and leave them with their mom and dad. But your testimony of Jesus is very powerful to the grandchildren. Imagine Joseph here with his grandchildren and his great-grandchildren and his great-great-grandchildren.

Imagine the kids, you know, saying, how old is he? When Joshua was little, we were visiting my in-laws in the West Coast and Kathy's dad has all, you know, wrinkles, crow's feet around his eyes and everything. And little Ryan, one of the grandkids, was sitting at the table and said, why does grandpa look like an alligator? Kids, you can imagine great-great-grandchildren sitting there with old Joseph. Imagine him with white hair or no hair, crow's feet, speaking to them about the things he heard from Jacob.

When he was a boy of Isaac and of Abraham and of Shem and of Noah and of Adam and of the history of redemption of the world before the fall. Imagine the things that he had to say to these kids. And Joseph said to his brethren, I'm dying, but God will surely visit you and bring you out of this land and to the land which he swore to Abraham and to Isaac and to Jacob.

And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel saying, God will surely visit you. You shall carry up my bones from this place. Now he knows that is, you know, he's asking for his remains to be carried up.

He doesn't want to be placed in a pyramid. He doesn't want to be put in a monument. His heart is in Canaan.

His life at this point in time is in Egypt. He was called by God to be an administrator there. And by the way, as you look at the great men in the Old Testament, whether it seems it was Abraham or Joseph or Moses or David, Daniel, Solomon, none of them were Bible teachers or pastors.

They were all administrators. I encourage you in the business world and in the working world where you are to take note that the majority of God's great men through the scriptures were administrators. They were men that excelled in the task that God called them to.

And because of that. Promotion came from God on their behalf. He took an oath.

I'm dying. God's going to bring you out of this land and bring you the land that he swore to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you.

You shall carry up my bones from hence. So Joseph died being one hundred and ten years old and they embalmed him. And he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

Now, a very strange way to end the book. We have covered in the study of Genesis half of the Old Testament history from creation. We are halfway through the Old Testament by the time we come to Joseph being placed in a coffin.

The period of time that is now ahead of us from Genesis to Exodus, in fact, from between Genesis forty six three, where God appears under Jacob one last time and Exodus three, two is a very dark period. Four hundred years that God does not appear to anyone until he appears to Moses. We have no record of God appearing to Joseph ever.

We have covered half of the Old Testament history in our study. Joseph's coffin ends up to be a mute testimony laying in Egypt as things become difficult and they are working there in the brick kilns and they are under hard labor. There is this coffin that will sit there and speak to their hearts of a promise of a better place.

You know, as we look at the the book of Genesis, remember, Jesus said many will come from the east and the west and sit down at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom. Won't that be some dinner? Won't it be amazing to sit down with them and say now in chapter forty six where it says that what was that talking about? You know, won't it be amazing to sit with them and to look at these men, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph? Reuben, you're the one that Jacob. Yeah, that was me.

It seems sad that the book begins in the beginning. God created the heavens and earth and it ends with a coffin in Egypt. But there it is harking of hope.

It is looking towards resurrection. It is looking towards life. Joseph wants his coffin to be carried up and put in Canaan because when the Messiah comes, he wants to wake up at the right place.

He doesn't want to have to walk from Egypt to Jerusalem to see him. He wants to get up where he is going to touch down.

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