

(Through the Bible) Genesis 47-50

by Chuck Smith

The sermon explores Joseph's journey from slavery to power in Egypt, highlighting God's providence during a time of famine and the eventual reunion with his family.

Duration: 1:33:55

Scripture: Genesis 15:13-14, Genesis 49:3-7, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Joseph's Story", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker references the story of Abraham in Genesis 15, where God reveals to him that his descendants will go down to Egypt for 400 years before being brought out with great substance. The speaker then moves on to the story of Joseph, who interprets dreams for the butler and the baker while in jail. Joseph asks the butler to remember him when he is restored to his position, as Joseph is able to interpret dreams. Eventually, Joseph is brought before Pharaoh and interprets his dream of the seven fat cows and seven skinny cows, as well as the seven stalks of wheat. The sermon concludes with a prayer for the congregation to be transformed by God's Spirit and to become a testimony for His glory.

Transcript

So we turn in our Bibles now to the 47th chapter of Genesis. Joseph has been sold by his brothers as a slave to the traders going to Egypt. In Egypt he is resold and purchased by a man named Potiphar who was the chief captain of the Pharaoh's Guard.

God prospered him and blessed him in Potiphar's house. Potiphar's house was blessed because of Joseph's being there. He made Joseph the head over everything he had.

But Potiphar's wife set her eye upon Joseph, sought to seduce him. When he refused her seductive ways, she became angry, accused him of attempted rape, and Joseph was placed in prison in Egypt with an indeterminate sentence. There in prison God blessed him and he came in favor of the captain over the prison and he turned the whole prison over to Joseph.

And Joseph ran the affairs of the prison. And while he was there in prison, the king's butler, chief butler, and the chief baker of the Pharaoh both got into trouble with the Pharaoh. Perhaps there was an attempted assassination plot, maybe a poisoned bit of bread or something that the chief butler brought to the Pharaoh and the taster who tasted it dropped over dead and so they don't know who did it, the baker or the butler, and so they're both thrown in prison until the matter can be determined.

While they are in prison they meet Joseph and Joseph becomes acquainted with them. They, both of them, one morning look very sad and when Joseph questions the reason for their sadness, they inform him of these dreams that they have had. The butler seeing a vine with three branches and clusters of grapes and he squeezed the grapes into a cup and carried it to the Pharaoh.

Joseph said, oh that's a good dream. It means in three days you're going to be restored to your old position and you'll be bearing the Pharaoh's cup to him once again. And when you come before the Pharaoh, tell him about me, will you? I've got a bum rap.

I don't deserve to be here. I'm a Hebrew. The woman lied about me and try and help me out if you would.

So, the baker said, oh I had a dream too and I had three baskets of dainties that I had baked for the Pharaoh and I was carrying them on my head. But as I was carrying them to the Pharaoh, the birds came and ate the dainties. Joseph said, you're in trouble man.

Three days and the Pharaoh will have your head. And so evidently the baker was the one who put the poison in the bread or whatever the plot was and he was discovered. The baker was put to death, but the butler was returned to his position as the chief of the butlers bearing the cup to the Pharaoh once again.

But the butler forgot all about Joseph for two years. But then after two years, the Pharaoh had a weird dream that troubled him. And he called in all of his wise men and astrologers, soothsayers to interpret for him his dream, none of them being able to do so.

Suddenly the memory of the butler was triggered and he said, oh I've done a horrible thing. There's a beautiful fellow down in jail. He's a Hebrew and this fellow is able to interpret dreams.

He interpreted the dream of the butler and the baker and myself and it came out just like he interpreted and he can interpret your dream for you. And so they sent for Joseph who shaved and took a bath and came in before the Pharaoh. And the Pharaoh said, I understand you can tell dreams.

He said, well I'm in touch with God and God knows everything and God can reveal the dream and the secret to the Pharaoh. So the Pharaoh explained his dream, which was in double. There was first of all, the seven fat cows grazing by the Nile river.

And as they were peacefully grazing, seven skinny, scrawny cows came up out of the river and ate up the fat cows and they weren't any fatter after they ate them. And then he saw the seven stocks of wheat. They were full corn and beautiful.

And then there came up after them, seven blasted and withered ears of corn and the seven blasted wither ones ate up the healthy ones. Now you can almost understand cows eating up each other, but it's hard to understand wheat eating up other wheat, but that's the way he dreamed it. And of course, dreams do weird things and it doesn't have to make sense in a dream, you know.

And so uh Joseph said, the Lord has showed to the Pharaoh that which is going to transpire in the land of Egypt. The dreams are one, though they are diverse, yet it's one meaning. And the reason for the repetition is that it is sure God is confirming it to the Pharaoh.

There are going to be seven years of plenty in which the earth is going to just really produce plenty, but it'll be followed by seven years of famine and the famine will be so great that it'll eat up all of the surplus of the

good years. Now he said the Pharaoh should appoint a wise man over the kingdom that during the years in which the surplus exists, that he might gather together all of the surplus of the good years into barns and into granaries, in order that during the lean famine years that are coming, they'll be able to distribute it to the people and thus survive the great famine that is coming. The king appointed Joseph himself second in Egypt and over this project, because he said no one is wiser than you, no one else was able to tell me the meaning of the dream.

And so Joseph became second in Egypt. During the seven years, he gathered together and kept the record of the amounts of grain until they gathered such an abundance, they couldn't even keep record anymore. They just piled it in and didn't even try to count the bushels anymore.

And then began the seven bad years and the famine extended beyond the borders of Egypt and up in Canaan where Joseph's family lived. Jacob looked at his sons and he said, why are you guys looking at each other? I understand they have wheat down in Egypt, go down and buy us some. And so ten of Joseph's brothers came down to Egypt to buy wheat.

Joseph recognized them when they came in, they didn't recognize him. He gave them a bad time, accused them of being spies, kept one of them hostage while he sent the other nine back and said, don't bother to come again. Unless you bring your youngest brother with you the next time and prove you are not spies.

After a lot of haggling, Jacob, first of all, totally unwilling to let Benjamin go, finally relented and Judah became surety for Benjamin. And they came down again to Joseph to buy wheat. And after a series of incidences, Joseph revealed himself to his brothers who he really was.

And he told them to bring their father down to Egypt because there were five more years of famine that were yet to follow. And Joseph said, I will nourish you and take care of you here. And so that brings us up to chapter 47.

Then Joseph came and told the Pharaoh and said, my father and my brothers and their flocks and their herds and all that they have are come out of the land of Canaan and behold, they're in the land of Goshen. Now the land of Goshen was actually near the Nile Delta. It was actually in the Nile Delta and it was in the northeast part of Egypt.

For the most part, the Egyptians had populated the south and western part of Egypt. But up here in the Nile Delta was a very fertile land. It was great for cattle grazing and the Egyptians didn't care much for cattle grazing or sheep herding.

And so it was a area that wasn't very populated as far as the Egyptians went and yet very fertile areas. So Joseph placed his family there in the area of Goshen. And he took some of his brothers, that is five of his brothers, and he brought them before the Pharaoh.

And the Pharaoh said unto his brothers, what is your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, your servants are shepherds, both we and our fathers. Now the shepherds were an abomination to the Egyptians for some reason or other. And yet there is a period in Egyptian history where they had pharaohs that were called the Hyksos kings.

Hyksos meaning shepherds. And it is felt that it was at this time that Joseph and the children of Israel were in Egypt that the dynasty of the Hyksos kings existed. And thus there wasn't at this particular time such a

feeling against shepherds as there usually did exist in Egypt.

And they moreover said to Pharaoh, for to sojourn in the land are we come. In other words, we aren't coming as immigrant status. We're not trying to move in and take over your land.

Our purpose isn't to stay here. We're just coming down to sojourn in the land. Pointing out the fact that they were shepherds, pointing out the fact that they had brought their own herds and their own cattle and not to immigrate into the land, but just to sojourn in the land.

Now, they may and they may not have known how long the sojourn was going to be. It all depends on whether or not they read the scriptures. Now, if they themselves had read the scriptures, they would know that they're going to be in Egypt for 400 years.

That's a pretty good sojourn. But you remember back in the 15th chapter of Genesis where Abraham saw this vision, he cut up these pieces of the rams and so forth and laid them out before the Lord. And he fought the birds off all day that tried to eat the carcasses.

And then in the night, a fear of darkness came upon Abraham and he saw the fire as it went between the pieces of the sacrifice. And then the Lord explained to Abraham what was going on, how that his descendants were going to go down into Egypt and they would be there for 400 years, but then God would bring them out with great substance and so forth. So, the 400 years in Egypt was actually something that God had already revealed to Abraham.

It was a part of the record, a part of the scriptures. And had they been up in the scriptures, they would have known that the time of the sojourn in Egypt would be 400 years. This, of course, is the fulfillment of that prophecy that God did give to Abraham back there in Genesis.

And so, we've come to sojourn in the land. For thy servants have no pasture for their flocks, for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan. Now, therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen.

So, they are making now the formal request from the Pharaoh that they might dwell in the land of Goshen. Because of the famine in their own land, they ran out of pasturage for their flocks. And Pharaoh is speaking to Joseph saying, thy father and thy brothers are come unto you.

And the land of Egypt is before them. In the best of the land, make your father and brothers to dwell. In the land of Goshen, let them dwell.

And if you know of any of them who are experts in their occupation, actually, as herdsmen, then put them over all of my flocks. For the Pharaoh also had a great deal of cattle. And Joseph brought in then Jacob, his father.

And he set him before the Pharaoh. And Jacob blessed the Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, how old are you? So, he brought in now his ancient father.

And Jacob immediately sort of takes command. Jacob blesses the Pharaoh. Now, the Bible declares that the lesser is blessed by the greater.

In referring to how that when Abraham came back from the victory over the five kings and Melchizedek came out from Salem to meet him, how that he blessed Abraham. And in the book of Hebrews, it is pointed out that the lesser is blessed by the greater. And so, Jacob in blessing the Pharaoh, as he comes

in, he blesses the Pharaoh, pronounces a blessing upon him.

And thus, immediately his position is recognized. And the Pharaoh says, how old are you? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, the days of the years of my pilgrimage, beautiful way to express it, are a hundred and thirty years. Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life.

And yet I have not attained to the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. I'm a hundred and thirty years old. My days have been few and evil, hard days.

But even so, I haven't attained the years. Evidently, he was weakening and he knew he would never make it as long as his dad did. His dad lived to be a hundred and seventy-five and his great, and his grandfather a hundred and eighty.

So, I'm not going to make it as far as they did. Actually, we see now a declining of longevity. Each generation is living shorter and shorter after the flood.

Those that shem and those that survived the flood seemed to live for a long period. But immediately we see a drop off in the longevity, probably as the result of this protective canopy of water being removed from around the earth. As long as there was that protective canopy of water in space, it no doubt protected the earth from much of the cosmic radiation.

It is the theory today of many of the scientists that the aging process is actually caused by this cosmic bombardment that our bodies are subjected to daily. All of these cosmic little neutrinos and all that come shooting through the earth and come to us from outer space, they go right through your body. But somehow they upset your cell structure so that in time they begin to create mutant cells and they begin to create the aging process.

If it weren't for this cosmic bombardment, it is possible that the body would continue to rejuvenate itself for much longer periods of time. But such was the case prior to the flood. After the flood, there was a definite diminishing of the lifespan.

And so now here at 130, Jacob's an old man. Whereas before the flood, he had just been thinking about getting married at that point and starting to raise his family. And Jacob blessed the Pharaoh.

So again, he blessed him and he went out from before the Pharaoh and Joseph placed his father and his brothers and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Ramesses, as Pharaoh had commanded. So the area of Goshen where later on, under slave labor, the Israelites would build the city of Ramesses. And so in this area, on the delta of the Nile River, the good land for pasturage, especially, there's where they established themselves.

And there was no bread in all the land for the famine was very sore. So that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine. And Joseph gathered up all of the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan for the corn which they bought.

And Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. That is, he's selling the grain and so forth. He soon depleted.

The people didn't have any more money. So when their money failed in the land of Egypt and Canaan, the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, give us bread. Why should we die in your presence? We don't have

any more money.

And Joseph said, all right, give me your cattle. And I will give you for your cattle if your money fails. And so they entered into a bartering process where Joseph would give them wheat in exchange for their cattle.

And they brought their cattle unto Joseph. And Joseph gave them bread in exchange for their horses and for their flocks and the cattle and the herds and for the asses. And he fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year.

The following year, they came to him again and they said, we'll not hide it from our Lord. Our money is gone. You have all of our herds and cattle.

There's nothing left but our own bodies and our lands. So why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread. We and our land will be your servants and give us seed that we may live and not die, that the land not be desolate.

And so Joseph bought all of the land of Egypt for Pharaoh for the Egyptians sold every man his field because the famine prevailed over them, so that the land became Pharaoh's. And as for the people, he removed them to cities from one end of the borders of Egypt even to the other. Only the land of the priest he did not buy, for the priest had a portion assigned them of Pharaoh and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them.

Wherefore, they sold not their lands. Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh. Here is seed for you.

Now you will sow the land. And so it came to and it shall come to pass when you have your increase, you'll give a fifth part to Pharaoh and four parts shall be your own for seed in the field and for your food and for them of your households and for food for your little ones. And they said, You have saved our lives.

Let us find grace in the sight of my Lord. We will be Pharaoh's servants. So Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day.

That would be the time of Moses writing this account, that Pharaoh should have a fifth part except the land of the priest only, which became not Pharaoh's. So having sold or having spent all their money for food, then they traded all their cattle, their herds. When that was gone, then they traded their land.

Now Joseph made quite a equitable arrangement with them. It all now belongs to the Pharaoh. Now you stay on the land, you plant it and whatever you receive, one fifth or 20 percent goes to the Pharaoh.

You keep the rest. If you figured out how much you pay in taxes, hidden and otherwise, you'd find that they have a pretty good deal. Just having to pay 20 percent and that was all.

They had no investment. They didn't have to even purchase the seed. The seed was given to them of the Pharaoh and they got to keep four fifths of it.

Whereas one fifth or 20 percent came to the Pharaoh. And so the taxation then in Egypt became a general 20 percent across the board tax. That was it.

No more. And it should be enough to run any government. And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt in the country of Goshen and they have possessions there and they grew and multiplied exceedingly even now

while they are in Egypt.

God's hand of blessing is upon them as they grow and are multiplying exceedingly. Multiplying exceedingly. Yes, they multiplied at the rate of about six percent a year for a time and then it slowed down.

They remained in Egypt for 400 years. When they left Egypt, there were about two million of them that left. So 70 came down to Egypt.

400 years later, two million of them marched out. So when it says multiplied exceedingly, you can see that yes, indeed, that is what happened. But in dealing with population ratios, if they increased the population at the rate of five percent a year, in 200 years they would go from a hundred to over two million.

Now five percent a year isn't that much. It means only five children per 100 people. And that is not at all an unlikely kind of a population growth factor.

And so they increased at a, probably at about a three percent rate during the period of time that they were in Egypt. So that by the time they left Egypt 400 years later, the 70 that came down with Jacob multiplied into a great host of two million people led by Moses. 600,000 adult males above the age of 21.

So that figures in the women and for each man there's probably a woman. And then all of the children that they would have estimated about a two million population leaving Egypt under Moses. So multiplied indeed.

And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt for 17 years so that the whole age of Jacob was 147 years. When he appeared before the Pharaoh he said, how old are you old man? He said, I'm 130 years old. And so he lived another 17 years there in Egypt.

So his total years being 147. And the time drew near that Israel must die. And he called his son Joseph and said unto him, if I have now found grace in thy sight, put I pray thee thy hand under my thigh and deal kindly and truly with me.

Bury me not, I pray in Egypt. But I want to be buried with my fathers and you shall carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burying place. And he said, I will do as you have said.

And he said, swear unto me. And so he swore unto him and Israel bowed himself on the bed's head or on the headboard of the bed. Now Jacob about ready to die.

He's first of all concerned with his burial. He doesn't want to be buried in Egypt. His grandfather Abraham had bought a parcel of land.

A great grandfather. And he wants to be buried back there where Abraham had bought the parcel of land in the cave of Machpelah. Now, he asked Joseph to swear unto him, putting his hand under his thigh.

This is the same kind of an oath that Abraham demanded of Eliezer or his chief servant when he sent him back to Haran to get a bride for his son Isaac. He said, swear to me, put your hand under my thigh and swear to me. Now, the same thing is asked of Joseph by Jacob, that he would swear to him, don't bury me in the land of Egypt, carry me back where my fathers are buried, actually.

Where Leah was buried and the rest of his grandfather and grandmother and father and mother. So, it came to pass after these things that one told Joseph, behold, your father's sick. He's dying.

And so Joseph grabbed his two sons to go and visit his father for the last time. Manasseh and Ephraim. And one told Jacob and said, behold, your son Joseph is coming unto you.

And so Israel gathered together his strength and he sat up on the bed. And Jacob said to Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me. And he said unto me, behold, I will make thee fruitful and multiply thee and I will make of thee a multitude of people and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession.

And now thy two sons Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came into the land of Egypt, are mine. Even as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. And thy issue, whichecker you have after them, will be yours and will be called after the name of their brothers in their inheritance.

And as for me, when I came from Paddam, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way. And when there was yet but a little way to come to Bethlehem and I buried her there in the way of Ephraim, the same as Bethlehem. And Israel beheld Joseph's sons and said, who are these? And Joseph said to his father, they are my sons whom God has given me in this place.

And he said, bring them. I pray thee unto me and I will bless them. So as Joseph comes into his father, Jacob, first of all, rehearses to Joseph the fact that God met him in the area near Bethel, Luz, which was later called Bethel, the house of God.

And it was there that God promised to give unto Jacob and to his seed that land as an everlasting covenant. Now it is interesting that God gave to Abraham the promise, to Isaac the promise, and now to Jacob God spoke and gave the promise of this land. After Jacob, there is no account of God's appearing to any of the sons of Jacob to confirm the promise that he made.

God made the promise to Abraham, confirmed it to Isaac, confirmed it to Jacob. But now Joseph hears it from his dad, not from God directly. But now his father is relating to him the promise of God, how that God promised to me and to my seed that land, everlasting covenant.

And so he is relating it unto Joseph. Now he said, the two sons that have been born from you here in Egypt, I'm claiming them. They're going to be mine.

If you have any more children after this, they can be named after you. But these two I'm claiming for me, they're going to be just like Reuben and Simeon, and they will get their inheritance in the land. Now it was customary that the oldest son receive a double portion of the inheritance.

But here Jacob is promising to Joseph the double portion. The double portion will be in Ephraim and Manasseh. So he gets the double portion of the blessing from Jacob in that Ephraim and Manasseh, the two sons born of Joseph, will become tribes and will inherit the land as tribes.

By which we then see that there are more than 12 tribes of Israel, because Ephraim and Manasseh became tribes and received their inheritance in Israel. So Joseph becoming two, Ephraim and Manasseh, in reality there are 13 tribes in Israel. Now Jacob also said, any that are born after this, they're yours, but these two are mine.

So it is interesting that in one of the listings of the tribes, there is actually a listing of the tribe of Joseph. So if indeed there were descendants of Joseph and there was a tribe of Joseph, they did not receive any

actual inheritance in the land, but the inheritance went to Ephraim and Manasseh. But the land was divided into 12 portions and apportioned out to the 12 tribes.

But the 13th tribe was the tribe of Levi. They did not receive any portion in the land, but actually dwelt in about 48 cities that were given to the tribes of Levi, but no portion of the land was apportioned out to them. But it is interesting that we always read of 12 tribes.

You never read of the 13 tribes of Israel, but of the 12 tribes of Israel. And whenever there is a listing of the tribes, there are always a listing of only 12. At some times one tribe or another is deleted from the listing of the 12.

For instance, when we read of the 12 tribes of Israel that are sealed in the book of Revelation chapter 7, the tribe of Dan is missing from that list. Usually in the listing of the tribes, the tribe of Levi is missing from the list. But Levi is inserted in Revelation chapter 7 and the tribe of Dan is deleted from the listing of the tribe as those who will be sealed during the great tribulation, the 144,000 sealed to be spared a portion at least of the great tribulation that is coming.

12 is a symbolic number. It is the number of human government. And that is the reason why you have 12 apostles, 12 tribes, though there may be more than the 12.

In talking about governmental purposes, there are always 12 listed and only 12 for the purpose of human type of government. 12 is the number of human government. So, the 12 tribes of Israel, though in reality there were 13 actual tribes or possibly if indeed the tribe of Joseph existed separate from Ephraim and Manasseh, you had 14 tribes, but never a listing of 14, only of 12.

So, here he claims the two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. They are just going to be like Reuben and Simeon and they shall receive their inheritance in the land. And so then Israel and no doubt his eyes were failing him and he saw just the shadowy figure of Joseph's two sons who at this time were probably in their 20s.

They weren't just little kids. They were probably in their 20s at this time because Joseph by this time was 56 years old. And so his sons are in their early 20s at this point.

And so Jacob sees these two others and he said, who are these? And Joseph answered, these are my two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. And Joseph thought that they bring them near to him and he kissed them and he hugged them. And Israel said to Joseph, I had given up ever seeing your face and lo, God has even shown me your children.

He had really figured that he had never be able to see the face of Joseph again, but God in his grace, not only did he get to see Joseph again, but Joseph's children. And Joseph brought them out from between his knees and he bowed himself with a face to the earth and Joseph took them both. Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand and brought them near unto him.

And Israel stretched out his hand and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly for Manasseh was the first born. So as Joseph brought the two sons up to his father in order that they might receive a blessing from his father, he brought them up so that Jacob's right hand would rest upon Manasseh and his left hand would rest upon Ephraim because Manasseh was the older and thus the first blessing to go to the older son. But as he brought

them up in this order that the old man might just lay his hands on the two boys, the old man crossed his hands and he put his right hand over here on Ephraim and his left hand over here on Manasseh and began to bless them.

And Joseph said, wait a minute, you've got a mistake here. And he said, let me alone, son, I know what I'm doing. And so Ephraim was then blessed and given a place of prominence over Manasseh, though he was not the first born.

Now, this is not the first time this happened. Even with Jacob himself, the old man that was doing this, he was not the first born. His brother Esau was first born and yet the blessing had come to him.

And so now he is doing the same thing with his grandsons, crossing his hands and pronouncing the greater blessing upon Ephraim. And he blessed Joseph and said, God, before whom my father Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long and to this day. That's an interesting phrase, isn't it? Recognizing that his provision, the bottom line had come from God.

Sure, he'd been out there working. Sure, he'd been out there taking care of the cattle and the sheep and so forth. And yet, when it comes right down to it, I depend upon God for my sustenance.

If God doesn't sustain me, I'm not going to be sustained. God has fed me all the days of my life. And the angel which redeemed me.

Now, this is interesting. He blessed Joseph and said, God, before whom my father Abraham and Isaac did walk. That is, God the Father.

The God which fed me all the days of my life to this day. That would be the work of the Holy Spirit in the ministry to the saints. The angel which redeemed me from all evil.

That would be the work of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer. And so, here you actually have the Trinity of God being mentioned in the prayer of Abraham. God of my father, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The God who has fed me. The angel of the Lord who redeemed me. Bless the lads.

And let my name be named on them. In the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac. And let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

And when Joseph saw that his father had laid the right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him. And he held up his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head, to Manasseh's head. And Joseph said to his father, Not so, father, for this is the firstborn.

Put your right hand on his head. And his father refused and said, I know it, my son, I know it. And he also shall become a people.

And he also shall be great, but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he. And his seed shall become a multitude of nations. And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh.

And he set Ephraim before Manasseh. And Israel said to Joseph, Behold, I am dying, but God shall be with you and bring you again unto the land of your fathers. Moreover, I have given to you one portion above your brothers, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.

And so one portion more, two portions going to Joseph, and thus the birthright being passed unto Joseph, his receiving of the two portions. And Jacob called his sons and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days. This is probably the grandest hour of the old man Jacob.

He had had some pretty rough hours. Life had been hard. As he said to the Pharaoh, My days have been 130 years, and few and evil are the days of my pilgrimage.

They have been tough years, but he rose to the grandest hour in the hour of his death. Gathering his sons together just before he dies in order that he might prophesy to them and of them that which should befall them in the years to come. Gather yourselves together and hear, ye sons of Jacob, and hearken to Israel your father.

Reuben, and the boys now standing around the bed, probably in order of their births. Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power. It should have been, Reuben, the firstborn, and yet you are as unstable as water.

You will not excel. And it is true that none from the tribe of Reuben ever did excel in anything, just wasn't there. Later on, Reuben desired to receive his portion and his inheritance really outside of the land, and he never did excel.

The tribe never did excel. Because you went to thy father's bed and you defiled it, you went up to my couch. Actually, you remember that earlier in the story, it tells how that Reuben went to his father's concubine, Bilhah.

And though Jacob didn't say much about it then, here at his death he brings it up and points out this characteristic of weakness, which will be a mark and a trait of Reuben, unstable as water, keeping him from excelling. Simeon and Levi are brothers. They are instruments of cruelty in their house.

O my soul, come not thou into their secret, into their assembly, my honor. Be not thou united, for in their anger they killed a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall. It is also translated in the Revised, they hand-strung an ox.

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." So, the tribes of Simeon and Levi were not to dwell together. They were brothers.

They seemed to be closer than any of the other brothers. These two seemed to pair off together. But the common bond between them wasn't a good bond.

It was the fact that they were both ill-tempered, violent tempers. Cursed be their anger and their self-will. But that seemed to bind them together.

But when you come into the land, you're going to be scattered. The tribe of Simeon was really scattered through the land. And of course, Levi never did receive any inheritance within the land, but dwelt in the 48 cities that were appointed unto Levi.

And so, the prophecy was fulfilled. Now, when he gets to Judah, Judah, thou art he whom your brothers shall praise. The word Judah does mean praise.

Thy hands shall be at the neck of thine enemies. Thy father's children shall bow down before thee. So, he's now prophesying really that from the tribe of Judah shall come the kingly reign.

Your father's brothers will bow down before you. Evidently, with Judah, there was a real change of character. Now, when Joseph's brothers were thinking about killing him and just leaving him in the pit to die, when they saw the caravan coming towards Egypt, it was Judah that suggested that they sell him to the people in the caravan.

Probably, not knowing Reuben's plan to come back and to get him out of the pit, and knowing the brother's full intention to just kill him, figured to save his life by selling him, and at least he'll be alive. He can be sold as a slave to Egypt, but at least he'll be alive. And the suggestion of Judah was probably to spare the life of Joseph.

But even over this, he no doubt had remorse. And later on, when Jacob said, I won't let Benjamin go down, Judah said, Dad, I'll be the surety for him. I'll hold me responsible.

And he was probably the most responsible of the sons. Now, when they came to Egypt and Joseph put his silver cup in Benjamin's sack, and when they came and they unloaded the sacks and they saw the cup and they said, we don't want you all. We'll just take this kid back and let him be the slave.

Judah came back and he said, look, he said, I'll give myself for my brother. I'll become your slave. Let him go back to his dad.

And Judah became the spokesman. And he stepped up and showed really a lot of courage, a lot of real metal at this point. So that this is beginning to develop in Judah.

And now Jacob carries it on in the prophecy. And begins to prophesy the fact that Judah shall actually become a ruling tribe. The father's children will bow down before thee.

Judah is a lion's wealth. And 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.

And so Judah became really the symbol of Judah was the lion. And there began then to be the prophecy of the lion of the tribe of Judah that would come. Of course, it was fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

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. Now this prophecy was fulfilled, fulfilled Shiloh indicating or be speaking of the Messiah that was to come.

The Savior. The word Shiloh came from the root of peace, shalom. And until peace comes.

And the peace, the prince of peace, of course, Jesus Christ. Now the scepter did not depart from Judah until the coming of the Lord. But 30 years after Jesus was crucified or 40 years after the scepter departed from Judah.

So that means that the Messiah would have to have come sometime before 70 AD in order that this prophecy of Jacob be truly fulfilled. Otherwise, the whole prophetic thing is off. So we know that Shiloh did come.

The peace of Israel did come. Even Jesus Christ. And when he came, he said, if you only knew the things that belong to your peace in this thy day, but they are hid from your eyes.

The day of his coming as the Messiah, the official day of his coming as the Messiah, his proclamation, as the disciples were crying Hosanna, Hosanna, as he came to the city of Jerusalem, looking over the city that day, weeping over the city. He cried, if you only knew the things that belong to your peace, Shalom, till the Shiloh, Shalom come. And so unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Actually, he will be the ruler binding his fall unto him. That is the Shiloh unto Christ, the gathering of the people, binding his fall into the vine and his asses colt into the choice vine. He washed his garments in wine and clothes in the blood of grapes.

His eyes shall be red with wine and his teeth white with milk. Zebulun the next shall dwell at the haven of the sea or towards the sea and shall be a haven of ships and his borders shall be unto Sidon. So Zebulun was given that area in the northern part of Israel, portion of which is now Lebanon.

However, he never did take the full portion that was promised. Ishkar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens and he saw that rest was good in the land. It was pleasant and he bowed his shoulder to bear and became a servant unto tribute.

In other words, he's strong as an ox, but he's lazy. And thus a characteristic of the tribe of Ishkar was though they were strong, yet they were lazy and thus became a servant to tribute. Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel.

The word Dan means judge. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path that biteth the horse's heels so that his riders shall fall backwards. Now, Dan, of course, inherited the northernmost part of the land in the area just at the base of Mount Hermon and the area which is today the Hula Valley, which lies between the mountains of Lebanon and the Golan Heights.

This valley of the upper Jordan upwards from the Sea of Galilee in this area of upper Jordan was the area where the tribe of Dan settled. Clear enough that the ruins of the city of Dan is just about four or five miles from the base of Mount Hermon. So, you're clear up in the upper end of the valley.

And Dan was a tough tribe and did protect the nation Israel from the attacks of those nations coming down from the north. Now, here in the midst of the whole thing, verse 18, not related to any of the prophecies to his sons, Jacob cried, I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord. The word salvation, O Lord, or translated salvation, O Lord, is actually Yahshua or the name Jesus.

I have waited for Jesus, Yahshua, or the Lord's salvation or Jehovah's salvation. And so, it's very interesting. This is the first mention of the word salvation in the Bible.

And its mention is just in the prophecy of Jacob as he cries out now in the midst of his prophesying over his sons, I have waited for Yahshua. I have waited for Jesus, or later Joshua, but Yahshua is the Hebrew word here. And it's translated thy salvation, O Lord.

The tribe of Gad. Gad means a troop, but a troop shall overcome him, and he shall overcome at the last. Gad, again with the Reubenites, took up inheritance outside of the land of Israel.

And they were overcome early, but yet the prophecy is in the end they will overcome. Out of Asher, his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties. And so, the baker tribe, those that would go into the baking industry, yielding royal dainties, great pastries.

And some of the tribe of Asher are no doubt over there today, because man, some of the greatest bread and pastries you've ever eaten in your life. Naphtali, his hind let loose, he giveth goodly words. Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall.

The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him, but his bow abode in strength. And the irons of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob. From thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel.

Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee, and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breast and of the womb, the blessing of thy father hath prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren." Joseph separate from his brethren, a beautiful individual, the great blessing that was pronounced upon him. He was a fruitful bough, he would be a fruitful person.

Tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh became great and fruitful tribes. A bough whose branches run over the wall. So, not only being blessed, but becoming a blessing to others.

And though he was to go through great trials and did endure great trials, the archers have sorely grieved him, shot at him, hated him. All of those arrows of hatred and bitterness and jealousy and envy and temptation and false imprisonment and lies shot at him, and yet his bow abode in strength. No retaliation, no striking back.

Willing to commit judgment to God, to whom judgment belongs. Turning the other cheek, his bow abode in strength, and the secret of his strength was that his hands, the hands of his arms were strengthened by the mighty hand of Jehovah. God was holding his hand.

God was giving him the capacity to restrain. His capacity was not a natural capacity, it was a supernatural capacity. He was being held by God in restraint.

And God can hold us in restraint. I think that we as Christians too often are willing to excuse the demonstrations of our old nature, saying, well, that's just me. Yes, that's just you.

Curse you. God wants to make anew you. God wants to help you.

God wants to strengthen you. And we're not to just live in a peaceful coexistence with our old nature and with our old man. We by the Spirit are to mortify the deeds of the flesh.

And we just can't pass things off as, well, that's just the way I was born. That's the way you were born in corruption from your parents. But you've been born now by incorruptible seed.

You're supposed to be different. And if you're not different, something's wrong with you. Or wrong with your experience with God.

Because anyone who is truly born of God is going to manifest a changed life and a changed nature. The purpose of being born again is that you might have a new nature, a nature now after the Spirit, no longer

after the flesh. That which was born of the flesh is flesh.

Crucify it. Renounce it. Learn to hate it in order that we might live and walk now after the new nature, the nature of Christ, born of His incorruptible seed.

I now have a new nature. For if any man is in Christ, he's a new creature. The old things are passed away.

Everything has become new. And if you're still going around manifesting the old nature all the time and giving way to the old nature and giving place to the old nature, something is definitely wrong with your relationship with God. And you need to repent and reckon that old man to be dead.

Don't coddle it. So many people are proud of their nasty temperaments. Proud of their ability to tell people off.

And they've given away so many pieces of their mind. There's very little left. Nothing to be proud of.

It's something to be ashamed of. God, forgive me. I reckon that old man, that old nature to be dead.

I don't want him. I don't want any part of him. I desire that new nature after Christ, that nature of love and tenderness and forgiving and kindness and compassion.

I desire that Christ be formed in me and His likeness within me and thus give no place to the flesh, make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its desires. And as Christians, unfortunately, too many are making provision for the flesh to fulfill its desires. And you're not really walking after the newness of life in Christ Jesus, walking after the Spirit.

And thus, you are a monstrosity. You're still a spiritual infant, though maybe you trace your born again experience back some 15, 20, 25 years. You have never developed spiritually.

You still don't know how to talk. You still can't walk. You're still there rattling your crib and demanding that people bow and acquiesce to your wishes and your demands, feed you when you're hungry, rock you when you're upset, and just to take care of you as a little infant.

And you've never grown. You've never developed. And that's all right for a stage of your Christian experience when you're first coming into Christ and all.

That's fine that you be coddled and taken care of and be fed and all, but it's time that you grow up. But spiritual immaturity is a great tragedy. And as the Scripture said, at the time when you should be actually able to eat meat, you still have need of milk, because you've not been able to take meat up till now.

And even now, He said, you're not able to bear it. So, I still have to feed you with the milk of the Word. But at the beginning, you are to desire the sincere milk of the Word that you might grow.

But there comes a time when we grow beyond the bottle itself and we need nourishment other than just the bottle. You need to grow up. You need to renounce the old nature and the old man.

And we need to begin to seek that nature of Christ to be perfected in us, that we might be what God wants us to be. And so, Joseph, the secret of his strength was God was holding him. God will hold you.

God will help you. God will give you control. You don't have to be Simeon and Levi.

You can have the control of God. Joseph, blessed, special blessings, the blessings of your father have prevailed. The blessings of the progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hill, they'll be on the head of Joseph.

Benjamin shall raven as a wolf. In the morning, he shall devour the prey and at night he will divide the spoil. Benjamin was tough.

It was one of the toughest tribes in Israel. They were the greatest fighters. Their career was marked by disaster.

They were almost eliminated at one time as a tribe in Israel because of wickedness. All of the tribes of Israel gathered against Benjamin and were scarcely able to defeat them. They were so tough.

From Benjamin came the first king of Israel, even Saul. From Benjamin came the great apostle Paul. Tough characters indeed.

Able to endure just far beyond the normal, enduring capacity of a person. A tribe of Benjamin. And these are the twelve tribes of Israel.

And this is it, that their father spoke unto them and blessed them. Every one 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 Ephron the Hittite. In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burying place. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife.

And there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife. And there I buried Leah. The purchase of the field and of the cave that is therein was from the children of Heth.

And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into his bed and he yielded up his spirit and was gathered to his people. So, this was his dying act. This pronouncement of the future of his sons.

And then even as he had told Joseph, swear to me you'll bury me, not in Egypt, but back in my own land. And Joseph swore. Now he's demanding the same thing from his sons.

He's saying, look, bury me back there in the cave that Abraham bought where I buried Leah. I want to be buried by her. Put me back there.

It is interesting that the love that he had for Rachel, that he didn't desire to be buried in the tomb of Rachel that still existed near Bethlehem. But bury me next to Leah actually there in the cave of Machpelah. Having said this, the old man pulled his legs back up into bed and that was it.

He was gone. And Joseph fell upon his father's face and he wept upon him and kissed him. And Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father.

And the physicians embalmed Israel. And forty days were fulfilled for him. For so are the days which they take to embalm them.

And the Egyptians mourned for him for seventy days. Now embalming processes took forty days and the period of mourning in Egypt for a great person was seventy days. And so they fulfilled the traditional things.

Now it would be interesting if you could find the cave of Machpelah because though you wouldn't find any remains of Abraham and Isaac and their wives, you should find a coffin and the mummified body of Jacob still existing there. And so it would be interesting if you could come across the cave of Machpelah and go down in and see the mummy of Jacob. Because of the embalming of Egypt, he would be preserved like King Tut and some of the others who were embalmed by the Egyptian arts of embalming.

Also, Joseph was embalmed, so you ought to be able to find Joseph too. That is, if you're interested in looking for mummies. One thing you'll never find, that's the body of Jesus.

And when the days of his mourning were over, Joseph spoke to the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I am going to die, and in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shall you bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again. And Pharaoh said, Go up and bury your father according as he has made you to swear.

Now though he was buried in a cave, and they didn't need to dig the grave that way, yet in these caves they dug niches in the walls, and they would lay the bodies in these niches in the walls. If you've been to the catacombs in Rome, you've seen it there, the niches in the walls that they have dug out for the bodies. And the same is true in Israel.

There are caves right up at the top of the Mount of Olives, just below the Intercontinental Hotel, there is an interesting burial cave there, and all of these niches in the wall of the cave that they dug out for the various people who in times past were buried in them. And so he had dug out his own niche, and so that's what he means in the grave which I dug, he had dug out his niche. In this cave when he dug out Leah's niche, he probably no doubt dug out his own niche to be buried by her in the cave.

And so Joseph is now asking the Pharaoh for permission, and of course they at this time have become an important part of the whole Egyptian prosperity, and the Egyptians probably did not want them to leave at this point, and so to ensure the fact that they aren't just migrating back now to Canaan. He's asking permission to go and to bury his father, but with the assurance that we will come back again to the land. And I will come again, he declares in verse 5. And Pharaoh said, go up and bury your father according as he made you to swear.

And Joseph went to bury his father, and with him the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all of the elders of the land of Egypt, and all of the house of Joseph, and his brothers, and his father's house, only their little ones and their flocks and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen. So they didn't take the children, but the adults all went. Of course, leaving their children in their herds is one of the greatest guarantees that they're not immigrating back, but they're just going for the burial.

Now a great multitude went. There went up with them both chariots and horsemen, and it was a great company of people. And so they came to the threshing floor of Etad, which is beyond Jordan.

And as they came up, they actually came up on the eastern side, crossing above the Red Sea, coming up on the eastern side of the Dead Sea into the area about where Joshua crossed in the area of Jericho. And

from Jericho, coming up the pass towards Jerusalem, veering to the left, coming up through the area of Bethlehem, across through the valley of Eshkol and to Hebron, where the cave existed. So they came up on the east bank of the Jordan because there are more fresh water supplies on the east bank.

Coming up the west bank of the Dead Sea, it would have been a long, hard journey without water because there are very few water tributaries coming in to the Dead Sea from the west side, but there are some good streams and springs on the east side of the Dead Sea. So that's why they made their journey up that way, then crossed the Jordan River on the north side of the Dead Sea, and then on up, as I said, that valley towards Jerusalem, cutting across to Bethlehem and down to the valley of Eshkol to Hebron, where Jacob was to be buried. But they stopped for a little celebration on the east side of the Jordan River, and there they mourned with a very great and sore lamentation, and he made a mourning for his father for seven days.

And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Etad, they said, this is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians. Wherefore, the name of it was called Abel Mizraim, which is beyond Jordan. And so, they, of course, didn't know, probably, that it was actually Jacob that his sons, Joseph, they just figured they were all Egyptians.

And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them, for the sons carried him into the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a burying place away from the Hittite before Mamre. And Joseph returned unto Egypt, he and his brothers, and all that went up with him to bury his father after he had buried his father. Now, this was Jacob's desire, and it was probably a desire, it did express faith, the faith of Jacob that this is the land God has given us up here.

And so, by faith, Jacob made mention, you know, of his bones before he died, asking him to bury him back in the land. It was a mark of faith, but really, it was putting upon the family certainly an unnecessary burden. To carry that body all the way from Egypt, clear on up to Hebron, to bury it there, what an unnecessary strain and burden he's putting upon the family.

But there was a special purpose for it, and so it was an expression of faith, this is the land that God has promised, this is the land where I want to be buried. But let me tell you something, God hasn't promised me any land, and I don't care where they bury me, because I think that we make much too much fuss over the old house. Once the spirit has departed, all it is, is an empty shell, it's the tent in which the person used to dwell.

But they now have a building of God, not made with hands eternal in the heavens. And I think that we make much too much fuss over the old tent. Sure, we sorrow, and there's nothing wrong with sorrowing.

Surely, we grieve, and that's only natural. We're going to miss them, we can't help but miss them, and there's nothing sinful or wrong with sorrowing or grieving because a loved one has been taken from us. But to make a big fuss over the body, to get all upset, because the casket, you know, just isn't what you wanted, or the florist didn't fix the flowers just right, and, you know, to have a big old, you know, thing, that's such a shame.

My wife said to me the other day, what do you want me to do with you if you should go before I do? I said, I really don't care. Cremate me if you want and scatter my ashes in a big surf. You know, it really doesn't matter.

Once I leave this old tent, it really doesn't make any difference. You say, oh, but cremation, can a Christian be cremated? I look upon cremation as just a speeding up of nature's process. Cremation will do in 37 minutes what nature will do in 37 years.

I see no problem with it spiritually. You know, in time, if there were going to be time, the body is just going to go back to the dust again, the tent. But the tent is me.

It has never been me. It has only been the place where I have been living. Now, we learn to relate people to the body, and that is rightfully so.

But once the person's spirit leaves the body, we shouldn't relate them to that body anymore. Behold, I show you a mystery, though. We're not going to all sleep.

We're all going to be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. I'm looking forward to that. Now, when Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, aha, Joseph will now hate us, and he'll certainly require from us all of the evil which we did to him.

He's going to get even now. He's going to requit us all of that evil. And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Your father did command before he died, saying, So shall you say to 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 the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spoke unto him. They sent messengers to Joseph, saying, Your dad Jacob, before he died, said, Hey, treat your brothers all right, will you? And the brothers came in and said, You know, Hey, we're the servants of your father's God.

Please, you know, forgive us the things that we've done. And Joseph wept before them. And his brothers also went, and they fell down before his face, and they said, Behold, we'll become your slaves.

And Joseph said unto them, Don't be afraid, for am I in the place of God? Now, this is a very illuminating phrase, because it shows that Joseph has a right estimate of things. That is, that judgment belongs to God. Am I in the place of God? Am I in the place of bringing retribution? Am I in the place of bringing judgment? Am I in the place of bringing vengeance upon you? God said, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.

Therefore, it is not up to me to bring judgment or vengeance upon a person who I feel has wronged me. That's God's place. It isn't my place at all.

And Joseph, recognizing it as God's place, then had the right attitude towards his brother in this whole thing. Am I in the place of God? That shows us, actually, the secret behind his attitude is his commitment to God and that area to God. And we also need to commit to God that area of judgment.

There are people that will say horrible things against you if you do anything. If you don't do anything, no one's going to say anything. But if you dare to do anything for the Lord, you're going to get your critics.

Now, you can waste your time going around trying to answer all your critics, or you can just go on doing the work of the Lord and let the Lord take care of the critics that rise. And if you have the right perspective, you'll just leave that in the hands of the Lord. You'll not try to defend yourself or whatever.

But, you know, I think it's one of Satan's tricks, really, to get us off of the real work of God and into the area of apologetics and defense. Get us fighting. Fighting communism, fighting liberalism, fighting, you know, so many different things.

And we're no longer really proclaiming the power of God and the love of God and the work of God. But we're fighting now all of these entities that are out there, fighting the devil. I think that it's a trap that it's easy to fall into.

But as for you, Joseph said, you thought evil against me, but God intended it for good to bring to pass as it is this day, the salvation of many people alive. Now, your intentions were evil. You were wrong.

Your motives were wrong. But even behind it, God was working. The Bible says that God uses the wrath of man to praise his name.

It is interesting to me how so many times God turns the tables on the devil. He'll prepare a trap for the children of God, and God will just turn the tables on him. Now, here are the brothers of Joseph.

Their intentions were evil. No getting around that. But behind it, God was working for good.

And this is true all the way through life. For no weapon that is formed against you will prosper. This is the heritage of the children of the Lord.

Though man may intend to evil and to hurt you, and all God is able to turn it around and to bring good from it. We need to have that kind of confidence in God that all things are working together for good to those who love God and are called according to his purpose. And even though a person might maliciously seek to malign you and hurt you, God can turn it for good.

You meant it for evil, but God has intended it for good for the salvation of many people. Now, therefore, don't be afraid, for I will nourish you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them. And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his father's house.

And Joseph lived a hundred and ten years. So, another fifty-four years after his father's death. And Joseph saw Ephraim's children to the third generation.

And the children also of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were brought up on Joseph's knees. So, he was a great-grandpa and brought up his grandkids on his knees, you know, bounced them around and had the joy of seeing not only his grandchildren, but his great-grandchildren. And I don't know, grandkids are great.

And I suppose great-grandkids are just that much more. So, he had the joy of bouncing his great-grandkids on his knees. And Joseph said unto his brethren, and it would indicate that some of his brothers were still alive, perhaps at the time that he was going to die, I'm going to die and God will surely visit you and bring you out of this land unto the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob.

And Joseph took an oath of his children, of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you and ye shall carry up my bones from here. So, Joseph died being 110 years old and they embalmed him and he was put in a casket in Egypt. Now, Joseph didn't put them to all the trouble of carrying his bones back immediately or the body back immediately, but he, at least when you leave here and you go.

And so, some 300 years later, when they left, they took this casket of Joseph and the children of Israel carried it out of the land of Egypt and they brought it into the land and buried him in the land of promise. So, Joseph again expressing that same faith of Jacob. This isn't my land.

I'm a stranger in a pilgrim here. I want to be buried in the land that God has promised unto us. And so, the Jews' love for the land isn't something that has arisen lately.

It isn't something that has arisen because of the persecution in Germany, or the persecution in Russia or elsewhere. That love for the land has been something that has been planted in them from the beginning. Even before they possessed the land, that love for the land was there in their hearts.

And Joseph said, hey, keep me here for a while, but when you leave, take me with you. I want to be buried in the land that God has promised unto our fathers. And surely God will visit and bring you out.

Now, as I said, if they had been reading the scriptures, they would have known that their time in Egypt would be quite a while. Four hundred years they were to sojourn in Egypt. But yet, the faith and confidence that one day God is going to bring them out, bring them into the land.

When he does, take me with you. And so, again, beautiful faith in the promises of God. So, now we jump a period of some three hundred years.

As we leave now, Joseph, and as we begin next week the book of Exodus, we are leaving three hundred years unaccounted for in their history. Because the next important event of their history is their coming out of the land of Egypt. And now, under new leadership, a man named Moses, who was of the tribe of Levi.

Cruel, short-tempered, hot-tempered Levi. And yet, of Moses it is said, of all the men upon the earth, he's probably the meekest. So, surely he did not have the characteristics of Levi, except in the beginning.

You see, he had forty years to learn meekness. In the beginning, he did display that hot temper of Levi. That's what got him into trouble.

He was out and he saw the Egyptian mistreating one of the Israelites, and he killed him. There's Levi again. But by the time God was through with him, after his forty years out in the backside of the wilderness, there was a real change wrought in Moses, and he became one of the meekest men who ever lived.

The changes that God is able to make in a human personality are really glorious. Taking a person from a fiery, hot-tempered, no control, to a meek, quiet kind of a spirit. The work of God in Moses' life.

So, we get into Exodus next week, the first five chapters. Shall we stand? May the Lord be with you and bless you. May his hand be upon your life this week.

And may God work in your life, in the changing of your nature with open faiths. May you behold the glory of the Lord. And as you gaze into his glory, may his spirit work in you, changing you from glory to glory into his image.

That God might conform you into the image of Christ. That you might become the person that God wants you to be. Not governed by your own will, but governed by the Spirit of God.

Reacting and responding, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. That your life might be a testimony in your home, in the office, at your place of work, wherever you are. As that nature and character of Christ is revealed in you.

And thus may men be drawn unto our Lord. And may your life be used as a witness for God's glory. In Jesus' name.

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