

Staying the Course

Genesis 49:22-50:26

Most of us are like Joseph. We do not have the luxury of a detached existence. We are in the melting pot of life, and we sometimes think that because our lives are busy and our environments secular, we cannot live for God as “spiritual people” do. If we are inclined to think that way, we should remember Joseph. Joseph was surrounded by every secular pressure. He was a citizen of the world. But his conduct throughout his entire life, as well as his dying words, proved that he did not live for the material things life can bring, but for God and his kingdom and glory. If Joseph lived like that in his circumstances, we can live for God in ours. We can endure and triumph as those whose eyes see things that are invisible. Boice

- I. Our study of the book of Genesis draws to a close this morning. It has given us a rich understanding of salvation history. The first eleven chapters taught us about creation, the fall, Adam and Eve’s sin, Satan’s role in it and the reason for the great flood. It has given us a character study of those who opposed God and those who embraced him. From chapter 12 on, we looked at the family God chose to fulfill the prophecy of Genesis 3:15, where God says to Satan, *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.* God chose this family, starting with Abraham, his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob, and promised them that they would become a great nation and that they would bring forth a deliverer, a redeemer from the sin that came to all men because of Adam’s sin. All of Scripture, all redemptive history, comes forth from this book. It began here and was ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ. It is encouraging to know that God is still redeeming a people unto himself through those who put their faith in Jesus, His Son, and His sacrifice for our sins. As the book of Genesis comes to a close, we see Jacob blessing his sons, each one according to how they had lived their lives before God. It speaks of accountability and God’s wonderful attributes of love, grace, mercy and justice. Consequently, how we view life, i.e., our world view, should include an understanding of the sovereignty of God over all matters great and small, which should move us to serve Him and His ways over any god the world might expect us to bow down to and serve.

Deut. 13:4 *You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him.*

- II. Jacob's name is recorded in the book of life because he, like Abraham and Isaac, believed God and His covenant promises, and as a result, had righteousness credited to him. It is seen in how he blessed his sons and especially Judah, as the one whose offspring would bring forth the Lion of Judah, the ultimate King through whom all nations would be blessed. As his life comes to a close, he gives us a testimony of faithfulness when seemingly all hope had been lost through circumstances out of his control. Perhaps, as he drew his last breath, his thoughts were on the fact that God had truly been with him throughout his journey of faith. A testimony to all of us who worship God knowing that His promises stand true to us no matter what living in this fallen world might bring. It is, therefore, best to finish well knowing that we too will be gathered to our people, the redeemed saints of God, maybe sooner than we realize. Then life truly begins, a life full of the fruit of perfect righteousness, peace and love in the presence of our great redeemer Jesus Christ. Therefore, be hopeful as we wait for the rapture!

Gen. 49:29-50:14

Gen. 28:15 *Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."*

- III. If any man epitomizes Matthew 13:23 as an example of what it means to bear fruit for God, it's Joseph. The good soil was his fertile heart that took to heart what it meant to fear God. *"The reason for Joseph's peerless conduct was God. And his father's blessings acknowledged this by a cascade of divine inscriptions unparalleled in Genesis."* He understood God's promises, character, holiness, sovereignty, majesty and power in ways that made him determined to stay true to Him no matter what. *"So we see that Jacob invoked a waterfall of divine names over his son: 'Mighty one of Jacob' – 'Shepherd'— 'Stone'— 'God of our father'— 'El Shaddai.' Thus we cannot miss the point: It was God in the full significance of these names and metaphoric appellations who had delivered Joseph and sustained him—and who would effect further blessings in his life. And for us his children, God has 'blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world' (Ephesians 1:3, 4a). The promise of his care for us is equally astonishing. Our awesome God will effect our care and blessing!" Kent Hughes*

Gen. 49:22-28

Gen. 50:15-26

John 15:5

Ps. 68:24,27

John 14:3

Rev.22:12

Matthew 13:23 *But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.*